OBSERVATIONS ON STATE, POLITY AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL ACCOUNTS ON INDIA; FROM THE 15TH TO 17TH CENTURY

Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University

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FOR MY GRANDPA ~ BABA

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Chapter One

TRAVELLERS' ACCOUNTS, STATE AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: AN INTRODUCTORY SURVEY

> Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country, before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel.
> Francis Bacon*, Of Travel, with notes by Joseph Devey*.[1]

1.1 Introduction

This quote is an indirect endorsement of the importance of travel accounts, which cannot be discounted for writing histories in the modern period. In addition, these accounts often are treated as literary accounts and thus offer a range of research possibilities to scholars, historians and general readers. The present research will attempt to examine the observations on different polities and facets of states with special reference to the Mughal Empire as recorded in the travelogues of different travellers who came to India especially from the fifteen century to the seventeen century. It is emphasized here that the accounts of these travellers reflected a vision and perspective that was influenced by their respective vocations, social status and purpose of visit.

[1]Francis Bacon, *Essays*: 'Of Travel', with notes by Joseph Devey, New York, 1883, p. 68. This quote aptly summarizes the importance of travelling in one's life, which further helps the scholars, historians and rest of the audience to a large extent.

1.2. Travellers and travellers' accounts: select themes of study

1.2.1. Travellers' Accounts: Their Significance as a Source of Historical Study

The period from early fifteenth to the seventeenth century experienced an influx of European travellers to India. The influx of European travellers increased with the establishment of the Mughal Empire, probably due to the expanding trade and trading networks through overseas as well land routes. Modern historiography and research often criticise these travellers' accounts for being biased and one-sided.[2] Notwithstanding the fact that European travellers were critical of rulers and their respective states and their accounts reflected their individual visions and perspectives, labelling these accounts as biased would be a sweeping statement, without taking into account the subjectivities and differences in these writings. The travellers documented what they essentially saw and observed. The European travellers while travelling within the Indian subcontinent engaged with texts, chronicles and accounts composed in the sub-continent, and used them as sources of information. Sometimes, the travellers were patronised by the local rulers as well. The travellers even had access to contemporary state documents and archives. Thus, it would not be incorrect to point out that their respective accounts would certainly reflect a degree of historical and contextual reality.

One cannot ignore the historical and individual contexts in which these European travellers were located. In addition to the context of the country of their origin, travellers belonged to different occupations and were definitely influenced by their respective professional training. The travellers belonged to a variety of professions. They were missionaries, doctors, merchants, diplomats and

[2] Eugenia Vanina, 'Roads of (Mis) Understanding: European Travellers in India (Fifteenth to Seventeenth Century)', *Indian Historical Review,* 40(2) 267-284, Sage, 2013.

adventurers. A lot of them also entered into various services with many kings, particularly in the Deccan. Some of them also accepted the services of a Mughal nobleman or attached themselves to the nobleman's retinue. They served as soldiers, advisors and mercenaries. Some of them were completely 'Indianised', wore Indian clothes, learnt various Indian languages and ate Indian food. Therefore, it is very important for us to keep in mind their different backgrounds, vocations, their length of stay, nationality and religion, while analysing their accounts in history. This study will analyse the accounts of these travellers according to their professions, namely missionaries, ambassadors, merchants and so on.

It is important to appreciate the difficulties the travellers faced during their journeys. Travelling for long hours across the seas, through various areas in the Indian sub-continent, from the port city of Surat towards Deccan, followed by the journey to Behrampore, Madras and Masulipatnum on the eastern coast, then to the Bengal province, Agra and Delhi, these travellers encountered a radically new and a different kind of environment and topography, altogether different climate, diseases, different animal and plant life, than what they were accustomed to. They also suffered extensively from homesickness, which is one of the basic problems during the travel, affected all of them to some degree and became a predictable theme in most of their records and letters; and mostly resulted in comparisons between the Indian and European context and sometimes in forming a biased judgement. Some of the European travellers were driven by the desire for material wealth, some were inspired by missionary zeal or a taste, and some were genuinely curious about the so called "exotic cultures" they encountered in their journey. For example Bernier, who starts his travelogue "Great Mogul", with,

> The desire of seeing the world, which had induced me to visit Palestine and Egypt, still prompted me to extend my travels.[3]

These lines prove that he went to the Indies for sheer knowledge and not for other materialistic pleasures like spices or for gold or diamond.

Travel accounts including fanciful stories and flawed accounts, provide sharper and certainly livelier pictures of the reality of the sub-continent despite the prejudices and outright bigotry of their authors. These travel accounts and chroniclers give a different insight to these different civilizations which they could neither ignore and nor were they able to dominate. Therefore, they basically sought to decode, demystify and understand Indian topography, behaviour, the different religion with this spirit of inquiry. They encountered living habits of the rulers and the people which in their perceptions were 'strange'. These different traditions and customs stirred amongst these travellers a sense of novelty- 'variety and unbelievable strangeness'[4]. This 'otherness' highlighted India's uniqueness in their perception, inculcating awe and wonder, helping to build a 'marvellous topography' and sometimes an imagined geography of the Indian space. In fact, one of their important sources of information were the *bazar* gossips which are recorded in their accounts. Although these local information are considered to be unreliable and of doubtful historicity, yet they tell us something about what the common people thought about the state, society, princes and so on. The *bazar* gossips can be seen as a counter to the court chronicles and

[3] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 74.

[4]Pramod K. Nayar, 'Marvelous Excesses: English Travel Writing and India, 1608-1727',*Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 No. 2, Apr., 2005, p. 213.

literature. Often the travellers recorded important folk tales and mythological stories which give us useful insights about the popular culture of that period. It is important to remember that most of the court chronicles were commissioned and patronised by the court and they tended to eulogise the reigning sovereign, exaggerating the state lavishes and concealing its deficiencies.[5]

These European travel narratives are of great historical and literary value. They bring about a new perspective in the areas of travel and exploration for many reasons. It helped in bringing the East upfront in the Europe, amongst the ordinary people of Europe. These accounts bring out the reality along with the glamour that was presented in the Mughal court. They helped numerous tradesmen in their ventures. These writings were not merely fascinating fictions but they inspired adventure and and a sense of imagination amongst others back in Europe. These stories needed no extra decorated rhetorics or adornment to inspire readership. They were sufficiently attractive even when they were simple and plain. Hence, the purpose of these travelogues was to provide both pleasure and knowledge for the people back home about the new and strange' land that the travellers travelled to and visited.

This study will attempt to analyse these accounts beyond the binaries of bias and objectivity keeping all the criticisms in mind. There is no doubt that as sources of history, the accounts of the

[5] E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*,Asian Educational Services, 1991, p. 7. "An important exception to this generalisation is Abdul-Qadir Badaoni, a scholar and author of the time of Akbar. He was employed by that monarch in the work of making translations into Persian from Arabic and Sanskrit, and his remarks on his patron are frank and unreserved. Indeed, the chief merit of his Muntakhab-utTawarikb is the fact that it is written by an enemy of Akbar, and exhibits the weakness as well as the grandeur of the character of the greatest of the Mogul emperors."

European travellers are invaluable and they help us in filling in certain major historical gaps, which otherwise would have been difficult.

1.2.2. Foreign Travellers and Their Journeys to India: From the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Century

Some of the notable travellers who travelled to the Indian subcontinent in the fifteenth century were Nicolo De Conti and Afanasy Nikitin. Nicolo De Conti (1420-1421 C.E.) was an Italian merchant, explorer and writer. After Marco Polo's[6] visit to India by the sea route, we find Conti, taking the sea route, according to the written documents available to us.[7] Conti's travel accounts initially circulated in the form of a manuscript. Conti helped in influencing the European perception of the entire geography in and around the Indian Ocean. He travelled to India and Southeast Asia during the early 15th century. His account was one of the main source to create the Fra Mauro map of 1450 C.E. that directed a sea route that moves from Europe around Africa and then to India Afanasy Nikitin (1469-1472 C.E.) visited the Bahamani empire during the latter half of the fifteenth century. He was a Russian merchant. In his account[8], we find abundance of information about India, its society, population, government, military, economy, religion and natural resources.

[6] Venetian merchant, explorer and writer who travelled through Asia along the Silk road between 1271 and 1295. He wrote his experiences in the book titled, *The Travels of Marco Polo.*

[7] Poggio Bracciolini, The Travels of Nicolo Conti in the East, in the Early Part of the Fifteenth Century, *De Varietate Fotunae,* Vol IV, 1857.

[8] Afanasy Nikitin's Voyage Beyond Three Seas: 1466-1472. Raduga, 1985.

In the sixteenth century, the number of travellers and their accounts increased significantly. The narratives of Domingo Paes, who visited India at around 1520 A.D., and the chronicles of Fernao Nuniz, who came around India in about 1535 A.D are well known. Domingo Paes was a Portuguese traveller who visited the Vijayanagara Empire at around 1520 A.D. which is located in the Deccan in southern India. Nuniz was also a Portuguese traveller, a chronicler and a horse trader who spent around three years in the capital of the Vijayanagara Empire during the time period 1535-1537 C.E. Their accounts were edited and translated, for the first time, by Robert Sewell.[9] Another significant account is that of Father Monserrate[10] (1580-1582 C.E.). He was a Portuguese Jesuit on his first mission to India in 1574 A.D. He accompanied Father Rodolfo Acquaviva and Father Francisco Enriquez on the mission headed to the court of the Emperor Akbar (1556–1605 C.E.). He was appointed for the mission by Francis Xavier in the Portuguese territory of Goa to Emperor Akbar's court in 1578 A.D. He was then appointed as a tutor by the emperor to the Mughal prince Murad[11] at Agra. His account is one of the earliest European accounts, in which he gives an objective account of Akbar's personality, court and administrative measures.[12] Ralph Fitch was another important traveller whose accounts give us valuable information. Fitch was an English merchant and traveller who documented his visit to India and

[9] Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire,* London, 1900.

[10] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922.

[11] Murad Mirza (15 June 1570 – 12 May 1599) was a Mughal prince as the second surviving son of Mughal Emperor Akbar.

[12] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922.

South East Asia from 1583 – 1591 C.E.[13] Fitch primarily travelled during the rule of Mughal emperor Akbar. His account was quite important for information on the East India Company's attempt in penetrating and controlling the trade in Indian sub-continent and East Asia.

The period of seventeenth century witnessed intensive travel networks with travellers coming from England, France, Italy, Portugal and Holland. Sir Thomas Roe[14] was an English diplomat who travelled to India as an ambassador from 1615 A.D. to 1618 A.D. and his accounts are significant amongst the travellers who visited India in the seventeenth century. Roe's journal is a valuable source of information for the reign of Jahangir and the history of India in the early seventeenth century. Roe was entrusted an important assignment of obtaining the official Mughal protection for the British East India Company's factory at Surat. He was adept in engaging with negotiations and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth's (1558-1603 C.E.) successor, James I (1603 – 1625 C.E.). The Directors of the English East India Company chose Thomas Roe as an ambassador to the court of the Mughals. Another seventeenth century traveller was Edward Terry[15]. He (1616-1619 C.E.) was an English chaplain at the English Embassy to the Mughals. In 1616 A.D. he went on the fleet which was commanded by Captain Benjamen Joseph. Sir Thomas Roe's chaplain had died. He had requested the English authorities at Surat to send another man. Terry was given the opportunity to become a chaplain and he accepted the job and joined Sir Thomas Roe in Ujjain in February 1617 A.D. They mostly travelled through the entire northern India, Gujarat and Bihar, which he accepted. Terry presented his account in 1622 A.D. to the Prince of Wales (Charles I) and later on

[13] J Horton Ryley, *Ralph Fitch England's Pioneer to India and Burma: His Companions and Contemporaries*, New Delhi; Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1998.

[14] Sir Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-1619*, ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, London, 1926.

[15] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655.

published another edition, adding more information. Purchas has included it in his *Pilgrimage*. [16] It has also been published by William Foster in *Early Travels in India.*[17]Another account under study is that of John Fryer[18] who travelled to East Asia from 1673-1681 C.E. He was an English doctor and a fellow of the Royal Society. He was later appointed as a medical surgeon to the British East India Company in 1672 A.D. After his arrival at Masulipatam (Presently Andhra Pradesh) in 1673 A.D., he travelled to Madras, Bombay and so on. His book provides extensive information about the Mughal India and South India, particularly Bombay, Madras and Masulipatam. William Hawkins (1609-1611 C.E.)[19] was another British traveller in the seventeenth century and was a representative of the British East India Company. Hawkins travelled to Agra to negotiate matters with regard to the setting up of a factory for Emperor Jahangir in 1609 A.D. He landed in Surat and travelled to Agra to the court of Jahangir. He was employed by the Emperor who gave him a handsome maintenance. He even married an Armenian Christian from the court. He stayed in the court for about three years and left around 1611 A.D. for Surat where he met Sir Henry Middleton with whom he travelled across the Red Sea. William Norris[20] (1699-1702 C.E.) was an English diplomat who visited India in the time of Aurangzeb (1658-1707 C.E.). He visited India for the purpose of obtaining necessary privileges of the Mughal authorities in favour of the 'New East India Company', in face of opposition of the officers of Old East India Company. Peter Mundy

[16] Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimage; or, Relations of the World and the Religions,* London, 1613.

[17]*Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, ed. William Foster, Oriental Books, Delhi, 1985.

[18] John Fryer,, *A New Account of East India and Persia: being nine years Travels 1672-1681*, 2 vols., ed. William Crooke, Hakluyt Society, London, 1915.

[19] William Hawkins, *The Hawkins' Voyages during the reign of Henry VII, Queen Elizabeth, and James I* (1609 A.D- 1611 A.D).

[20]*The Norris Embassy to Aurangzib (1699-1702),* Harihar Das (trans), condensed and rearranged by S.C. Sarkar, 1959, Calcutta.

was a British merchant, trader, traveller and writer (1628-1634 C.E.). He came to Surat, travelled to Agra, Bengal and other parts of North India and left behind extensive information about that period of these places.[21]

Some of the important travel accounts on the seventeenth century were written by French travellers in the Mughal Empire. Abbé Carré who travelled during 1672-1674 C.E., published his accounts in three volumes.[22] The volume accounts for the Indian geography which covers from the region from Bijapur to Madras and then to St. Thome. He gives extensive details regarding the capture of the Trincomalee Bay and St. Thome. He writes about the siege of St. Thome by the Golconda army in Golconda and various hostilities with the Dutch. Francois Bernier was a French physician and traveller during 1656 to 1658 C.E.[23] He was attached to the court of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. He also served as a personal physician to the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh for a brief period of time. His account largely deals with the reigns of Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb. Bernier has extensively written about his journey and his observations and used information based on eminent noble from the court, including the Emperor's harem. He was under the protection and guidance of Daneshmand Khan who was an important official at the court of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Khan was the *Mir Bakshi* (Treasurer) and later Governor of Delhi. Bernier refers to

[21] Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-1667*, ed. Richard Carnac Temple, Second Series No. XXXV, Hakluyt Society, London, 1925.

[22] Abbé Carré, *The Travels of Abbé Carré in India and the near East 1672-1674*, 2 vols., tr. Lady Fawcett, ed. Charles Fawcett and Richard Burn, Hakluyt Society, London, 1674.

[23] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983.

Khan as 'my *Agha*' in his account. He also mentioned meeting with John Basptiste Tavernier, another great traveller in Bengal (1666 A.D.). In 1669 A.D., Bernier returned to Paris.

There were other travellers from France who visited Indian during the seventeenth century. Francisco Pyrard De Laval was one such French traveller (1601-1611 C.E.) in South Asia. However, his account largely deals with Maldives where he was held captive for five years.[24]Jean De Thevenot (1666-1667 C.E.) was another French traveller.[25] He was in the Mughal Empire for about thirteen months. He travelled across Masulipatnam via Golconda and then Surat. He excelled in natural sciences which can be evidently found in his account. Jean Baptiste Tavernier was a French gem merchant and a traveller. He travelled during 1630 and 1668 at his own expense.[26] He was a keen observer as we find in his account, a vivid description of trade and jewels available in the country and in the royal treasury. During his travels, he visited the royal court of Shah Jahan.

One of the Italian travellers in the seventeenth century was Fredericke Caesar. Caeser was a merchant of Venice and travelled to East India and the Indies.[27]In his account we find the descriptions relating to various customs and rites practiced in the countries he travelled in. He discovered the merchandise and commodities of these countries along with the gold, silver, spices, drugs, pearls and other jewelleries. Francesco Gamelli Careci was another Italian adventurer and

[24](Ed) Albert and Bell Gray, H .C .P, *The voyage of 'Francisco Pyrard de Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil,* vo1 i, London: Hakluyt Society, 1944.

[25]*Indian Record Series: Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, ed. Surendranath Sen, National Archives of lndia, New Delhi, 1949.

[26] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*,2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977.

[27] Caesar Fredericke, *The Voyage and Travel of M Caesar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice into the East Indies*, The Principal Navigations, (Trans) M Thomas Hicboche, vol v, Glasgow: Hakluyt Voyages, 1904.

traveller in the seventeenth century.[28] He financed his trip by carefully purchasing goods at each stage that enhanced his next stage of trip. Niccolas Manucci[29] (1653- 1708 C.E.) was an Italian writer and traveller. He wrote an extensive account about the Indian sub-continent during the Mughal era especially of the later reign of Shah Jahan and of the reign of Aurangzeb. He spent almost his entire life in India. Pietro Della Valle[30] was another Italian traveller visiting India at about seventeenth century. He extensively visited and resided in Surat and Goa and his accounts are an important source of information for those parts of the country.

Travellers in the seventeenth century also comprised Portuguese and Dutch wanderers too. Fray Manrique Sebastian was a Portuguese missionary and a traveler.[31] He travelled to India around 1640 A.D. and left in 1641 A.D. He spent this time mostly in Bengal. Francisco Pelsaert was a Dutch merchant under the Dutch East India Company during 1618 A.D. [32]He spent almost seven years in Agra after which he left for Java around 1628 A.D. He left behind a considerable amount of collective information about the Mughal trade and society.

Since the individual perspectives and subjectivities of these European travel accounts are numerous, it is worthwhile to compare their narratives with the narratives in the other non-

[28]Ibid.,

[29] Niccolao Manucci, *Storio Do Mogor or Mogul India*,tr. William Irvine, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1981.

[30] Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, 2 vols.,ed. Edward Grey, tr. Georges Havers, Hakluyt Society, London, 1892.

[31] Sebastien Manrique, *The Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique 1619-1643*,2 vols., tr. Luard C. Eckfora, Second Series No. LIX, Hakluyt society, London, 1927.

[32] Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert*, trs. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 2001.

European and Indic accounts. For instance, Abd-er-Razzak who left us an account named "*Matla-us-Sadain wa Majma-ul-Bahrain",* translated in English as*, "The Rise of the Two Auspicious Constellations and the Confluence of the Two Oceans".* He visited India as an ambassador of emperor Shah Rukh, who was the Timurid ruler in Persia (1442-1445 A.D). His account is important for two main reasons. Firstly, he writes in the fifteenth century and considering that we have very few accounts in this period, Razzak's account adds up to the value of information at that period. Secondly, he happened to be the ambassador of an important empire (Persia) at that period of time.

1.2.3. Themes of Study: State, People and the Political Frameworks

While focussing on the narratives on the state in these travel accounts, this dissertation would also deal with the ways in which the travel narratives delineated the economy, culture, judiciary and religion as a part of the state. The primary aim is to study the state of affairs, the polities, and the different politics in the court through the traveller's observation on the court culture of the Mughals. For instance, the travellers commented extensively and in considerable detail on the Mughal military camps. The Mughal emperors often invited travellers to accompany these mobile military camps. These camps attracted their attention as they were large in numbers. The Mughals established these military camps during various military campaigns and during their tours to summer retreats and pilgrimage sites. The interesting part to be noted here is the exact arrangement of all the particulars of the court in these military camps even when they were on the move.

> Whenever the King travels in military pomp he has always two private camps; that is to say, two separate bodies of tents. One of these camps being constantly a day in advance of the

> other, the King is sure to find at the end of every journey a camp fully prepared for his reception.[33]

The relation of the political with the economic was well highlighted in the accounts of these travellers. The location of the peripatetic court and camps and the ultimate foundation of urban centres is another aspect that will be studied here. Where did the Mughal emperors stop and the reasons for the choice of the place that the emperors halted in. Was there any hidden agenda? Were these places, a place of interest? Or was it because the emperors chose to halt and it became a place of importance? These questions will are useful to understand the history of the emergence of towns and the reasons for their growth and contribution to urbanization. Bernier mentions how Aurangzeb makes a stop at Lahore on his way to Kashmir.

The study will also extensively analyse the etiquettes and protocols that were followed by the emperors, nobles, princes, and the royal households. In this connection, the study will discuss the elaborate court culture and the rituals, as perceived by the Europeans. It will also be interesting to study the role of the royal's and nobles' households during the period under study. This study will also entail the ways these travellers' accounts perceived state governance and the relationship of the emperors and the court with the subjects. Here one could understand the evolution of sovereignty in the Mughal Empire from the fifteenth to seventeenth century. Two areas in connection with the sovereignty can be examined. First was the relation with the nobles, princes and local power structures, especially those in the principalities. Second was the relation with the subjects.

[33] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 359.

Various princes and nobles who were given command over different small principalities are discussed in these travel accounts. The study will attempt to highlight whether they were always loyal or were there cases of rebellions. In this connection, the study will also broadly want to shed some light on the role of nobility and their military strength and the degree of independence they enjoyed. Following from this, another important theme that will be broadly discussed in this study is the imperial succession, princely contenders and the ways in which they were chosen and the princely rebellion, especially during the later stage of the Mughal rule in India. The question that needs to be discussed is to what extent did the travel accounts give importance to the issue of the wars of succession in the politics of the Mughal Empire. The study also includes the extensive role of the various stakeholders especially in the rural areas like the land holders, *zamindars*, revenue officials, village elders and cultivators and the relationship between them as documented in select travelogues. Some of the questions with regard to the relationship of the state with the subjects would be to examine whether the emperors were the ultimate power holders or did they share considerable amounts of power with their subjects or other stakeholders. If the study suggests that powers were shared, then to what extent was it shared will be discussed. The European travellers in their individual accounts also compared the political, economic and social conditions of India with that of the areas and political environment they came from. This is especially marked in the comparison between the Mughal Empire and medieval cities of the states of Europe.. In the accounts, there are many references regarding the state of affairs in the European empire. It is interesting to find how the travellers keep comparing the courts in India with that in Europe, often praising their native countries, often in the hope of impressing their respective European rulers.

In addition, this study will also analyse the extent to which the state considered religion to be important for sovereignty and the subjects. Hence, an analysis of the influence of the concept of

divinity over the state as expressed in these accounts would be crucial. Was Mughal state 'the hand of God on Earth'? Was the religion of the emperor forced upon the people? Or did the administration deal in a diplomatic manner? These are some of the questions that would be addressed in the study.

Another area that would be focused upon is the judiciary. To what degree did the judiciary and legalities influence the perspectives of the rulers and the states? And what were the various ways to maintain the administration, and law and order in the state? The different rules and regulations practiced during the different rulers will be interesting to study. The court etiquettes for different festivities were an important facet as they sometimes expressed the state's attitude towards the other state and those attending the royal court as guests.

1.3. Historiography

The plethora of historiography for the early modern period seems to have a certain level of fascination with the moment of the honest encounter between the European and his 'other'. The objectivity between the empirical observation and their objective interpretations will not be easy to establish, of course. The most important debate so far among the modern historians mostly has been dominated by the issue of orientalism.

1.3.1. Modern narratives on Travel accounts

Many scholars have pointed out how the genre of the travel narrative developed in post-Enlightenment Europe. The desire to identify oneself as an individual, distinguished from others, sought wider distribution of their narratives. These Europeans increasingly printed their own travel accounts in addition with editors like Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616 C.E.) and Samuel Purchas

(1577-1626 C.E.), in England, started printing and selling vast compilations of travel narratives, initially to celebrate English achievements and also as a comprehensive documentation of other European exploration throughout the world.[34]

Oaten[35]has compiled all the accounts of the various European travellers in a chronological order. He has divided the travellers into three categories on the basis of those that belonged to the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and tried to show them as important witnesses to the social and political institutions, their nature and degree of their influence in India during that time. It is basically a compilation of the accounts of the travellers whose accounts Oaten summarized taking almost everything into consideration in his book. Even the minute details were taken care of especially with reference to the emergence of the importance of Indian trade.

Nanda[36] in her study focuses majorly on the seventeenth century, especially the later half. According to her, the European accounts were generally limited by cultural preconceptions and preconceived notions, nonetheless they also stand in sharp contrast with the Persian chronicles of the time, which she considers as the main indigenous sources in order to study the Mughal empire in its entirety. She, however, explains the importance of the travelogues with respect to the information about the social life and religious practices. The various information on political organizations, the economy and on trade have been described in detail. Nanda points out the

[34]Michael H Fisher, *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing,* I.B. Tauris, New York, 2007.

[35] E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*,Asian Educational Services, 1991.

[36]Meera Nanda, *European Travel Accounts during the Reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb*, Nirmal Book Agency, Kolkata, 1994.

historical and geographical importance of these travellers and the ways in which they engaged in a debate about the incidents they encountered. They do not speak in a single voice but rather discussed their observations and their authenticity.

The book by Kate Teltscher, *India Inscribed*[37], is an interesting example of an anti-orientalist approach, which has been influenced by Edward Said[38]. Teltscher in her work deals with famous travellers like Purchas, Bernier, Manucci and Pietro Della Valle who came to India at that time and studies and compiles their work into one volume.[39]This is mainly done in order to examine the writings about India by the various European and British travellers from 1600 to 1800 C.E. This book also charts out the evolution of Britain from a trading partner to a colonial power and discusses the founding of the East India Company. Teltscher in her book argues that the representations of India are quite diverse and shifting depending on historical contingencies and also frequently competitive. The book also takes up certain issues through contrasting representations in the travelogues. [40]

1.3.2. Construction of the Exotic and Terra Incognita

While pointing out that not all the travellers had the freedom and independence to write their journals, Pramod Nayar[41] interestingly highlights certain guidelines stated in the sixteenth and

[37]Kate Teltscher, *India Inscribed- European and British writings on India 1600-1800*, Oxford University Press, Delhi,1995.

[38] Edward W Said, *Orientalism,* Pantheon Books, 1978.

[39]Ibid., pp. 5-18.

[40] Ibid., p. 134.

[41]Pramod K. Nayar, 'Marvelous Excesses: English Travel Writing and India, 1608-1727',*Journal of British Studies*, vol. 44 No. 2, Apr., 2005.

seventeenth for these writings which reflected a certain attitude that exceptionalised areas and land with their histories and natural resources as exotic, mysterious and hence waiting to be explored. Institutions and people such as the Royal Society of London and Francis Bacon, respectively, made strong demands for exact and accurate description of new and interesting places. Nayar quotes Bacon in 'Of Travel' (1625 A.D.) regarding the things and observations that a traveller should observe and write about.

> The things to be seen and observed are, the courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors, the courts of justice, while they sit and hears causes; and so consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbours; antiquities and ruins; libraries, colleges, disputations….and to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go.[42]

Similarly, Nayar discusses some thinkers like William Davison(1541-1608 C.E.)[43] who listed the items specially observed by travellers. In his work, *Profitable Instructions* in 1633 A.D., Davidson asked the travellers and these writers to organize their information and observation into three categories, such as; "*The Country*", "*The People*", and "*The Policy and Government*". The various characteristic accounts assembled during this period gave narrative models to these travelogues. Natural history was in any case arranged systematically as 'obscure/mysterious' and 'wild land'. It was an endeavour logically to change the land into an object of quest, adventure and control.[44]

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[42]Ibid.,p. 215.

[43] He was the secretary of Queen Elizabeth, was, according to his own account, of Scottish descent.

[44]"Profitable Instructions describing what special observations are to be taken by travellers in all nations, states and countries; pleasant and profitable", Robert, late Earle of Essex. Sir Philip Sidney. And, Secretary Davison, quoted in Pramod Nayar.

Similarly, Joan Pau Rubies in an essay titled, "*Instruction for Travellers: Teaching the Eye to See"*, writes about Robert Hooke who was the Secretary of the Royal Society of London for improving natural knowledge.[45] In 1681 A.D., Hooke had written a preface to Robert Knox's[46] "*Historical relation of the island of Ceylon",* focussing on a distinct study of the logical significance of travel history and literature. Hooke pointed out the need to accomplish the attractive safeguarding of all revelations. He wrote that the accounts[47] ought to be distributed independently and should have varied themes and that explorers should meet men who would to pose relevant questions in order to help in the composition of legitimate chronicles. Most importantly, it was important to promote,

> Instructions (to seamen and Travellers,) to show them what is pertinent and considerable to be observed in their voyages and abodes, and how to make their observations and keep registers or accounts of them...[48]

According to Rubies, the four primary subjects chosen for the depiction of a state were its name and position, its climatic condition, the character and customs of its kin, and the specifics concerning its ruler. Every one of these subjects included different extraordinary sub-topics.

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[45]Joan-Pau Rubies, 'Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the eye to see', *From Travel literature to ethnography,* (eds) J. Stagl and C. Pinney, Special issue of History and Anthropology, 9 (1996).

[46] English trader and sailor in 1681. This account narrates one of the most important contemporary accounts of 17th century Sri Lankan life.

[47] Robert Hooke, 'The Preface', pp 3-8, in Knox Robert, *An historical relation of Ceylon, in the Indies,* edited by S.D. Sapardamu, Dehiwala, 1958.

[48]Ibid., p, 3.

The category for "instruction for travellers" was mainly started by a group of German socialists, such as Theodor Zwinger[49] (1533-1588 C.E.), who studied law or medicine at the Padua University. According to Rubies[50], these thoughts communicated by Robert Hooke depicts the continuous change in the European system of information or knowledge, which was moving away from the customary schooling that was dependent on the way of talking and limited by the limits of college control. It was now a wide assortment of conversations which upheld new cases to logical position, where travel writing shaped a piece of this new scientific authority. Further, as per Rubies, teaching voyagers what to see in a scientific manner tended to the idea of technique, which was critical to the change from the generic to scientific in the Renaissance times. Hence, teaching the Europeans the strategies for exploring new intellectual and scientific approach to see the world became crucial.[51] Hence, it will be interesting to analyse in the chapters whether these travellers followed these instructions or not. It may so have been that there might have been such broad general framework or an outline but whether it was mandatory to follow it or not requires some study into their observation.

[49] Justin Stagl (1990) The methodising of travel in the 16th century, History and Anthropology, 4:2, 303-338.

[50]Joan-Pau Rubies, 'Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the eye to see', *From Travel literature to ethnography,* (eds) J. Stagl and C. Pinney, Special issue of History and Anthropology, 9 (1996).

[51] Ibid., p. 150.

1.3.3. Analysis of Travellers' Perceptions in their Historical Contexts

Rubies's "*Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance"*[52] is a detailed record of religious and political life in middle age south India, drawing on the individual stories of European traders, evangelists, and explorers. The volume covers the time of European appearance, generally matching with the rise and decline of the Vijayanagar Empire (1308- I685 C.E.).This book provides an ambitious analysis and discusses how European travellers visiting India developed perceptions of religious diversity, ethnicity, polity over three centuries. Rubies intends to question many assumptions. Specifically, voyagers would not have the option to decipher what a native culture was about, on the grounds that an explorer's viewpoint was informed by his own way of life. A voyager from the late sixteenth century would similarly misconceive an archaic record. Indeed, even the cutting edge student of history can't anticipate seeing appropriately what a Renaissance explorer saw.[53] These are a portion of the issues which Rubies bargains in his work that generally manages the Southern India, particularly the Malabar Coast and the realm of Vijayanagara, as it got numerous European travellers. The book is thus a paper about sources, occasions, settings and outcomes, concerned with long term social changes, mindful both to the archaic foundation of the Renaissance and to the manner in which the Renaissance made the conditions for the Enlightenment.

Harbans Mukhia's, *The Mughals of India*[54] deals with Mughal presence in India from 1526 C.E., to the mid-eighteenth century. It attempts to co-relate the dynasty's inner world with popular perceptions through four dimensions: sources and process of legitimization; the evolution and

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[52] John-Pau Rubies, *Travels and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes 1250-1625.*

[53]Ibid., pp. xvi-xvii.

[54]Harbans Mukhia, *The Mughals of India*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, 2004.

meaning of court etiquette; the domain of the imperial Mughal family and the interaction between folklore and royal court culture. While opening many new paradigms, a wide range of primary sources seen by Mukhia - viz. court chronicles, official documents, poetry, painting, travelogues and perhaps for the first time bazaar gossips and folktales - ensure a holistic account that would attract the reader. However, for Mukhia the more colourful and irreverent accounts of the Mughal court are those provided by European travellers, especially Edward Terry, Pelsaret, John Fryer, Careri, Manucci and Bernier. Mukhia uses these sources very effectively. In Mukhia's perception, both the notions of 'foreigners' and 'aliens' are of very recent origin associated with modern colonialism which has changed the importance of conquest, because here the colonized people and their resources are used for the benefit of the mother country. In the ancient and medieval world conquest constituted its own legitimization, where the victor either returned back with the booty or settled down to rule over the vanquished land, converting their own identities as that of the natives. Mukhia has explained the working style of the medieval Indian historians, who were basically courtiers which implied a serious limitation as well. But according to Mukhia, unlike European historiography, who preferred to treat the historical occurrences as some divine will, medieval Indian historians have treated historical events as results of human volition.

Three Ways to Be Alien, as portrayed by the author Sanjay Subrahmanyam, is concerned with processes of acculturation and assimilation, as well as their limits, and the historical reasons for these limits. In more general terms, the book basically discusses the issues of mutual perceptions across cultures in a way that was probably rather familiar to the historian to whose memory they are dedicated. The title of the book has been inspired from the first book (dated 1946 C.E.) of the Hungarian writer and humorist George Mikes (1912–87 C.E.), who once wrote that,

> It was a shame and bad taste to be an alien, and it is no use pretending otherwise. There is no way out of it.[55]

The work follows a sort of case method, and focuses on a few individuals in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries who found themselves in awkward situations of intercultural communication, the "travails" of the subtitle. The author, Sanjay Subrahmanyam finds the subject only apt as he has been a resident of Los Angeles since 2004 A.D. A constant question asked to Subrahmanyam by his friends and visitors is whether he feels somehow "alienated" there. His response, which no doubt informs this book, is that "whatever alienation he feel has less to do with the place than the people; as to his mind, social relations must always lie at the core of the answer to such a question."[56]

Three Ways To Be Alien has essentially been the case study, bridging as it were the gap between micro-history and world history[57]. The author has looked at three instances, running from the 1530s through to the 1720s, spreading across from western India to the western Mediterranean. He examines some quite complex itineraries and processes of circulation, often - but not exclusively - framed within the world that was made by the Iberian empires of the early modern period.[58]In a sense, therefore, this work has been about friction and discomfort, at both the existential and the conceptual levels, with a basic focus on 'Ali bin Yusuf 'Adil Khan, Anthony Sherley, and Nicolo

[55] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Three ways to be alien: Travail and Encounter in the early modern World*, Brandeis University Press / Historical Society of Israel, 2011, p. Xiv.

[56] Ibid.,

[57] Ibid., p. 173.

[58] Ibid.,

Manucci. The three instances are clearly illustrative of different aspects of the problem of the "alien" in the context of the early modern world.

Indian history is a fascinating subject, but, as rightly put by M.A. Ansari, in *European Travellers under The Mughals (1580-1627 C.E.),* it becomes more fascinating after a study of foreign travellers, who visited the land since the early ages.[59] Many adventurous souls have left behind interesting accounts of their travels in India. It seems that the author chose this period as he says, 'During sixteenth century the influx of foreign travellers increased'.[60] They turned into a significant source material for social history of the period. Before the century was over, the number of travellers' accounts expanded and thus their inclusion. Some of them accepted the service of a Mughal nobleman or attached himself to his routine. The author suggests that their descriptions suffered from partiality at times but the accounts retained the graphic quality and the value of the material furnished by them. In this volume, Ansari takes up twelve such wanderers and the material has been categorized under specific headings and almost the same procedure has been adopted in the case of all of them. The author, basically, summarizes and gives the descriptions given by these travellers in th[e] sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Mughal India. He seems to have analyzed these travellers in depth. However, his work more or less is only a compilation of the observation of these travellers.

[59] M.A. Ansari, *European Travellers under the Mughals (1580-1627),* Idara-i Adabiyat-i Delhi, Delhi, 1975.

[60]ibid., p. i.

Yogesh Sharma's essay, *A Chronicle of the Times: The Memoires of Francois Martin (1665-1696 C.E.)*[61]analyses the account of Martin whose writings constituted one of the most comprehensively variegated and elaborate diaries written during the seventeenth century. Martin stayed for three decades, which coincided with many crucial phases of the Mughal Empire where the focus of political development was shifting to peninsular India and Aurangzeb was involved in conflict with Shivaji, the Deccan Sultanate and with Ram Raja. He comments extensively on the general developments pertaining to the European companies, Indian politics, the revolt by Prince Akbar, Sambhaji's unpopularity, famines and cyclones.

Sharma's comments on the *Memoires* by appreciating the genuineness of Martin. According to Sharma , Martin's work is devoid of self-preoccupation or an unnecessary projection of one's own self-importance which was quite the characteristic of many contemporary writers. We come across many travel accounts, such as that of Thomas Roe, who refuses to obey certain traditions for he believes them to be disrespectful towards him or the English ruler. However, we do not find such aura in Martin's writings. Sharma appreciates the simple and understated manner in which the work is written without being egocentric or bearing prejudice towards Indians. According to Sharma, Martin's style of writing is elegant in choice of words and coining of phrases, considering the fact that Martin had a less privileged upbringing. According to the author, Martin can be compared to Francois Bernier and Abbe Carre, given the fact, he writes in a mature, polished way.

[61]Yogesh Sharma, 'A Chronicle of the Times: The Memoires of Francois Martin (1665-1696)', *Biography as History*, eds.Yogesh Sharma and Vijaya Ramaswamy, Orient Black Swan, New Delhi, 2009.

Michael H. Fisher in his *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing*[62]and *Beyond the Three Seas: Travellers Tales of Mughal India*[63]takes into account ten diverse travel narratives from many different homelands and backgrounds as they ventured through Mughal India, their visions fascinated and informed those who followed after them as well as the readers, then and now. The author investigates into the various barriers and problems faced by them, like for example, the language barrier (some learnt Persian or Turkish languages, others employed Indians who could translate for and guide them), their attire (what to wear: their own familiar garb or Indian-style clothing more suited to the often extreme environment of seasonal heats and monsoon rains), eating habits (which tasted entirely different than their native food), their health concerns, and various other problems experienced on the road. He also examines the various reasons for their travel. He examines ten men travelled during two fascinating and tumultuous centuries; their narratives appear in chronological order, thus highlighting changing, as well as occasionally contradictory European visions of India.

Fisher points out that the observation of these travellers on the rise and fall of cities over the centuries and their individuality in their way of writing takes into consideration their intended audience. Almost all of the travellers also observe the stark economic and social differences that were present throughout Indian society, along with the prevalent caste system in the society. They also wrote on the various religious communities that they came across. Considering that all these travellers were Christians, they however, differed in various sub-sects. This also posed a serious

[62]Michael H. Fisher, *Visions of Mughal India: An Anthology of European Travel Writing,* I.B. Tauris, New York, 2007.

[63]Michael H. Fisher, *Beyond the Three Seas: Travellers Tales of Mughal India,* Random House India, 2007.

threat to the travellers, as we find in Manucci's account, on how he believed his employer, representing deposed English Catholic King Charles II, was assassinated by East India Company officials loyal to King William, a Protestant.[64]

The author correctly points to the fact, that, there were only men-travelogues as not many women were literate in India and Europe, thus, their account being oral and largely outside of written historical records. Addressing the various queries like what was the significance of travel writing and the reasons behind, the author attributes it all to the readership back at home. Similarly, we find some accounts to be more precise and formal, where they do not write about the personal experiences; others picked more scholarly language, with or without unmistakable incorporation of their own musings and feelings. Some wrote to convince and persuade; others wrote to amaze. Some composed a day by day journal, some reflectively made more engineered accounts dependent on their recollections of prior encounters.[65]The author also puts forward an interesting observation as how Europeans were not the only ones writing travel narratives at that time. Various Asians, both Indians and others, also have composed accounts during this period. However, only six out of the several thousand people from India who had travelled to Britain by 1800 A.D. actually wrote a book or rather survived their journeys. Of these, only two have published their books in English, in Britain. This scanty nature of writings can suggest that Europeans were more interested in reading and mastering knowledge about Indians than vice versa. [66]

[64] Ibid., p. 9.

[65] Ibid., p. 11.

[66] Ibid., p. 13. More explanation can be found in, Michael H. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600-1857,* Delhi: Permanent Black, 2006.

1.4. Research Questions

The two most important objectives that have been studied are, firstly, the connection between the European traveller's accounts and the East India Trading Companies that started arriving in the sub-continent from sixteenth century onwards at different points of time. It is quite astonishing to know how these emissaries were not allowed to communicate with the envoys of other states and were not allowed to leave without permission. Since these narratives were widely read back in Europe, undoubtedly the comments on the state and polity of various kingdoms in India influenced the understanding and the world views of the European state. Therefore, this study will attempt to understand the link between these travelogues and the ideologies and the perspectives of the various European East India Companies. By understanding and writing about the state and polity of various kingdoms in India, these accounts, read widely in Europe, must have helped in shaping the understanding the rulers and the ruled in the sub-continent. Another aspect of study will be the extent to which these travel writings influenced each other and the circulation of ideas throughout the world and amongst the travellers.

Some of them definitely mention their predecessor or the ones they met on the way, such as Tavernier and Bernier in 1666, William Hawkins and Henry Middleton in 1611. Thirdly, this work attempts to analyze the outcome of the travel(their preconceived notions or their orientalist attitude), as to whether travel broadened the travellers' thinking processor did it rather result in making them more 'narrow' or did it make them feel more superior to the what they have just observed in the foreign land? Some tend to become liberated with travel, whereas the others tend to grow more timid with their earlier beliefs. How much of the problem did the cultural differences pose for the travellers and how many of them managed to overcome such challenges of communication? I have also tried to study how alienated these travellers felt in the early modern

world. How easily could they return back and adjust with their old lives after spending years in the new land with new environment. What difficulties they faced and how did they adapt and ,how well could they adjust with their lives in the new country? As pointed out by Subhramanyam, *"Whether it meant by being a chameleon or a trickster".*[67]

Some travellers adjusted too well and consequently did not go back to their native countries and settled in India. However, the other left for their home town, not fully aware of how much of an alien they have become to their own people and their own land after years of staying in exile. Fourthly, the study will try to compare the observations of these travelogues with the 'ideal' concept of state as perceived by some of the Persian and Indian writers. One has to understand as to how the travellers' perceptions of state were any different from that of the existing narratives in India. And to what extent do we find the construct of orientalism or the 'otherness' in these travelogues? Also the focus is on the travellers' idea of states and how is it different from all the various states that they came from?

This work will further study the various facets of state such as: court, army, law and order, Central officials, mobile camps, their hunting, princes and the imperial family, stipends and allowances, the various ambassadors that visited the court, taxes, revenue and customs, the war of succession, the behaviour of the state in times of distress such as famine, agrarian revolt, different *farmans* that were issued, the empirical information on architecture and palaces, by intensively using the travelogues.

[67] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Three ways to be alien: Travails and Encounter in the early modern World*, Brandeis University Press, Historical Society of Israel, 2011.

These above mentioned themes will, however, not form chapters as such but will be constantly reflected in all the chapters in this work. These are some of the main questions that will constantly be raised with an attempt to answer them.

1.5. Chapterization

The second chapter, *State and Polity from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century in the Travel Narrative*, has extensively spoken about the characteristics of the state and its administrative policies. The various duties and roles of the nobles and the imperial household have been dealt with as well. Bernier's account which talks about private property during the Mughal Empire has been analysed. The study will shed considerable amounts of light on the mobile courts of the imperial rulers along with their military strength and structure even while on the move. This in the process helps us in understanding the emergence of cities and urban centres along with autonomous principalities. This chapter also deals with the study of the relation between the religion of the ruler and the ruled. Next important area of study would be the Mughal imperial successions which often led to various princely rebellions. Here, the study will revolve around the various judiciary systems, legal procedures and even-handed justice. The travellers that have been extensively researched have given considerable amount of insights regarding the agricultural system, the landholders, the revenue officials along with the conflict and interdependence of chieftains and princes. The extensive work of the travellers have also shared considerable insights about the wealth brought into the state from different sources such as the revenues collected from trade, commerce and industry. The reasons behind the often celebrated festivals and functions in the court by different emperors have also been studied into.

In the third chapter, *The Missionaries and the Religious Persons*, the aim is to vividly describe the proselytisers' different writing approaches. Here the focus is on their purpose of travel which is

often reflected in their accounts. One can also often find a sense of pride in the writer's own religion and their constant emphasis on how superior their own religion was to the others. Understandably, through these writings, we get to understand the characteristics of the different Mughal Emperors, which one can further examine in the chapter later. One can also see the advantages and benefits given to the religious persons in the country for religious purposes. These accounts talk in detail about the presence or absence of nobles at the court from different religions. The various accounts also talk about the other facets of State through these religious men.

The fourth chapter, *Ambassadors and Diplomatic Relations*, will focus on the various diplomatic developments that took place in the Mughal era. It also discusses the differences the ambassadors encounter in the government agencies' behaviour towards them. It further elaborates the difference in attitude during the different time period starting from fifteenth to the seventeenth century along with different rank holders. Along with other developments such as the emergence of autonomous states, the different problems of defence, alliances and counter-alliances, including interstate alliances will be discussed. This chapter would also deal with the different fractions and treachery that was often seen during the period. It can be clearly stated that different treatment was meted out to ambassadors of different countries, which helps us in understanding the importance of different countries for the Mughals. In short, not all countries were held in high regard by the Mughals. Further research on the travel accounts led me to the understanding of different transportation available in the country along with their problems. Another significant area of study is how the war of succession had an impact on the ambassadors. While studying these accounts we get to understand the continuous interaction and diplomacy between the rulers of various states across the world. One also understands how these ambassadors were sent to commence the emperors for the goodwill and advantages of the company and its servants. There were certain

rules in the state whose attitudes were humiliating for the European emissaries. Last but not the least, these ambassadors were often invited over for the various festivities and functions that took place in the court. Here, the emperor often exhibited the lavishes of his empire to them.

The fifth chapter, *The Company Servants and Private Merchants*, discusses the major difference in the attitude meted out to the company officials and private merchants, depending on which category the merchants belonged to. The accounts also have significant information about the various amenities and discomforts the Company servants encountered such as looting (inland) and the piracy (off-shore), especially while trading with the merchants. Most of the accounts that have been studied in this research deal with the importance of certain imperial towns or places, for example, the significance of the Surat port. The Company and merchants' accounts also write about the various rules and regulations they had to follow and how different rules were applied for different European professionals. They also bring into focus smuggling of pearls and how the State kept a check on it. One can find elaborate descriptions about the knowledge of the disgruntled Original East India Company along with the New East India Company. Another important area that comes into our study are the various rituals and importance of taking valuable gifts in the court.

1.6. Conclusion

Therefore, with the help of these accounts and writings, these travellers not only explored and gained knowledge for themselves but also interacted with the wider group of people who read their accounts. Starting from the medieval times till date these accounts help us to understand the Mughal Empire through their first-hand experiences. For modern readers, these accounts throw considerable light on the start and gradual growth of Europe, particularly the English power in the East. These narratives help us in understanding the foundation of the British Empire in India, the country that ruled over the latter for about two hundred years. By adopting, adapting and appreciating, these European travellers not only minimised the gap between the new alien language or culture but also helped their country make enormous financial gains.

Hence, the study of the state during fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries through the perception of the European travellers seems fittingly appropriate to look into the 'otherness' of the state, which is not usually observed by the native writers or the court chronicles. This study opens up different and new facets to the State and administration which are often ignored or relegated to the margins.

1

Chapter Two

STATE AND POLITY FROM THE FIFTEENTH TO SEVENTEENTH CENTURY: AN OVERVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is a contextual study of the characteristics of the state and its administrative policies of the three political dispensations, one is the Vijayanagara empire (1336–1646 CE) two is the Bahamani kingdom (1347-1526 CE) and three is the Mughal empire. All three of them received a large numbers of foreign travellers and have been the main subject of their accounts. This chapter will primarily discuss the various strands of historiographical research on the nature of state and polity, of the Vijaynagara, Bahamani and Mughal states in general and on various themes in specific as a background to the foreign travellers' accounts on similar issues in the subsequent chapters. The capital city, image and role of the king, nobility, bureaucracy, administration, taxation and festivals would be some themes discussed in the case of the Vijayanagara empire. These areas have been a matter of concern in the travellers' accounts while describing the Vijayanagara state. In the case of the Mughals, the aspects that received attention in the travellers' accounts will be taken up with an extensive discussion on the historiography of the Mughal state. For instance, the various duties and roles of the nobles and the imperial household, the dynamics of the Mughal court, the nobility, their duties, imperial household, court culture and various festivals celebrated in the court, the various judiciary system, legal procedures and matters of

justice and the issues of imperial succession which has often led to the princely rebellions. The functioning of the mobile court in the imperial rule will also be the focus of discussion as it was discussed in the travellers' narratives and helps us to understand the emergence of cities and urban centres along with other autonomous principalities and give us an idea about the military strength and structure of the Mughals even while they were moving. This chapter also deals with the study of the relation between the religion of the ruler and the ruled. The travellers' account, most of the time, bring out the narratives with regard to the religion of the ruler and the ruled, in their native country, which helps us in comparing the state of affairs in the East and the West. An overview of the Mughal agrarian system will also be focused upon in this chapter as the travellers that are under consideration have given considerable insights regarding the agricultural system, the landholders, the revenue officials along with the conflict and interdependence of chieftains and princes in the countryside. Here the account of Bernier is extremely resourceful, especially with regard to the private property. The extensive work of the travellers has also shared considerable insights about the wealth brought into the state from different sources such as the revenues collected from trade, commerce and industry. These travellers' accounts have been available to us in some written forms as diaries, documents and travelogues. But there might have been other travellers during this period who visited the sub-continent but their accounts may have not been documented or preserved or would have been lost in history. For instance, the accounts of a traveller,Pedro Covilham have perished.[68] This information has been provided to us by Oaten in his monograph, in which he quoted from the fragmentary accounts of Pedro Covilham.

[68] Pedro Covilham, quoted in, Oaten, E. F., *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Asian Educational Services, 1991, pp. 14-16.

The period of this study, fifteenth to seventeenth century, often tends to be looked through the lens of communalism which somehow distorts the way historical processes are viewed. Undoubtedly, there have been numerous conflicts on religious issues along with the presence of some powerful separatist cultural movements among different communities which many a times also fuelled the sense of general hatred and mistrust for the 'others'. Nonetheless, there were forces and trends in favour of unity and cultural synthesis. This period is quite important with respect to the social and religious history in the Indian subcontinent because of various experiments done by Emperor Akbar (1556-1607 A.D.), the migration of the Naqhsbandi Sufis, increasing number of people who performed or went for the Haj pilgrimage and movement and circulation of various social and occupational groups. There was a wide acceptance of local language in addition to the Persian by the ruling power, which fostered a sense of mutual trust and harmony amongst the people. For example, Akbar was a Sunni, highly influenced by Sufism where he made annual pilgrimage to Ajmer shrine. His Rajput wives, his Rajput officials like Todarmal, Birbal, Man Singh, scholars like Abul Fazl and Faizi along with the ideas of bhakti in the sixteenth century helped in moulding his religious ideologies. He established the Ibadatkhana (hall of worship) where he conducted passionate religious discussions, inviting religious scholars from all around the world. This trend of broad outlook continued. For instance, Shah Jahan's son, Dara Shukoh's (1615-1659 C.E.) *Majma-ul-Bahrain* is a treatise written during the seventeenth century on comparative religion and explored both diversity and unity of Islam and Hinduism.

2.2. Vijayanagara Empire and the Bahamani State

The Vijayanagara realm administered a considerable piece of the southern landmass of India for three centuries, starting from 1336 CE. With its rulers, or 'Rayas', who were peninsular overlords, the capital at Vijayanagara or 'the City of Victory', emerged as the symbol of immense influence and abundance. According to some scholars, the sovereignty of the Rayas was based upon customs and rituals on the basis of which, they commanded resources and reverence, homage and occasional tribute of distant lords. "Moreover, they forbore, if they did not actually foster, the creation by their nominal agents of a whole set of compact and clonal kingdoms - denominated as 'nayaka kingdoms' - whose competition later helped to destroy the kingdom."[69]

Vijayanagara kings seemed to have been largely inspired by the kingdom of the Chalukyas of Badami (which was the ancient Vatapi kingdom in Bijapur district of modern Karnataka, ruled between the sixth and eighth century). They were inspired by the emblem of the Chalukyas which was the boar, or the varaha, and also modeled their capital with respect to the Chalukyan capitals in Vatapi and Aihole from the sixth to eighth centuries. Also, they built their first temples in the city which were quite based on the temples constructed at the capital of Chalukyan kingdom.

The Bahamani kingdom began as a result of multiple revolts and outbreaks that ultimately broke up the Tughlaq empire, at the end of the rule of Muhammad bin Tughlaq (1325-1351 CE). Hasan Gangu alias Zafar Khan proclaimed himself to be the ruler of Deccan on 3rd August 1347 A.D., to be precise, under the name of Sultan Abu'l Muzaffar Ala-ud-din Bahman Shah. It is commonly believed that he ruled for eleven successive years until his demise in the month of February 1358 CE.

[69] Burton Stein, The New Cambridge History of India 1.2 Vijayanagara, New York; Port Chester: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. xi.

2.2.1 Historiography

There were two different and partial accounts that was presented to the European world, about the Vijayanagar state. The first account was written by Mark Wilks[70] in 1810 CE describing South India and another account was written by Colonel Colin Mackenzie[71] in 1815 CE. Finally, it was in 1900 A.D. that Vijayanagara history was studied in detail by Robert Sewell.[72]

Mark Wilks wrote his work during the reign of the Wodeyar rajas. His work was based on the eighteenth-century Kannada language work[73]. He was a political agent of East India Company at the court of the rajas of Mysore. Colin Mackenzie who was a military surveyor collected this account along with the other accounts from places such as Madras and Mysore. As a part of his survey, he visited the Vijayanagara ruins at Hampi in 1799 CE. During his research, he took the help of some Indian academicians who translated temple inscriptions, collected artifacts that were later placed in the Indian museums. This entire research work resulted into the first set of reliable sources for reconstructing the history of early India.

Similarly, Robert Sewell, who was an official member of the Madras civil service, was given the responsibility of collecting records, information, artifacts regarding the past of South India. Just like his two English predecessors, he was then asked to publish his works on inscriptions and his research work on antiquarian remains of the entire Madras Presidency. It is argued that such research was not to gain pure genuine knowledge. It was encouraged more so for the purpose of

[70] Mark Wilks, *Historical Sketches of the South of India,* 3 Vols, London, 1817.

[71] Colin Mackenzie, *Mackenzie Collection: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Oriental Manuscripts,* Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1828.

[72] Robert Sewell, A Forgotten Empire: Vijayanagar, Delhi: Division, 1962.

[73] It written on a cotton scroll, by a Brahman savant known as Pootia Pundit.

justifying the British rule in India, as they sought to control the subject by constructing their past in such a way that colonialism seemed the only "right" future for them.

2.2.2. State and Polity in the Travel Accounts

The success of the early kings in Vijayanagar kingdom was phenomenal. Ibn Batuta, a Moroccan traveller visiting India from 1333 CE to 1342 CE, describes in his account that the western coast was under the office of a Muhammadan chief who was subject to Harihara I. Batuta often referred to him as, "Haraib" or "Harib," from "Hariyappa" in his account.

According to another traveller, Ferishta, the Raya of Vijayanagar was "in power, wealth, and extent of country greatly the superior of the Bahmani king of the Dakhan. "[74]

Ferishta describes in brief the kingdom of Vijayanagar during the period of about 1378 A.D. He writes,

> The princes of the house of Bahmanee maintained themselves by superior valour only, for in power, wealth, and extent of country the roles of Beejanuggur were greatly their superiors;..[75]

Further, he suggests that during his visit, the entire south India had mostly bowed under the rule of these Rayas.

The kings conducted most of their political businesses in Vijayanagara. They collected tribute from the powerful provincial nobles or lords during the *mahanavami* festival. It was also the place where the *rayas* garrisoned their army. All these activities were recorded and documented by the foreign travellers. One of the earliest to record about Vijayanagara was Nicolo di Conti (1420 -1421 A.D),

[74] Robert Sewell, A Forgotten Empire: Vijayanagar, Delhi: Division, 1962, p. 13.

[75] Ibid., p. 27.

a Venetian who wrote that Vijayanagara, in 1420 CE, accommodated an army of about 90,000. Nicolo de'Conti, came during the rule of Devaraya (1406 -1422 CE) of Sangam dynasty (1336 - 1485 CE) of Vijayanagar Empire. Other witnesses in the late fifteenth century have documented even larger number of garrisoned soldiers at Vijayanagara.

Nicolo de Conti was a Venetian from a noble family, he was a merchant resident from the city of Damascus. Since his early age, he would venture towards East, although we cannot specify the exact year of his travels. He crossed countries like Persia, sailing across the Malabar coast, while visiting the interior parts or the countryside of Hindustan. He gives a detailed account of the first Indian city that he reaches, Cambay, where he describes the various precious stones such as "sardonyxes". He further describes the different prevailing customs of sati.[76] He writes about Vijayanagara rulers as, "Their king is more powerful than all the other kings of India."[77]

Many years later, we find in the accounts of Abdur Razzak, an envoy from Persia, referring to the rulers of Vijayanagar as the "lord of all Southern India", who reign from the entire Deccan to Cape Comorin. Abd- er-Razzak was originally born at Herat, in around A.H. 816 (A.D. 1413). The audience is made aware about his family background, where his father, Jalal-ad-din Johak, was at a post of qazi at the time of Persian ruler Shah Rukh. After the death of Razzak's father at about 1441 A.D., he was placed under the service of the emperor Shah Rukh. Razzak was sent on an important official mission to the kings of India, namely the Vijayanagar empire. Razzak arrived at the port of Calicut, where he found the traders honest. He further described all the facilities for

[76] R.H. Major, (ed), *India in the Fifteenth century: Being a collection of Narratives of Voyages to India,* Deep Publications, 1974, p. lxi

[77] ibid., p. 6

commerce provided there. However, he described the natives as, “devils rather than men”. Further he was presented in front of the Sameri or the king in a hall which was decorated with beautiful paintings, where the king delivered his presents. Razzak writes,

> His majesty, the happy Khakan, had sent as a present for the prince of Calicut, some horses, some pelisses, some robes of cloth of gold, and some caps, similar to those distributed at the time of the Nauruz.[78]

During his visit at Vijayanagara he had a chance of seeing the extraordinary yearly celebration of the Mahanavami, where the sand elephants were covered with shield or armours. About the Mahanavami festival, he writes,

> The idolators, who exercise an imposing authority in this country, with a view of displaying their pride, their power, their tyranny, and their glory, prepare every year a royal feast, a banquet worthy of a sovereign.[79]

Regarding the description of the palace, he further writes,

> On the left of the Sultan's portico rises the divan-khaneh (the council-house), which is extremely large and looks like a palace. In front of it is a hall, the height of which is above the stature of a man, its length thirty ghez, and its breadth ten. In it is placed the defter-khaneh (the archives), and here sit the scribes.[80]

Fernao Nuniz, a Portuguese traveller and a horse trader who visited Vijayanagara between 1534-37 CE during the period of Achyutadevaraya (1529-1542 CE) and spent three years in the city, recorded the extraordinary authorities of the chiefs and lords who had power in their realms and were designated as military commanders and Achyutadevaraya received considerable tribute in gold coins from them. Nuniz gives us information about eleven such military commanders and their territories from whom he received recognition. These tributaries paid the ruler between a third

[78] Ibid., p. 14

[79] Ibid.,p. 35.

[80] Ibid., p. 21.

and a portion of their cash assortments, holding the rest of the balance to help their own military. Nuniz saw that Achyutadevaraya utilized authorities to record and gather the incomes from lands around the city - "the King's own lands" - yet that there were no imperial authorities liable for the overall incomes of the realm.

Nuniz in 1535 CE reported that,

> the annual collection of customs from one of the gateways of Vijayanagara was rented for 12,000 gold coins. While a full range of taxes collected during the fifteenth century is not retrievable, customs, or tribute paid by merchants, from port towns in the time of Devaraya II could have provided the means for him to pay for horses imported from Ormuz and elsewhere as well as providing a surplus to pay for the skilled horsemen to use them.[81]

Domingo Paes, another Portuguese traveller who visited the city around 1520 CE during Krishnadevaraya's time describes it and his descriptions can be verified with the visible evidences at the excavation sites at Hampi. While Paes enters the western gate of the city, he notes,

> The king has made within it a very strong city, fortified with walls and towers, and the gates at the entrance are very strong ... these walls are not made like those of other cities, but are made of very strong masonry ... and inside very beautiful rows of buildings ... with flat roofs. There live ... many merchants, and it is filled with a large population because the king induces many honourable merchants to go there from his cities…[82]

About Krishnadevaraya (1509 CE- 1529 CE), he further writes,

> of medium height, and of fair complexion and good figure, rather fat than thin; he has on his face signs of smallpox. He is the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be ... He is a great ruler and a man of much justice ...[83]

The travellers have often pointed out that the most common practice that was adopted in the empire was bringing of the gold by the provinces to the empire's mint. Anyone who receives an allowance

[81] Robert Sewell, A Forgotten Empire: Vijayanagar, Delhi: Division, 1962, p. 98.

[82] Ibid., p. 108

[83] Ibid., p. 109.

from the *divan*, was mostly paid by *darab-khaneh*.[84] Even the soldiers were paid through a draft made upon the revenues from the province, once in every four months. Nuniz describes how the rulers of Vijayanagar empire initially gained power which gradually became extensive.

When the Europeans came they strengthened the business and by adapting the powers given by Vijayanagara kings, the Portuguese officers contributed towards developing the military technologies especially in the case of artillery at the time of Krishnadevaraya and his successors. These administrative reforms of the Vijayanagara empire were largely accepted and adopted by all the nobles.

Many historians, such as, Nilakanta Sastri considered Vijayanagara state as a "war state", as it was mostly ruled by "warrior-chiefs". According to them, the Vijayanagara state mostly focused on achieving military victory over their enemy irrespective of their religion. It should be remembered that the enormous and growing borders of the kingdom, had for quite some time been to the 'Hindu' south and not the 'Muslim-governed' north. Subsequently, the products of military achievement, in riches, territories, and sovereignty, were basically collected in Tamil country. Vijayanagara was additionally an incorporative system, one that looked to win to itself the faithfulness and military ability of the numerous fighters all through Deccan. "These objects of Vijayanagara courtship were also chiefs, or 'little kings' – with armed men, horses, and firearms at their disposal."[85] Therefore, in conclusion we can say that the Vijayanagara state combined all the elements of diversities, that made it cosmopolitan.

[84] Ibid., p. 26.

[85] Ibid., p. 110.

In the fifteenth century, Athanasius Nikitin (1469 -1472 A.D), a Russian merchant visited the Bahamani Sultanate (1347 -1527 CE) and documented his Indian visit in his elaborate narrative. Nikitin happens to be the only known European that we know about, so far, who has visited Bidar in the Bahamani kingdom and documented his visit there. However, his comments on what he saw there are to some degrees constricted. He depicts Bidar as the central city of Mohammedan India. He gives an exceptionally hued depiction of the grandeur of the court, and compares it with the prevalent misery or sorrow present amongst the people:

> The land is overstocked with, people, but those in the country are very miserable, whilst the nobles are very opulent and delight in luxury. They are wont to be carried on their silver beds, preceded by some twenty chargers caparisoned in gold, and followed by three hundred men on horseback, and five hundred on foot, and by horn-men, ten torch-bearers, and ten musicians.[86]

As soon as he enters India he writes,

> In the land of India it is the custom for foreign traders to stop at inns.[87]

About the king and the empire, he further writes,

> The Hindoo sultan Kadam is a very powerful prince. He possesses a numerous array, and resides on a mountain at Bichenegher (Bijanagar). This vast city is surrounded by three forts, and intersected by a river, bordering on one side on a dreadful jungel, on the other on a dale; a wonderful place, and to any purpose convenient. On one side it is quite inaccessible; a road goes right through the town, and as the mountain rises high with a ravine below, the town is impregnable.[88]

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[86] E. F. Oaten,, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*,Asian Educational Services, 1991, p. 19.

[87] R.H. Major, (ed), *India in the Fifteenth century: Being a collection of Narratives of Voyages to India,* Deep Publications, 1974,p. 10.

[88] Ibid., p. 29.

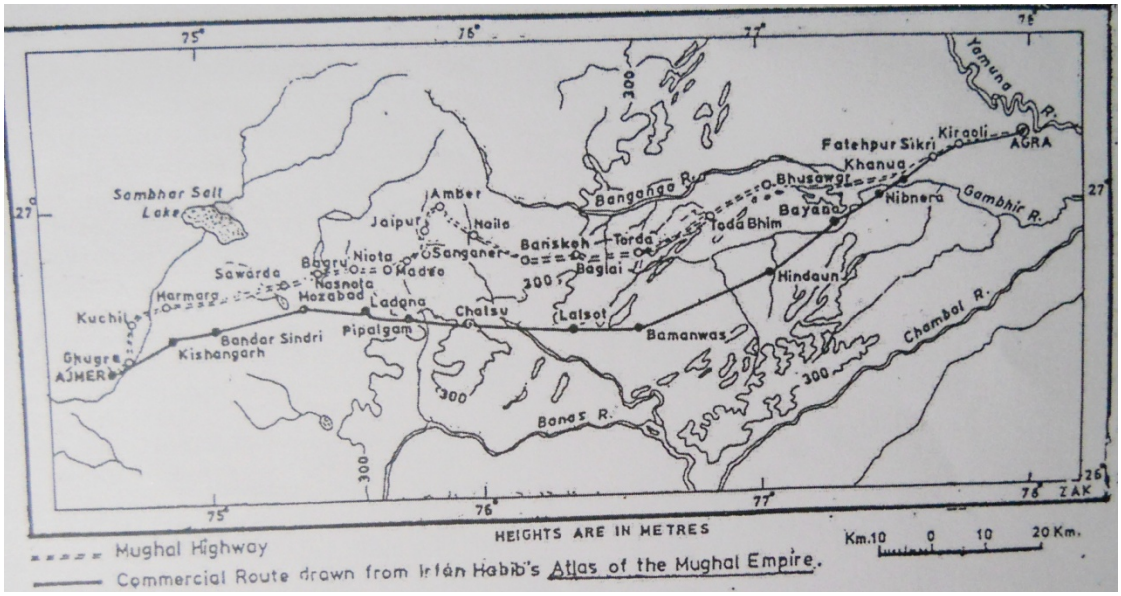
2.3. The Mughals

The characteristics of the Mughal State have often been a debatable issue, with numerous criticisms from the historians regarding the kind of state that was prevalent in the Mughal period. One major school of historians, the "Aligarh school", describes the Mughal state as a "centralized-bureaucratic polity" which was similar, "with an extreme systematization of administration, a new theoretical basis of sovereignty and a balanced and a stable composition of the ruling class", the "quasi-modern state".[89] Here the state is considered to be a "powerful leviathan". The relationship between the state and the society was considered to be unidirectional, where the authority or the power traversed from the state to the society and vice-versa. However, many other historians often considered the Mughal state to be a "patrimonial-bureaucratic state", that was placed somewhere between the extremes of the Weberian paradigms of a "patrimonial state" and the "modern bureaucratic state".[90] In such a state all the power and the authority seems to be emanating only from the person, who is the Emperor whereas the state seems like an impenetrable isolated entity that does not get influenced by its subjects.

[89]M. Athar Ali, 'Towards an Interpretation of the Mughal Empire', *JRAS*,1, 1978, pp. 38-49.

[90]It was Stephen P. Blake who first formulated the thesis that the Mughal Empire was a 'patrimonial-bureaucratic state', See. Stephen P Blake, 'The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals', *The State in India, 1000-1700*, ed. Hermann Kulke, MacGraw-Hill Book, New York, 1995, pp. 278-303. His argument has been supported by an influential historian of the Mughal period. J. F. Richards, *The New Cambridge History of India:The Mughal Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 59.

Map: I



Map taken from, Irfan Habib, Atlas of Mughal Empire, Oxford University Press, 1982

2.3.1. Historiography

The historiography of the Mughal period in the twentieth century has been a highly contested field. Broadly speaking, after 1920, Indian historians took up topics on social history along with traditional political and governmental aspects,[91] considering at that point of time, social history was not considered an important aspect of history studying.

History writing under the British colonial period was almost an attempt to control knowledge production. It is at this point writers such as William Harrison Moreland[92], in the twentieth century, while comparing Mughal and the British rules, concluded that the despotism of the Mughal empire

[91] Satish Chandra, "Writings on Social History of Medieval India: Trends and Prospects", *The Indian Historical Review,* vol. 3, No. 2, 1976, p. 268.

[92] W H Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1983.

resulted in the poor administrative functioning and practices and how the Indian peasants were content and were developing under the British rule, which was not possible under the Mughals. However, as we know that the nationalist sentiments had started evolving in India by then. In this context, the work of Jadunath Sarkar (1870 CE–1958 CE) is an important study. One of his best known popular work on the Mughal period is his five-volume work, *History of Aurangzeb: Based on Original Sources*.[93] Being a cultural nationalist, he pointed out that Aurangzeb's weakness was his extreme Islamic outlook and religious behaviour.

Mughal historiography underwent another major shift during the Partition (1947 CE), when some of its ideas were influenced by specific cultural and community tendencies.[94] To some extent, these readings can be traced back to the division of history into "Hindu", "Muslim" and "British" in *The History of British India*, by British historian and political thinker James Mill.[95] He introduced the idea that religion was the main defining element in Indian society and that it was with the coming of the British which imparted a modern outlook to India. This kind of nationalist-communitarian approach towards the history of India was to an extent questioned by Damodar Dharmananda Kosambi's book, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*[96] who placed importance to the class division instead of religion. Such a kind of writing gave way to new trends that went beyond the romanticised focus on the personalities of certain rulers towards the study of institutions. It was a shift from an attempt to glorify or to praise India's past towards the other issues such as social and economic history.

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[93] Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb: Based on Original Sources,* Calcutta, 1912.

[94] *History and Culture of the Indian People* edited by K M Munshi and R C Majumdar, Bombay, 1954; Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *Akbar: The Architect of the Mughal Empire*, Karachi, 1978, pp. 45-50.

[95] James Mill, *The History of British India,* London, 1817.

[96] D.D. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History,* Poona, 1990.

Another important Marxist historian was Irfan Habib who belonged to the Aligarh school. His work, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, dealing with an important time period in Mughal history, 1556 -1707 C.E.,[97] marked a turning point in history writing. Dealing with the ideas of class struggle and peasant resistance as an explanatory variable for the decline of the Mughal Empire, Habib pointed out the problems in the Mughal bureaucracy and characterised the Mughal state as exploitative. The Aligarh school and Irfan Habib have been criticised for emphasizing exclusively on the economic history and the centralised character of the Mughal state

The Mughal period was visited by numerous European travellers in India. They were generally horde of dealers, medicos, emissaries and ministers, officers and mariners, fortune trackers and explorers, and so on. They came from assorted nations by different courses on different missions; some in journey of exchange, others looking for a vocation, but then others, to look for redirection in new nations among new people groups with what they thought were unusual habits and customs. Further in the next chapters, these certain themes will be discussed through the perception and observations of the European travellers. However, before coming to the travel accounts, it is important to study these themes in general perception. Hence, given below are the descriptions of these themes and facets as an overview for better understanding of the traveller's perception in the later chapters.

2.3.2. Mughal Court and the Imperial Household

Contemporary historians describe the Mughal imperial court culture as "peripatetic".[98] The royal courts were important sites for political culture and modes of legitimacy. These courts

[97] Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India,* Oxford, 1963.

[98] Ruby Lal, Domesticity and power in the Early Mughal World, CUP, 2005, p 7.

were “personal residences and administrative centres". Often termed as “households” of the Mughal rulers and their magnets “who had the wealth and means to imitate them”, one distinctive features of these households seem to be the crystallization of distinct corpuses of gestures, carriage and department in them and therefore the formation of a coherent courtly culture. Gifting and festivity became medieval court rituals par excellence.[99] From the start, “the Mughal Empire manifested a tendency towards and intensified centralisation of political and administrative authority as well as of the resources it controlled”.[100] Of the documents issued by Akbar's successors reiterating the basic principles of the theory of sovereignty as evolved by him, the most significant, perhaps, is Aurangzeb's 'Nishan' to Rana Raj Singh of Marwar, written in 1658 CE to win the latter's support in the war of succession.

Aurangzeb reiterated the basic principal theory of sovereignty evolved under Akbar, and empahisized that the rulers were bound to ensure that men who belong to different communities and religion will live in peace and prosperity, without interfering in others affairs. He further wrote that those kings who were intolerant “become the cause of dispute and conflict and of harm to the people at large.” He further promised to continue and follow such practices and regulations if he were to succeed in seizing the throne.[101] With the passage of time, the Mughal empire shed many of its Central Asian features and gradually developed a new kind of court culture where a large

[99] *Rethinking a Millennium (Perspectives on Indian History From the Eight to the Eighteenth Century),* (ed) Dutta, Rajat, Aakar, 2008, p. 82.

[100] Iqtidar Alam Khan, *India’s Polity in the Age of Akbar,* Ashoka University, Orient Blackswan, 2016, p. 12.

[101] Athar Ali, Mutual empire in history, presidential address, section 2, medieval India, Indian history Congress, 33rd session, muzaffarpur, 1972. The text of the letter can be seen in shyamaldas, vir vinod, II, p 20.; quoted in Khan, Iqtidar Alam, *India’s Polity in the Age of Akbar,* Ashoka University, Orient Blackswan, 2016, p. 17.

source of inspiration was taken from the Persian tradition. This court culture was also infused with various Persian influence. Mughals observed a special respect and courtesy in their diplomatic exchanges and relations with the Safavid rulers, this being in sharp contrast to the hostility and disdain generally manifested in the attitude towards the Shaibanids and Janids of Central Asia.[102]Also, an enormous number of men from Iranian origin were inducted for the Mughal nobility. Along with them were women like Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal who came from important Iranian families, and helped in creating and intellectual atmosphere in the Mughal court.

It was Akbar who introduced in the Mughal empire a systematic and centralised structure. "In 1574 he used the nobility, bureaucracy, and military commanders into a single 'service' by assigning to each member of it a numerical rank (mansab) from 10 to 5000 and still higher numbers to indicate his status, salary, and size of military contingent."[103] Akbar also enlarged the ethnic base of his nobility. The primary duty of state was the protection of the existing social order for which judiciary was an important instrument. Abul Fazl's high official position gave him access to any document he wished to consult, and his long career and training in various department of the State, and his marvellous powers of expression, fitted him eminently for the composition of work like the *Akbarnamah* and *Ain-i Akbari.* He states in his *Ain* that the art of governing mainly consists of three topics, those being the (imperial) household (*manzil*), secondly, the army (*sipah*) and last but not the least, the empire (*mulk*). According to Abul Fazl, the Mughal imperial household was centered around Akbar (1556 CE-1605 CE), the emperor who was a man blessed by god, someone

[102]*Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries 1400-1800,* (eds) Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, CUP, 2007, p. 177.

[103]Irfan Habib, "The Mughal Empire", in *The State and Society in Medieval India,* (ed) Grewal, J.S., OUP, 2005, p. 78.

who has received divine ray of light or an illumination which has enabled him to rule with great virtue and efficacy. The text says that "Royalty is a light from god". The imperial household has the central position in the organization of the empire, and Blake refers to its organization as "the mixing of household and states" in what appeared to be the domestic arrangements and functions of the emperor's court- the harem, the wardrobe, the kitchen, the perfumery, were interlocked with departments-like the imperial mints, the treasury and the state arsenal- that had wider politico-economic ramifications. According to Fazl, the ideal state was liberal, humanitarian and tolerant and it was the duty of the chosen ruler to maintain it that way.[104]

Comparative writings on the nature of state power in the East and the West in the early modern period have often stressed the persistent nature of personalized power in the former, when contrasted to its increasingly institutionalized character in the latter. This differentiation at least partly underlies ideas of 'Oriental Despotism'.[105]

A fine section in Bernier's account displays one more source of shortcoming in the Mughal realm, specifically, the vice and insufficiency of its rulers. This he puts down, in the primary, to their preparation and schooling. Despite the fact that the substance of the contention was shown by Bernier to have been articulated by Aurangzeb himself, one can assume that it was Bernier's thoughts themselves. According to Bernier, in a conference of learned men that was held by the ruler to choose a preceptor for his third child Akbar, Aurangzeb spoke at length fundamentally

[104] Satish Chandra, *Historiography, Religion and State in Medieval India*, Har Anand Publication, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 214-215.

[105]M. Athar Ali, 'Political Structures of the Islamic Orient in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Medieval India I: Researches in the History of India, 1200-1750*, ed. Irfan Habib, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1992, pp. 129-40.

dissecting the reasons for the debasement and stupidity of the Asiatic rulers. Bernier writes that Aurangzeb said:

> Kings should be as pre-eminent in wisdom and virtue as in power and station. But their deficient and pernicious training made this impossible. Their early life within the walls of the seraglio was corrupting and debilitating; and when they emerged beyond them, they were as beings from another world, staring like simpletons at every object that met their wondering gaze. Deaf to all wise counsels, and rash in every stupid enterprise, they were, on ascending the throne, utterly incapable of performing their exalted duties. They affected to be dignified and grave, though dignity and gravity were no part of their character. Instead of attending to the affairs of their realm, they impaired their understanding with the drinking of spirits and the fondling of concubines. They compelled their subjects to follow them in the pursuit of game, heedless whether they died of hunger or heat or cold or fatigue. Rarely had they any knowledge of the domestic and political condition of their dominions. In general, they put all business affairs into the hands of some vizier, thereby making it to that official's interest that they should continue uninformed.[106]

2.3.3. Military, Mobile courts, Towns and Urbanisation

The Mughal Emperors were great travellers, whether campaigning, touring or hunting they moved constantly with great splendour and magnificence. From the travellers' accounts we get to know that although the Mughals travelled long distances, they took along with them their harem, horses, elephants, camels and an entourage of thousands making their advancement a marvellous sight. According to Bernier, such a spectacle was not devoid of political intentions, it was probably meant to motivate the people to respect and admire the ruler and his officers and create awe and fear in the minds of those pondering an uprising, thus symbolically intimidating them:[107]

> Regardless of where the Mughal Emperor was, he held courts wherever he was stationed. Whenever the King travels in military pomp he always had two private camps; that is to say, two separate bodies of tents. One of these camps being constantly a day in advance of the other, the King was sure to find at the end of every journey a camp fully prepared for his reception. It was for this reason that these separate bodies of tents were called *Paish-khanah* or houses, which preceded. The two *paish-khanahs* are nearly equal, and to transport one of them, the strength of more than sixty elephants, two hundred camels, one hundred mules, and one hundred men-porters was required. The most bulky things were carried by the elephants,

[106] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, p. 84.

[107] Abul Khair Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India*, Idara-i Adabiyat-i Dilli, Delhi, 1977, p. 88.

> such as the large tents, with their heavy poles, which on account of their great length and weight are made so as to be taken down into three pieces. The smaller tents were borne by the camels and the luggage and kitchen utensils by the mules. To the porters were confided the lighter and more valuable articles, as the porcelain used at the King's table, the painted and gilt beds, and those rich Khargahs.[108]

Bernier writes that Indian cities were like large military camp. It depended largely on the presence of the king. Mughal rulers are known for their mobile camps, which could expand to a particular city or a place and also would contract in size of that place once the purpose of the camp was over. We find in Bernier's account the description of these camps. He gives an insight on how the emperors in Hindustan rarely failed, even while on the field. They held these assemblies twice a day, in a similar fashion when in the capital. Bernier tells us that this particular custom was regarded as a matter of law and duty, which would not be ever neglected. Terry mentions that Jahangir gives audience thrice a day, one early in the morning, second at noon and third, little before the sunset. He also gives a private audience to the nobles in a place called "Goozalcan or bathing house"[109] between seven to nine in the evening.

Bernier describes the royal camps occupying much space, "owing to its beauty, its order, and the number of people who collect on such occasions; and everybody can infer, from what happens when a European monarch moves out into camp, what it is like in the Mogul territory, where the kings display indescribable magnificence." Hence, he further writes how the entire set up looks, "like a great city travelling from place to place. For there are wanting neither baazars, nor shops, nor markets, nor sports, nor pastimes, nor gold, nor silver; in short, all that could be looked for in

[108] folding tents, some with one, others with two doors, and made in various ways, quoted in, Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 359.

[109]Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*, p. 371.

a flourishing city is to be found in this camp."[110]These instances largely be found in travellers account mostly implied that the presence of the imperial army determined the importance of cities. Another traveller, Manucci, notes in this regard as to how whenever Aurangzeb went the actual centre of the realm went with him. Manucci here went on a three-day trip with the emperor to Kashmir, after which he decided to move towards Bengal. He writes, "So great is the dignity with which the Mogul kings travel..."[111] According to him, it seemed like a grand metropolis travelling from place to place. If one settled down to portray the Mughal camp, according to Manucci, it would acquire a great deal of room, extremely difficult due to its magnificence, arrangement and amount of people who were there. Further he says that everyone could conclude of what occured when a European ruler shifted into a Camp and here "what it is like in the Mughal country where the King exhibits beyond description radiance."[112]He comes to the conclusion that the entire episode looks like, "a great city travelling from place to place."[113]

Sebastien Manrique describes the camp as being big and spacious as it was at the time owing to the presence of the Court. It was so full that even its large number of houses was inadequate and more than half a league of the adjoining country was covered by the handsome, well laid out, moving town composed of an assortment of tents and pavilions of many colours and presenting to the eye enjoyable scenery.[114] Anywhere the monarch went the real capital of the kingdom went with him.

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[110]Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668,* pp. 360-361.

[111] Niccolao Manucci, *Storio Do Mogor or Mogul India*,vol. 2, p. 70.

[112]Ibid., p. 75.

[113] Ibid.,

[114]Sebastien Manrique, *The Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique 1619-1643*, vol. 2, p. 185.

It has often been deduced by the European travellers that these camps helped in establishing an entire community or an inhabiting city in the process. With the formation of bazaars, areas for hunting, playing sports, and other various activities, usually many people flocked into the place and started settling down permanently. However, this was not always true. Most of the times, these rulers chose these places to halt because they were already important cities of trade and manufacture. Hence, it was not always the other way round. There were many cities that were established as political capital because they were important commercial cities. Their importance was far greater as a commercial city than as an administrative one. They were one of the major centre of business.

The causative factors for the emergence and sustenance of the medieval towns varied over time, causing changes to happen in their functional roles. There were cases when towns like Agra, which emerged mainly due to political reasons, had accumulated a lot of economic meanings over time and later grew as one of the most thriving commercial centres of north India, even after the shifting of the power base of the Mughals to Delhi and elsewhere. Certain towns like Banaras, though it emerged mainly because of trade, eventually lost its prime mercantile character because of the excessive intervention and control of the Portuguese state, which made the various merchant groups flee to the commercial liberal spaces in the Indian Ocean, converting Banaras eventually to a dry seat of Portuguese power bereft of any significant trade and actual substance of power. Most of the medieval towns underwent this process of radical transformation, as a result of which towns that initially emerged for certain reasons gained new functions and roles to play. [115]

[115]Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities: Theoretical Perceptions and Meanings', *Cities in Medieval India*, p. 5.

Map: II

Map taken form, Yogesh Sirole, 'Mughal Highways in Seventeenth Century', Unpublished M.Phil Dissertation submitted at Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2003

By fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the sufism and bhakti movements, including those of the Kabir Panthis and Dadu Panthis, were increasingly evolving as religious movements of the towns, catering to the spiritual, social and psychological issues predominantly of the urban dwellers,

which the mainstream conservative strands of these religious failed to properly address.[116]The itinerant weavers and artisans, who went from town to town carrying the new religious values, were also carrying the newly emerging urban culture. This is seen to a considerable degree in Jaunpur, Gwalior, Mandu, Burhanpur, Banaras, Ludhiana, Panipat, Ahmedabad, etc., which by this time had evolved as significant secondary towns and were part of networks used by people and institutions linked with commodity movements or by faith-related travels.[117]

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a large number of towns grew up in Mughal Empire, some by rise, others by growth from older units. When it came to the rise of new towns, under Akbar, Agra and Lahore forts were built almost about the same time (1565-80 C.E.), while Fatehpur-Sikri, which became virtually Akbar's capital (1569 CE-1586 CE) grew out of a mere village. The Red Fort at Delhi was established during 1639-48 CE by Shahjahan. Thus, towns grew up nestling under these- the modern city of Patna, the towns of Akbarabad and Lahore and Shahjahanabad. On the other hand, towns like Surat and Ahmadabad were examples of development of older towns. These and some other towns came to be of world-wide importance during this period, as they were controlling international trade. Their wealth and prosperity impressed foreign travellers.[118]

One way of classifying these urban centres are as those like Agra, Delhi, and Lahore, whose prime purpose was administrative, with manufacturing and religion as secondary; second, those like Patna and Ahmedabad, which were predominantly commercial and manufacturing centres with some administrative functions; third, religious and pilgrim centres like Benaras, Mathura, and

[116]*Ibid.,* p. 9.

[117]*Ibid.,* p. 10.

[118]Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, *Studies in Economic Life in Mughal India*, Oriental Publishers, Delhi, 1975, p. 208.

Kanchi, with a large floating population combined with trade and manufacture; and, last, centres with specific manufacturing skills and techniques, such as Bayana (indigo), Patna (dyeing), and Khairabad (textiles). To these may be added a fifth type-port towns like Surat, Calicut, and Nagapatnam, which had an ambience of their own. Port towns under the control of one or the other European companies (Hooghly, Diu, St. Thome, Pulicat) were a class apart, bearing little resemblance with any of the other Indian towns.[119]

Studying the various process of town formation and urbanization helps us to understand the places visited by the travellers in their journey. Travellers passing through the same town in fifteenth century will have different experience than the travellers in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Considering that many travellers use the same route while travelling for various reasons, it is interesting to come across such varied perception.

2.3.4. Court intrigues, Nobility and War of Succession

Medieval societies were organized on the basis of almost autonomous principalities, which the king or the Prince would bring under his own authority whether by conquest or on the basis of inheritance. The people living in these principalities owed personal loyalties to the king.[120] These principalities were sometimes joined together by dynastic marriages. Political legitimacy depended upon either the right of conquest or the personal claim of the Prince.[121] In many parts of

[119]J. S. Grewal, *The State and Society in Medieval India*, (History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization), eds. J. S. Grewal and D. P. Chattopadhyaya, vol. VII, Part-1, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 99.

[120] S. Nurul Hasan, *Religion, State and Society in Medieval India,* (ed)., Chandra, Satish, OUP, 2005, p. 63.

[121] Ibid., p. 64.

the world, the religion of the prince was considered to be the religion of the state. The wars of religion in Central Europe, which had started with the emergence of Protestantism in the 16th century finally came to an end with acceptance of the principle that the religion of the King would be deemed to be the religion of the people of the kingdom. Even in England, during the same time period, the religion of king or queen was accepted as the religion of the state. Roman Catholics were persecuted when Henry VIII broke with the Pope. His successor, Queen Mary re-established Roman Catholicism as the state religion and Protestants were subjected to persecution. After her death, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, Protestantism again became the established religion of the English state.[122] However, as opposed to Professor Hasan's conclusion, where he writes that, "In Asia too, this concept was in existence in one form or another even though it was not always explicitly acknowledged."[123]

The Mughals did not enforce their religion upon the subjects. Indian society was predominantly based on the caste system and had certain hierarchy in the society that did not depend on the religion of the people. Although the ruler was supposed to be bound by the laws and principles of his own religion and was expected to enforce those throughout his dominion. This did not have large impact on the society. We have seen this also in the presence of large non-muslim officials in the Mughal Empire, holding important posts. Also, the Canonical law (shariat) could not be fully enforced even when most of the subjects for Muslims.

[122] Ibid.,

[123] Ibid.,

A significant part of the change that occurred in the nature and working of the establishments of the Mughal Empire in the sixteenth century was in the development of a homogeneous respectability out of the multiracial and strictly heterogeneous components united by Akbar.[124]

Another aspect to keep in mind while trying to understand state in medieval India is the role of the nobility and their military strength. These nobles, however, did not enjoy any hereditary or territorial rights. They depended for their position on the pleasure of the Sultan. They could be transferred, promoted, demoted or even dismissed by the Sultan. At the same time, the nobles also resisted the attempts of the King to become all powerful. They acted as a counter check at times to the all-powerful Monarch. They had the complex correlation with the king and vice versa. The king wanted to keep a check on the nobles and took possible steps to achieve it. He also made sure that his authority and Supremacy is not hampered or transgressed. However, at the same time, the king also attained his legitimacy to rule through these men. His power and authority largely relied on the strength and loyal support of his nobles. This interdependence between the two also went on to become the conflict of interest between them. With every change of the emperor came in a whole new set of nobility.

At no time among Babur's and Aurangzeb's rules did the Mughals actually unmistakably articulate an arrangement of magnificent progression, and Mughal progression would remain moderately open finished. By the end of sixteenth century, the Mughals kept an adaptable framework in which, after Akbar, just the lineal beneficiaries of a head were offered any stake. Considering the frequently tense rivalry among siblings, the oldest would in general be the most favoured; in many cases, the younger child could and would challenge the older sibling's case if and whenever

[124] Iqtidar Alam Khan, "The Nobility under Akbar and the development of his religious policy, 1560-80', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* No. ½ (Apr., 1968), pp. 29-36.

opportunity emerged. This open-finished framework has been frequently viewed especially by the French traveller Francois Bernier, as a wellspring of summed up insecurity and shortcoming.

Unfavourable assessments of open-ended systems of succession have a long lineage within European historiography. One of the most significant critics was Max Weber. He argued that this system of succession promoted arbitrariness, uncertainty, and factionalism. In contrast, ordered systems of succession-most significantly primogeniture-enabled a rationalization of imperial power, promoted certainty, and helped prevent debilitating and expensive war of succession.

The Mughal system of succession precisely led to the determined efforts by princes, from early in their childhood, to build politically and militarily robust households as well as networks of friends and allies. These efforts were a backdrop against which they expressed defiance or launched outright rebellion. In the run-up to the succession war, princes stepped up their intelligence gathering to keep a close watch on the actions of primary rivals, and also on the emperor. Early knowledge of failing health or death afforded a crucial head start over the other princes. In September 1657 CE, Shah Jahan fell seriously ill, hence he withdrew himself completely from public life. Day to day management of the empire fell in the hands of Dara Shikoh. The news quickly spread and consequently, all the brothers; Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad influenced and mobilized their military and started marching towards the court in Agra. Although Shah Jahan had recovered sufficiently such as he was able to reappear in public, his younger sons still continued with their belligerent agenda. However, in the spring of 1658 CE, Shah Jahan openly showed his support for his elder son Dara Shikoh. With this planned move, the emperor hoped to protect his throne and secure it for his beloved favorite son, but he failed on both counts. In the end Aurangzeb was able to pick off his rivals to become the uncontested emperor by 1659 CE.

The lingering presence of princely contenders posed a threat to the emperor's direct heirs, the next generation of princes. As we see in Bernier, "The art of reigning is so delicate that a King's jealousy might be awakened by his very shadow."[125] According to Bernier, in the wake of the imprisonment of Muhammad Sultan for rebellion, Aurangzeb warned his second son Mu'azzam to keep his own political ambitions in check by reciting this saying.

Therefore, the Mughal Empire demonstrated an increasing conviction that no royal rival to the emperor (besides his sons) could be spared his life. However, the treatment meted out to the supporters of the defeated princes was quite different. For example, following the 1659 CE battle of Deorai (that ended any hopes of victory for Dara), the vanquished sovereign's allies engaged Aurangzeb for forgiveness, which was promptly conceded. Such generosity of spirit drew harsh comment from Manucci that Aurangzeb's victory was largely accomplished by conferring "many distinctions and gifts on men of Shah Jahan, Dara, Murad and Sulaiman Shikoh who came over to his side."[126] Despite his own misgivings about Aurangzeb and his deep affection for Dara, he eventually found his way into the service of the emperor's son Mu'azzam. His past association with Dara never came up as a reason to disqualify him from imperial patronage.

Just as Shah Jahan showed no reluctance or remorse for killing his princely rivals, the same was true for his successor, Aurangzeb, when he turned down Dara Shikoh's request for clemency following his capture.[127] Aurangzeb also ordered execution of his younger brother, Murad and Dara Shikoh's eldest son Sulaiman Shikoh. This action is however, justified in Manucci's account, where he says if Dara Shikoh would have ascended the throne, then he would have done the exact

[125]Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, p. 84.

[126]Niccolao Manucci, *Storio Do Mogor or Mogul India*,vol. 1, p. 292.

[127]Aurangzeb Alamgir, *Raqa'im-i Kara'im*,as quoted in Munis D. Faruqui, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504-1719*, Cambridge University Press, p. 253.

thing himself. In fact, Dara Shikoh would have, not only ordered Aurangzeb's decapitation but also commanded those parts of his body be hung on Delhi's four major gates for all to see.[128]

Among the nobility at court, a succession battle surely caused a lot issues, in light of the fact that every individual who made a difference needed to pick a side. Similar to the case during royal uprisings, lack of bias was impossible, particularly preceding 1707 CE. For some aristocrats, loyalties had been for quite some time settled, so there was no difficult decision to be made on the cusp of the succession battle.

The choice by a sovereign to concede a ruler full grown-up status (in some cases between the late teen years and the mid-twenties) prompted a strengthening of endeavors to build a powerful household and assemble partners around rulers' individual. One contemporary observer notes, "when these princes leave the paternal house, they work and scheme to make themselves friends. They write secretly to the Hindu princes and the Mahomedan generals, promising them that when they become king, they will raise their allowances…if any of these princes mounts the throne, he fancies that they will have been faithful to him."[129]

Princely rebellions, therefore, were deeply unsettling affairs for the entire empire. It taxed both the loyalty of supporters and household resources; it also highlighted the brittleness of the political order as well as questioned the emperor's right to rule. The framework was unforgiving, and maturing or sick sovereigns were particularly helpless against difficulties. As each sovereign from Akbar to Aurangzeb could validate, there was no doubt of laying on past achievements. Turning back to princely challenge meant passing a crucial test of continuing imperial and political relevance. Achievement demanded that a beset ruler unsheathe the full array of weapons available

[128]Niccolao Manucci, *Storio Do Mogor or Mogul India*,vol. 1, p. 339.

[129]*Ibid.,* p. 320.

to him. Through dynamic military activities, endeavors to uncover adversaries inside the Mughal foundation, activities pointed toward prevailing upon persuasive people and gatherings, and endeavors to combine or reinforce the authoritative apparatus of the express, the ruler's counteroffensive profited long haul Mughal dynastic power. Given that these endeavors generally followed comparative activities embraced by insubordinate or rebellious sovereigns, these complementary processes inadvertently helped entrench Mughal power across northern and central India. "Besides drawing new groups into the ambit of Mughal politics, princely rebellions and subsequent imperial response often tied formerly peripheral areas more closely to the imperial centre."[130]

As battle of succession turned into the essential method of choosing the next ruler, the eradication of unsuccessful regal competitors likewise turned into a political need. There could be no subsequent demonstrations, in case these draw consideration, energy and assets from the next and rising generation of rulers.

Since the day that princes were born, and for the term of their lives as rulers, they were basic entertainers on the Mughal stage. Their centrality at last got from the serious political energy that outlined Mughal successive battles throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Particularly after the 1580s and Emperor Akbar's choice to not allow his children semi-autonomous domains, the principles of this challenge were basic and are best summarized by the short Persian expression: ya takht, ya takhta (either seat or memorial service), and it was indeed to the throne or until their deaths that generations of princes scrambled to establish loyal followings, accrue wealth

[130]Munis D. Faruqui, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504-1719*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 11-12.

and influence, and built their political power and military strength. They realized that inability to garner such support would mean loss of the Mughal seat as well as unavoidable demise.[131]

2.3.5 Judiciary

Another important facet of the state which, we can find, in Bernier's account to have been exaggerated, is judiciary. He writes that "in Asia, if justice be ever administered, it is among the lower classes, among persons who, being equally poor, have no means of corrupting the judges, and of buying false witnesses."[132] Bernier makes some interesting and advisory remarks on the matter of the administration of justice in the Mughal realm, which seek to combat the panegyrics which certain previous travellers had pronounced over some aspects, at least, of law in India. "In France", says Bernier, "the laws are so reasonable that the king is the first to obey them: his domains are held without the violation of any right; his farmers or stewards may be sued at law, and the aggrieved artisan or peasant is sure to find redress against injustice and oppression. But in eastern countries the weak and injured are without any refuge whatever; and the only law that decides all controversies, is the cane and the caprice of a governor."[133]

Roe once observed that during the rule of Jahangir, "Laws they have none written. The Kings judgment byndes"; and the condition of affairs had not greatly changed fifty years later; yet Bernier alleges that "they are not altogether destitute of good laws", though the governors disregarded them if it suited their purpose. Bernier admits that despotic government has some advantages peculiar to itself, such as the scarcity of lawyers and of lawsuits, and thoroughly agrees with the

[131]Ibid., p. 7.

[132]Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, p. 138.

[133] Ibid.,

Persian proverb which says that "Speedy injustice is preferable to tardy justice;" but his ultimate verdict is that this remedy for lawsuits is worse than the disease it rectifies. He comes to the conclusion that in Asia, if one was to ever get justice administered, one was supposed to buy false witnesses or bribe the judges. Hence, in brief justice was unable to a person who cannot pay up for such corruption.

Conti has some exceedingly interesting evidence for the legal procedure of the fifteenth century southern India. His remarks seem to apply principally to Vijayanagar, but also, generally speaking, to all of India other than the Mughal India which he visited. "The debtor who is insolvent," he says, "is everywhere adjudged to be the property of his creditor." In criminal law trial by ordeal held sway. He describes three methods, which according to him are "extraordinarily foolish". However, at the same time as Conti was in India, even Europe was implementing certain judicial measures which could be considered as absurd by a non-European. Hence, we should be inclined to disbelieve Conti:

> If a man were accused of an offence, and no witness were produced to prove it, instead of adopting the sensible course, and putting the false accuser in some Indian equivalent for a pillory, the judge compelled the accused to swear before the idol that he was innocent, and then ordered him to lick a red-hot mattock with his tongue. If he were innocent, he was expected to feel only a pleasant sensation of warmth; but woe betide him if his tongue exhibited any sign of the contact! Carrying a red-hot plate in the hand, and immersing the fingers in boiling butter, were minor variants of this brilliant specimen of legal sagacity.[134]

2.3.6. Agriculture

Another such case of interdependence and conflict of interests was in the field of agriculture. In the medieval Indian state, the principal source of wealth, and hence of power, was agriculture. The bulk of the village elders, the landholders, the revenue officials, as well as the cultivators were

[134] E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*,Asian Educational Services, 1991, p. 20.

non-Muslims. The wealth and power of the state depended on their well-being and prosperity. Therefore, these classes had to be well maintained, they were to be kept satisfied as well as under control at the same time. Although it was quite difficult to ensure that they did not become too powerful, it was important for the state to maintain its own status quo over them.

Such complex case of interdependence and conflict was also between the chieftains and princes. The state depended on the chieftains, who were by and large, non-Muslims, for military support, for maintenance of law and order in the countryside and for the collection of revenue. Except in the cases of rebellion or other hostile action by the chieftains, political and military interest demanded that the state should maintain friendly relations with them. Hence, they did not risk antagonizing the chieftains by subjecting them to Shariat law or by resorting to bigotry and intolerance.[135] Another important source of wealth for the state was the revenue collected from trade, commerce and industrial production. Over the centuries, these activities gradually gained the momentum and became an unrefusable part of the state. As money economy started reaching the villages, banias, mahajans, sarrafs, etc, acquired even greater importance in the political, economic and social life. Members of this class provided loans to the nobles, even to the Sultan at times. They were also employed to manage the finances and accounts and revenue administration of the state. Hence, they played an important role in the state. Akbar took many important decisions which reflected his tolerant attitude, such as the abolition of jizya, the pilgrim tax on the Hindus. As a symbol of respect for all religion, Akbar ordered that the festivals of the different religious communities be observed at the court. The policy of the absorption of non-Muslims in the administrative and military hierarchy began to be pursued with great enthusiasm and also the

[135] S. Nurul Hasan, *Religion, State and Society in Medieval India,* (ed)., Chandra, Satish, OUP, 2005, p. 69.

highest ranks were thrown open to the Hindus. The policy of matrimonial alliances also received greater impetus during the reign of Akbar.

The Mughal Empire had almost succeeded in establishing a stable Empire. However, it was faced with two opposite tendencies- an attempt to establish a centralised government over the whole country and the other tendency towards decentralization. This conflict between the centrifugal and centripetal tendencies has garnered multiple debates and explanations from many scholars. The medieval Indian nobility was fundamentally different from the European feudal aristocracy. In Europe, the feudal lord was the hereditary owner of the land. He kept his own private army and was expected to give military aid to the King. The source of his political power, that is, land and private army could be inherited by him. Position, therefore, did not depend solely on the goodwill of the king.[136] In India, however, the nobleman did not own land. Also, they were not the hereditary owners of land, hence for their political position they had to depend on the influence they could wield on the King. Therefore, their military utility to the king was important in garnering this influence. The Empire was formed as a result of amalgamation of a military alliance between a group of military leaders and a chief. Whenever the rule of a certain dynasty was established, the revenues of different parts of the country were also given to different nobles. it was quite important for the maintenance of the political power of that particular group of nobles that the rule of dynasty that had come to power, should continue, because, whenever an Empire was overthrown, the entire aristocracy was swept off the political arena too.

According to Professor Hasan, this absence of landed estates was because of three reasons: -

[136] Ibid., p. 111.

> the particular system of economy prevailing in India, the tribal nature of the social organization of the rulers, and the laws of Islam.[137]

The village community generally considered land as communal property, hence hampering the idea of private ownership of lands by the landlords. Land was assigned to different families for cultivation. The nobles acted as the revenue collectors, who also supervised local administration and provided military aid to the King. Secondly, the law of Islam strictly forbids private ownership in land. It believed that all land belongs to God and to the community. This absence of landed property kept the nobles distant and unattached to any particular tract of land. Hence, their position depended on their military capacity and not the area of possession. However, the monarch and the nobles shared an interdependence. Also, it sometimes leads to the conflict between them. The power of the nobles was the share of the royal power and it could be increased at the expense of the other. Hence, the nobles, in a way acted as a counter force to the monarch's attempt to become all powerful. Nonetheless, there was an attempt by both the parties to resolve such crisis. The nobles took an oath to recognize that the Mughal monarch's power gave them power. The king in return accepted to give full concert direction to the wishes of his nobles. The zamindar class played an important role in the political, economic and cultural life of mediaeval India especially in the Mughal period. The surplus of agricultural production from the peasants was shared amongst the emperor, the nobles and the zamindars. Hence, in order to appropriate maximum benefit, they became partners in the process of economic exploitation. Even when most of the administrative difficulties which the Mughal emperor had to face were the results of the zamindar activities, the administration had to lean heavily on their support.

[137] Ibid.,

The zamindars also helped in the cultural synthesis between the distinctive traditions of the various communities and different regions, and between the urban and rural cultures. They provided powerful patronage to the separatist, localist and parochial trends. Hence, collaborate these classes through the zamindars. The word "Zamindar" was used to denote the various holders of hereditary interests ranging from powerful, Independent and autonomous chieftains to petty intermediaries at the village level. This wide use of the same generic term can be the reflection of the Mughal desire to reduce the chieftains to the status of intermediaries. Hence, they were broadly classified into: - 1) the autonomous chieftains, 2) the intermediary zamindars, and 3) the primary zamindars. It may also be noted that the territories held by the zamindars were not separate from the khalisa or Jagir lands. Their difference lay only in the distribution of the state's share of the revenue. “if the revenue from a particular area were deposited in the Imperial treasury, it would be Deemed to be khalisa;” if it were to be assigned to an officer in lieu of salary, it could be considered a Jagir. 1) The chieftains were the hereditary autonomous rulers of their territories and enjoyed practically sovereign powers. The Mughals sought recognition of their overlordship, the payment of tribute, and the rendering of military assistance from these chieftains.

a) the Mughals further introduced some new elements as they realised the importance of forging powerful links between the empire and the chieftains by observing many of them in the Imperial hierarchy and the administrative machinery. This policy led the chieftains to seek promotion in the Imperial service than to cast of the Imperial and attempt to expand their territory in defiance of Imperial authority.

b) the Mughals asserted the principle which later came to be known as that of "paramountcy". They asserted their right to decide who would be the ruler of a principality not

only strengthens the control of the central government but also gave the latter a sense of personal obligation to be Emperor.

c) the Mughals utilized the military assistance of the vassel chiefs in all their major campaigns.

d) the emperors sometimes entered into a direct relationship with the vessels of some of the more important chieftains, thus, creating a new class of allies and reducing the chieftain's powers.

e) the Mughal compelled these chieftains into confirming to imperial rules and regulations, especially while maintaining law and order in the state. They also claimed the right to dispense justice to those who are filled to the Imperial government against the chiefs.

f) the Mughals attempted to solve the hereditary dominions of the autonomous chiefs as Watan Jagirs. They gave the chiefs the prestigious status of jagirdars, which gave them the rights to their jagirs along with the hereditary succession rights. They no longer feared the indefinite and unforeseen transfers from the emperor.

A centralized Empire established much greater peace and a sense of security, which ultimately help in the expansion of trade and commerce. It increased and diversified the economy by increasing the purchasing power of the general common masses which further led to the advancement of various industries, therefore, improving the growth of money economy.2) The intermediary zamindars: -They mainly consisted of zamindars or the middle men who were in charge of collecting the tax from the primary zamindars, after which they handed over the collected revenue to the Imperial treasury or the respective chieftains. They formed the backbone of the administration and also maintained law and order. This class includes: - *chaudhuries, deshmukhs, desais, deshpades, certain muqaddams, qanungos* and *ijaradars*.

Even though their rights were hereditary, the Mughal state mostly interfered with rights to succession, especially in the division of the jurisdiction amongst their own relatives.

3) The primary zamindars. They mostly owned all the agricultural lands in the Empire. Their rights were hereditary and alienable. They, most of the time, gave their land away in lease to their tenants, who further enjoyed the security of tenure through the patta granted to them by these zamindars. Zamindars were supposed to collect, from the peasants, all the revenue and were expected to deposit the State's treasury accordingly. They were expected to assist the administration in maintaining law and order in their area and were at times expected to even supply the troops. Strategically and officially, the Zamindar class delivered steadfast collaboration and help to the Mughal realm. Yet there were many conflicts of interest that could not by completely eleminated between the state and the zamindars. There were frequent conflicts disturbing law and order in the state which also weakened the administrative and sometimes the military power of the state. It became quite evident that the central government had become too weak, after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, that it could not sustain the conflicts amongst the various groups, which ultimately resulted in the decay of the empire.

Bernier writes that in India there was no middle state. He describes Indian societies as consisting of "undifferentiated masses of impoverished people, subjugated by a small minority of a very rich and powerful ruling class." Bernier seems to have suffered the misconception that in Asia there was no private property. He writes how the main function of the state was the destruction of all private property. This, according to Bernier was the sole reason for the suffering of economics and societies in Asia. For it often led to the nobles and the zamindars being oppressive. The tax collection usually absorbed the large part of the surplus, which Bernier and others often misunderstood as rent collected by the emperor, which resulted in them believing as lack of private property in India. However, we know that, outside the fiscal system, the Mughal state hardly interfered with the structure of property rights or with urban property and commerce.

2.4. Conclusion

The reading of these narratives leaves a definite picture of the state of affairs of the Mughal Empire. The traveller's account imposes and establishes how the empire provided reason to feel ambiguous about all the shades of malice of despotism with none of its comparing favorable circumstances. It also implies how the administration functioned at the pleasure of the king, which ultimately crushed out all individuality. The reign of Akbar showed that, given a strong ambitious leader was not entirely harmful. His two successors only prove that without a strong ruler, decay of an entire empire was bound to happen eventually. Although Aurangzeb was a strong monarch, but after a certain stage such vigorous personality does not suffice to sustain a huge empire like that of the Mughal's.

The state in the Mughal period was generally speaking, based on an elaborate bureaucratic structure, particularly when it comes to the *mansabdari* system. Historians have considered mansabdari system to be similar to the bureaucracy in the modern times. This entire system was organised finely into the ranks and their respective responsibilities. This has also been referred to as checks and balances in the administrative field.

While we know that the Mughal state shows certain features of bureaucracy in nature, but it cannot be completely shoved under the general tag of "bureaucratic" state. The term "bureaucracy" is a modern concept which cannot be used in the same manner for the medieval period. In the medieval times, the officials were loyal to the one person, rather than the state, which is not the case in the modern sense. In Mughal state bureaucracy were paid either in cash or in land for the work they did in military and administration. Also, most importantly, bureaucracy then was mostly

hereditary, but in the modern day, bureaucrats have fixed salaries and are selected on the basis of merit entirely.

Therefore, to understand the evolution of state and polity in medieval India, we need to look into sovereignty and religion, growth of society and economy and cultural developments. No state can be read in isolation as it is an essential feature of medieval society, its cultural ethos and its socio-economic developmental trajectory. The excessive preoccupation in identifying the Mughal state in a certain 'structure' or a 'system' undermines the entire grandeur of the empire. The conflict about the kind of state, ranging from 'patrimonial-bureaucratic' to 'segmentary' state does no justice to enhance our understanding of the history. There has to be an alternative approach to one's study, where it involves judicious treatment of other aspects such as its social groups, source materials, regions and the epochs.

As in the words of Subrahmanyam, in order to approach these issues, one has to dig deep:

> far more than producing parochial local histories, or paraphrasing the apocryphal chronicles of particular zamindar families. It means writing histories that share neither the structural presuppositions of Bernier, nor a simplistic vision of the Mughal juggernaut, the medieval road-roller that reduced the sub-continent into an institutional flatland.[138]

The discussion on Mughal state remains on certain specific themes in the travel accounts, of which, most of these themes are largely discussed above. Therefore, this chapter is a survey based mostly on the secondary readings as a historical context. The mentioned themes will be further discussed in the later chapters through the eyes of the travellers.

[138] Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Mughal state- Structure or process? Reflections on recent western historiography", *Indian Economic Social History Review,* 1992, pp. 290- 291.

Chapter Three

THE MISSIONARIES AND THE RELIGIOUS PERSONS

3.1. Introduction

The developments in Europe like, the Renaissance[139], Reformation[140] and Counter-Reformation[141] movements forced the missionaries particularly the Jesuits in Europe to go in search of new fields for preaching and spreading Christianity. These developments resulted in the immediate establishment of the European power in the East where a large number of missionaries were dispatched to proselytize Christianity, especially in Goa where Portuguese made it one of the main centre for the Jesuit missionaries and their activities.[142]

One of the first Jesuit mission to have begun in India was with the coming of Francis Xavier (1506-52 C.E.) at around 1542 A.D. It was mostly Portuguese with overseas missions that were under a special vow to the Pope. The patron of the Jesuit missions was the Portuguese Estado da India.

[139] It was an intense period of European cultural, artistic, political and economic "rebirth" following the middle ages. Starting from 14th – 17th century, this period promoted the rediscovery of classical philosophy, literature and art.

[140] It was a movement within western Christianity in the 16th century Europe that posed a religious and political challenge to the Roman Catholic Church and papal authority.

[141] It was the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church during the 16th and early 17th centuries against both the Protestant Reformation and towards internal renewal.

[142] The in-famous Goa inquisition was established in 16th century to forcefully convert the local people into Roman Catholic faith. In the process, they persecuted many hindus, muslims, jews and people practicing other faith.

They had to engage with the rulers, the local masses and report back home which were then published for wider circulation in the Western world. These reports and their corresponding documents in published form were a primary source of the historical narratives of the mission, meant to be widely read by the European audiences and in the process helped the Jesuit missions in recruiting many new recruits for their activities. They mostly wrote in various languages and were supported by different patrons. Nonetheless, these writers worked exclusively under the royal patronage of the Portuguese missions.

When Akbar sent a *farman*[143] to the "Principal of Goa" asking for the presence of some missionaries who could take part in his discussions held at Ibadat Khana[144], that is when the first mission was particularly made up. It consisted of three Jesuits: the *Catalan Antoni Monserrat,*[145] the aristocratic Italian Rodolfo Acquaviva, and the rather "enigmatic figure of the Persian convert from Hurmuz, Francisco Henriques". However, this mission ended in February 1583 A.D. with Acquaviva's departure for Goa.[146] However, their entire incident left behind a series of literary

[143] In September 1579 A.D, Akbar sent his ambassador, Abdullah along with and Armenian Christian. Dominic Perez, an interpretor, asking for two learned priests to be sent to Akbar's court.

[144] The house of worship established in 1575 CE by the Mughal emperor Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri. He conducted discussions with the various spiritual leaders in order to learn about different religions.

[145] Monserrate, the most prolific writer of the three, and in a sense the official chronicler of the Mission.

[146] The Provincial, Fr. Rui Viccente chose three Jesuits and sent them in their first Jesuit Mission to the court of Akbar on November 17, 1579 A.D. On December 13 of the same year they left Daman for Surat, and on February 28, 1580 A.D, Fathers Aquaviva and Enriquez arrived at Fatehpur Sikii. Father Monserrate, having been taken ill at Narwar, reached the Moghal capital a week later, on March 4. The missionaries were warmly received at the royal court. Abul Fazl and Hakim Ali Gilani were asked to look to the comforts and health of the guests. The delegation returned to Goa in C 1583 February.

sources that has been used extensively by the historians later to understand the events that occurred during their stay.

3.2. Missionaries Under Study

The first account that will be dealt with in this chapter is that of Father Monserrate.[147] Father Monserrate (1580-82 CE) who was born in 1536 CE in Catalonia. He took the admission in the *society of Jesus* in 1558 CE. His *Commentary* is one of the earliest European accounts, in which he gives an objective account of the emperor's personality, court and administrative measures. His account has been an important source of material for understanding Mughal India, particularly, the reign of Akbar for many reasons. The first reason was that he served as a tutor to Akbar's second son, Prince Murad. Secondly, he was a Portuguese representative and was on a special mission, that is, conversion of Akbar to Christianity. Thirdly, he was a part of religious discussions, which was a regular feature in the court of Akbar. Last but not the least; he also accompanied Akbar in one of the military expeditions[148]. Hence, his account contains some valuable inputs as far as the present research is concerned.

Considering that Father Monserrate has closely studied the behaviour of Akbar, it helps us in understanding the instances and causes behind some of the activities of Akbar. It, therefore, helps us in understanding the nature of state, polity, and judiciary during the reign of Akbar. Monserrate was a missionary; hence, it is quite expected from his account to have instances related to religion and rightly so, we do find him mentioning the instances of how during discussions they

[147] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922.

[148] He accompanied Akbar on his military expedition to Kabul in 1581. He proceeded as far as Peshawar with the emperor.

(Christians) were far more superior than any other religion, especially to that of Islam. Therefore, keeping in mind how religious perception through the eyes of missionary can be subjective to bias and prejudices, they can lack in objectivity sometimes. This chapter will confine itself to the observations of matters related to state, polity and diplomacy and will refrain from dwelling into the matters of religion. Nonetheless, we will observe these prejudices, even with respect to state, polity and diplomacy, later in the chapter.

Another traveller's account that shall be studied in this chapter is that of a chaplain, Edward Terry. Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador who was residing at the Mughal court was in need of a chaplain, as his former chaplain, Mr. John Hall had recently expired. In 1616, Edward Terry, on this account was to be Roe's next chaplain at the English Embassy in the Mughal India. Terry presented his account in 1622 CE to the Prince of Wales (Charles I 1600-1649 C.E.) and later on the published another edition, adding more matter. Purchas (English cleric and published several volumes of reports by travellers to foreign countries) has included it in his *Pilgrimage*[149]. It has also been published by the English writer, William Foster in *Early Travels in India*[150] in which Terry frequently mentions one of the earlier English traveller, Mr. Thomas Coryat who visited India. "He is principally remembered for two volumes of writings he left regarding his travels, often on foot, through Europe and parts of Asia."[151]

[149] Samuel Purchas, *Relations of the World and the Religions,* 1613, London.

[150] *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, ed. William Foster, Oriental Books, Delhi, 1985.

[151] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, p. 55.

Another friar of the order of St Augustine[152], Sebastian Manrique was sent to Bengal in about 1612 CE, with three other missionaries to propagate Christianity in that particular province. Over the span of the following thirteen years, he voyaged broadly in India, and visited certain regions of which not many records are surviving. Beginning apparently from Goa, the four evangelists[153] arrived, after a journey round the south of India, at "Angelim" (Ingelly)[154] at the mouth of the western part of the Ganges. They were speedily produced in the court of the local *nawab*, who asked them to hand over the keys of the ship. They refused to do so and the angry *nawab*, ordered their execution. However, they were seized and imprisoned for some time. Soon enough they were released and given the permission to depart for Hooghly. Manrique here after notes some valuable observations on the political and social condition of Bengal. He describes the great fertility of the Ganges plain, however, he opines how the oppressive nature of the rule of the Mughal representative in Bengal is hampering the prosperity of the country.[155]

On leaving Bengal, Manrique sailed for Chittagong after which he proceeded to Arracan. After a prolonged stay there, he returned to Bengal, where he was again imprisoned and returned to Goa. From Goa, he left for Malacca, visited Macao, Philippines and China. After his visit to this part of east India, he made a lengthy stay in Bengal. He then proceeded towards Agra and then to Lahore.

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[152] Augustine was one of the greatest Christian philosopher of Antiquity who exerted the deepest and most lasting influence. He is a saint of the Catholic Church, and his authority in theological matters was universally accepted in the Latin Middle Ages and remained, in the Western Christian tradition, virtually uncontested till the nineteenth century.

[153] After the foundation of the settlement of Hugli in 1579-80, the Bishop of Cochin decided to assign the Bengal mission to the Augustinian order, the priests were sent from Cochin to Hugli shortly after.

[154] Near Hughli, the kingdom of Gauda, the area where Calcutta was built later on.

[155] E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*,Asian Educational Services, 1991, p. 37.

He then moved to Multan passing Jaisalmer, then Kabul, Kandahar, Persia and finally making his way to Europe.

There were two editions of Manrique's account published, one in 1649 CE and the other in 1653 CE. Manrique was a Portuguese but his works are written in Spanish. When Manrique started on his activities, the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan had been on the throne for two years. However, his end was a tragic one. After passing through all the hardships with which the book makes us familiar, his Portuguese servant with the object of robbing him murdered Manrique in London in 1669 CE. His body was concealed in a box, which the servant threw into the river Thames. Some fishermen later discovered his body.

3.3. Personality of the Emperor in the Jesuit Writings: An account of Monserrate, Terry and Manrique

The first image of Akbar in Monserrate's accounts most likely comes across as a diplomatic ruler in an instance mentioned by the Jesuit. In one of their encounters with the king, after a sudden rainstorm, Akbar is seen wearing a "Portuguese dress[156] - a scarlet cloak with golden fastenings". Akbar used to wear Portuguese dress on appropriate events, most likely acquired through his various exchanges with the Portuguese starting with Antonia Cabral in 1573 C.E. On this particular occasion, he wore it unexpectedly. Monserrate clearly understands the intentions as he draws the conclusion that the king did this to 'please his guests'. This incident portrays Akbar as practical as well as forthcoming and open minded. It also shows the level of diplomacy in his attitude and his keen desire to befriend his Portuguese guests. Another interesting event that occurred was when

[156] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, p.28.

the Jesuit priests brought in front of the audience chamber "a copy of the Holy Bible." It was written in "four languages and bound in seven volumes. In the presence of his great nobles and religious leaders this was shown to the king who thereupon most devoutly not only kissed the Bible, but also placed it on his head."[157] These images assured Monserrate about the king's desire for conversion. Hence, it fed the first mission with all the necessary energy and hope, to be greatly disappointed in the end.

As we read these accounts, we come across the descriptions of the Emperor as seen by these writers. By their descriptions we can also identify their prejudices and can anticipate what is to follow in their narratives. Monserrate seems to be in awe of the Emperor, as he describes him as, "This Prince is of a stature and of a type of countenance well-fitted to his royal dignity, so that one could easily recognise, even at the first glance, that he is the King."[158]

Further, Monserrate tells us that Akbar although having a heterodox attitude towards Islam, which was an unforgivable offence, was not assassinated by the *ulema* who were considered to be orthodox Muslims. The reason, according to him can be that he was mostly accessible to all those who wished to see him and created an opportunity for the common people and the nobles to converse with him. Monserrate found Akbar to be mostly pleasant spoken and affable, understanding the minds of his subject. Monserrate writes in this regard,

> He has an acute insight, and shows much wise foresight both in avoiding dangers and in seizing favourable opportunities for carrying out his designs. Yet all these fine qualities both of body and mind lose the greater part of their splendour because the lustre of the True Faith is lacking.[159]

[157] Ibid., p. 37.

[158] ibid., p. 196.

[159] Ibid., p. 197.

Then the audience is brought into the notice of the splendour of the King's palaces, which

> approaches closely to that of the royal dwellings of Europe. They are magnificently built, from foundation to cornice, of hewn stone, and are decorated both with painting and carving. Unlike the palaces built by other Indian kings, they are lofty ; for an Indian palace is generally as low and humble as an idol-temple. Their total circuit is so large that it easily embraces four great royal dwellings, of which the King's own palace is the largest and the finest. The second palace belongs to the queens, and the third to the royal princes, whilst the fourth is used as a store house and magazine. The roofs of these palaces are not tiled, but are dome-shaped, being protected from the weather on the outside by solid piaster covering the stone slabs. This forms a roof absolutely impervious to moisture.[160]

The above description can indicate certain preconceived notions that Monserrate had with respect to the Mughal King and also the other Indian kings. It is clear that he considers Akbar to be a foreign ruler in India. He also seems to look down upon the Indian kings as compared to the Mughal king or the European counter parts.

Further. According to Monserrate, Akbar was an incredible benefactor of education, and consistently kept around him educated men, who were coordinated to examine before him reasoning, religious philosophy, and religion, and to explain to him the historical backdrop of extraordinary rulers and radiant deeds of the past. He had an incredible judgment and a decent memory, and had accomplished an extensive information regarding numerous matters by methods for consistent and understanding tuning in to such conversations.[161]

Unlike Monserrate, Terry does not seem to be much fond of the emperor Jahangir then, about whom he describes as,

160 Ibid., p. 199.

161 Ibid., p. 201.

> an over-grown Prince.....that preys upon all his neighbours, who therefore purchase and keep his favour by very great presents given him by way of homage, and submits acknowledgement of his mighty power.[162]

Terry, sounding sarcastic, however, talks about the general capacity of the king in the country.

> Mogul be not matter of the whole world, yet hath he a great share in it, if we consider his very large territories, and his abundant riches, as will after more appear whose wealth and strength makes him so potent, as that he is able, whensoever he pleaseth, to make in roads upon, and to do much mischief unto any of his neighbours.[163]

We are brought to an attention, when Terry mentions an incident related to Asaf Khan[164], who once invited Thomas Roe for dinner.[165] Terry notes how Asaf Khan entertained Sir Thomas Roe in a "very spacious and a very beautiful way". He writes, "the tent was kept full of very pleasant perfumes; in which scents the king and grandees them take very much delight. The floor of the tent was first covered all over with very rich and large carpets"[166].

Friar Domingo[167] also describes all the aspects of society especially concerning the religious aspects around the Coast of Coromandel. He comments on the "personal life of the King of Golconda", Abdullah Qutub Shah (1626-1672 C.E.) who according to Domingo "indulged in worldly pleasures and was not active in governance". He describes the palace, which he rightly

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162 Edward Terry, A Voyage to East India,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, pp. 148-49.

163 Ibid., p. 352.

164 Asaf Khan was a wakil (a high ranking official) at the court of Jahangir.

165 this was the only respect in that kind be ever had, while he was in East India.

166 Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, pp. 150-51.

167 Friar Domingo Navarrete (1618-1686) was a Spanish missionary traveller. He toured many countries round the world. He describes is visit to China, the Phillipines, Indonesia, Macassar, Madagascar, St. Helena, Portugal and Italy. On 14th December, 1670 he arrived at Goa. From there he landed at Swally, the seaport of Surat, on 8th January, 1671.

calls as “sumptuous” with beautiful Towers and Pinnacles covered with lead. He writes how “Palace of Segovia” was not as beautiful.

> I admir'd nothing so much in that Country and me thought I was looking upon Madrid. I carne up to the great Fort where the King's Apartment is ; I went not in, but it had a fine outside, and look'd great, the Walls were strong and stor'd with Cannon, the Situation high, the Ditches wide and deep. They told me the King had 900 Concubines within there, and among them the Portuguese Woman of St Thomas I mention'd above.[168]

While Domingo was in the country, Aurangzeb was the king and he had put his father, Shah Jahan in the prison, where the latter died in 1666 A.D. and Aurangzeb seized power and usurped the crown.[169] Navarette, notes the incident, making his account politically significant. He further mentions that,

> This Man has a Son who govems a Province eight Days Journey from Golconda, towards Bengala [Bengal], which properly belongs to the Prince, who designs to follow the example his Father set him, and get all into his own Hands.[170] Antony Coello a Portuguese, who had serv'd under him, told me he had already 200000 Horse and 300000 Foot.[171]

Domingo finds the Mughal, in this case Auragnzeb as “a mighty prince, whose dominions are vastly large, with his people numberless, and his wealth inexhaustible. He seems to have had an

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[168]The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete 1618-1686, Vol II, (ed) J.S. Cummins, Second Series No. CXIX, Issued for 1962, CUP, The Hakluyt Society, p. 314.

169Aurangzib imprisoned his father, Shah Jahán, in Agrá fort where he died in 1666. Aurangzlb had succeeded him with the imperial title of Alamgír in 1658.

[170] Muhammad Mu'azzam, Aurangzlb's second son, was the Viceroy of the Deccan with the title of Shah Alam. In 1687 his father, suspecting him of treachery, had him imprisoned. Other writers (e.g. Manucci) hold that the Prince's rebellion was feigned in order to trap Shivájl but there was widespread belief in his having rebelled against his father. The Prince later succeeded his father with the title of Bahádur Shah (1707-12).

[171]*The Travels and Controversies of Friar Domingo Navarrete 1618-1686,* Vol II, (ed) J.S. Cummins, Second Series No. CXIX, Issued for 1962, CUP, The Hakluyt Society, p. 329.

encounter with a Portuguese, who had served in his Army at Agra, which was the seat of the Mughal court". Domingo was informed how the emperor kept 300,000 horses besides other vast numbers.[172]

3.4. Customs of the Court as Described in the Travellers' Accounts

Akbar extends his gratitude towards the group of Jesuits who visit his court, by offering them 800 pieces of gold. However, they politely refused to accept it as monetary value held no importance for the missionaries[173]. They had a larger vested interest with the emperor, which was to proselyte and convert him into Christianity.

However, this act of offering gold by the emperors was not one way process, as we read in Terry's account how the Mughals liked to be presented with something in exchange. Terry writes about this in brief as,

> The East-India Company sent other presents for that King, as excellent pictures, which pleased the Mogul very much, especially if there were fair and beautiful women potrayed in them. They sent likewise swords, rapiers, excellently well hatcht, and pieces of rich embroidery to make sweet bags, and rich gloves, handsome looking-glasses, and other things, to give away, that they might have always some things in readiness to present, both to the King, and also to his governors, where our factories were settled; for all these were like those rulers of Israel, who would love to say with shame, give ye. They looked to be presented wid something, when our factors had any special occasion to repair to them; and if the particular thing they then presented did not like them well, they would desire to have them exchanged for something else.....[174]

We can also find glimpses of such instances as we come across Manrique's account. He gives one of the most unique and important observations on how and why the lands were conferred as a

[172] Ibid., p. 330. A reference to the Hindú kingdom of Vijayanagar, conquered by the Muslims in 1565.

[173] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, p.28.

[174] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, pp. 368-369.

reward or a gift to the religious persons', surprisingly it also included the Christian missionaries, and he writes:

> The Emperor Akbar as well as his son and successor Ziahanguir or Ianguir, as he is ordinarily styled by the people, tried severy times to confer land on the Brethren for their maintenance or to assign them mainas, a monthly cash grant paid from the nacassares or Imperial treasury. But the Augustianian Brethren would never accept such gifts either in this Empire or in Persia or any other infidel Kingdom in which they settled, because most of these Asiatic monarchs and Princes merely extend such graciousness to strangers as an offset to expected services and benefits. For, as I remarked before, they hope owing to the presence of the Brethren that their country will more readily attract Christian merchants. But when they find that they are not receiving the benefits they expected, being unwilling to expend money without any return, they seek an opportunity for expelling them.[175]

As Manrique rightly explains that this process of gift exchange, was a two-way process. The costlier the gift presented to the king, the more the respect and privileges they received in return. The quality of these gifts often reflected the status of the countries, hence, the gift-giving tradition was a kind of competition amongst them.

With respect to the ambassadors and embassies, as mentioned Monserrate's work, Akbars' attitude towards them is briefly mentioned, such as,

> He receives foreigners and strangers in a very different manner to that in which he treats his own fellow-countrymen and subordinates. For he behaves with marked courtesy and kindness to foreigners, especially to the ambassadors of foreign kings, and to princes who have been driven from their dominions and appeal to him for protection. Such princes he furnishes with troops and resources, on one condition only, namely that they shall employ only his own weights and measures and money coined by himself. However, he received the envoys of the Turkish Viceroy of Arabia Felix, whose capital is Senaa, so ungraciously that the embassy 'vanished in a cloud of smoke.' For the chief ambassador was put in irons and banished for a long period to Lahore, whilst his attendants made good their escape secretly. The reason for this is said to have been his resentment at the arrogance both of the ambassadors themselves

[175] Fray Sebastien Manrique, *Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique 1629-1643*,vol I, tr. Lauren, The Hakluyt Society, Oxford, 1926, pp. 47-48.

> and of the king who sent them, and the endeavour which they made to persuade him to wage war against the king of Spain and Portugal.[176]

This incident shows how different treatment was meted out to different countries. It also shows the importance of different countries in the eye of the rulers.

Coming up next is the technique the King utilizes in consideration of what? Not clear, explain a bit more—he asks every instructor secretly for his own assessment, and afterward himself chooses the course which is by all accounts upheld by the biggest number and the most experienced. He gets some information about subjects whereupon he has just decided, asking the nobles, "This is what I think should be done, do you agree?" They reply "Salaam, O King;" where he says, "Then let it be carried out." However, there were times when some of the nobles did not agree with the king, the nobles would then explain their reasons, which if logical enough, would alter the king's decisions.[177]

The narratives tell us that the king generally had seven advisors, one for every day of the week. Similarly, he selected four or five secretaries, out of the writers, for their obligations every day. These selected people recorded all the scheduled business executed by the ruler, "all the estimates he took, and all the orders he gave". These men noted down whatever the king said with speed, that it appeared like, "carefully to catch and preserve his words before they can fall to the ground

[176] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922., pp. 204-205.

[177] Ibid., pp. 203-204.

and be lost".[178] These men or the scribes were known as "chroniclers", since it was their capacity precisely to record in their diaries and journals each and every occasion which occurred.

Further, Monserrate notes that "the officers mentioned above, together with the captains of the bodyguard, and the guards themselves were changed in rotation every day, along with the janitors, servants and orderlies of the palace". They received rations of grain from the king. The chief police officer, the private advisor, the central paymaster, the controller of records and accounts, the chamberlain, the chief of the public works, the chief judiciary, the legislative governor of the palace, the officer in charge of the royal camp, the chief responsible for the king's family unit, the administrator of the depository, the central janitor, the head cook, and so on, were always present at the royal residence. "Men of low birth", and, as the Mughals would say, "men who have risen", along with those of "outsider birth", were likewise given position in the imperial family unit, given that the king found them proficient and productive. Depending on their capability they were then promoted to higher ranks gradually. However, the king ordered them to always carry along the tools of their original handicraft, so that they always remember their low origin, especially so that they did not practice "mean and contemptible tricks or intrigues".[179]

Akbar had around 'twenty Hindu clan leaders, as clergymen and guides' to help both in the work or administering the realm and in controlling the entire royal family unit. As per Monserrate, they were dedicated to him, and were "wise and reliable" in directing and conducting the public businesses. They were always present with the ruler at the court during the business proceedings,

[178] Ibid., p.205.

[179] Ibid., p. 206.

and were allowed to the interior regions of the capital and the palace, which was often "a privilege not allowed even to the Mongol nobles".[180]

For the officials who were on the job permanently in the Empire, Monserrate tells us that they may have had the option to do their obligations and duties with ease and responsibly. The King had constructed, we are told a little private office for every one of them inside the palace, which was known as *iataxqhana (YatashKhana)* that is, the house of solitude or house of quenching thirst.[181]

In another account of Edward Terry[182], we can also find some portraits where we first come across the "Great Mogul"[183]; in which Terry presents the Mughal emperor Jahangir in his daily-unvaried habit, as he is

> bedeck'd and adorn'd with jewels he continually wears. For the fashion of the habit in which he is here presented, it is for the fashion the habit of that whole vast empire; so that he who strictly views this, may see the dress of the men throughout the whole great monarchy.[184]

The second portrait is that of the "Royal standard of the Great Mogul"[185], which happens to be a lion couching and covering as a shadow part of the sun.[186]

The third portrait[187] is that of:

> the Imperial signet, or the great seal, wherein nine rounds, or circles, are the names and titles of Tamerlane and his lineal successors, in Persian words. This seal, the great Mogul, either in a large or lesser figure, causeth to be put unto all Firmanes or letters patents the present king's title put in the middle and larger circle that i surrounded with the rest; the impression whereof

[180] Ibid., p.203.

[181] Ibid.,

[182] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655.

[183]Appendix, Image I.

[184] Ibid., p. 347.

[185]Appendix, Image II.

[186] Ibid., p. 347.

[187]Appendix, Image III.

> is not made in any kind of wax, but ink, the seal put in the middle of the paper, and the writing about it; which paper there is made very large, smooth and good, and in diverse colors, besides white, and all to write on.[188]

Terry notes how the king gives audience and appears three times publicly to his people every day, starting with

> early in the morning, at that very time the sun begins to appear above the horizon...directly opposite to the east, about seven or eight feet high from the ground; against which time a very great number of his people, especially of the greater fort, who desire as often as they can to appear in his eye, assemble there together, to give him the salam, or good morning, crying all out, as soon as they see their King, with a loud voice PaadshaSalamet...and thus they clapped their hands for joy.[189]

The second and the third time was

> At noon he shows himself in another place like the former, on the south-side; and a little before sunset, in a like place, on the west side of his house or tent; but as soon as the sun forsakes the hemisphere, he leaves his people ushered in and out with drums and wind instruments, and the people's acclamations. At both which times likewise, very great numbers of his people assemble together, to present themselves before him; And at any time of these three time, he that hath a suit to the King, or desires justice at his hands, be the poor or rich, if he holds up a petition to be seen, shall be heard and answered."[190]

Between seven and nine at night, the king sat in the private space of his tent, which was more of a spacious place called

> Goozalcan, or bathing house, made bright like day by abundance of lights; and here the king sits mounted upon a stately throne; where his nobles, and such as are favoured by him, stand about him; others find admittance too, but by special leave from his guard, who cause every one that enters that place to breath upon them, and if they imagine that any have drank wine, they keep him out.[191]

3.5. Administrative Policies as Described in the Travel Narratives

[188] Ibid., pp. 347-348.

[189] Ibid., pp. 370-371.

[190] Ibid., p. 371.

[191] Ibid., p. 371.

We also read about some conspiracy theories against the emperor, like for example, Monserrate writes how Xamansurus(sic)[192] or Khwaja Shah Mansur, Akbar's minister or *vazir* "pressed his plots with all diligence, and how he spent a great deal of pains in estranging the hearts of his subjects from the King". He further writes,

> Xamansurus persuaded the King that these officers were cheating him by drawing pay for more troops than they really had, and by counting infantrymen, or even their own servants, as cavalrymen. Hence, (he said), in order to prevent fraud, every man should be required to be present with his horse; the horses should be branded : and if a horse had died, its tail should be brought. No borrowing or substituting of horses should be permitted; and no horses should be sold without the King's sanction. Furthermore, the pay of the cavalry and its officers should be reduced. The King agreed to this scheme as likely to be advantageous; whereupon the unscrupulous villain, representing himself as the champion of the army, endeavoured to supplant and overthrow the King. For the Mongols so bitterly resented both reforms that a rebellion broke out in Gangaris, and the King's Viceroy was killed. The King himself became highly unpopular with all classes of people throughout the empire. He was accused of despotism.[193]

Subsequently, there was a law that no horse in the empire should be sold without informing the king or his representatives or officials. He permits sell-offs to be openly held, yet the king purchases up the very best animals for himself, without anyway meddling with the offering, or disapproving if any one attempts to outbid him. To keep away from any doubt of persecution, the cash is openly checked out on these events, and the merchant gets several gold pieces, sometimes even more than the actual cost price.[194]

However, this system of branding of horses '*dagh*' and biometric identification of soldiers '*chehra*', were successful policies adopted by the Khilji dynasty ruler, Alauddin Khalji (dates).

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[192]Khwaja Shah Mansur (Xamansurus as Father Monserrate puts his name). He began his career as an accountant in the Perfume Department (E.D.V. 401) and in 1575 A.l). became Vizier and filled the post with ability till his execution on 28th February 1581.

[193] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, pp. 68-70

[194]ibid., p.208.

Akbar, a reasonable and a good administrator, adopted this policy as it was transparent and productive for the functioning of the army. Before long, the King found out about Xamansurus' subsequent conspiracy and endeavoured treachery; and consequently he was dismissed again from his office, denied of all his monetary obligations, and was given away to the custody.

3.6. Judiciary

In accordance with the Islamic practice, we are told, a double process before two judges decides cases. Further, the narratives inform that under the king's directives, all of the capital cases or the important civil cases were conducted only before the king himself. Monserrate writes that though the king could be easily excited and was prone to fits of anger, nonetheless, he was thoughtful and altruistic, and was genuinely a believer that the crimes should not go unpunished. Thus, in the cases where he acted as the judge, he carefully understood the situation and then gave the judgement without any biases or prejudices. There is one instance in which,

> During the campaign against the king of Chabulum, twelve deserters to the enemy were captured in an ambush near the Bydaspes and brought before the King. He pronounced judgment upon them; some were to be kept in custody in order that their case might be more thoroughly investigated, whilst some were convicted of treachery and desertion and handed over for execution.[195]

Terry was of the opinion that the government under Jahangir was tyrannical. He writes:

> the worst of all governments, called by Aristotle arbitrary, illimited, tyrannical.....very uncomfortable for those that live as subjects there, under the command of others, taller than themselves by heir sword's length....the King measureth his power by his sword or lauce, n making his will, his guide.[196]

[195]Ibid.,

[196] Ibid., pp. 352-353.

Further he pointed out that this kind of tyranny was due to the the various religion allowed to be practiced in the country. He writes:

> In that empire all religions are tolerated, which makes the tyrannical government there more easy to be endured. The Mogul would speak well of all of them saying, that a man might be happy and safe in the profession of any religion; and therefore, would say that the Mahometan religion was good, the Christian religion good, and the rest good; therefore the ministers of any religion find regard and esteem amongst the people.[197]

This aspect of the state that Monserrate describes, where he writes, that

> The King's severity towards errors and misdemeanours committed by officials in the course of government business is remarkable, for he is most stern with offenders against the public faith. Hence all are afraid of his severity, and strive with all their might to do as he directs and desires. For the King has the most precise regard for right and justice in the affairs of government.[198]

We are informed that there were two clergymen of the judiciary, one was for the primary cases, and the other minister was for the appeal cases. There was additionally a main officer or the chief magistrate. Judgment was conveyed just verbally, and not recorded as a hard copy. Depending on the extent of their crimes, they were sent either to the prison at 'Goaleris' or Gwalior or were held under watchman in chains. However, Monserrate writes that

> no one is actually punished with these instruments, which seem to be intended rather to inspire terror than for actual use. For the same reason various kinds of chains, manacles, handcuffs and other irons are hung up on one of the palace gateways, which is guarded by the afore-mentioned chief executioner. The chief doorkeeper, the chief trainer of gladiators, and the chief despatch-runner guard the other three gateways respectively.[199]

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[197] Ibid., p. 418.

[198] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922., p. 209.

[199] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, pp. 210-211.

These were the manners by which the criminals were given punishment. The individuals who have carried out a capital crime were squashed "by elephants, speared, or hanged. Seducers and adulterers were either choked to death or gibbeted." The king had such a scorn for depravity and infidelity that neither any influence nor pleas nor the extraordinary payment which was offered would instigate him to pardon such culprit. Despite the fact that Prophet Mohammad did not preclude unnatural wrongdoings, yet the Emperor rebuffed the individuals who were liable of such violations by savage scourging with leather straps.

Similarly, Terry notes that there were no specific laws for judiciary, allowing the king to administer as he pleases. Hence he writes:

> There are no laws for government kept in that empire upon record to regulate governors there in the administration of justice, but what are written in the breast of that King and his substitutes, and therefore they often take liberty to proceed how they please, in punishing the offender, rather than the offence; men's persons, more than their crime.[200]

Terry mentions how the emperor was the sole judge for all the heinous crimes,

> the great Mogul will sit himself as judge, in any matters of consequence that happen near unto him: and there are no malefactors that lie more than one night in prison, and many times not at all, for if the party offending be apprehending early in the day, he is immediately brought before him that must be his judge, by whome he is presently either acquitted or condemned; if he be sentenced to be whipt, he hath his payment, and that usually with very much severity, in the place often where he received that sentence. If condemned to die, he is presently carried from his execution, which is done usually in the Bazar, or market-place. And this round and quick justice keeps the people there in such order and awe, as that there are not many executions.[201]

He further describes how certain crimes were dealt with severity, such as

> Murder and theft they punish with death, and with what kind of death the judge pleaseth to impose; for some malefactors are hang'd, some beheaded, some impaled, or put upon sharp

[200] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, p. 353.

[201] Ibid., pp. 353-354.

> flakes, some are torn in pieces by wild beasts, some kill'd by elephants, and others stung to death by snakes.[202]

Terry observes and adds how the king himself appoints, "governors for provinces and cities, judge in all matters criminal that concern life and death."[203] Further, there were other officers to assist them:

> which are called Cut-walls (Kotwal; whose office is like that of our sherrifs in England) and these have many substitutes under them, whose business it is to apprehend and bring before these judges such as are to be tried for things criminal or capital, where the offender knows presently what will become of him. And those officers wait like wife on other judges there which are called Cadees, who only meddle with contracts and debts, and other businesses of this nature....[204]

These officers also arrested debtors, and brought them before those judges, and their sureties too, bounded as in contracts, confirmed under their hands and seals. If they did not give anything as required and as written in the contract, they would be imprisoned or sometimes got their wives and children into bondage.

3.7. Preparations of War and Royal Camps as Told in the Travel Narratives

These narratives gave descriptions of the preparations of war with Mirza Muhammad Hakim in 1581 C.E., who was a semi-independent governor of Kabul. He was the half-brother of Akbar and had invaded Punjab. Akbar took his eldest son (Salim/Jahangir) and his second son (Murad) along with the Monserrate to the field. Back at the royal court**,** the king had supposedly given his mother Hamida Banu Begum the power and the authority to look after the functioning. The next description put forth was that of the royal camp on move, where Monserrate writes that it is made

[202] Ibid., p. 354.

[203] Ibid., p. 366.

[204]Ibid.,

in a "traditional Mongol style".[205] He tells us that in the pavilion is the *peshkhana*, which was supposedly built in a pleasant open space. It was surrounded by the tents of princes and the princesses in the second line respectively. There were separate *bazaars* established for the king's and the princes, which were very "large and well-stocked, not only with stores of grain and other provisions, but also with all sorts of merchandise, so that these bazaars seem to belong to some wealthy city instead of to a camp."[206]

The king rigorously enforced military discipline, where Monserrate cites one example where one officer does not fully obey the orders of the king and hence, this officer is severely punished and also sold off as a slave before being pardoned. Father justifies this brutal act and writes that "So great an army could indeed have been kept in control by no other method."[207]

The strength of the army lies in the cavalry and Monserrate segregates them as the following,

> The lowest officers are leaders of ten; above them are the leaders of a hundred; above them the leaders of a thousand; and above these the leaders of ten thousand. When the total numbers were reckoned up, for the purpose of giving the cavalry their pay, complete confidence used to be put in the accounts submitted by the chief officers.[208]

Monserrate observes that the payment to the troops is done through the royal treasury directly or through the chief commanding officers' provinces:

> There are forty-five thousand cavalry, five thousand elephants and many thousand infantry, paid directly from the royal treasury. In addition to these there are troops whose command is inherited by their chief officers from father to son, like an hereditary estate ; these troops,

[205] Ibid., p. 75.

[206] Ibid., p. 76.

[207] Ibid., p. 83.

[208]Ibid., p. 37.

> consisting of cavalry, infantry, and elephant detachments, are paid by their commanding officers out of the revenues of the provinces which they hold from the King.[209]

The king could also allot the territories acquired in the conquest to his noble man at his pleasure, in return for the revenue that the nobleman was supposed to pay to the royal treasury:

> For the ancient usage and custom still obtains that territories acquired by conquest can be granted by the King to anyone he likes, not on perpetual tenure, but to be held at his pleasure. Hence the government of such territories is vested in nobles on condition that they pay some stated tribute to the royal treasury. These nobles distribute in their turn cities, townships and villages to their companions-in-arms, and pay the royal tribute either by appropriating the revenues of certain districts to this purpose, or by direct taxation. The King takes great care, in the assignment of territories, to grant each noble a district large enough to enable him to maintain due state and dignity and to support properly his share of the military forces. Thus he, for instance, who has to maintain two brigades receives a richer province than he who has to maintain only one.[210]

It is observed that the King owned the land throughout the country; hence, he can take away or give away any land he wishes to his commanders. As we read this account, it looks like the king was an autocrat as he made the appointments alone. However, we have records to prove otherwise, as there were court nobles and ministers to help and assist the king with important decisions in the functioning of the country. Also in continuous changing and rationing of these positions, the king was more than often under the attack of conspiracies by these men, as Monserrate writes;

> Hence, although all the cities and lands in the empire belong to the King, and the whole army obeys him as commander-in-chief: yet most of the troops have their own generals and officers, to whom they are attached—as has already been pointed out—by an hereditary allegiance. This fact supplies constant cause and opportunity for conspiracy and treason. Wherefore, in order to prevent the great nobles becoming insolent through the unchallenged enjoyment of power, the King summons to court those whom he learns to have become enriched by the revenues of their provinces, and gives them many imperious commands, as though they were his slaves—commands, moreover, obedience to which ill suits their exalted rank and dignity. For he charges them with the maintenance of a certain number of elephants, horses, camels, panthers, fallow-deer and doves, which they have to produce before him on a stated day every year. When they are dismissed once more to take charge of their provinces, he does not allow

[209]Ibid., p. 89.

[210]Ibid.

> them to reside for long in one place ; and in order to prevent their abusing their power he himself appoints the judges and governors of the cities and towns, who have to report to him how the great nobles behave.[211]

Terry also makes some important observations with reference to the inheritance of the offices and wealth, where he rightfully observes how the king takes all the possessions after the officer dies. However, he fails to understand the process of escheat and notes, just like most of the travellers,

> But there is never a subject in that empire, who hath land of inheritance which he may call his own; but they are tenants at the will of their King, having no other title to that they enjoy, besides the King's favour, which is by far more easily lost than gotten. It is true that the King advanceth many there unto many great honours, and allows them (as before) marvellous great revenues; but no son there enjoys the titles or means of his father, that hath had pensions from the King, for the King takes possession of all when they are dead, appointing their children some competent means for their subsistence, which they shall not exceed, if they fall not into the King's affection, as their fathers did; wherefore many great men in this empire live up to the height of their means, and therefore have a very numerous train, a very great retinue to attend upon them, which makes them to appear like Princes, rather than subjects.[212]

The obedience and the loyalty to the King is also not much appreciated by Terry as he observes,

> Yet this their necessary dependence on their King, binds them to such base subjection, as that they will yield readiness unto any of his unreasonable and wilful commands.....and thus the people here will do any thing the King commands them to do; so that if he bid the father to lay hands of violence upon his son, or the son upon his father, they will do it, rather than the will of their King should be disobeyed: thus forgetting nature, rather than subjection.[213]

The tradition of religiously appearing before the public in the court, as Terry observes is also followed even while on move. While the royal camps are built while travelling, it is also noted that

[211] Ibid., pp. 89-90.

[212] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, p. 391.

[213] Ibid., pp. 391-392.

the emperor giving attendance to his subjects is also followed there along with the private meetings.

> Which indeed is very glorious, as all must confess, who have seen the infinite number of tents, or pavilions, there pitched together, which in a plain make a shew equal to a most spacious and glorious city.[214]

> The tents pitch'd in that Laskar, or camp royal, are for the most part white, like the coathing of those which own them. But the Mogul's tents are red, reared up upon poles, higher by much than the other. They are placed in the midst of the camp, where they take up a very large compass of ground, and maybe seen every way; and they must needs be very great, to afford room in them for himself, his wives, children, women, eunuchs, & c…..In the fore front, or outward part, or court within his tent, there is a very large room for access to him, 'twixt seven and nine of the clock at night, which is called his Goozulcan.[215]

3.8. Provinces and Revenue in the Travellers' Records

The Jesuits while travelling in the Mughal Empire documented the sources of income that the king claimed from the regions of his realm. According to them, the Empire's land was rich, ripe and fertile both for development and agriculture, and had an extraordinary potential for produces that could be exchanged both for imports and exports. The king additionally got a lot of revenue from the accumulated fortunes of the rich aristocrats, which by law and custom all went to the king on their proprietors' demise. Also, there were the crown jewels of vanquished rulers and clan leaders, whose fortune was seized, and the extraordinary tolls claimed, and endowments got from the occupants of recently repressed areas in all aspects of his territories and these endowments and duties were considerable. In addition, the king also participated in exchanging for his own account, and hence built his abundance exponentially; and he is said to have enthusiastically misused the profit. Also, he permited no financiers or money changers in his realm aside from the

[214] Ibid., p. 398.

[215] Ibid., pp. 400-401.

administrators or superintendents of the imperial treasury. This colossal banking-business brought the king extraordinary benefit; for only at these illustrious treasuries were they allowed to exchange gold coins for silver or copper coins, or vice versa.[216]

Manrique mentions a brief history of Bengal, where he writes:

> The principalities of Bengala consist of twelve provinces...In former times all these provinces were subject to a pagan monarch, known as the BengalquePadcha, which means Emperor of Bengala. So great, indeed, was his power that he was one of the principal Monarchs in India, ranking with the rulers of Cambaya and Narsinga."[217]

However, the present situation seemed quite different as described by Manrique in Bengal;

> They are now all subject to the Mogul Empire owing to the civil wars which broke out between them after the fall and destruction of the Emperor or Bengala. The grand Mogol then appointed his Nabobs, who, as I said, correspond to Viceroys with us, to all these Provinces. These, in their turn, appoint Governors or Seguidares of their own wherever they consider to keep the people of the country more subject and impotent, they augment their tribute making them pay four or six months tribute in advance. They only hold their governorship. On this account they are always used to exact all the tribute in advance, often by force, and, when the wretched people have no means of paying this, they seize their wives and children, making them into slaves and selling them by auction, as they are heathens. Inspite of such violence the Bengalas are so averse to paying money that some sections of the community hold that the payment of this tribute is a great humiliation, unless they have first been severely beaten. If they pay this tribute without being first well chastised they are received very coldly by their wives, who give them in revenge, very poor meals for several days, upbraiding them with being useless men and cowards, for surrendering so easily money it had cost them such pains to amass."[218]

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[216] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, p. 207.

[217] Fray Sebastien Manrique, *Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique 1629-1643*,vol I, tr. Lauren, The Hakluyt Society, Oxford, 1926, pp, p. 52.

[218] Ibid., pp. 53-54.

In the above paragraph, we also come across some important observations related to the land and revenue system during the period. We can also confer the various 'inhuman' laws and instruments that were used to punish those who were unable to pay the revenue.

As Manrique reaches Agra, he notes down the experiences he encounters at the Court, the *farmans* issued by the Emperor allowing the construction of their religious places of worship and some other various instances, such as:

> The Padcha received them with great honour and kindness, and, after several talks with Captain Tavares, the Emperor took a great liking to him, and Tavares, much gratified, gave him his word that he would come and settle at Ugulim, and bring other Portuguese with him. His majesty was satisfied and accepted his promise, presenting him a grant for the adjoining lands. The Nababo and the above mentioned segnidares were also instructed to supply the Portuguese with all materials necessary for the construction of their houses. The same formones also granted leave to the Brethren to build Chruches and Monasteries, and to baptize without hindrance all the heathen who desired to follow the Anzil (Injil), that is, the Gospel and Christian faith.[219]

We find in Manrique's record how he states that the thriving of the nation is genuinely hampered by the oppressive behaviour of the Mughal delegation in Bengal. The times when the land holder could not pay his proper rent, for whatever his reasons, it was believed that the governor not only held his property but also his wife and his kids. The issue, notwithstanding, we gather from Manrique, that it was not altogether the fault of the governor. Manrique tells us that the Bengali *ryot* as a rule never left behind cash without the utilization of the whip. In case the *ryot* readily parted with the cash, Manrique tells us that if the *ryot's* wife, discovered that her husband had paid

[219]ibid,. p. 37.

without a hesitance or a fight, then she would often "put him on short rations for a time as a punishment".[220]

When it came to signing of a royal *farman*, Monserrate gives a detailed analyses on the entire process:

> The crowd of officers, secretaries and paymasters, who administer the royal supplies, and grant safe conducts, passes, contracts, etc., are accommodated in a very large hall. This secretariat is presided over by a chieftain of great authority and ability who signs the royal 'farmans.' These are eight days afterwards sealed by one of the queens, in whose keeping is the royal signet-ring and also the great seal of the realm. During this eight days' interval every document is most carefully examined by the confidential counsellor and by the King himself, in order to prevent error and fraud. This is done with especial care in the case of gifts and concessions conferred by the royal favour."[221]

Edward Terry talks about the number of provinces under the monarchy, which was divided,

> into thirty seven several and large provinces, which anciently were particular kingdoms, whose true names with their principal cities and rivers, their situation and borders, their extent in length and breadth.[222]

3.9. Problems Encountered By the Travellers

We know that these valuable accounts did not come easy. The travellers had to face many major problems while travelling. Like for example, Monserrate was on the roads, which were "infested on all sides by robbers; and to Musalmans the mere name of Christian or Frank is horrible and

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[220] E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*,Asian Educational Services, 1991, p. 37.

[221] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, pp. 208-9.

[222] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, p. 301.

hateful. Hence they are easily induced to put Christians to death."[223] Edward Terry also seems to have faced with such annoyances while travelling, as he writes,

> All put together, are nothing but a mixture made up of good and bad; of bitter, and sweet; of what contents, and of what contents not. The annoyances of these countries are first many harmful beasts of prey, as lions, tigers, wolves, jackals, with others; those jackals seem to be wild dogs, who in great companies run up and down in the silent night, much disquieting the peace thereof, by their most hideous noise.[224]

Some of the other occurrences described by Terry are the crocodiles in the river, the scorpions and the weather added to the misery as it was extremely hot. It is however, very interesting to note that as Terry points out that there has been no place, no country under heaven, nor a place without discomforts, for even the Garden of Eden had serpents. He further writes,

> But there is no place nor country under Heaven, nor yet ever hath been, without some discommodities. The garden of Eden had a serpent in it.[225]
>
> He (read God) hath made all things by his absolute command, hath so mixed, and tempered, and ordered all things below, by his infinite wisdom....that there is no true and perfect content to be found in any kingdom, but in that of Heaven:[226]

He further writes,

> For while we are here, trouble and peace, mourning and joy, comfort and discontent, come all of them by courses and successions, so that there is no weeding up of those tares, no removing of those annoyances from the life of man."[227]

The above observation shows his perception as a chaplain while travelling in India. While referring to the Lord Almighty and giving justifications based upon his reading and understanding of the holy scriptures in his land, one finds Terry to be religious :

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[223]Ibid., p. 186.

[224] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*,J. Wilkie, London, 1655, p. 115.

[225] Ibid., p. 119.

[226]Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[227]Ibid., p. 120.

> there is no true and perfect content to be found in any kingdom, but in that of Heaven: for while we are here, trouble and peace, mourning and joy, comfort and discontent, come all of them by courses and successions, so that there is no weeding up of those tares no removing of those annoyances from the life of a man."[228]

Terry further observes that

> They have no inns in those parts for the entertainment of strangers, but in some great towns large houses they call saraes, very substantially built with brick or stone, where any passengers may find house-room, and use it without any recompence; but there is nothing to be had besides room, all other things they must provide and bring with them, as when they lodge in tents.[229]

He mentions how many difficulties he encountered on his whole journey and how with the help of his belief in the Almighty he was able to conquer them all:

> I was placed in great difficulty by the unexpected death of the Father, my companion[230]..... This, indeed, was what occurred, as it was nineteen months before two more Brethren arrived.[231] During this interval I met with many difficulties...although I lacked all human aid I did not lack what is more important, divine support, by which the mercy of God carried me safely through many dangers both spiritual and temporal.[232]

Terry tends to romanticize many things in his work, like God, Death, where he writes that Death is a *"*great leveller which cuts down, and then lays all people flat before God. Oh if sickness and death could be brib'd, how rich they would be!"[233]Homesickness, the intimate shadow of wanderlust, affected all of them to some degree and became a predictable theme in their records and letters; most of the times, it resulted in comparisons and sometimes in biased judgements.

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[228] Ibid., p. 120.

[229] Ibid., p. 187.

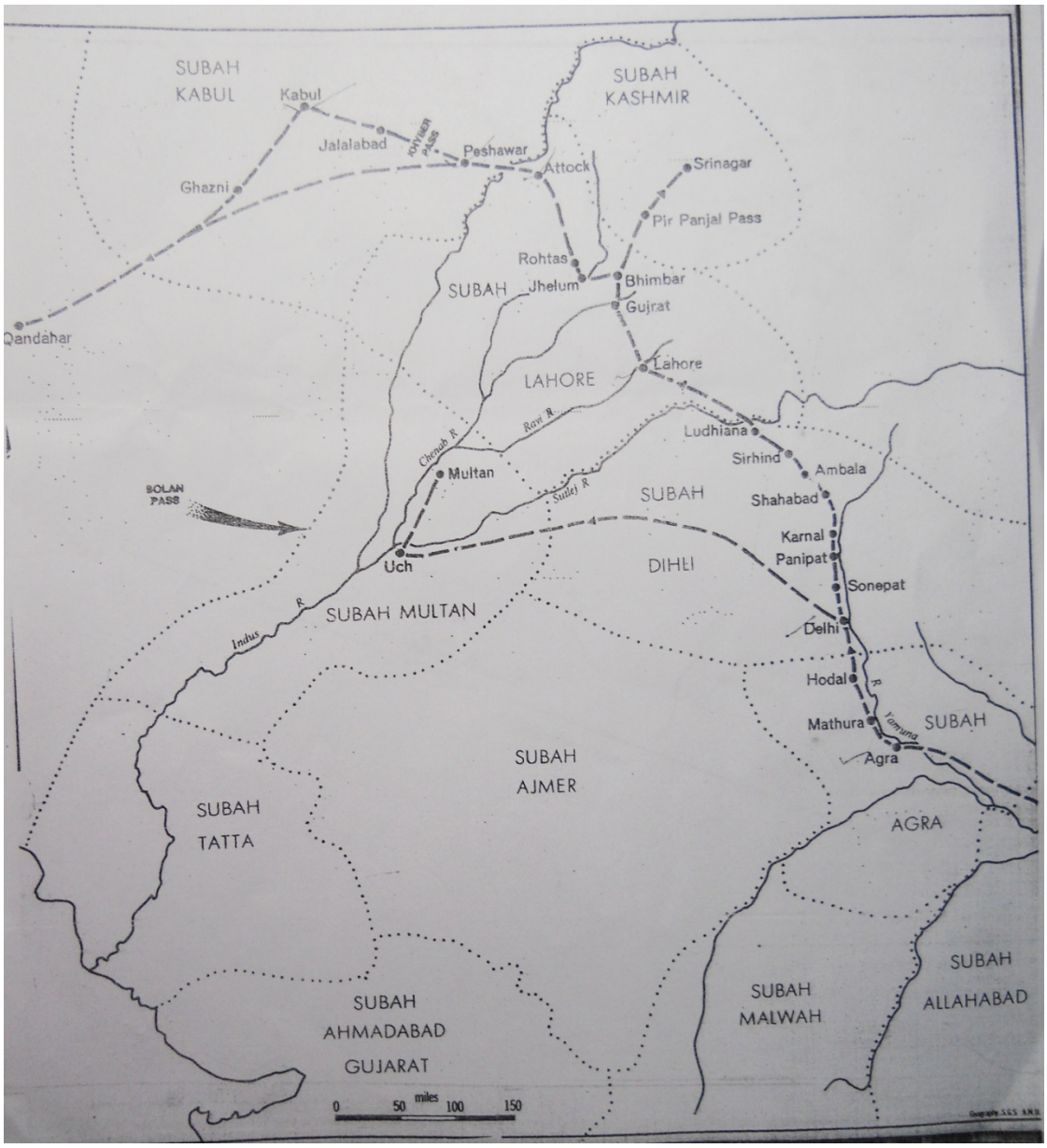
[230] Father Manuel died almost certainly in Oct 1629.

[231]One was Fray DiogoCoulam, other is not given.

[232] Ibid., p. 87.

[233] Ibid., p. 297.

Map: III



Map taken from Abul Khair Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India*, Idara-i Adabiyat-i Delhi, Delhi, 1977

3.10. Conclusion

By the end of Monserrate's account we find a stark contrast to the way the author had started writing his account. We can say that he is very critical of the Indian State and society and the towns as we near the end. While he talks about the towns in the city, he writes,

> they, appear very pleasant from afar ; for they are adorned with many towers and high buildings, in a very beautiful manner, But when one enters them, one finds that the narrowness, aimless crookedness, and ill-planning of the streets deprive these cities of all beauty. Moreover the houses are purposely built without windows on account of the filth of the streets. None the less the rich adorn the roofs and arched ceilings of their houses with carvings and paintings : plant ornamental gardens in their courtyards: make tanks and fish-ponds, which are lined with tiles of various colours : construct artificial springs and fountains, which fling showers of water far into the air : and lay down promenades paved with brickwork or marble. Yet such houses will show nothing in their facades or entrances by which the eye of the passer-by might be attracted, and nothing by which it might be known that inside is anything out of the ordinary. The Brachmanae have another style of architecture; but they also beautify their houses with cleverly executed statues and sculptures of fabulous heroes and monsters either in wood or stone. They never forget to carve or paint somewhere on their buildings (generally on the capitals of the columns) the crested snake, which is called by the Portuguese the 'cuckoo-serpent,' and which I believe to be the Egyptian asp. The common people live in lowly huts and tin cottages : and hence if a traveller has seen one ot these cities, he has seen them all. The ideas of government entertained by the Brachmanae and the Musalmans in Zelaldinus' empire differ widely. For the Brachmanae govern liberally, through a senate and council of the common people: but the Musalmans have no council or senators, everything being decided by the arbitrary will of the governor appointed by the King."[234]

Hence, we can also say in conclusion that although Akbar could not read and write, he was a secular and a knowledgeable person. He was a sharp an eager student of comparative religion. He welcomed to his court Christian priests, Parsee and Jain preachers too. Commonly an inquisitive and eccentric person, he in every case excitedly enquired after some new faction, however he was also totally mindful and aware of how far he could delight his interest without meddling with the

[234] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, p. 219.

security of his throne. However, he was also practical, never compromising with political interests. Although we can find evidences of how Akbar showed interest in Christianity more than his own religion but he comprehended clearly that, without inciting an overall resistance of his subjects, both the Hindu and Mahommedan, he could not have possibly converted himself to Christianity faith. His conversion to some other faith would have demolished the fabric of his entire kingdom, which was the result of his years of effort and perseverance.

Secondly, it is also to be noted that as practiced in the Europe where the religion of the king was to be the religion of his subjects, in India, this was never so. The religion of the king could have been different than his subjects. Monserrate and the other missionaries misunderstood the Indian society and were incorrectly keen on converting the king.

Similarly with Terry, considering his resentment for the people of the country, it is not surprising to find in his account the way he concludes asking for a pardon, as he writes that "I shall presume one parden, and that is for the leanness and lowness of my stile, wherewith this relation is cloathed, when my reader considers, that I live among Indians, which made me rude."[235]

Therefore, certain common visible aspects that we come to, after analysing these accounts are, firstly, these missionaries and friars had one sole purpose in visiting foreign countries and that is to spread and teach their religion as much as possible. The missionaries like Monserrate, came to India with the motive to convert the emperor, as it was a common practice in Europe for the King's religion to be the religion of the masses. In the beginning he seems to have had a strong belief that the king had an inclination towards conversion. We can also find the differences in his way of writing, where in the beginning he praises the king and the way he administers the country. He

[235] Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India*., p. 511.

seems to be in awe of the emperor even if the emperor is behaving in a tyrannical manner, Monserrate somehow finds a way to justify. However, by the end of his book, as he realizes that his mission to convert the king is not coming true anytime soon, he starts taking out his real feelings in his writings. He ends by talking about the places and towns which he says looks ‘pleasant’ from far but as one approaches it, finds it to be ‘narrowness, aimless crookedness, and ill-planning’.

Terry, however, seems very sceptical right from the beginning till the end. Knowing that his writings will not in any way affect their embassy, he is clearly very critical of the king and the way he administers it. It can also be said that since he was with the ambassador, he felt no need to please the king in any way possible. Nonetheless, we cannot say that his account is free of bias, as we find many instances where he criticises the country or the king because of their belief system and their religion.

Chapter Four

AMBASSADORS AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

4.1. Introduction

In the fourth chapter, the focus will be on the various diplomatic developments that took place in the Mughal era. This chapter will discuss the differences the foreign ambassadors encountered in behaviour of the Mughal state, especially the Mughal emperor towards them when they travelled and visited the court. It further elaborates the difference in the Mughal attitude during the different time period starting from fifteenth to the seventeenth century with different diplomatic rank holders. It can be clearly stated that different treatment was meted out to ambassadors of different countries, which helps us in understanding the importance of different countries for the Mughals. In short, not all countries were held in high regard by the Mughals. This chapter also deals with the different fractions and treacheries that were often seen in connection with the diplomatic relations during the period, especially when these missions got embroiled in the complexities of the war of succession. While studying these accounts we get to understand the continuous interaction and diplomacy between the rulers of the East and West. One also understands how these ambassadors were sent to seek the emperor's goodwill and advantages for the respective trading Company and its servants. We also get an idea of various problems these foreign emissaries faced, for instance, inconvenient mode of transports and various rules that they felt subjected them to humiliation at the hands of the Mughal state. Such instances will be studied further, later in the chapter along with some case studies. Last but not the least, these ambassadors were often invited over for the various festivities and functions that took place in the court. Here, the emperor often

exhibited the lavishes of his empire. Hence, this research work further looks into the reasons for such occurrences and the nature of diplomacy from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century.

The period of study for this chapter focusses mainly on the interaction between power politics and diplomacy with their associations grandeur, status and the idea of 'national prestige'. Many diplomats during this period also followed the "civilian theory of negotiation",[236] which depended on presumption that the trade-off amongst contentious groups are by and large more beneficial than the total obliteration of the opponent. Often the inter-state politics marked by intrigues, fractions and treachery, especially in the later years had implications for the security of the trading companies. The companies and their rulers had their own perceptions of dealing with these issues. For example, the policy of the Court of Directors in London was to leave the matters to the contending powers. According to their views as reflected in various correspondence, "It is for the contending parties to establish a balance of power among themselves. Their divisions are our security."[237]

Hence, there is a surge in ambassadors in the medieval time period in India and around the world. In general, diplomacy has always certain motives for foreign travel and undertakings: to accquire information; to broadcast European power and military successes; many a times these embassies were exchanged so that the trade between the countries could flourish; to strike friendship and support; signing of various treaties played a major part as the work of embassy; and finally,

[236] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, p. 54.

[237] Letter from the Court Directors, as quoted in Sehgal, Prabha, *Political History of Modern and Medieval India in the 18th century,* Sanjay Prakashan, 1992, p. viii.

religious missions as embassies, especially to the court of Akbar and Jahangir.[238] Hence, matters of delicate political etiquette lay at the heart of diplomacy and diplomatic relations always and such was also the case between the fifteenth and seventeenth century.

However, before we begin studying the diplomatic relations in medieval India, let us understand the history of diplomacy from the ancient times. This will help us contextualize the chapter further more.

4.2. History of Diplomacy

Harold Nicolson defines the term 'diplomacy' as, "it is neither the invention nor the pastime of some particular political system, but is an essential element in any reasonable relation between man and man and between nation and nation."[239] There have been common assumptions on how the basis of foreign policy and diplomatic relations are based upon the states 'rights and interests'. There was an overall agreement that international concerns were a specific and elusive investigation, the privileged insights of which lay past the extent of conventional layman's experience or judgment.[240]Diplomatic practice is itself an ambiguous term. Diplomacy, therefore, can be said is an ordered progress of relations or businesses between one group of state with the other group, that is, alien to them. In the ancient and primitive times, all foreigners were regarded as both impure and dangerous. The evolution was generally a slow and a gradual process. It was only after the fifteenth century, that the permanent Ambassadors were appointed by the Italian

[238] Stefan Halikowski-Smith, "The friendship of Kings was in the Ambassadors: Portuguese Diplomatic Embassies in Asia and Africa during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", Portuguese Studies, Vol 22 No 1 (2006), p. 108.

[239] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, p. 14.

[240] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, p. 10.

States, who further took diplomacy as profession that can be said to have been for the most part perceived in the modern times.

The theorists of the sixteenth century often believed that angels were supposedly the first diplomatists. They were the messengers "between heaven and earth."[241] Harold Nicolson states that, "The wretched Ambassadors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were not merely supposed to engage in physical combat for the maintenance of their own precedence. They were expected to indicate by the lavishness of their display the magnitude and power of their own sovereigns, and since the said sovereigns generally omitted to pay them any salary, they fell frequently into debt."[242]

Professor Mowat[243] identifies diplomacy in Europe in three phases. The first phase starts from 476 C.E. to 1475 C.E., which covers the famous dark ages where the concept of diplomacy was not organised. The second phase starts from 1473 C.E. to 1914 C.E. where the diplomatic theory was continued in the system of policy also known as the "European States system". The third phase was inaugurated by President Wilson, which was known as 'diplomatic diplomacy'.

Ernest Satow defined diplomacy as, "the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent States." Therefore, diplomacy is not equivalent to moral philosophy. The most exceedingly awful sort of diplomatists are evangelists, fanatics and legal counselors; the best kind are the sensible and empathetic people. Consequently, "it is not the religion which has been the principle developmental impact in political hypothesis; it

[241] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, p. 17.

[242] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, pp. 31-32.

[243] Mowat, *Diplomacy and Peace,* 1935, quoted in Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, p. 34.

is in fact just common sense. Furthermore, it was through exchange and trade that individuals first figured out how to apply good judgment in their dealings with one another."[244]

Hence, some of these characteristics can be visibly identified in the travel accounts. Diplomacy can be seen in their gift giving practices, which decided the kind of treatment that the travellers were due. Also, the news of war of succession and the enthronement of the new emperor often kept the neighbouring countries in high alert. Most of the times, these countries sent their embassies immediately in the presence of the newly enthroned Mughal emperor to gain the emperor's trust and to profit as much as possible.

4.3. Accounts of the Mughal State's Attitude to Various Embassies

Different ambassadors that visited the Mughals in their court experienced different behaviour towards them. It can be observed in my of such writings where the travellers mention the reasons too at times.

Diplomats often made their visits for the benefit of trade and commerce, which ultimately overcame the adversity of political communication.. The language of trade was the most widespread language that could be made in the medieval times. The diplomats were mostly working on profiting gains for their companies in a maximum way possible.

4.3.1. Hospitality of the Mughal State Towards the Ambassadors

By the principles of diplomatic relations in the Mughal Empire and other political dispensations in Asia, foreign embassies were obliged to be taken care of and housed by the host nation, and even given money for their expenses. The personal religion of the ambassador was definitely more

[244] Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, OUP, 1939, p. 50.

tolerated in Asia than it was in Europe. This can be witnessed in an instance where, Philip II (ruler of Spain, 1556-98 C.E.) in 1568 flatly refused to allow the English ambassadors in Madrid to hold Anglican services, as he considered himself to be the defender of Catholic Europe. However, in India this was not the case most of the times.

Monserrate states that Akbar's court was mostly visited by a horde of ministers and high officers from practically everywhere in the world, notable amongst them were the embassies of "Henry the Fourth of Castalia", the ruler from Spain.[245]. Akbar was known to be kind and compassionate to the foreigners, particularly in his attitude towards the ambassadors. This has been witnessed in the case of William Hawkins, an Englishman, who came to India in 1608. He was to take charge of the various negotiations on behalf of the king of England. He remained as a resident ambassador (without any authorization from England) at Agra in the court of Jahangir. Jahangir was so pleased with him that he promised to allow the English traders with favourable terms and conditions to trade at the Mughal ports. Hawkins was also made "captain" of about four hundred horses, with a good allowance. He was married to an Armenian woman, and was amongst the prominent members of the Mughal court.[246] Monserrate notes that Akbar welcomed his guests in a way, quite similar to the ways in which he treated his own individual kinsmen and subordinates.

However, there were some exceptions too according to Monserrate. The emperors did not always treat the ambassadors well, for example, there is an instance where Akbar welcomed the embassies of the "Turkish Viceroy of Arabia Felix", unreasonably to such an extent that "the embassy disappeared in a cloud of smoke". Akbar then ordered the chief ambassador to be imprisoned and

[245] Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, p. 105.
[246] *Early Travels in India 1583-1619*, ed. William Foster, Oriental Books, Delhi, 1985, p. 65.

sent to exile for a significant period of time to Lahore. However, the chaperons of the ambassador secretly escaped. According to Monserrate, the reasons for Akbar's hostile attitude was his disdain at the haughtiness or arrogance of both the ambassadors and of the ruler who sent them, and the undertaking which they made to convince him to take up arms against the rulers of Portugal and Spain. We are also told that Akbar was also compassionate towards those rulers who were driven out from their domains and were in need of his protection. According to Monserrate, to such rulers, Akbar provided troops and assets on the condition that these rulers in their respective areas would use the weights, measures and currency of the Mughal Empire, ensuring its control and sovereignty.

Monserrate further explains that Akbar's behavior towards these bureaucrats who do behave accordingly or commit any kind of offence are punished more harshly and tirelessly than the rest of the individuals.

The Mughals assumably were in the habit of detaining all ambassadors as long as can reasonably be done. For example, according to Bernier, Aurangzeb in order to assert his power received the ambassadors and made them attend his court as long as he wanted them to. Monsieur Adrican, the chief of the Dutch factory at Surat was not dismissed when he wished to leave, but he was allowed to return before the ambassadors from Tartary, who were also visiting the Mughal court at the same time. These ambassadors remained in Delhi for more than four months, in spite of all their endeavors to achieve their purposes. This over stay often resulted in number of problems in their health. The reason can be the change in weather, the new environment as it was not easy to adjust for all. It could also have been due to the changed eating habits, at the worst-case scenario, the travellers also died. Bernier finds that the Uzbek Tartars who visited Aurangzeb's court were narrowminded, sordid and unhygienic. He further writes how the various individuals who

composed the Uzbek embassy hoarded most of the money given by Aurangzeb for their everyday expenses and instead "lived on a miserable pittance, in a style quite unsuitable to their station".
The Mughal behaviour also depended on other factors, such as the gifts that were presented to the emperor by the ambassadors. In the next part, these gift giving as well as receiving customs will be studied further. This will help us understand the nature of Mughal behaviour towards the ambassadors and their native countries in return.

4.3.2 Gift Giving Practices and Their Implications

Giving gifts were a vital component of the Mughal court protocol and official arrangements of endowments were usually made in advance. The quality of gifts often caused tension, for if the gift was perceived as inferior, the Mughal emperor took serious offence.

However, while welcoming the ambassadors, Akbar had generally wonderful and lavish feasts arranged, placed them in a well-fortified camp. The emperor's main objective was to make a grand display of their wealth and abundance. During such occasions the common people were generally given gold and silver coins along with some jewels. The Mughals made these occasions an opportunity to display their grandeur, power and wealth.
While Thomas Roe mentions other ambassadors from different countries, we also find his observation on the different kind of treatment meted out to them. Roe mentions the arrival of five ambassadors in Delhi. The first one to arrive was from Mecca, who was popularly known as the 'grand shereef' (from the Arabic word *sharif* or noble). It was believed that he had control over holy places and also claimed "to be a lineal descendant of the Prophet Muhammad". The presents that accompanied his embassage consisted of:

> a small number of Arabian horses and a besom which had been used for sweeping out the small chapel situated in the centre of the Great Mosque at Mecca; a chapel held in great veneration by Mahometans, and called by them Beit-Allah., or the House of God….[247]

The second ambassador was sent by the "King of Hyeman, or Arabia Felix" (Yemen, south-east of Mecca); and the "third by the Prince of Bassora; both of whom also brought presents of Arabian horses. The two other ambassadors came from the King of Ebeche, or Ethiopia" (Abyssinia). Roe observes how the first three of these embassies were not given much respect. The envoy from the King of Ethiopia was welcomed with some compassion. The African monarch, mentions Roe, worried that his ambassador would not dress up to the occasion and therefore tried to compensate by gifting generously the Mughal emperor. He presented the emperor with "thirty-two young slaves, boys and girls, to be sold at Moka; and the money raised by this happy expedient was to supply the expenses of the mission. Besides these, the Ethiopian King sent to the Great Mughal twenty-five choice slaves, nine or ten of whom were of a tender age and in a state to be made eunuchs".[248]

Sir Thomas Roe also mentions the visit of a Persian Ambassador Mahomett Roza Beag.[249] According to Roe:

> about no one came into the Towne with a great troup, which were partly sent out by the king to meete him with 100 Eliphantes and musique, but no man of greater qualetye then the ordinary receiver of all strangers. His owne trayne were about 50 horse, well fitted in Coates of Cloth of Gould, their bowes, quivers, and Targetes richly garnished, 40 shott, and some 200 ordinary Peons and attenders on baggage."[250]

[247] Thomas Roe, vol II, p. 294.

[248] Muhammad Raza Beg; *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India*, vol II, p. 295.

[249] Ibid.,

[250] Ibid.,

The ambassador was then brought to the *darbar* (court) before the king, to attend the ceremony where Roe sent his secretary to observe the proceedings. Roe got reports of how the ambassador approached the throne, amd performed the *sizda*[251] at the entrance, thereby presenting the Mughal emperor his letters.[252] The ambassador was placed, according to Roe, in the:

> seventh rank against the rayle by the door, below so many of the kinges servantes on both sides, which in my judgment was a most inferior Place for his masters Embassador, but that hee well deserved it for doing that reverence which his Predecessores refused, to the dishonor of his Prince and the Murmer of many of his nation."[253]

The ambassador further brought many gifts. Roe provides a list of gifts:

> nine horses of Persia and Arabia, seven camels laden with velvet, two suites of Europe Arras (which supposedly was Venetian hangings of velvet with gold, and not Arras), two chests of persian hangings, on cabinet rich, 40 muskets, 5 clocks, one camel laden with persian cloth of gold, 8 carpets of silk, 2 rubies ballast, 21 camels of wine of the Grape, 14 camels of distilled sweet waters, 7 of rose waters, 7 daggers set with stones, 5 swords set with stones, 7 Venetian looking glasses.[254]

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[251] The *sizda*, or prostration, introduced by some of Akbar's courtiers upon the establishment of his " Divine faith." As, however, it was one of the positions at prayer, it was looked upon by the Muhamma- dans in general as the exclusive right of God; and Akbar, though pleased with the practice, was obliged to forbid its use in public. Jahangir encouraged it, and in his *Tuzuk-i- Jahangiri* he notes with evident satis- faction that the Persian ambassador on this occasion " performed the dues of prostration and salutation " (Mr. Rogers' translation) ; but it was always unpopular and Shdh Jahdn abolished it upon his accession to the throne (Blochmann's Ain-i-Akbari, vol. i, pp. 159, 213).

[252] Sir Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-1619,* ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, London, 1926, vol II, p. 295.

[253] At a later date, the Persians appear to have received better treatment, for Bernier says that the privileges of saluting according to the customs of their own country, and of delivering their letters "without the intervention of an Omrah…belong exclusively to Persians ambassadors," although they are not granted, "even to them, without much hesitation and difficulty."

[254] Sir Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-1619,* ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, London, 1926, vol II, p. 295.

Roe surprisingly writes how Jahangir did not receive the Shah's (Shah Abbas I of Persia, 1571-1629 C.E) letter with as much respect as Roe's. Yet we find in Jahangir's *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, not only the mention of the embassy but also the text of Shah's letter. Interestingly, Roe's mission was not even mentioned.

Roe further mentions the sudden departure of the Persian ambassador on the pretext of ill-health, though the actual reason, according to Roe was the unfair compensation given to him.[255] The ambassador was supposedly given,

> thirty fair horses at his departure, the King gave in recompense three thousand rupias, which he took in great scorn; whereupon the King prized all that the Ambassador had given him at mean rates, and likewise all that the King had returned since his arrival, even to slaves, drink, melons, pines, plants, Hawkes, Plumes, the elephant and whatsoever at extreme high rates, and sending both bills made it up in money.[256]

This seemed to have upset the ambassador, hence, leading to his departure. These instances can be cited to understand the importance of gifts and presents to the Mughals and the compensation and the behavior towards the ambassadors accordingly were the deciding factors for any kind of diplomatic relations.

Similar court etiquettes in greeting a foreign emissary, courtesies expected from him and the elaborate exchange of gifts can be seen in Bernier's account of Aurangzeb's court. The ambassadors, as observed by Bernier, made the *salaam*, "or Indian act of obeisance, placing the hand thrice upon the head, and as often dropping it down to the ground."[257] Further they approached emperor Aurangzeb so as to give him the letters personally. However, Omrah usually

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[255] Something has been omitted here. Agha Nur seems to have been the person referred to.

[256] Sir Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-1619,* ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, London, 1926, vol II, p. 400.

[257] *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656-1668*, Francois Bernier, trans. Archibald Constable, 1916, p. 120.

performed this function, who opened those letters first and then later presented it to the king, who then commanded that each of the ambassadors should be given a “Serapah or vesture from head to foot; namely, a vest of brocade, a turban, and a sash or girdle, of embroidered silk. After this the presents from the Khans were brought before the King, consisting of some boxes of *lapis-lazuli* or the choicest azure[258]; a few long-haired camels ; several horses of great beauty, although the Tartar horses[259] are generally something better than merely beautiful : some camel-loads of fresh fruit, such as apples, pears, grapes, and melons” ; Uzbek principally supplied Delhi with these fruits, and many of dry fruit, such as *kickmiches*[260], or raisins, prunes[261], Bokara, apricots etc.

[258] Used, pounded up, by the calligraphers of Persia, Kashmir, and Delhi as the basis for that ' azure blue ' color, in their choice illuminated MSS., which is unsurpassable, and cannot even be approached by any modern artificial chemical substitute. Lapis-lazuli was largely used in the pietra dura work in the Taj; and these Tartar ambassadors may have been bringing some of it as a tribute or offering to the Mogul Court for this very purpose. This tomb, although finished in 1648 as far as the mere structure is concerned, was probably worked at for many years afterwards ('built by Titans, finished by jewelers’), as much of the exquisite detail of its decorations could not have been carried out in any other way. In a translation of a Persian MS., published at Lahore in 1869, at the Victoria Press, by Azeezoodeen, giving an account of the building of the Taj, particulars are given of the source of supply and cost of the various stones used. In this account lapis-lazuli is said to have been brought from Ceylon, but I believe that this mineral is never found there. We are also informed that ' most of these [stones] were received in lieu of tribute from different nations under the Emperor's rule, or were made presents voluntarily, or otherwise, by the different Rajahs and Nawabs.'

[259] ‘The fine up-standing Turkoman horse ' of the everyday Calcutta horse-dealers' sale-catalogues. Moorcroft's journey to Tibet, in 1819, was chiefly undertaken with the object of obtaining Turkoman horses of the choicest breed, which it was his great ambition to domesticate in India.

[260] Kishmish, the stoneless raisins of the modern dried-fruit sellers.

[261] The Alii Bokharas imported largely into India at the present day, and most excellent simply stewed, or in a tart.

Aurangzeb seemed well pleased with the beautiful and rare presents of camels, horses and fruits. Bernier seems disappointed with the complying nature of these ambassadors, as he writes, "If they had been required to kiss the ground, or to perform any act of still deeper humiliation, I verily believe they would have complied without a murmur."[262]

Bernier further writes that such expectations from the ambassadors were highly unreasonable. He states that only the Persian ambassadors were given privileges to interact with the King or even to present the letters personally to him.

The Dutch also decided to send Monsieur Adrican[263] as an ambassador. Adrican possessed "integrity, abilities, and sound judgment"; and as he considered the advices given to him by those experienced and wise men. Aurangzeb despised *Franks* or *Christians*, writes Bernier, yet during such occasions when the embassies arrived, his behavior was mostly generous, courteous and patronizing. The emperor also wished that the ambassador perform *salaam*, (the Indian way of saluting) while he approached him and salute the emperor. The emperor, however, received the letters from the *Omrah*. However, this was a custom done with all the ambassadors, so was the case with the Uzbek ambassadors. "The preliminary observances being over, Aurangzeb intimated that the ambassador might produce his presents; at the same time investing him, and a few gentlemen in his suite, with a *seraph* of brocade. The presents consisted of a quantity of very fine broad cloths, scarlet and green; some large looking-glasses; and several articles of Chinese and

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[262] *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656-1668*, Francois Bernier, trans. Archibald Constable, 1916, p. 122.

[263] Dirk van Adrichem, who was chief, or director, of the Dutch factory at Surat from 1662 to 1665. He succeeded in obtaining a ' concession' (Farman, of gunst-brief'vn. the Dutch original), dated Delhi, 29th October 1662, from Aurangzeb, which conferred valuable privileges upon the Dutch in Bengal and Orissa. Valentyn, Bcschryving, p. 261.

Japan workmanship; among which were a palanquin 'paleky' and a 'Tack-ravan'[264] or travelling throne, of exquisite beauty, and much admired.

While taking leave Aurangzeb again presented him with a *seraph* of brocade for his own use, and another very rich one for the governor of Batavia, together with a dagger set with jewels; accompanied by a gracious letter. The chief aim of the Dutch in this embassy was to ingratiate themselves with the Mughals, and to impart to the emperor some knowledge of their nation. The Dutch hoped that a beneficial influence might be produced upon the minds of the governors of the Mughal sea-ports, and other places, where the Dutch had established factories."[265]

Further, the Dutch felt the such diplomatic goodwill established through elaborate gift giving would strengthen their position as traders and influence the governors to practice restrain from obstructing their commerce. It was also expected that the governors would realize that the Dutch had the protection of the powerful Mughal state and hence, they could have him listen to their grievances or cater to their complaints. They further intended to gain favorable opinions from the government by making them believe that they are profiting from keeping good relation with the emperors of India. They exhibited "a long list of articles purchased by their countrymen, from which they showed that the gold and silver brought by them every year into the Indies amounted to a considerable sum. But they kept out of sight the amount of those precious metals extracted by their constant importations of copper, lead, cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, pepper, aloes-wood, elephants, and other merchandise."[266]

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[264] Takht-i rawdn, from takht, a seat or throne, and rawdn, the present participle of the verb raftan, to go, to move, to proceed. The takht-i rawan was carried on men's shoulders, and was used by royalty alone.

[265] The Farman (lit. an order, a ' patent ' or commission) obtained by Dirk van Adrichem

[266] Francois Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656-1668*, trans. Archibald Constable, 1916, p. 126.

Further, in the presence of the Omrahs, the king also gave the Dutch two rich Seraphs and also commanded his officers to give them eighth thousand rupias. [267]

4.4. Transportation difficulties

Transportation in those days were hardly swift, there were not good roads available most of the times. It was natural for a foreigner to not expect the comforts and conveniences that was available to him at his hometown. "The sea had its corsairs, the land its highwaymen hence, few travelers could afford to carry with them the much-needed cash; the utility of letters of credit depended on contingencies no one could foresee. Where does this quote end? But despite all these difficulties the lure of the unknown proved too strong for many adventurous spirits and in the far-off lands of the east they were warmly welcomed not only by their own countrymen but by all Europeans in general and even by their dusky brethren in faith. Careri was befriended by Portuguese officials and clergymen, Mandelslo was received with open arms by the English and the Dutch merchants, Pietro della Valle found never failing friends in the Dutch and even Carre, employed on a political mission, was not infrequently helped by the enemies of his country. A white man travelling in the Mughal's country could normally count on the friendship and assistance of other white men."[268]
To evade the thieves attacking their guards, embassies frequently joined the caravans and camel caravans *(kafilas*) as a precaution or insurance. The ambassadors would recover the lost cash through pay-offs from merchants wanting to be included in the cafila.

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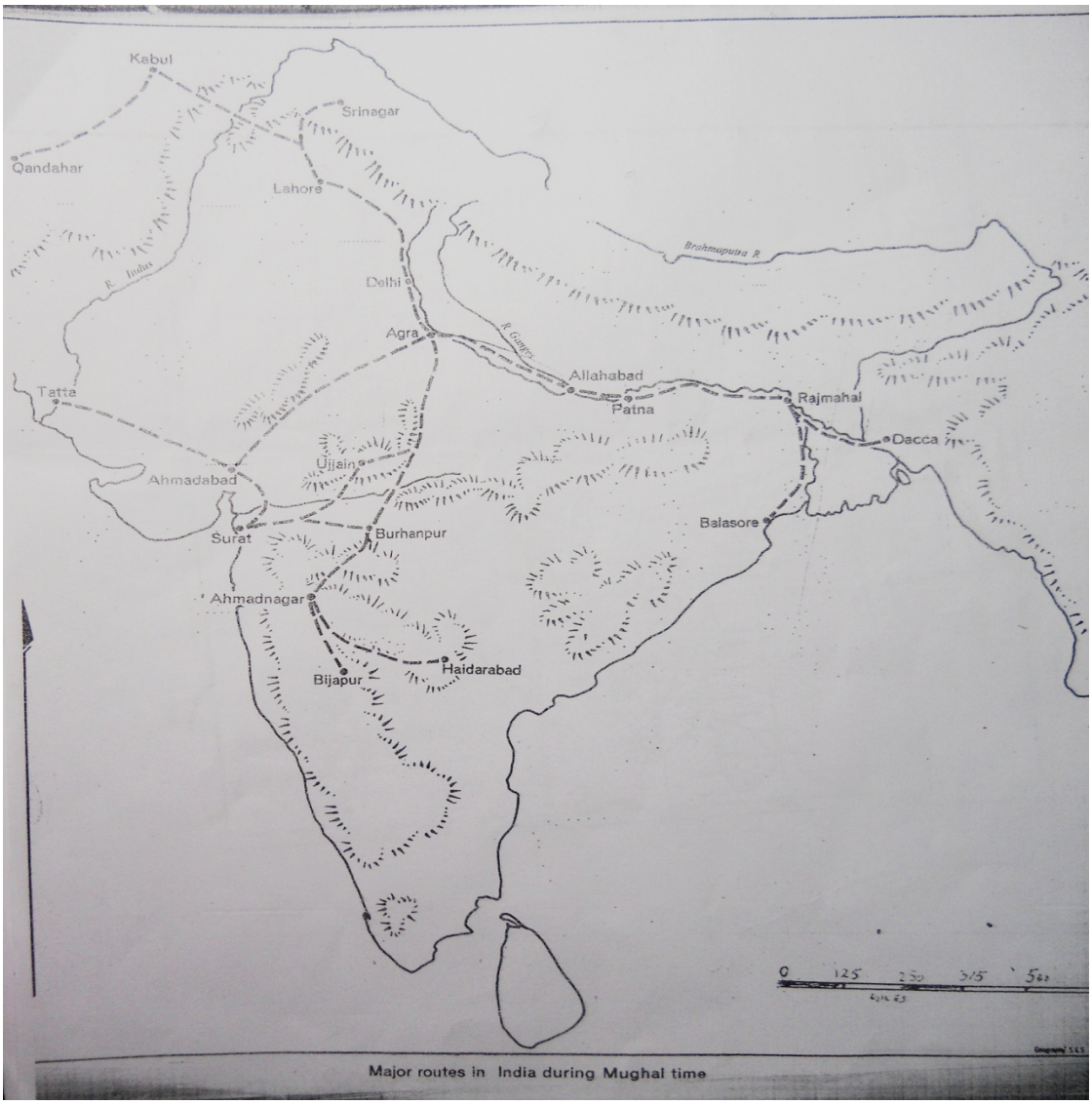
[267] Bernier describes the Uzbek ambassadors as, "ignorant beyond all conception. They were unacquainted even with the boundaries of Uzbek". *Travels in the Mogul Empire, AD 1656-1668*, Francois Bernier, trans. Archibald Constable, 1916, p. 127.

[268] *Indian Record Series: Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, ed. Surendranath Sen, National Archives of India, New Delhi, 1949, pp. liv-lv.



Map IV: Abul Khair Farooque, *Roads and Communication in Mughal India.*

4.5. War of Succession as Documented in the Diplomatic Accounts

The Mughal state experienced intense wars of succession, after the reign of Akbar in particular. The change in throne often played an important part in the coming of the embassies. On such similar occasions, Bernier notes how after the war of succession ended, the Tartars of Uzbek eagerly dispatched ambassadors to Aurangzeb. The Uzbek's had earlier known Aurangzeb since the era of Shah Jahan. It was in his reign that Aurangzeb was sent to assist the Khan of

Samarkhand[269] The Tartars from Uzbek kept a track of the occurrences in Hindustan, especially with reference to the succession, the knowledge about the victors and the losers. They knew the fact that although Shah Jahan being still alive, Aurangzeb was in reality the established ruler of the Indies. "Whether, then, they dreaded his just resentment, or hoped to obtain some considerable present, the two Khans sent ambassadors, with a proffer of their services, and with injunctions to perform the ceremony of the 'Mobarek': that is, to express in a solemn manner their wishes that his reign might be long and auspicious." Bernier notes how Aurangzeb in spite of knowing the truth behind such diplomatic approach of the Uzbeks, treated their ambassadors in a courteous fashion. A similar incident of selecting the successor can be witnessed during Aurangzeb's reign. Aurangzeb once assembled his privy-council while the Ethiopian embassy was still in Delhi. The emperor brought together the knowledgeable people to help select the emperor with a suitable successor and to teach him further, in this case, for "his third son, Sultan Akbar."[270] Aurangzeb gave utmost importance to this occasion so as to prepare his son as the best successor after him. According to Bernier, noone is more suitable enough to train the minds of princes with useful knowledge other than Aurangzeb. Here we find that Bernier praises this particular attribute of Aurangzeb. He writes how Aurangzeb is extremely,

> sensible regarding the cause of the misery which affects the empires of Asia, of their misrule, and consequent decay, should be sought, and will be found, in the deficient and pernicious mode of instructing the children of their Kings. Instructed from infancy to the care of women and eunuchs, slaves from Russia, Circassia, Mingrelia, Gurgistan[271] or Ethiopia, whose minds

269 The Mughal Occupation of Balkh 1646-1647 A.D. In 1638, Kandahar was handed over to Shah Jahan by Kurdish turncoat Ali Mardan Khan. Kabul and Kandahar was considered important for the Mughal empire as two twin 'gateway-cities' to Hindustan. Later in 1647, Aurangzeb forced Uzbeks outside Balkh and captured the city. However, they were not able to secure the the territory for long.

270 Muhammad Akbar, his fourth son, but the third then alive, revolted against his father, and took refuge in Persia, where he died.

271 Georgia.

> are debased by the very nature of their occupation; As they surpass others in power and elevation, so ought they, he says, to be pre-eminent in wisdom and virtue. He is servile and mean to superiors, proud and oppressive to dependants; these Princes, when called to the throne, leave the walls of the Seraglio quite ignorant of the duties imposed upon them by their new situation.[272]

4.6 The Embassies from Persia

As we know the importance that was given to the Persian empire by the Mughals, it is interesting to study the observation of the European travellers on how the embassies from this particular country were treated. Mughals often borrowed Persian way of living, their culture amongst other things, such that the official language of Mughals was Persian. This fact could not be ignored by the fellow Europeans as well. Bernier give a detailed account of the Persian embassy and its interactions with Aurangzeb. He narrates that while Aurangzeb was dealing different embassies, information was flowing in the court that an embassy had arrived from Persia on the Mughal court. "The Persian *Omrahs*, and others of that nation, in the service of the Mughal, spread a report that affairs of the utmost moment brought the ambassador to Hindustan. Intelligent persons, however, gave no credence to the rumor. It was clear that the Persians had no other reason for saying their countryman was entrusted with an important commission, than a vain and overweening desire to exalt their nation. It was also pretended by the same individuals, that the Omrah appointed to meet the ambassador on the frontier, and to provide for his honorable treatment during his journey to the capital, was strictly enjoined to spare no pains to discover the principal object of the embassy. He was instructed, they said, to prepare, by degrees, the haughty Persian for the ceremony of the *salaam*, which was to be represented, as well as that of delivering all letters through the medium of a third person, as a custom that has invariably obtained from time immemorial." Therefore, it

[272] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 173.

was quite evident from all the evidences that were present that Aurangzeb was prepared with much higher necessities of fulfilling to such expedients.

As the embassies from Persia came to the capital, they were showered with every possible respect in the place and in accordance to the tradition. "The markets through which they passed were all newly decorated, and the cavalry lining both sides of the way extended beyond a league. Many Omrahs, accompanied with instruments of music, attended the procession, and a salute of artillery was fired upon his entering the gate of the fortress, or royal palace. Aurangzeb welcomed him with the greatest politeness; manifested no displeasure at his making the *salaam* in the Persian manner, and unhesitatingly received from his hands the letters of which he was the bearer; raising them, in token of peculiar respect, nearly to the crown of his head. A eunuch having assisted him to unseal the letters, the King perused the contents with a serious and solemn countenance, and then commanded that the ambassador should be clad, in his presence, with a vest of brocade, a turban, and a silken sash, embroidered with gold and silver." After such elaborate ceremonies, it was the time for the presents to be displayed, which was the most important ceremony in the court. The presents were then laid out for display, which consisted of:

> five-and-twenty horses, as beautiful as ever, with housings of embroidered brocade ; twenty highly bred camels, that might have been mistaken for small elephants, such was their size and strength ; a considerable number of cases[273] containing excellent rosewater, and another sort of distilled water called Beidmichk[274] a cordial held in the highest estimation and very scarce ; five or six carpets of extraordinary size and beauty ; a few pieces of brocade extremely rich, wrought in small flowers, in so fine and delicate a style that Bernier surprisingly states that if anything so elegant was ever seen in Europe; four Damascus cutlasses, and the same number

[273] Caisses in the original. Rosewater and bedtnushk were enclosed in glass bottles, holding about 2| gallons each, called in Persian kardbas (hence the English word carboy} covered with wicker-work. Case is therefore a better rendering than box, as used by former translators of these Travels,

[274] Bedmushk, a cordial still highly esteemed in Northern India, distilled from a species of willow, bed in Persian.

> of poniards, the whole covered with precious stones; and lastly, five or six sets of horse-furniture, which were particularly admired. The last were indeed very handsome and of superior richness; ornamented with superb embroidery and with small pearls, and very beautiful turquoises, of the old rock.[275]

It was remarked that Aurangzeb seemed "unusually pleased with this splendid present; he examined every item minutely, noticed its elegance and rarity, and frequently extolled the munificence of the King of Persia. He assigned the ambassador a place among the principal Omrahs; and after speaking about his long and fatiguing journey, and several times expressing his desire to see him every day, he dismissed the ambassador." After this meeting the Persian ambassador stayed in Delhi for about four to five months, luxuriously living at Aurangzeb's expenses, at the same time enjoying the hospitality provided by the chief Omrahs who mostly invited the ambassador for grand functions and celebrations, as instructed by the emperor.

Before returning back to his country, the emperor showered upon him again with a rich *serapah*, along with some valuable gifts, keeping separately other presents meant for the Persian monarch

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[275] In the original, 'de la vieille Roche,' which means that they were, so to speak, of the finest water. This phrase was used to denote those precious stones in general that exhibited more or less perfect crystalline forms, being considered more developed than those with amorphous forms. Tavernier's (Travels, vol. ii. pp. 103, 104) description of the turquoise is valuable, as elucidating Bernier's account of the presents. ' Turquoise is only found in PERSIA, and is obtained in two mines. The one, which is called " the old rock," is three days' journey from MESHED towards the north-west and near to a large town called NICHABOURG [Nishapur in Meshed is the classic locality for the true turquoise] ; the other, which is called " the new," is five days' journey from it. Those of the new are of an inferior blue, tending to white, and are little esteemed, and one may purchase as many of them as he likes at small cost. But for many years the King of PERSIA has prohibited milling in the "old rock" for anyone but himself, because having no gold workers in the country besides those who work in thread, who are ignorant of the art of enameling on gold, and without knowledge of design and engraving, he uses for the decoration of swords, daggers, and other work, these turquoises of the old rock instead of enamel, which are cut and arranged in patterns like flowers and other figures which the (jewelers) make. This catches the eye and passes as a laborious work. It is wanting in design.'

which was to be sent through the embassy which was gradually appointed. Bernier tells us that there, however, seemed to have been a slight misunderstanding between the Kings of Persia and Hindustan. It had something to do with the last ambassador from Persia, where Aurangzeb seemed to have used certain words, which was not much appreciated by the Persian king. Even the title Alamgir or Conqueror of the World taken by Aurangzeb was not well received by the Persian emperor such that his reaction formed part of his letter, "Since then thou art this Alem-Guire, Besm-Illah, in the name of God, I send 'thee a sword and horses. Let us now, therefore, confront each other."[276]

One of the predominant criticism of travelogues was that the travelers were extremely prone to *bazaar* gossips. In a similar occasion, Bernier seems to have been informed through the *bazaar* gossip that Persia was not in a position or strong enough to take any adverse step against a powerful empire such as Hindustan. At the most, Persia can do enough to retain Kandahar, towards Hindustan, "and preserve the integrity of her frontier towards Turkey. The wealth and strength of that nation are accurately estimated. Her throne is not always filled by a Shah-Abbas,[277] a

[276] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 175.

[277] Shah 'Abbas I., surnamed the Great, who ascended the throne in 1588, and died in 1629. ' He was the first who made Isfahan the capital of Persia, was brave and active, and enlarged the boundaries of his dominions. He took conjointly with the English forces, in 1622, the island of Hormoz, which had been in the possession of the Portuguese for 122 years.' Beale. I have been told by learned natives of India that the Indian exclamation, Shah Abbas (Persian Shah-bash], meaning, ' Well done! ' ' Bravo! ' ' REX FIAS,' takes its origin from the name of this Persian monarch, or as Ovington, in his Voyage to Surat in the year 1689 (London, 1696), p. 169, so quaintly puts it, 'The mighty Deeds and renowned Exploits of Shah Abbas, the Persian Emperor, have likewise imprinted Eternal Characters of Fame and Honor upon his Name, which is now by vulgar use made the signification of anything extraordinary or Miraculous ; so that when anything surpassing Excellent, or wonderful, is either done or spoken, the Indians presently say of it, Shah-Abbas '

Sovereign intrepid, enlightened, and politic; capable of turning every occurrence to his benefit, and of accomplishing great designs with small means."[278] In case the Persian government meditated anything aggresive against Hindustan, Persia would not benefit much; "although she might, with a comparatively small army, and at an inconsiderable expense, have gained possession of the fairest part of Hindustan, from the kingdom of Kabul to the banks of the Indus, and even beyond that river; thus constituting herself the arbitress of every dispute."[279] The King of Persia's letters, in any case, either contained some hostile articulations, for Aurangzeb disliked the lead or language of the diplomat; in light of the fact that the King griped, a few days after the consulate had left Delhi, that the ponies introduced for the sake of the Persian ruler had been hamstrung by request of the minister. He directed, consequently, that he ought to be captured on the boondocks, and denied of all the Indian slaves he was removing. It is sure that the quantity of these slaves was generally outlandish; he had bought them very modest because of the starvation, and it is additionally said that his workers had taken a large number of kids. Aurangzeb, while the embassy was still a resident at Delhi, was extremely cautious to imbue "himself with strict propriety; unlike his father, Shah Jahan, who, upon a similar occasion, either provoked the anger of the ambassador of the celebrated Shah-Abbas, by an ill-timed haughtiness, or excited his contempt by an unbecoming familiarity."

"A Persian, who wishes to indulge in any satirical merriment at the expense of the Indians, relates a few such anecdotes as the following. When Shah Jahan had made several fruitless attempts to subdue the arrogance of the ambassador, whom no arguments or caresses could induce to salute the Great Mughal according to the Indian mode, he devised this artifice to gain his end. He commanded that the grand entrance of the court leading to the Am-Kas, where he intended to

[278] Ibid.,
[279] Ibid.,

receive the ambassador, should be closed, and the wicket only left open; a wicket so low that a man could not pass through without stooping, and holding down the head as is customary in doing reverence or bowing or performing sizda. Shah Jahan hoped by this expedient to have it in his power to say that the ambassador, in approaching the royal presence, bowed the head even nearer to the ground than is usual in his court; but the proud and quick-sighted Persian, penetrating into the Mughal's design, entered the wicket with his back turned toward the King."[280] These incidents show how these states (both the visiting and the host) held prestige of their own country at the highest.

4.7. The Embassies in Bengal

Considering that Bengal was an important province for the Mughals, many ambassadors were sent to Bengal to facilitate trade activities in that particular place. Therefore, it is apt that we also discuss embassies that visited Bengal through the European perspective. It was during the time of Jahangir that the Portuguese established their settlements at Hugli. According to Bernier, "the prince was free from all prejudice against Christians, and hoped to reap great benefit from their commerce." These settlers tried to keep the pirates out of the Gulf of Bengal, hence benefitting the entire sea merchants in the long run.

Shah Jahan while visiting the Portuguese at Hugli was "provoked by their refusal to release the numerous slaves in their service, who had all of them been subjects of the Mughal. He first exacted, by threats or persuasion, large sums of money from them, and when they refused to comply with his ultimate demands, he besieged and took possession of the town, and commanded that the whole

[280] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 176.

population should be transferred as slaves to Agra.[281] The misery of these people is unparalleled in the history of modern times: it nearly resembled the grievous captivity of Babylon; for even the children, priests, and monks shared the universal doom. The handsome women, as well married as single, became inmates of the seraglio; those of a more advanced age, or of inferior beauty, were distributed among the Omrahs; little children underwent the rite of circumcision, and were made pages; and the men of adult age, allured, for the most part, by fair promises, or terrified by the daily threat of throwing them under the feet of elephants, renounced the Christian faith. Some of the monks, however, remained faithful to their creed, and were conveyed to Goa, and other Portuguese settlements, by the kind exertions of the Jesuits and missionaries at Agra, who, notwithstanding all this calamity, continued in their dwelling, and were enabled to accomplish their benevolent purpose by the powerful aid of money, and the warm intercession of their friends." Before such mishap occurred at Hugli, the emperor Jahangir had allowed the missionaries to build a large church at Agra, along with the one at Lahore. It was later ordered to be demolished by Shah Jahan due to such reasons given above.

Shah Jahan has accomplished his first plan with great skill and flair. "It was scarcely practicable to march an army from Bengal into the kingdom of Kankan owing to the great number of rivers and channels that intersect the frontiers; and the naval superiority of the pirates rendered it still more difficult to transport an invading force by sea. It therefore occurred to him to apply to the Dutch for their co-operation, and with this view he sent an envoy to Batavia, with power to negotiate, on certain conditions, with the general commandant of that colony, for the joint

[281] This was in 1629-30, and other reasons than- those given by Bernier led to the action taken by Shah Jahan ; such as the refusal of all aid to him, when in 1621, as Prince Khurram, he had revolted against his father, the Emperor Jahangir, and applied to the Portuguese at Hugli for assistance in the shape of soldiers and munitions of war.

occupation of the kingdom of 'Rakan' (Myanmar); in the same manner as Shah Abbas treated formerly with the English in regard to Ormuz"[282]

The Governor of Batavia was effortlessly convinced to go into a plan that offered a chance of even more discouraging the Portuguese impact in the Indies, and from the achievement of which the Dutch organization would determine significant benefits. He dispatched two boats of battle to Bengal to work with the movement of the Mughal's soldiers to Chatgoan, Bangladesh; yet the lead representative meanwhile, had gathered an enormous number of galleasses and different vessels of impressive weight, and took steps to overpower the privateers in irremediable ruin on the off chance that they didn't promptly submit to the Mughal's power, Bernier further writes how the common people were threatened by the governor of Batavia,

> AurengZebe is fixed in the resolution' said he to them, 'of chastising the King of Rakan, and a Dutch fleet, too powerful to be resisted, is near at hand. If you are wise, your personal safety and the care of your families will now engross all your attention; you will quit the service of the King of Rakan, and enter into that of Aureng-Zebe. In Bengale you shall have as much land allotted as you may deem necessary, and your pay shall be double that which you at present receive.[283]

During this time, the pirates had killed one of the chief official of the King of Rakan's, and it is not clearly understood whether they were more hit with fear by the discipline anticipating them for that wrongdoing, or moved by the guarantees and dangers contained in the lead representative's correspondence.

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[282] The officers of Shah Abba's, who looked with a covetous and resentful eye on the Portuguese occupation of Hormoz, invoked the aid of the English Council at Surat, and on the i8th February 1622 the combined Persian and English forces laid siege to Hormoz. The Portuguese, after a gallant resistance of five weeks, surrendered on the 1st May.

[283] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, pp. 180-181.

"The governor of Batavia received these extraordinary visitors with open arms; gave them large sums of money; provided the women and children with excellent accommodation in the town of Dacca,[284] and after he had thus gained their confidence, the pirates evinced an eagerness to act in concert with the Mughal's troops, shared in the attack and capture of 'Sondiva', which island had fallen into the hands of the King of Rakan, and accompanied the Indian army from Sondiva to Chatgoan. Meanwhile the two Dutch ships of war made their appearance, and the governor having thanked the commanders for their kind intentions, informed them that he was now in no need of their services."[285] In regard to the Portuguese, it was said that the governor treated them, not perhaps as he ought, but certainly as they deserve.

4.8. Conclusion

Historians have often used the term "corporate ambassador" for the embassies designed to further East India Company's goodwill. For example, in 1615 A.D., the East India Company appointed Sir Thomas Roe as their "corporate ambassador" to the court of Jahangir. He was a joint representative of both the Company and King James I and VI. Sir Thomas Kerridge was the principal factor of the Surat factory and it's dependent trading settlements during Roe's tenure in India. The letters exchanged between Roe and Kerridge, as well those addressed to the Company leaders in London (which included yet another Thomas, Sir Thomas Smith, the governor of the East India Company), offer the historian a way to approach the experience of the Company

[284] According to Stewart (History of Bengal, p. 299) at a place about twelve miles below Dacca, hence called Feringhee Bazar, where some of their descendants yet reside. The Feringhee Bazar of Rennell's Plan of the Environs of the City of Dacca, published in 1780,

[285] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, pp. 181-182.

merchants in India, even the most mundane, from the perspective of early modern diplomacy. The conceptual distinctions between commerce and diplomacy are fundamentally intertwined. However, in order to understand such relation and the impact of these ambassadors on the factory is difficult to cover in this particular study.

The day-to-day commercial activities of the factors and other Company agents reveal a significant form of diplomatic agency, and those activities ultimately constituted an integral role within English diplomacy in India. Moreover, they demonstrate how early modern diplomacy was a truly corporate enterprise, in that its successes or failures depended on a smoothly functioning network of commercial actors. The dynamics of that network, which linked the most minor Company agents to their ambassador, could dramatically shape Mughal regard for the English.

The ambassador's primary preoccupation was to make sure that their respective factors continue to preserve good relationships at Mughal Court. Although they cannot control how the agents at the factory or the captains on the Company ships will act. All they can do is urge these factors to behave correctly.

This "corporate" dimension of early modern diplomacy, the process in which multiple actors cooperate together in the joint diplomatic enterprise, has been neglected within the conceptual expansion that the field itself has recently undergone.

In the travel accounts, especially with the writings of the ambassadors', they usually portray the importance they associate with their "position as a royal ambassador and the stress they placed on their own position at the Mughal court." However, many a times, these embassies did not enhance the political status of their own countries within the Mughal Empire; instead, these embassies mostly served to increase the span of the Mughal ruler's visual imagery of power.

Chapter Five

THE COMPANY AND PRIVATE MERCHANTS

5.1. Introduction

The advent of travellers, especially from Europe is one of the important historical chapter of our country. One of the first attempts to define Indian civilization through a perspective that compares different societies based on the personal experiences was through the accounts left by these European travellers. Therefore, it is particularly necessary to assess the impact of the proliferation of travel narratives throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century to some extent. These are important not just for their quantity but also for the position they occupied in a structure of discourse. It was because of them and the images and perceptions they offered of the 'other' world that 'these' worlds became far less distant.

From the writings of a merchant who came from Venice, Marco Polo[286], Europe realized the presence of immense wealth in India. Indian goods were quite popular in Europe during this period, however, with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks at around 1453 AD, trade via land was not easy for the Europeans. The commodities such as "spices, certain drugs, metal works, textiles,

[286] Marco Polo (1918). Marsden, William (ed.). *The Travels of Marco Polo,* London: J.M. Dent & Sons.

silk, gold, silver and precious stones" were highly exported from India to the European countries. Hence, to continue this trade, they desperately needed a new route preferably via sea.[287]

As the Mughal empire was established, it not only united the large part of India within its limits, but also accomplished a degree of centralized authority and stability in the country. Although it was found by Babur in 1526 CE, its classic period begins with the accession of Akbar, 1556CE, and the reign of powerful emperor ends with the death of Aurangzeb, 1707. For this particular period, we have records of all kinds which are very extensive; and for the first time in Indian history, we can claim to have direct evidence for almost all significant aspects and events of society.

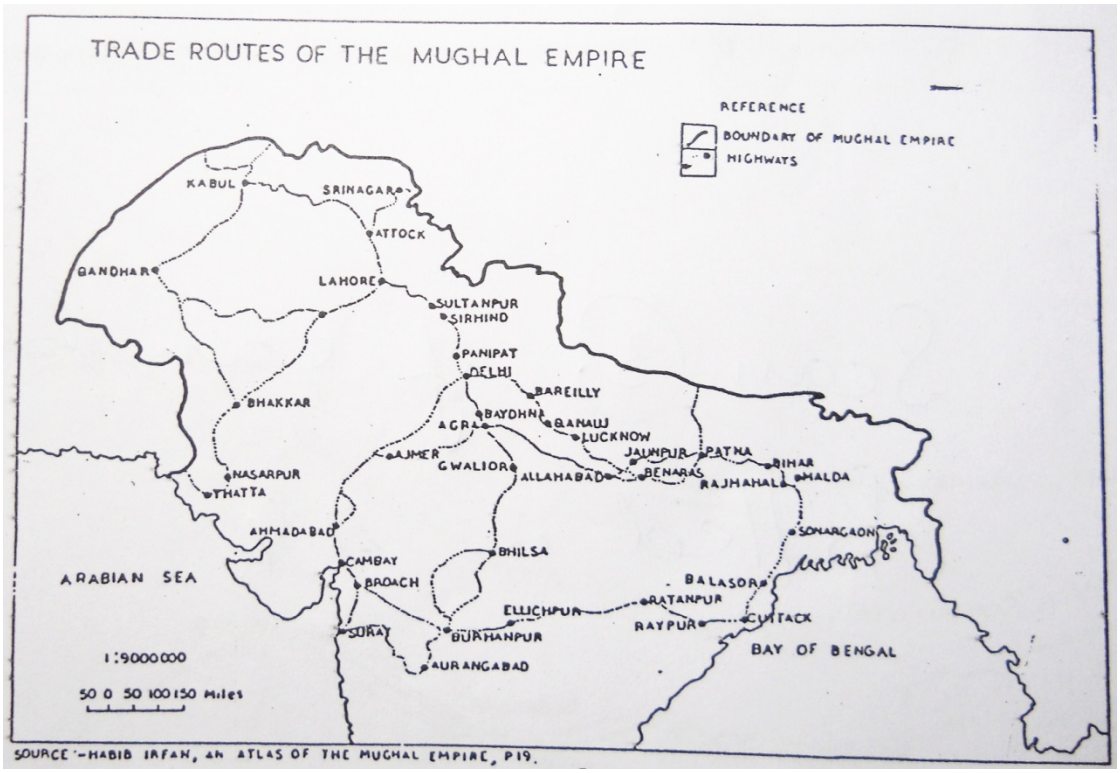
This chapter will study the observations of the various European merchants and Company servants from different kingdoms, who visited the Mughal Empire. It will also try to analyse the difference in the observation of State and its polity from the eyes of these professional men. The differences they sometimes encounter in the government agencies' behaviour towards them is worth noting. The most valuable part of these travellers' accounts are the fact that they are not simple history writing but a record of their personal experiences. Therefore, giving the audience a sense of adventure and the stories that people could often relate to or imagine about in their dreams. These accounts, hence, developed a connection with the audience at a personal level, that was way beyond the normal history writing.

[287]John-Pau Rubies, *Travels and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes 1250-1625*, Past and Present Publications, UK, 2000, p. 35.

5.2. Routes Taken by the Travellers

There were many routes for the travellers to choose from in order to reach India. Some travelled by road, while others took the sea route. In 1580 CE, the visible dominance of the Portuguese in the eastern sea led the other European countries to search for other alternative routes. Land was considered more safe as compared to the sea route due to the presence of the pirates and other unforeseen calamities, thereby forcing the Englishmen to travel via land.

Map: V



Map taken form, Irfan Habib, The Atlas of Mughal Emprie, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1982, p. 19

One such traveller was Ralph Fitch[288], a merchant from London and one of the earliest English travellers to come to India. In 1583, Fitch started from England with Newsburry, another fellow English merchant and reached Aleppo in May. After a short stay there, they started from Basrah and arrived on the 6th of August. From Basrah, Fitch and Newsburry left further for Hurmuz. Due to the jealousy and conspiracy of the other merchants from Italy they ended up being prisoners to the Portuguese in Goa, who thought them to be some kind of spies. In Goa they struck a friendship with a British Jesuit, Thomas Stevan and a Dutchman, Linchotan. As they showed themselves to be good Catholics they were released on bail. Thus, they settled down in Goa, hired a shop and stared their profession.

Ralph Fitch, one of the early Englishmen who came to India during the reign of Akbar, after crossing Sind crossed Diu, which was in possession of the Portuguese. From there he traveled to Daman, a place famous for trade of corn and rice only, then to Bassein and then Tanna, which also traded in corn and rice only. He further travelled to Chaul, which traded in goods such as, "spices and drugs, silk and cloth of silk, sandals, elephant's teeth, and China work, sugar made up of nut called gagare, palmer tree, fruit, wine, oil, sugar, vinegar, cordes, coles, souls for ships, mats to sit or lie on, branches to make their houses, brooms to sweep, wood for ships."[289] He then reaches Goa, which according to him was the most principal and fine city, full of orchards and gardens and palmer trees.[290] Then Fitch crossed Belgaum which was the market for "diamonds, rubies, sapphires and many other soft stones," after which he reached Bijapur, which happened to be the

[288] J. Horton Ryley, *Ralph Fitch England's Pioneer to India and Burma: His Companions and Contemporaries*, New Delhi; Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1998.

[289], Ibid., p. 59.

[290]Ibid., p. 61.

King's court, then Golconda, Masulipatnam, Seruldore, Balapur (Akola district, Berar). He passed Burhanpur (Nimar district, Central Provinces), Mandoway (Mandu, Mandogarh) in Dhar state, Ujjain in native state of Gwalior, Sironji in Tonk state, Rajputana. He reached Agra, which was the capital of the Mughal government under the emperor Akbar. Then he travelled to Prayag, an old name of Allahabad and further went to Banaras which was known for cotton textiles. He passed Patna where he found deep pits dug in the ground which according to Fitch was for the digging up of gold. Along with cotton textiles, gold, opium and, sugar which Fitch came to Bengal. Then he reached Tanda/Tandan or Tanra, a petty village in Maldah District, then proceeded to Kuch Behar, crossed Hugeli and reached Porto Angeli in Orissa. It was a place of rice, cotton cloth and cloth made of grasse, which they call Yerua, wool cloth, sugar and long pepper, butter and other victuals for India. He crosses Satgaon which was known for the daily markets known as Chandeau. From this place there were boats that would travel from places to places to buy rice and other things. Then he crossed Tippara (Burma), Chatigan (Bengal), Bacola which produced rice, cotton cloth and silk cloth, then he reached Serampore where he came across rebels against the emperor Akbar. Then he went to Sonargaon in East Bengal which was famous for its Dacca muslin.[291] He went back to London on 1591 C.E., after almost eight years, where his friends and family had assumed him to be dead. His account is of great value, along with his experience.

Another British merchant, traveller and a writer, Peter Mundy[292] travelled to India in the seventeenth century. He took off from Surat (1628 C.E.) towards Cumwarra [Khumbaria] and then

[291] *Ibid.,* p. 110.

[292] Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-1667*, ed. Richard Carnac Temple, Second Series No. XXXV, Hakluyt Society, London, 1925.

to Barnolee [Bardoli].[293] He then travels through Kirka, to Narayanpur and then to Dayta [Dhaita], from where he reaches Baadoore [Bhadwar], Netherbarre [Nandurbar] and then to Burhanpur.[294] He then reached Khandesh and then to Naysara-Cheanpore-Charwa-Bechoula-Standeene-Ichhawar-Sihor-Delawood [Dilod]-Pamaria-Sironj-Sendhore [Shahdaura]. He mentioned that the country cultivated many fruits such as mangoes and tamarind, moreover he found the country to be pleasant. He reached Kulhara-Dongri-Narwar-Gwalior, where he came across two decent *sarais*, and then Dholpur-Agra, which was then the imperial seat of the Emperor.[295] He came across *Noore mohol ca Sara* (Nur Mahal's Sarai), which he describes as a

> very faire one, built by the old Queene Noore mohol [Nur Mahal] for the accommodation of Travellers, in which may stand 500 horse, and there may conveniently lye 2 or 3000 people; All of Stone, not one piece of Timber in it, the rooms all arched, each with a several Copula.[296]

He remained in Agra until 1631 C.E. after which he travelled to Patna and the borders of Bengal. He went off to England by 1634 C.E. His travel narratives are published by the Hakluyt Society.[297]

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[293]Bardoli, 19 miles from Surat. Jourdain and Finch took the road passing through Mota and Karod, but Tavernier followed Mundy and went to "Barnoly", which he describes as "a large town where you cross a river by a ford." Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, vol. 1, p. 48.

[294]According to Mundy's reckoning, the distance between Surat and Burhanpur was 170 kos, and he took 17 days to accomplish the journey and had three halts of a day each; Finch did the journey in 16 days with two halts of two days each, and he makes the distance 152 kos. Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, vol. 2, p. 56.

[295]Surat to Agra- 396 Course, English Miles 551½); Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, vol. 2, p. 65.

[296]Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*, vol. 2, p. 77.

[297] Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society. *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667*; Vol. III, Part II. Second Series, No. XLVI; pp. 317-577

Map: VI

The Map taken from, Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,* 1608-1667, ed. Richard Carnac Temple, Second Series No. XXXV, Hakluyt Society, London, 1925.

A Dutch merchant called Francisco Pelsaert, who worked for Dutch East India Company, travelled at around 1618 C.E. as rendering a service to the Company. His account, *Remonstrantie*[298] was written at the last few years of his tenure at about 1626 A.D. His account gives enormous exclusive record about the company and its function that anyone reading it could have gotten some serious

[298] Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert*, trans. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 2001.

Company secrets. Hence, it can be said that his account was a commercial report rather than a book meant for the larger general public.

We find no formal record of his actual experience in India, however, looking at his elaborate descriptions, we can very well assume its validity. His account tells us his travel routes, indicating his journey initially from Masulipatnam to Surat and then further to Agra, which was the usual destination for most of the foreigners. His experiences about Burhanpur indicates the routes taken while travelling to Agra. Also, in addition we do not find other alternate routes mentioned in his account. His account also mentions his visit to Kashmir once, most probably for the official court business. His journey indicates that he used the exact route taken by the emperor. Apart from these, he occasionally visited Bayana as it was very popular for indigo production.[299]

Pelsaert being a merchant himself, gives elaborate details on trade and commercial areas such as the Nakhas, which was a great market, located beside the fort, He writes, "where in the morning, horses, camels, oxen, tents, cotton goods and many other things were sold."[300] He departed for Java in 1628 C.E. Soon after in 1630 C.E., Pelsaert's health deteriorated and he died in Batavia, which was also the capital of Dutch East Indies.

5.3. Difficulties faced by the Travellers

Venturing into the new country was not easy for these travellers, they experienced multiple obstacles and problems on their way. Starting with the climate, the language, the officials, the local

[299]Ibid., p. 23.

[300]Ibid., p. 4.

people, the bandits, the flora and fauna, for these merchants, the main issue was with the customs department they encountered often.

The first annoyance that awaited the traveller, most importantly a merchant or a Company Servant at the port at which he disembarked were the officers of the Emperor, who dealt mostly with the customs department. They were, as expected despised the most by the trading community. The duties placed for the goods were, however, not very high, nonetheless, some of the places were strictly searched to put a check on any kind of illegal activities. Thomas Roe comments that *"*the custome of the Kings officers to search everie thing that came ashoare, even to the pockets of mens cloathes on their backs, for custome."[301]

Roe did not have to face much humility or indignity on behalf of the custom officers, as he belonged to the noble ambassadorial rank. However, for a common trader, it was a different situation altogether as they did not get any special considerations. He further writes that "It was the Custome of this Cuntrie that nothing could passe but by the Custome house, and thear to be searched."[302]

The merchants for obvious reasons had to be searched aggressively as compared to the other. Justifiably so, as there were numerous reports of pearls being smuggled by the merchants along the ports, especially that of Surat. To prevent such activities the custom officers were mostly on alert. However, there were incidents where, irrespective of such high security some of the smugglers still continued with the business. Roe admits that the other merchants who were

[301] Sir Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-1619*, ed. William Foster, Oxford University Press, London, 1926, pp 28-29.

[302] Ibid., p, 125.

travelling alongside him, namely Richard Steele and Mr Jackson, were able to bring along "the pearle and some other small matters stolen ashoare, according to my order, which I received and gave quittance for."[303]

Similarly another merchant Tavernier gives a similar incident of gold being smuggled many a times, supposedly by an English captain,

> the merchants who import it (gold) use so much cunning in order to conceal it, that but little of it comes to the knowledge of the customs officers. The former do not run so much risk as in the custom-house of Europe.[304]

Pietro della Valle on reaching Surat immediately encountered the rule of the Mughals and the custom practices. However, surprisingly, when we find the Surat "Customers" (a term mostly used for the Custom House officials) being criticised most of the times, Valle seems to be justifying and normalizing the entire process as something that is common in many other countries. He says,

> Near the place, where the boats land stands the Dogana, or Custom House, and it took us some time to dispatch there, because they observe narrowly nil goods that are brought in, . . . nor will they suffer strangers to enter till they be first known, and have licence, as 'tis also practiced in Venice.[305]

Peter Mundy was in the service as a factor of East India Company from 1628-1635 C.E. He interestingly comes across the severe drought situation of Gujarat on his way to Agra in 1631 A.D. The famine was popularly known as *satiasio kal*. Mundy further encounters, as he moves to Burhanpur, numerous painful experiences of the local people due to famine. Their caravans had a

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[303] Ibid., p. 405.

[304] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 9.

[305] Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, 2 vols., ed. Edward Grey, tr. Georges Havers, Hakluyt Society, London, 1892.

rapid increase in size, joined by the famine-stricken people trying to escape their fate. He mentions that "the factor at Surat was appointed the chief factor of East India Company in India in March 1616 A.D." The other factories subordinate to Surat were, Agra, Ahmadabad, Baroda, Broach and Cambay.[306] The other problems Mundy faced during his travel were mostly the fear of getting attacked by the bandits or the outlaws on the way. He also feared the risk of getting infected by the diseases caused due to the famine situation. Another problem for him was the fear of not being able to possess permissions or provisions on the way till he reached Burhanpur.

No sooner had Thevenot arrived at Surat in 1666 A.D., he encountered the customs officer as they immediately boarded his ship for inspection. It was then that this French traveller experienced the offiers for the first time. We find in his work the details described elaborately on subject matter such as, rules and regulations followed at the Customs department as soon as he landed at Surat. He gives us the minute details of the procedures that were followed there. Another traveller Careri on reaching Surat was warned prior regarding the strictness of these officials as there were many instances of smuggling of pearls from Persia via that port.

Tavernier notes that once the commodity reaches Surat, it has to be immediately reported to the customs office that happens to adjoin the court. He describes that those officials are extremely strict and serious during the search so as to not miss a single illegal activity. The duty for the companies is much less as compared to the private traders, who usually pay upto four or five percent duty over their entire goods. However, he believes that the goods cost them nearly the same. as the costs of "deputations and presents which they are obliged to make every year at the

[306] Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,*, p. 28.

court."[307] Tavernier notes how all travellers' baggage were examined before embarking the boat and no duty was charged on the personal property. It is only on merchandise that the duty was charged.[308]

Aurangzeb, had supposedly, according to Tavernier, "established a custom adverse to merchants who come from Europe and other places to sell jewels at the Mughal court. When these merchants arrived, whether by sea or by land, the governors of the places where they arrived had prior orders to send them to the Mughal Emperor with their goods, either with their consent or by force."[309] Thus by 1665 A.D., Tavernier was sent to the emperor's court by the governor of Surat.

Tavernier informs us that,

> there were in the employment of His Majesty, two Persians, and a Banian, whose duty it is to see and examine all the jewels which one wishes to sell to the Emperor. One of these two Persians is named Nawab Akil Khan[310], i.e. the prince of wit, and it is he who has charge of all the Emperor's precious stones. The other is named Mirza Mu'azzam, whose duty is to tax each piece. The Banian, called Nihal Chand[311], has to see whether the stones are false and if they have any flaw.[312]

Tavernier further narrates:

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[307] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p.55

[308] Ibid., p. 99.

[309] Marco Polo (ed. Yule, i. 379) reports that the Great Kaan used to treat in the same way merchants visiting his dominions.

[310] 'Āquil Khān, Mīr 'Askarī, was Aurangzeb's Wazīr, he died in A.D. 1695 (Beale, Oriental Biographical Dict. 76). See also bk. ii, ch. x, p. 314f. For the legend of his love affair with the Princess Zeb-unnissa, daughter of Aurangzeb, see Jadunath Sarkar, Studies in Mughal India, 79 ff., from which he appears never to have been Wazīr, though he rose to be Sūbahdār of Delhi, dying in 1696.

[311] This trio appears as Akel Kan, Mirza-Mouson, and Nali Kan, in the original.

[312] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 105.

> These three men had obtained permission from the Emperor to see, before he does, all the foreign merchants bring to sell to him, and afterwards to present them to him, and although they have sworn to take nothing from the merchant, they do not neglect to extort all they can in order to ruin him. When they see anything beautiful from which there is reason to hope for a large profit, they try to make him sell it to them for half its value, and if he refuses to let them have it, they are malicious enough to estimate the jewels when they are before the Emperor at half their value; besides which the Emperor Aurangzeb cares little for stones, and loves gold and silver much better.[313]

Therefore, without the presence of a broker nothing is sold throughout Asia. These particular class gets paid by the group that buys the product as a stipulated fee. "Accordingly, the Portuguese in those times made great profits and suffered no losses or bankruptcies."[314]

5.4. Policy and Regulations Concerning East India Company

Since the chapter studies the merchants and company officials, it is but natural that some travelogues describe the various rules, policies and regulations pertaining to the companies. We find one such account where the details about the French East India Company is elaborately explained.

Abbe Carre was one such French merchant who worked for the French East India company and has left us a detailed account of his entire travel[315]. He gives elaborate details about the French East India Company factory such as he mentions,[316]

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[313] Ibid., p. 105.

[314] Ibid., p. 127.

[315] Abbe Carre, *The Travels of Abbé Carré in India and the near East 1672-1674*, 2 vols., tr. Lady Fawcett, ed. Charles Fawcett and Richard Burn, Hakluyt Society, London, 1674.

[316] Ibid., pp. 160-162.

1. No chief or subordinate officer is appointed to any factory until inquiries show his capacity, morals and honesty. Also, no promotion is given by favour or any such considerations, but for merit alone.
2. The Chief of a factory has absolute power over all the other officers, which is confirmed by an authentic document signed by the directors (of the company).
3. The Chief in every factory must take great care to ascertain all the trade in the factory he is stationed.
4. The officers in every factory must accompany the broker in all the transactions that take place, in order to avoid all kinds of corruptions.
5. The Chief in charge should serve as a role model for the other officers in his factory. He should encourage them to follow his example of devotion and zeal in their business.
6. It is the duty of the chief to prevent illicit private trade, and to keep an eye over his officers to see that they are not in league with the brokers.
7. The Company's officers must always act with sincerity, good faith and honesty.
8. The Chief must never allow gambling or debauchery in his house. He should also send any officer who is found to be corrupt or incorrigible, to the head factory so that the particular officer does not corrupt the other officers.

Carre further writes about the several essential things to be considered when ships are sent to trade in Eastern foreign kingdoms, such as[317]

1. If merchandise is to be taken on freight, it is necessary to send honest, experienced and far-sighted persons to deal with the strangers and Eastern merchants.

[317] Ibid., pp. 162-165.

2. It is also important to consider the quality of the goods, whether it's saleable at a good profit. It is important to understand the good's demand as well.
3. The company also places an agent with full power to act in the affairs of trade, giving him the entire authority in case of any disorder.
4. The company's merchants are also forbidden to spend any extra money or goods, except for the written orders as to their expenditure during the voyage.
5. The company merchants are strictly forbidden from participating in any kind of private trade.
6. On the arrival of the ships at their destinations, the expenses and refreshments of their officers should be regulated in order to prevent the disorders and confusion which they generally cause in the factories.
7. The officer sent for the company affairs are also obliged to show the Chief of factory the entire list of merchandise and goods.
8. The commercial officers and the chief are expected to make an exact statement of all their trading transactions.
9. During the stay of the ships at the factories, if there are other ships then the officers must not be extravagant in firing salutes or any kind of other ostentations.
10. They are expected to maintain an exact register mentioning every detail of the presents to be given to the governors of the town, to the custom officers, to the princes of the country, as well as the gifts they receive in return from them.
11. The officers sent to act for the company and their brokers must not misuse the rights and privileges belonging to the company given by the host country.

12. Last but not the least, both the naval and commercial officers must treat civilly and kindly all the foreign merchants that travel with their goods in the Company's ships.

In a letter addressed to the directors of the general chamber of the royal company in the east, Abbe Carre clearly mentions his objectives and desires for writing the journal,

> I show clearly the most hidden and secret things that have occurred in the administration of your trade in these distant Eastern lands…You will see the state of all your offices and establishments, and how Eastern kings and princes court and protect your Company's settlements in their countries. You will see the trade methods of other European nations.[318]

We do not find such beautiful detailed narration in other accounts, explaining us the policies, regulations of the company, which makes this account highly important. Hakluyt Society has published his entire writing.

5.5. Description of the Mughal Lands

Many of these merchants and company officials leave us a vivid descriptions of the places they visited on their way. Many of them stayed over those places to understand the trading cultures and in the process understood the city or the place enough to write about them.

Pelsaert gives a description of "a city named Sikandra" which was "well built and populated", mostly inhabited by the merchant community, especially the banias. All the merchandise were brought from east, "the Bhutan mountains, cotton goods from Bengal, raw silk from Patna,

[318] Ibid., p. 1.

spikenard, borax, erdigris, ginger, fennel and thousands of sorts of drugs."[319] There were various sarais that were built by Nur Jahan Begum, which was used mostly to collect the duties from the trading community. According to Pelsaert, Sikandra is a "place of great traffic" and it is these supplies that is provided in the entire country.[320]

Mundy writes about Agra as,

> Castle, King Ecbars [Akbar's] Tombe, Tage Moholls [Taj Mahal's] Tombe, Gardens and Bazare…. It is very populous by reason of the great Mogolls keeping of his Court here….The Cittie hath many outstraglinge places, as Pores [pur, suburb], Bazares, Gunges [ganj, market].[321]

He further gives the list of places,

> where Kinges have kepte residence and governed in the, of which are Dilly (Delhi), the first and most Auntient, Then Cabull (Kabul), Lahore, Adgemere (Ajmer), Cazmeere (Kashmir), Agra, Futtapore (Fatehpur Sikri).322

Agra had other admirers, like Ralph Fitch (1583-91 C.E.) who found it a great and populous city. After seeing the stone buildings and wide streets of Agra and Fatehpur, he declared them both "much greater than London and very populous." Moreover, all along the way between these two cities there ran "a market of victuals and other things, as full as though a man were still in a town."[323]

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[319] Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert,* pp. 4-5.
[320]Ibid.,

[321] Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-1667,* p. 207-209.

[322] Ibid., p. 107.

[323]*Early Travels in India*, ed. William Foster, p. 17.

Another European traveller Pietro Della Valle's *Travels in India* can be critiqued in a way that his travel was very limited, with Ahmadabad in the north, Calicut in the south and some regions in the Malabar coast. Also vivid are the descriptions of what they thought was the Hindu religion, mysterious, as represented by idols and temples, and religious ceremonies. He further writes,

> although the interest of the reader is more likely to be attracted towards the descriptions of native life, the account of Portuguese towns and of the mode of life adopted by their European inhabitants will be found little less interesting. To us, who in the present day see nothing in these settlements but the relics of departed greatness, the pictures here laid before us of the commercial activity and political enterprise which were exhibited in those days must have a fascination which is all the greater because they owe their attractions to the 'touch of a vanish'd hand' and the charm of 'a voice that is still.'[324]

Pietro Della Valle visits the city of Surat, which according to him is of a "handsome greatness", and has good buildings. Further he informs us that "it is very populous, as all other cities and places are in India", full of people, inhabited by Hindus and Muslims and the former are greater in number, observes Valle. However, they live peacefully together, and according to Valle this is because of the Grand Mughal.[325] According to Valle, although he is a Muslim, the emperor, however, "makes no difference in his dominions; and both in his court, and armies, and even amongst men of the highest degree, they are of equal account, and consideration."[326]

Many of them are left in awe of the places they visit, while some cannot but compare them with their own countries and hence, end up criticising the state of affairs, considering their biasness or prejudices. It is but natural for an 'outsider' to often compare the new place with his own, which

[324] Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, vol I, p. 9.

[325] This was the Emperor Jahangir (whose real name was Selim), son of the Emperor Akbar. His religion was pure Deism.

[326] Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, vol I, p. 43.

often results in disliking the new place. However, while studying these accounts it should be considered how these travellers were intending to write about their experiences to their higher authorities in their home countries. Hence, they often tended to praise their own country and try to show how the other countries were not so efficient as their own.

5.6. Commerce in the Land

Considering that these travellers were merchants, they also observed the state of commerce in the land and gave a detailed analysis of the commerce in India. For instance, Pelsaert states that commerce flourished during the time of Akbar. However, according to him it was not the same in Jahangir's reign, as the emperor was devoted to enjoyment alone. According to him, the growth of commerce was because of the location of this particular city which happens to be in the middle of all the distant and far off countries. Majority of the commodities passed through Agra, being produced in Gujarat, "Thatta (or Sind); from Kabul, Kandahar or Multan, to the Deccan; from Deccan or Burhanpur to those places, or to Lahore and from Bengal to the whole eastern country carrying describable quantities of merchandise, especially cotton goods."[327]

Pelsaert further describes some places and the kind of economy and trade that was practiced. Firstly, Allahabad which, he writes, produced no commodities and had very little trade and was more like a pleasure-resort. Next, he mentions Jaunpur which according to him produced and exported "large quantities of cotton goods, such as turbans, girdles, plain calico and coarse carpets."[328] Benares produced girdles, turbans, clothes, copper plates, dishes, basins and other such

[327] Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert,* p. 6.

[328] Ibid.,

articles. Patna, where English had established a factory yielded mounds of raw silk. Pelsaert then goes on to describe the trade in Gujarat-Ahmadabad region. According to him, large amount of raw silk was imported from Patna and were manufactured into "ormesines, satins, velvets and various kinds of luxurious stuffs. Carpets were also woven there with an intermixture of silk and gold thread. Other imports were spikenard, pipel, numerous drugs, Bengal muslin, *malmal* and white sugar."[329] However, in the year 1626 C.E., Pelsaert notes that there was a considerable decline in trade in Gujarat as not more than forty merchants came that too bringing commodities of not much value or price. The Portuguese bought "all the goods, both spices and Chinese silk, carried in ships from Malacca, Java and Sumatra."[330]

Trade in Lahore was gradually "limited to the requirements of Persia and Turkey" and declined. The cost of overland transit was too much to bear compared to those of the sea carriage.

Surat flourished in the initial years where the trade was carried on mostly by the Muslims. However, after the advent of Europeans, the trade in the seaports had drastically declined-reason being frequent wars. Pelsaert noted that the custom duties in Surat was "3 ½ percent on all imports and exports of goods, and 2 percent on money, gold or silver."[331]Further, Pelsaert informs us that the king had established mints in places like Surat, Ahmadabad and other capital cities. In a small town of Gujarat called Broach, tolls with the rate of 1 ½ percent were levied on all kinds of goods. The valuation was made by a legal expert, who was also known as *qazi*. He dealt with all the legal

[329]*Ibid.,* p. 19.

[330]*Ibid.,* p. 20.

[331]*Ibid.,* p. 42.

issues in town and was popularly known as someone who cunningly takes away the wealth from the merchants.

Pelsaert in his travelogue gives the audience his entire experiences of seven long years spent in India. He writes that for the Europeans, the cotton textiles from Gujarat were extremely important and was the main reason behind the success of the Europeans. With this as their primary aim, the Dutch however established their trading factory in a place such as Agra and this particular step was taken mainly for two reasons. Firstly, the importance of indigo-trade could not be neglected by any European merchant, and also the surrounding areas of Agra was famous for indigo production. Secondly, during this period, Dutch depended largely "on sales of spices to finance their purchases and Agra, or rather the Mughal Court, was the most expensive spice-market in India." Hence, Pelsaert was in charge of the Dutch factory at Agra during that time. He notes that the richest men in Agra lived mainly by money-lending.

The Hawkins' Voyages, published in 1878 A.D., talks largely about the year 1608 when the English arrived at Surat for the first time. Sir William Hawkins embarked on this ship on a journey with the aim "to present a commendatory letter from King James" (King of England 1603-1625 C.E.). He was also in charge of soliciting trading privileges for the company from the Mughal emperor. From this account we learn about the arrival of Sir Henry Middleton, (captain and worked for East India Company) at Surat, in September, 1611 CE.

5.7. Court Culture

5.7.1 The Court, the Palace and the Royal City

There are some European merchants who had the pleasure of interacting with the emperor on a personal level, although most of the times the private merchants did not get such opportunity. The factory merchants on the other hand, at times visited the court. Although most of the official dealings were done by the ambassadors, which is describes in the previous chapter, Peter Mundy happened to be such merchant who visited during the rule of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.

He describes the *am khas* at the time when Shah Jahan was at the throne. It was the public and private chamber in the Mughal palace. He described how the King sat in the *jharoka* or the window for about two hours. The palace or the mahal adjoined the *am khas*, near there was the *ghusl khana* or the bathroom where intimate discussions took place at times.[332]

Mundy mentions how Nur Mahal was the actual ruler at the time of his visit,

> Rather hee became her prisoner by marryeing her, for in his tyme shee in a manner ruled all in ruleing him, Coyninge money of her owne, 162uilding and disposeinge as shee listed, putting out of the Kinges favour and receiveinge whome shee pleased.[333]

The elaborate description of the palaces is found in the accounts of Tavernier. He describes the emperor's palace in the city of Jahanabad[334] and hence, he writes how the

[332] Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-1667*, pp.200-202.

[333] Ibid., p. 206.

[334] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 90-92.

> "Emperor's palace is a good half league in circuit.[335] The walls are of fine cut stone, with battlements, and at every tenth battlement there is a tower. The fosses are full of water and are lined with cut stone. The principal gate has nothing magnificent about it,[336] nor has the first court, where the nobles are permitted to enter on their elephants. Leading from this court there is a long and wide passage which has on both sides handsome porticoes, under which there are many small chambers where some of the horse guards lodge. These porticoes are elevated about two feet from the ground, and the horses, which are fastened to rings outside, take their feed on the edge. In certain places there are large doors which lead to different apartments, as to that of the women, and to the Judges' court. In the middle of this passage there is a channel full of water, which leaves a good roadway on either side, and forms little basins at equal distances. This long passage leads to a large court where the *umrahs*,[337] i.e. the great nobles of the kingdom, who resemble the Bachas[338] in Turkey, and the Khans in Persia, constitute the bodyguard.[339]

He further describes it as,

> There are low chambers around this court for their use, and their horses are tethered outside their door. From this second court a third is entered by a large gate, by the side of which there is, as it were, a small room raised two or three feet from the ground. It is where the royal wardrobe is kept, and whence the *khil'at*[340] is obtained whenever the Emperor wishes to honour a stranger or out of his subjects. A little farther on, over the same gate, is the place where the drums, trumpets, and hautboys are kept,[341] which are heard some moments before the Emperor ascends his throne or justice, to give notice to the *umrahs*, and again when the Emperor is about to rise. When entering this third court you face the Divan where the Emperor gives audience. It is a grand hall elevated some four feet above the ground floor, and open on three sides. Thirty-two

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[335] The fort measures 1,600 feet east and west, by 3,200 feet north and south exclusive of the gateways (Fanshawe, Delhi Past and Present, 22)

[336] Fergusson, on the contrary, describes the gate as 'the noblest entrance known to belong to any existing palace' (Indian and Eastern Architecture, 1910, ii. 309), and compare Fanshawe, p. 22.

[337] Omerahs and Omrahs in the original for Umara, Arabic pl. of Amir.

[338] Bachas for Pachas. Chardin quaintly says of the two modes of spelling that bacha means Head of the king; and pacha, Feet of the King (Voyages, Amsterdam, ed. 1711, vol. i, p. 35). The true explanation being, as Colonei Yule states (Hobson-Jobson, 70), that as Arabic has no p, they have substituted b, which the Turks have adopted.

[339] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 95-97.

[340] This wardrobe was known as the Tashakhana.

[341] The Naubat- or Naqqar-khana, Bernier, Francois, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 260.

> marble columns sustain as many arches, and these columns are about four feet square with their pedestals and some mouldings.[342]

According to Tavernier, as and when Shahjahan started the construction of this particular hall he wanted or desired to enrich the entire hall by

> wonderful works in mosaic, like those in the chapel of the Grand Duke in Italy. But having made a trial upon two or three pillars to the height of two or three feet, he considered that it would be impossible to find enough stones for so considerable a design, and that moreover it would cost an enormous sum of money. This compelled him to stop the work, and content himself with a representation of different flowers. In the middle of this hall, and near the side overlooking the court, as in a theatre, the throne was placed when the Emperor came to give audience and administer justice. [343]

Tavernier informs us that the throne "is a small bed of the size of" Tavernier's "camp beds, with its four columns, the canopy, the back, a bolster, and counterpane; all of which are covered with diamonds."[344]

> When the Emperor takes his seat, however, they spread on the bed a cover of gold brocade, or of some other rich quilted stuff, and he ascends it by three small steps of two feet in length. On one side of the bed there is a parasol elevated on a handle of the length of a short pike, and to each column of the bed one of the Emperor's weapons is attached, to one his shield, to another his sword, next his bow, his quiver, and arrows, and other things of that kind. In the Court below the throne there is a space twenty feet square, surrounded by balustrades, which on some occasions are covered with plates of silver, and at others with plates of gold. At the four corners of this space the four Secretaries of State are seated, who both in civil as well as criminal matters fulfil the roles of advocates. Several nobles placed themselves around the

[342] It was sometimes called Chihal Situn, the hall of 'forty pillars'. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 99-102.

[343] Ibid.,

[344] Manucci (i. 88) says : 'It is like a table, adorned with all kinds of precious stones and flowers in enamel and gold. There are three cushions, a large one five spans in diameter, and circular, which serves as a support to the back, and two other square ones, one on each side, also a most lovely mattress. For in Turkey, and throughout the whole of Hindustan, they do not sit upon chairs, but upon carpets or mattresses, with their legs crossed.' Cf. Bernier, 260 ff., for the etiquette at the Emperor's receptions.

> balustrade, and there was placed the music, which was heard while the Emperor is in the Divan. This music was sweet and pleasant, and made so little sound that it did not disturb those present from the serious occupations in which they are engaged. [345]

Tavernier further describes how the emperor was seated on his throne throughout while some of his nobles and children stood beside the emperor. Ministers such as the Nawab or the Vizir presents a formal report to the emperor regarding the entire meeting. It is to be noted, however, that as long as the emperor was seated on his throne, not a single person was allowed to leave the court. Tavernier further mentions an instance where one day,

> while the Emperor was in the Dīvān, to leave the palace on urgent business which could not by any means he deferred, the Captain of the guards caught me by the arm, and told me roughly that I should not puss out. The Emperor was informed in due course what had occurred, and in the evening the Nawāb sent one of his people to tell me that His Majesty had notified that I might enter and leave the palace as I was pleased which he was in the Dīvān, for which I went on the following day to thank the Nawāb.[346]

"Towards the middle of the same court there was a small channel which was about six inches wide, where, while the Emperor on on his seat of justice, all strangers who attend the audience had to stop. They were not allowed to pass it without being called, and even ambassadors themselves were not exempted from this rule. When an ambassador arrived at the channel, the officer in charge of the introductions called out towards the *divan*, where the Emperor was seated, that such an ambassador wished to speak to His Majesty. Then a Secretary of State repeated it to the Emperor, who very often did not appear to hear, but sometime after lifted his eyes, and throwing

[345] Demi-pique in the original . This is the Aftabgir, 'sun-seizing', Abul Fazl, *Ain-i Akbari*, vol 1, ed. & tr. H. Blochmann, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927, p. 50.

[346] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 90-92.

them upon the ambassador, conveyed a sign through the same Secretary that he may approach."[347] Directly from the Divan halls, the emperor could be seen visiting his harem directly. This was exactly where Tavernier had his first little encounter with the King. On the left side of the court was a "small well-built mosque" whose dome was fully covered with lead and was beautifully plated such that it could have been easily mistaken as that of gold.[348] Tavernier says:

> This is where the Emperor goes daily to pray, save on Friday, when he visits the Grand Mosque, which is very magnificent, and is situated on a lofty platform higher than the houses of the town, and it is reached by many grand flights of stairs. On the day the Emperor goes to the mosque, a large net five or six feet in height is stretched round these stairs lest the elephants might approach them, and out of respect with which the mosque is regarded. The right side of the court in occupied by porticoes which form a long gallery, elevated about six inches above the ground, and the whole extent of these porticoes constitutes the Emperor's stables, to which there are several doors. They are always full of very fine horses, the least valuable of which has cost 3,000, and some are worth up to 10,000. In front of each door of the stables hangs a kind of screen made of bamboos split like our osiers; but, unlike the way in which we weave our little twigs of osier with osier itself, the bamboo is woven with twisted silk representing flowers, and the work is very elaborate and requires much patience. These screens serve to prevent the flies from tormenting the horses, but that is not deemed sufficient, for two grooms are told off to each horse, one of whom is generally occupied in fanning it. There are also screens stretched before the porticoes, as before the doors of the stables, which are lowered and elevated according to necessity; and the floor of the gallery is covered with beautiful carpets, which are taken up in the evening in order to spread the bedding of the horses. This

[347] An interesting account of the proceedings at the Grand Darbar of Shahjahan will be found in Jadunath Sarkar, Studies in Mughal India, 6 ff. Compare the Court regulations of the Persian Sassanians and of the modern Shah (Sir P. Sykes, Hist. of Persia, 2nd ed., i. 465, ii. 382 f.).

[348] 'It is not a little singular, looking at the magnificent mosque which Akbar built in his palace of Fatehpur Sikri, and the Moti Masjid, with which Shahjahan adorned the palace at Agra, that he should have provided no place of worship in his palace at Delhi. The little Moti Masjid which is now found there was added by Aurangzeb. . . . There is no place of prayer within the palace walls, of the time Shahjahan, nor apparently, any intention of providing one. The Jama Masjid was so near, and apparently part of the same design, that is seems to have been considered sufficient to supply this anomalous deficiency' (Fergusson, ed. 1891, iii. 600 f.; Fanshawe, 451). Possibly the mosque of which Tavernier speaks was only a temporary building, afterwards replaced by the Moti Masjid.

bedding is made of the horse's own droppings dried in the sun, and afterwards somewhat crushed.[349]

From Delhi, Tavernier travelled to "Badelpoura, from Badelpoura to Pelvel-ki-sera, from Pelvel-ki-sera to Cotki-sera and from Cotki-sera to Shah Ki Sarai,"[350] The distance between each of these places is precisely given.[351] Tavernier found Shah Ki Sarai, as "one of the grandest pagodas in India with an asylum for apes, both for those commonly in the place and those from the neighbouring country, where the *banians* provide them with food. This temple/ pagoda according to Tavernier was called Mathura."[352] Initially the devotees gave the place a lot of respect and veneration, who he referred to as idolators. Since the river Yamuna then flowed at the foot of the temple,[353] Tavernier observed that the devotees "both those of the place and those who came from afar in pilgrimage to perform their devotions there, were able to bathe in the river before entering the pagoda, and after coming out of it. They would never eat before bathing. Besides, they believed that by bathing in running water their sins were more effectually removed. For some years the river

[349] This is also the custom in Persia (Wills, Land of the Lion and Sun, ed. 1891, p. 101).

[350] The stages are probably: Ballabhgarh; Palwal; Kosi; Shah Ki Sarai, for Shah Ki Sarai, the Shahganj Sarai, then recently built (Growse, Mathura, 120, 127). It is to be noted that Tavernier calls Mathura the Shah Ki Sarai, and gives the name Mathura to the temple. A useful examination of this route will be found in Jadunath Sarkar, India of Aurangzeb, Introd., xcvii f.

[351] Refer the appendix.

[352] Mathura, or Muttra, on the right bank of the Jumna, about 30 miles above Agra. It was a centre of the Buddhist faith about the year A.D. 400, when visited by the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien. Monkeys still swarm in the city, where they are fed by the inhabitants. In 1669-70 Aurangzeb visited the city, and destroyed many of its temples and shrines (Growse, 36; Smith, Oxford Hist. of India, 437).

[353]On the supposed change in the course of the Jumna see Growse, 119 f.

had taken a northerly course, and flowed at a good distance from the temple;"[354] This, according to Tavernier, could have been the main reason for pilgrims not visiting the temple anymore. From Shah Ki Sarai, Tavernier went to Goodki-sera and from, Goodki-sera to Agra.

He writes that the most remarkable structure in Agra happens to be the Emperor's palace,[355] along with few serene tombs in and around the town. "The palace of the Emperor is a considerable enclosure with a double wall, which is terraced in some places, and above the wall small dwellings have been built for certain officers of the court." He further describes the place as having "a large square on the side of the town in front of the palace, and the first gate, which has nothing magnificent about it, and is guarded by some soldiers. Before the Emperor had given up his residence at Agra for that at Jahanabad, whenever he went to the country on a visit he entrusted the custody of the palace, where his treasure was, to one of the principal and most trustworthy of his Omrahs, who, until the return of the Emperor, never moved, neither day nor night, from this gate where his lodging was. It was during such an absence that Tavernier was permitted to see the palace at Agra. The Emperor having left for Jahanabad, where all the court followed, and even the

[354] On his second journey Tavernier made the distance from Mathura to Agra 18 kos, which is about right. In this case he must have omitted one stage. If he made only two marches the natural halt would have been farah, quoted in, Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 93.

[355] The palace was commenced during the reign of Ibrahim Lodi; but the chief architectural monuments are due to Shahjahan (Arch. Survey, iv. 12). New Delhi or Shahjahanabad was occupied by the Court in 1648, some ten years after the beginning of the work. The Taj at Agra was built between 1632 and 1653, but the central mausoleum was ready in 1643. The Pearl mosque was finished in 1653 (Smith, Oxford Hist., 420 f.). The old fort at Agra was built by Salim or Islam Shah (A.D. 1545–53–4), and was called Badalgarh, 'Cloud Fort'. It was blown up in 1556. For its rebuilding by Akbar see Smith, Akbar the Great Mogul, 76, quoted in, Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 93.

women too, the government of the palace was conferred on a noble who was a great friend of the Dutch, and, in general, of all the Franks."[356]

The chief of the Dutch factory at Agra[357], M. Velant, made the salutations in accordance to the court traditions after which he presented certain gifts to the nobles such as, "spices, Japanese cabinets, and beautiful Dutch cloths", which was worth 6,0008 approx. However, in one particular incident which is also witnessed by Tavernier, the governor of a particular province felt offended at being presented with the gifts and requested for the friendship with the Franks instead. [358]

Tavernier goes on to describe the palace at Agra[359], where the first gate, where, "the dwelling of the Governor of the palace is situated, is a long and dark arch, after which one enters a large court surrounded with porticoes, like the Place Royale or Luxembourg at Paris. The gallery which is opposite is larger and higher than the others, and is supported by three rows of columns, and under those, on the three other sides of the court, which are narrower and lower, there are several small chambers for the soldiers of the guard. In the middle of the great gallery one sees a niche in the wall to which the Emperor obtains access from his harem by a small concealed staircase, and when seated there he looks like a statue. He has no guards about him then, because he has nothing to fear; and because neither before nor behind, from the right nor from the left, can any one approach

[356] Franguis in the original, franks, i. e. Europeans, quoted in Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 93.

[357] Bernier (p. 292) speaks of the Dutch factory at Agra, quoted in Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 93.

[358] Tavernier's visit was probably in 1648, as he would not have been admitted while Shahjahan was imprisoned there from 1658 till his death in 1666, quoted in, Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 94.

[359] Ibid., pp. 94-95.

him. During the great heat he keeps only one eunuch by him, and most frequently one of his children, to fan him."[360]

He further describes the royal court where, " at the end of the court there is, on the left hand, a second gateway which gives entrance to another great court, which is also surrounded by galleries, under which there are also small rooms for some officers of the palace. From this second court you pass into a third, where the King's apartments are situated. Shahjahan had intended to cover the arch of a great gallery which is on the right hand with silver, and a Frenchman, named Augustin de Bordeaux, was to have done the work. But the Great Mogul seeing there was no one in his kingdom who was more capable to negotiate at Goa an affair with the Portuguese, the work was not done, for, as the ability of Augustin was feared, he was poisoned on his return from Cochin."[361]

"The three other sides of the court are altogether open, and there in but a simple wall to the height of the support. On the side overlooking the river there is a projecting Divan or belvedere, where the Emperor comes to sit when he wishes to enjoy the pleasure of seeing his brigantines, and making his elephants fight. In front of this Divan there is a gallery which serves as a vestibule, and the design of Shahjahan was to cover it throughout with a trellis of rubies and emeralds, which would represent, after nature, grapes green and commencing to become red; but this design, which made a great noise throughout the world, required more wealth than he had been able to furnish, and remains unfinished, having only two or three wreaths of gold with their leaves, as all the rest ought to be, and enamelled in their natural colours, emeralds, rubies, and garnets making the

[360] Ibid.,
[361] 'The assertion that Augustin was sent to Goa and poisoned is not corroborated from Portuguese sources'— Journal Royal Asiatic Society, 1910, pp. 134-5.

grapes. About the middle of the court one can see a great tank for bathing, of forty feet in diameter, and of a single piece of sandstone, with steps cut in the stone itself, both within and without."[362]

With respect to the tombs that were in Agra and its surrounding areas, the architecture was brilliant and most of the emperor's and the nobles wanted to build their own magnificient tombs. Also many of the rich people who wanted to visit Mecca were not allowed by the. Emperor as he did not want any money to leave. Hence, with all the money, these nobles would buy luxurious palaces for themselves and also build memorials often.

Another major facet that Tavernier describes is the Taj Mahal, about which he writes, "how of all the tombs at Agra., that of the wife of Shahjahan is the most splendid. He purposely made it near the Tasimacan,[363] where all foreigners come, so that the whole world should see and admire its magnificence. The 'Tasimacan' is a large bazaar, consisting of six large courts all surrounded with porticoes, under which are chambers for the use of merchants, and an enormous quantity of cottons is sold there. The tomb of this Begam, or sultan queen, is at the east end of the town by the side of the river in a large square surrounded by walls, upon which there is a small gallery, as on the walls

[362] The reference is apparently to the Bath or Cistern of Jahangir, now in the court opposite the Diwan-i-amm. It is nearly 5 feet in height, 4 feet in depth, 8 feet in diameter, and 25 feet in circumference, with an inscription in Persian characters giving the date A.D. 1616, the year in which Jahangir married Nurjahan (Syed Muhammad Latif, Agra, 79 f.).

[363] The Taj, known as Taj-makan, 'Taj-house,' Taj-Mugam, 'Taj residence,' one of which is represented in Tavernier's Tasimacan, Taj mahal, 'Taj palace,' or Taj-ganj, 'Taj bazar', was erected as the tomb of Arjumand Banu Began, known as Mumtaz Mahal, 'exalted of the palace,' daughter of 'Asaf Khan, Wazir : born 1592, married to Shahjahan 1612, died in childbed 1631. For the history of the building see Bernier, 294 ff.; Sleeman, Rambles, 312 ff.; Mundy, ii. 213 f.; Syed Muhammad Latif, 100 ff., quoted in, Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 95-96

of many towns in Europe. The square is a kind of garden divided into compartments, but in the places where we put gravel there is white and black marble. When one enters this square by a large gate, what one sees at first is, on the left hand, a beautiful gallery which faces in the direction of Mecca, where there are three or four niches where the Mufti[364] comes at fixed times to pray. A little farther than the middle of the square, on the side of the water, one can see three great platforms raised one upon the other, with towers at the four corners of each, and a staircase inside, for proclaiming the hour of prayer." Tavernier, seems to unconsciously compare the structure with another from Paris and comes to a conclusion that is scarcely less magnificent than that of the Val de Grace at Paris. "It is covered within and without with white marble, the centre being a brick. Under this dome there is an empty tomb, for the Begam is interred under a vault beneath the first platform. The same changes which are made below in this subterranean place are made above around the tomb, for from time to time they change the carpet, chandeliers, and other ornaments of that kind, and there are always there some Mullahs to pray."

Tavernier witnessed the commencement and accomplishment of this great work, on which twenty-two years have been spent, during which twenty thousand men worked incessantly; this is sufficient to enable one to realize that the cost of it has been enormous. "It is said that the scaffoldings alone cost more than the entire work, because, from want of wood, they, as well as the supports of the arches, had all to be made of brick; this has entailed much labour and heavy expenditure. Shahjahan began to build his own tomb on the other side of the river, but the war with his sons interrupted his plan, and Aurangzeb, who reigns at present, is not disposed to complete it. A eunuch in command of 2,000 men guards both the tomb of the Begam and the 'Tasimacan', to

[364] Mufti, a Turkish title applied to the supreme exponent of the Law.

which it is near at hand. On one side of the town the tomb of King Akbar[365] is to be seen; as for those of the eunuchs; they have but a single platform with small chambers at each of the four corners. When one reaches Agra from the Delhi side one meets a large bazaar, close to which there is a garden where the King Jahangir, father of Shahjahan, is interred.[366] Over the gate of this garden you see a painting which represents his tomb covered by a great black pall with many torches of white wax, and two Jesuit Fathers at the ends. One is much astounded at seeing that Shahjahan, contrary to the practice of the Muslims, who hold images in abhorrence, has allowed this painting to remain, and it can only be explained because the Emperor his father and he himself had learnt from the Jesuits some principles of mathematics and astrology."[367]

5.7.2 Judiciary and Punishments

Mundy once comes across a punishment meted out to a robber, who was thrown before the wildest elephant who instantly tore him to pieces. According to Mundy, "Ckaun cawsed a fellowe to bee throwne to owne [one] of his Eliphants that was more furious then the rest, whoe instantly

[365] This was built by Jahangir at Sikandra. For the best account of this building see E.W. Smith, Akbar's Tomb, Sikandra, Agra, Allahabad, 1909; Sleeman, op. cit. 323, 354, 358.

[366] This is a mistake : Jahangir was buried at Shahdara, Lahore. The difficulty is the identification of the building mentioned by Tavernier. Mr. R. Barkley-Smith, Magistrate of Agra, kindly referred the question to Father H. Hosten, who writes: 'I have always understood that the passage in Tavernier applies to Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. When I visited Sikandra in 1912 I looked carefully for the pictures which he mentions, but I could not see anything. Many Christian paintings existed in Jahangir's palace about 1608–9 : in fact, his whole palace, I mean the public buildings, was covered with Christian paintings.' Tavernier, on his visit, could not have examined the place carefully.

[367] Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 99-105.

Catchinge hold of him, sett his foote on him, and with his trunck tore him in peeces one quarter from another.."[368]

It was not just the elephants but the criminals were treated in a crude fashion, where Mundy writes,

> Sometymes this manner of execution is used by the Kinge and great men, Alsoe throwne to doggs bredd for that purpose. Other tymes to wilde beasts. Yea, sometymes appoyntinge certaine men to teare the ofifendour with their teeth, of which Cuttwall Ckaun was said to bee one, Commaunded thereto by Jehan- gueere [Jahangir] because hee was a bigg fellowe and had a good sett of teeth[369]

There were also times when the criminals were tied to an elephants leg, after which they were dragged up and down the streets till the person died.

5.7.3. Court festivals

The Mughals celebrated number of festivals in the court, to give a sense of grandeur to the observer. One such grand festival celebrated was the festival of Norouz or Navraz, or the festival of New year.

We find Mundy describing the festival of Norouz celebrated in the court, he begins with the sitting arrangement and says that "Att this tyme in Agra, the kinge sitteth out upon his throne or Tackhe \takht\ of which everye kinge hath his owne,"[370]He writes how the markets were kept within the *mahal* for the women folks, starting with the jewellers, the goldsmiths, mercers, grocers and so on.

[368] Peter Mundy, *The Travels of Peter Mundy in Europe and Asia,1608-1667,* p. 232.

[369] Ibid.,

[370] Mundy, p. 237.

At the court of Aurangzeb (1658-1707 C.E.), Bernier[371] describes elaborately another grand celebration, which was during the Emperors' birth anniversary. It was celebrated for the consecutive five days and it usually started on November fourth and, "they are in the habit of weighing him"[372]. This was done to compare his weight with that of the previous year, in cases when such was the case the celebration was naturally more. The process of weighing was,

> he seats himself on the richest of the thrones, of which I shall speak presently, and then all the nobility of the kingdom come to salute him and offer presents. The ladies of the court also send gifts and he receives others from the Governors of Provinces and other exalted personages. In diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, gold and silver, as well as rich carpets, brocades of gold and silver, and other stuffs, elephants, camels, and horses, the Emperor receives in presents on this day to the value of more than 30,000,000 livres."[373]

[371] Bernier, Francois, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983.

[372] Aurangzeb evaded the custom of distributing his weight in money, and did not have tokens coined, like his predecessors, to celebrate the occasion of his coronation. Sir T. Roe describes in rather contemptuous terms the scramble for thin pieces of silver, made to resemble different fruits. The Mogul, Jahangir, presented to him a basin full of them; but while he held them in his cloak the nobles snatched most of them from him. He estimates that the amount distributed did not exceeded £100 in value (ed. Foster, i. 252, ii. 411 f.). Terry, his chaplain, also describes the scene (Voyage, ed. London 1777, p. 376; Bernier, 270; Ovington, 178 f.). For Akbar's practice see Ain-i-abkari, i. 266 f.; Hindu Rajas adopted the practice (Thurston, Castes and Tribes of Southern India, vii. 202 ff.). For further references to the custom see J. Fryerl, New Account of East India and Persia, Hakluyt Society, i. 206; iii. 194; Ja'far Sharif, Islam in India, 191. Sivaji having been weighed against gold, the amount of which was distributed to Brahmans, obtained a high rank among Rajput's, from whom the Brahmans tried to prove his descent (Grant Duff, Hist. Mahrattas, ed. 1921, i. 207).

[373] 30,000,000 lives, at 1s. 6d. to the livre = £2,250,000.

Both Bernier and Tavernier states that "the Great Mogul has seven magnificent thrones, one wholly covered with diamonds, the others with rubies, emeralds, or pearls."[374] The main imperial throne that was on the first court usually measured the form and size of the mobile camps. Which means, "it is about 6 feet long and 4 wide." The description of these thrones as given by Tavernier is as follows,

> In the middle of each bar there is a large balsas[375] ruby, cut in cabochon, with four emeralds round it, forming a square cross. Next in succession, from one side to the other along the length of the bars there are similar crosses, arranged so that in one the ruby is in the middle of four emeralds, and in another the emerald is in the middle and four balass rubies surround it. The emeralds are table-cut, and the intervals between the rubies and emeralds are covered with diamonds, the largest of which do not exceed 10 to 12 carats in weight, all showy stones, but very flat. There are also in some parts pearls set in gold, and upon one of the longer sides of the throne there are four steps to ascend it. Of the three cushions or pillows which are upon the throne, that which is placed behind the Emperor's back is large and round like one of our bolsters, and the two others placed at his sides are flat. Moreover, a sword, a mace, a round shield, a bow and quiver with arrows, are suspended from this throne, and all these weapons, as also the cushions and steps, both of this throne and of the other six, are covered over with stones which match those with which each of the thrones respectively is enriched."[376]

Nonetheless, Tavernier observes how it was all conducted with grandeur that was only fit for the monarch as great as the Mughals in the East. He does not fail to compare the Indian monarch with that of the Europeans, as he writes,

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[374] Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 212.

[375] Balet in the original.

[376] Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, *Travels in India*, 2 vols., tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 197.

> the Great Mogul being in power and wealth in Asia what the King of France is in Europe, but having nothing comparable with him in might if he waged war with a valiant and clever people like our Europeans.[377]

He further mentions, if any country that wishes to build a commercial company in India, the most important thing would be to come up with a good basic station that has the ability to refit the requirements of its ships. A place that protects these ships when not in sea. The main reason for English Company to not have succeeded so far is because of the lack of such a good harbour. A ship cannot stay without being reworked or refitted for about more than two year, as there are chances for the ship to be attacked by the insects and other worms.[378]

Tavernier concludes,

> the Great Mogul is certainly the most powerful and the richest monarch in Asia; all the Kingdoms which he possesses are his domain, he being absolute master of all the country, of which he receives the whole revenue. In the territories of this Prince, the nobles are but Royal Receivers, who render account of the revenues to the Governors of Provinces, and they to the Treasurers General and Ministers of Finance, so that this grand King of India, whose territories are so rich, fertile, and populous, has no power near him equal to his own.[379]

5.8. Conclusion

It should be kept in mind that these travellers had self-interest or the interest of their company in mind all the time. Their observation is no less important to that of the other travellers to India

[377] On the inferiority of Indian as compared with European armies, see Bernier, 55, and p. 311 below, quoted in Tavernier, p. 199.

[378] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Travels in India*, Vol II, tr. V. Ball, ed. William Crooke, Oriental Books, New Delhi, 1977, p. 27.

[379] Ibid., p. 176.

during the medieval time period. However, their observations cannot be taken on the face value, as sometimes they misunderstood the things they saw. They also sometimes relied much on the bazar gossip, which has often been the criticism for the travel accounts. Nonetheless, we should not discredit them entirely, for they were professionals in their own field and can also be said that they did not sugar-coat the occurrences they saw with their eyes, which was often the case with the native writers. These travellers wrote in a crude way, criticised harshly and appreciated the things they admired openly.

Considering all these limitations, these travel accounts happen to be an important source of information about the specified time during the Mughal rule. The audience should keep in mind that they were simple travellers and not scientifically trained observers with the sole aim and the aim of writing about the country and the people inhabiting it, but their main purpose and focus was trade. They mostly gave their observations mostly as any merchant would observe certain things hence, “nothing engages their attention so much as a successful bargain.” This interest and devotion towards commerce gave them the ability to collect such information’s on trade with ease. They gave exact amount of prices for commodities such as—"spices, snake-stones, the market place, musk, indigo, ivory, and the like— which are an important contribution to the history of oriental commerce.” Such information were more valuable as they were written by the merchants, who are supposedly the experts in their own field.

However, to conclude, we must keep in mind that they often wrote their experiences for an audience back in the west. For any writer, audience plays an important role, similarly, for these travellers, the mindset of the people or the readers in the west played an important factor. Although, this was not the case for all the travellers, some also wrote their experiences on the basis of what they experienced entirely.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this dissertation is to give a detailed account of various foreign travellers, who visited and stayed in India starting from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, keeping in mind and trying to understand their importance as a source of information for various historical events and social institutions of the Mughal Empire. This dissertation also tries to estimate the authenticity and reliability when it comes to information pertaining to the nature or the influence of the Mughal government within the concerned time frame.

The European travellers came from a varied professional background, some of them were missionaries, doctors, merchants, diplomats and adventurers. The missionaries were the first Europeans who came to the Mughal court and were also the one who also recorded the first accounts. Their visit and account was significant and it was a stepping stone for the others that followed. They, along with other travellers were impressed by the grandeur and loftiness of the Mughal Empire which included different functions, ceremonies, decorum or etiquettes, music, verse, artworks and various activities at the royal court.

In the course of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many Portuguese and other European observers wrote about cities and other settlements located along the Western coast of India and mostly Mughal India. They had heard about the riches of India and hence wanted to be part of this lavish traffic and therefore, looked to get privileges, so that they would be able to trade here and that is one of the reasons that representatives were sent to the Mughal Court from different

places. For instance, embassies were sent to the Mughal Court from England, Netherlands, Denmark and France. This was during the time when various trading companies were coming from different parts of Europe to trade in India.

6.2. The Interactions between India and Europe

The courtly culture of the Mughal rulers was well known and a cosmopolitan outlook was not new to India. The diplomatic rituals were elaborate in India than in Europe. Therefore the governors and the governor generals of the different trading East India companies in India had to follow all the practices and the principles for the exchange of presents according to the gradations in the rank of the rulers. On the whole, the privileges and immunities of envoys at the Mughal court were short of nothing in comparison with those in Europe. They were based on customs in India for many centuries. The main difference between Indian and European diplomatic usage was that Europe saw the expansion of constant diplomatic representation and the permanently established diplomatic troops. In contrast India remained the world of provisional missions that were appointed temporarily and were often concerned in negotiating unilateral rather than bilateral contracts.

The continuous interaction between Europe and India in the matters of diplomacy and its etiquette did not take place without discord. Though obliged to conform to the customs of India, European emissaries were annoyed at the humiliations to which they were subjected frequently. Although treated as a respected guest with their expenses paid, the envoys were not allowed to communicate with the envoys of other states and were not allowed to leave without permission. The ambassador was generally subjected to endless delays and required to bribe the court officials in order to speed up his business. This was common for example in the court or in Surat with regard to custom duties. Sir Thomas Roe stood his ground for weeks until he received what he

regarded as the respect due to his rank. Many representatives of the East India Company generally became infuriated by the greed of the local governor and were forced to encounter pressure with aggression, mobilizing ships to block the port.

The Europeans were permitted to build up trading posts at the outskirts of the domain and beyond it. However, they were rarely influential or compelling at the court. The Europeans arrived in India because of mercantile reasons as the Indian subcontinent was then world famous for spices. During this time there was a regional specialization in production and manufacture of goods. So, there was much scope for exchange of items. Not only did the Europeans took spices from India, they also brought with them some of the vegetables and fruits, for example, cabbage that was native to Southern Europe; papaya and cashew nut were introduced by the Portuguese. They also brought the scientific advances to India for example the popular hand driven pump which was often used to transfer water and was also be credited for transmitting the technical skills.

The Mughal government also employed Europeans as artillerymen amongst other vocations, who were generally deserted by the English East India Company. The other reason for the Mughal kings preferring to employ a European at his Court, was to exhibit the grandeur of the Mughal Empire to the whole world. Hence, by employing them in their courts or by inviting them on some grand occasions, as was in the case of Sir Thomas Roe, who was invited to the court to witness the celebrations of the *nauroz* festival and the emperor's birthday, can be seen as the emperor's propaganda for spreading the word of the grand Mughal court to the whole world . To a certain extent, the rulers wanted to gain authority and power over the civilians and the common man, and therefore, to the entire world.

However, the place of the Europeans among the Indians was mainly determined by their role as traders rather than as master and ruler. The trade was more improved by collaboration and

haggling than by oppression. It was chiefly due to their maritime skills that Europeans were able to get the cooperation of the merchant communities that were established.

6.3. The Importance of Travelogues

The travel accounts are important not because they are numerous, rather their narratives engaged in a structure of a dialogue. The focal issue was not just the pictures that were passed on, but the authority that was subjected to travel writing. The crucial examination of travel accounts show that they have been used as transcripts which were conditioned by tangible assumptions and purposes. These accounts not only help and support us to not only relativize the experiential value of the travellers but also rebuild the actual encounter that preconditioned the growth of early modern ethnology with several mentions to a number of situations, techniques and difficulties.

The power of foreign spectators regarding the various details about India and the authenticity of their observation and empiricism have been questioned many a times, as a demonstration of European wish for superiority and to go beyond their own bias and supposition in order to clearly understand other new and varied cultures. Legislative issues, religion, habits, politics, profound quality, music, morality, food and dress, scene, relics and natural history were all open to the inspection by these travellers. They introduced impressions of far away, different universes for the Europeans, amongst which India was just an odd and unique area. These places through these descriptions turned out to be less distant and familiar and often instead of the establishing of western predominance, these narratives provided the medium of fostering underlying relations. Out of such interaction grew a superior understanding of the Indian society that the Europeans gave to their descendants. These accounts also provided a guide to the other visitors particularly

from west in respect to what customs and traditions were required to be followed and what customs could be avoided, so that these foreigners are not outrightly rejected by Indians.

6.4. Problems Encountered in the Sources

In spite of the fact that the experience of these travellers were in many ways an honest perception of an unfamiliar world , their experience was complex while observing and depicting a non-European culture. These accounts were a reflection of European mentalities and have been understood by historians as opposed to or offering another point of view to the official chronicled version of Mughal India.

However, there is something more than what we see in the experience and narratives of these travellers. Each traveller had their own individualism and uniqueness. Not all European observers disguised their admiration for some aspects of the Mughals. Some perceived a well ordained city to be the result of a kind of governance that could be arbitrary but was often conducive to peaceful and beautiful human settlements. Bernier, who is mostly criticized for interpreting incorrectly what he saw and experienced especially his comments on the agrarian system justifies the buildings and structures of Hindustan, which other travellers have continuously referred to as "inferior in beauty to those of the Western world". According to him, "they forget that different climates require different styles of architecture, that what is useful and proper at Paris, London, or Amsterdam, would be entirely out of place at Delhi".[380]

While most of the travellers, like Monserrate felt that though the Indian cities appeared very pleasant to look at from far as they had many tall towers and beautiful buildings, however, when

[380]Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, tr. Archibald Constable, Orient Reprint, New Delhi, 1983, p. 240.

one entered these cities, they found the reality as something different, with the cities characterised by "the narrowness, aimless crookedness, and ill-planning of the streets deprive these cities of all beauty".[381] In this aspect Bernier again comes to the rescue as he suggests that not all the streets of a town were narrow and crooked. Delhi's main streets, for instance, were wide and beautiful.[382]

However, despite their bias and ethnocentrism, travellers also tried to be objective and balanced their criticisms with positive comments. Father Monserrate describes Akbar as, "Prince is of a stature and of a type of countenance well-fitted to his royal dignity, so that one could easily recognise, even at the first glance, that he is the King."[383] Even Pelsaert, while criticizing Jahangir as someone who in spite of having an intellect does not use it, does not fail to appreciate Jahangir's predecessor, Akbar for the good things he did. Pelsaert writes,

> "Commerce flourished here in the time of Akbar, and also in the beginning of the present reign, while he [Jahangir] still possessed a vigorous intellect, but since this King devoted his life to enjoyment, violence has taken the place of justice."[384]

Travelling on these routes was not an easy task. One had to be prepared for hardships like crossing high mountains and swift flowing streams, traversing treeless deserts and even coming across dangerous forest animals. Travellers also had to deal with climatic extremes ranging from bone chilling temperatures and snow fall to scorching hot winds. But these difficulties did not stop the travellers from travelling and thereby using the routes regularly. The Europeans coming from a different environment had more interesting occurrences to note down, which have been of great

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[381]Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on his Journey to the Court of Akbar*, J. S. Hoyland, Oxford University Press, London, l922, p. 219.

[382]Francois Bernier, *Travels in Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, p. 152.

[383]Father Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate*, p. 196.

[384]Francisco Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India: The Remonstrantie of Francisco Pelsaert*, trs. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 2001, p. 6.

use, certain things which the native writers must have thought it to be too trivial a thing to note. By adopting, adapting and appropriating, the Europeans were able to diminish the gap between the foreign language and the foreign (Indian) culture at most of the level.

Similar to the famous quote, "I came; I saw; I conquered", generally attributed to Julius Caesar after his victory, the travellers also came to this new land, they saw many a new things and they conquered. They conquered the hearts of the millions by their writings and still continue to do so. Their writings do not cease to fascinate and mesmerize the reader even today. The image at the macro level may seem monotonous, as if the travellers are mostly writing about the same things like religion, society, government and trade but as we look closer, we realize their individuality. The minute details presented by the travellers which was often ignored by the court writers, as they believed it to be mundane, are the very things that add beauty and essence to these European writings. However, the indigenous writings cannot be ignored either and therefore, in order to understand Mughal Empire completely, there is a dire need to examine all foreign and native writings (various kinds) together.

The travellers' accounts differ in value starting from the political way of thought or philosophy of Bernier to the various market gossips, but none of these accounts fail to increase our knowledge in some way or the other. Most of these records are simple and straightforward accounts or first-hand experiences they had in India. However, some of them also voice their experiences for their personal delightful discourses, like for example, Edward Terry**,** while others use this opportunity to give the detailed information about socio-economic or political environment, such as the account of Bernier. However, almost all the travellers give an honest account, who are mostly trying to discover the truth. These narratives are the delightful, unique and entertaining sources of

documentary history.[385]The Europeans coming from a different environment had more interesting occurrences to note down, which have been of great use, certain things which the native writers must have thought it to be too trivial a thing to note.

Though the travellers' descriptions retained their graphic quality, sometimes their judgement suffered from partiality. Still the value of the material, furnished by them, did not diminish. Sometimes these travellers were biased, but this does not necessarily reduce the value of their contribution. Often, they compared and contrasted India with their own countries or with those seen elsewhere, thereby producing added insight into the various descriptions. Travelling on these routes was not an easy task. One had to be prepared for hardships like crossing high mountains and swift flowing streams, traversing treeless deserts and even coming across dangerous forest animals. Travellers also had to deal with climatic extremes ranging from bone chilling temperatures and snow fall to scorching hot winds. But these difficulties did not stop the travellers from travelling and thereby using the routes regularly.

6.5. Summarizing the Chapters

For the historians or any reader interested in travel histories, these accounts not only help in understanding or decoding perhaps the most important times of Indian history, but also help in uncovering the initial and progressive development of Europe, especially English force in the East. Written by men to whom everything in India was new and unusual, these narratives are an important enhancement to the records of the local or indigenous writers. Not only did these travel literature give Europe an interesting descriptions of foreign distant lands and peoples, but they also

[385]Ibid., pp. 24-25.

helped in structuring this entire genre on the basis of categories that were popular and attractive in those times.

The first chapter deals largely with the background and other information pertaining to the travellers such that it helps in understanding their perception or observations. While reading the travelogues we must keep in mind the various aspects, such as their family, their occupation, their purpose of travel, their nationality. Depending on these facets the chapter explored the ways in which these writings should be interpreted. Most of the times, these travellers were faced with many obstacles, starting with language, different flora and fauna, different traditions and different environment altogether, however, they did not stop at it. Many travellers learnt the local languages, got married at times, and when it was the time to return to their native places, they found themselves alienated in their own land. However, irrespective of all these problems faced by the traveller's, their accounts have helped and continues to help the large audience immensely to understand medieval India.

Chapter two attempts to study the general idea of the state and polity from the fifteenth to seventeenth century in theses narratives. The Mughal imperial succession and the war of succession observed in the writings is an interesting subject that has been dealt in this chapter. The state of affairs in the Vijayanagara, Bahamani and Mughal states has been the main focus of the study in this chapter. The European travellers in the Deccan or the southern India for this period of study are scarce and scanty, hence, the account of Abdur Razzak, an envoy from Persia, has also been considered in this chapter. The grandeur of Mughal court, the imperial household, the military, mobile courts, towns and urbanisation are some matters that have been studied in detail. This chapter also takes into account the writings of Abul Fazal, to help us understand the state of affairs in the Mughal period. Since Abul Fazal was an important court chronicler, during the reign

of Akbar, it is imperative that his account is studied in detail. This chapter helps to understand how the state and polity cannot be read in isolation, but has to be studied along with other facets of state, such as, religion, society, economy and culture amongst other things.

Chapter three studies state and polity from the fifteenth to seventeenth century through the eyes of the proselytizers. It studies the various facets of state such as, the personalities of the emperors, the customs and traditions practiced in the court, the various administrative policies of the state, the other preparations of war and royal camps that were set up during their movement, the various provinces and revenue and judiciary amongst other things. Studying the accounts of the missionaries and religious persons have showed how they viewed and perceived the state in terms of religion. They considered religion to have played an important factor just like in European countries. Witnessing the rulers and the maximum local population to be of different religion definitely disturbed their understanding of the nature of administration in India. Nonetheless, the travellers who had access to the rulers tried their very best to influence and convert them, so that it helped in converting the population. However, in some of the accounts it is clear how failing to proselytize the rulers, the travellers perception about the emperors change. It can be said that most of the accounts start with a positive image of the emperors which gradually change into a negative image. This attitude is clearly visible in the accounts of Father Monserrate. Another interesting difference that can be found in these accounts is how they justify their problems that they face as an act of God.

Chapter four studies the state and diplomatic relations as perceived by the European ambassadors. It attempts to trace the entire concept of the word "diplomacy" from the ancient days to the medieval times. The origin and change in concept of the term has been studied as well. It studies the purpose of such embassies, the other customs and traditions followed while receiving

them. It also tries to understand the war of succession during the Mughal period the customs and festivals observed in the court. It further studies how strenuous it was for these ambassadors to act on behalf of their native countries. They often had an important job, which came along with various risks and perks as well. Their major focus was trade and their companies. Their purpose was mostly to benefit their own countries as much as possible. They had to make sure that the traders and other citizens of their native countries were treated in a proper way. Equally, these ambassadors also had to ensure that these traders followed the trade rules of the host country. Hence, from time immemorial the work of an ambassador has been extremely important and it definitely has not been easy.

Chapter five studies the accounts of the company merchants along with the private merchants. India, since ancient days attracted many merchants, as the country was known for its immense wealth. Various Indian commodities were in demand in the other parts of the world. It traces the routes taken by these travellers, as it is important to understand the reason behind taking that specific route. The problems faced by these professional groups has been studied in detail. Some of the policies and regulations for East India Company and for the merchants has been documented in detail by some of the merchants, which has been studied in this particular chapter. They also describe many places that they come across, such as Agra, Surat, Lahore amongst others. They discuss the state of trade, court culture and tradition, judiciary functioning and punishments for those who fail to oblige by the rules of the land.

6.6. Conclusion

Medieval Indian history is what historiography tells us. In the words of E.H. Carr, "History is what historians tell us."[386] Therefore, we can safely assume that history keeps changing as the versions of historians keep changing. Medieval history is given to us by medieval historians. History comes to us through many forms, such as:

Firstly, the court chronicles - while studying them, one must remember that since most of these works were patronised by the court, they tend to eulogise the reigning sovereign, exaggerating the states lavishes and concealing its deficiencies. Secondly, the paintings- they should be studied not as a source but as a history itself. For example, Jahangir had several paintings of his encounter with Shah Abbas.[387] In these paintings, one can clearly distinguish Jahangir as tall, hefty, seated in a higher plank with a big halo, whereas, Shah Abbas as a small person, seated in a relatively smaller plank with a small halo. However, as a matter of fact, Shah Abbas never came to India and Jahangir never went to Iran. Therefore, no such meeting ever really happened. Yet the painting speaks volumes about the mindset of Jahangir. Thirdly, the literature. Fourth, the mythology – it gets intertwined with history at times. Fifth, the folklore – such as Akbar Birbal stories. Some historians have interpreted these stories as a form of popular resistance to the Mughal state, where Akbar is always made fun of. On the other hand, historians such as, Prof. Mukhia interpret it as the popularisation or social acceptance of Mughal state. Sixth, the travel accounts which has been the major focus in this research. Although, these travelogues come with their own drawbacks, they

[386] E.H. Carr, *What is History,* Penguin Books, Second edition, 1961.

[387] Abbas the great or Abbas I of Persia (1571-1629) was the 5th Safavid Shah or the ruler of Iran. He is generally considered as one of the greatest rulers of Persian history and the Safavid dynasty.

cannot be ignored. They have earned their own significance while studying the past. They give us another completely different perception to our basic understanding of history.

Therefore, one can say that history comes in different forms or sources. Dissecting it as true history or false history is not a good way of interpreting history. One should look at each of these as a separate genre or categories altogether of interpreting the past. Therefore, each of these forms should not be treated as equal or substitute for one another. Each has different meaning that needs to be understood.

The accompanying comment of Mr Stanley Lane-Poole, however initially was made regarding the travellers during the seventeenth century just, can pertain to others as well:

> In such a cloud of witnesses of varied ranks, professions, and nationalities, truth, divested of insular or continental prejudice, may surely be found. The body of information furnished by their journals, letters, and travels, is indeed of priceless value to the historian of India.[388]

[388]Stanley Lane-Poole, *Medieval India under Mohammedan Rule 712-1754*, Sushil Gupta, Calcutta, 1951, p. 294, quoted in E. F. Oaten, *European Travellers in India during the Fifteenth, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 1.

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Appendix

Image-I
Portrait of the "Great Mogul"

Image-II

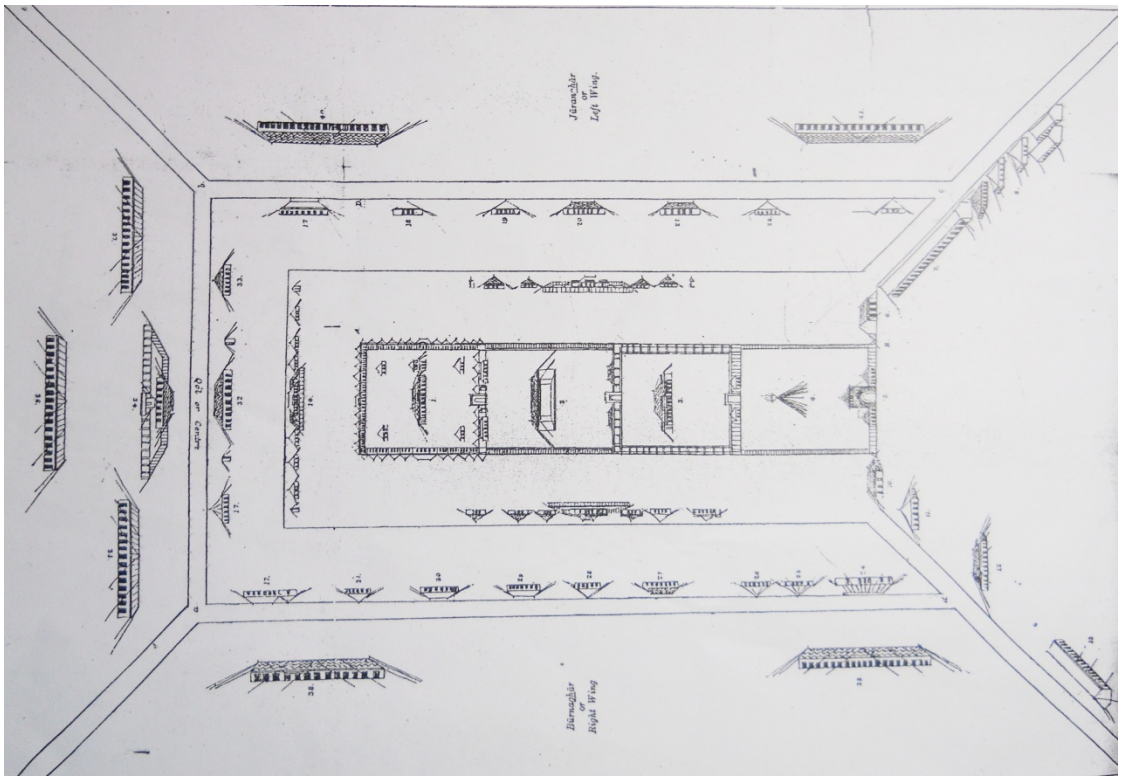
Royal Standard of the Great Mogul

Image-III

Imperial Signet

Image-IV

Imperial Camp



The Imperial Camp

a, b, c, d, f, g-roads and bazaars.

1. The Imperial Harem (*shabistan-i iqbal*). At the right hand side is the Do-ashiyana Manzil.
2. Open space with a canopy (*shamyana*).
3. Private Audience Hall (*Diwan-i Khas*).
4. The great camp light (*akas-diya*).
5. The *Naqqara-khana*
6. The house where the saddles were kept (*zin-khana*).
7. The Imperial stables (*istabal*).
8. Tents of the superintendents and overseers of the stables.
9. Tents of the clerk of the elephant stables.
10. The Imperial Office (*daftar*).
11. Tents for Palkis and Carts.
12. Artillery tent (*top-khana*).
13. Tents where the hunting leopards were kept (*chita-khana*).

14. The Tents of Maryam Makani (Akbar's mother), Gulbadan Begum (Humayan's sister), and Prince Danyal.
15. The Tents of Sultan Salim (Jahangir), to the right of the Imperial Harem.
16. The tents of Sultan Murad, to the left of the Imperial Harem.
17. Store rooms and workshops (*buyutat*).
18. Tent for keeping basins (*aftabchi-khana*).
19. Tent for the perfumes (*khushbu-khana*).
20. Tent for storing mattress (*toshak-khana*).
21. Tent for the tailors, etc.
22. Wardrobe (*kurkyaraq-khana*).
23. Tent for the lamps, candles, oil, etc. (*chiraqh-khana*).
24. Tents for keeping fresh Ganges water (*abdar-khana*).
25. Tents for making sharbat and other drinks.
26. Tent for storing pan leaves.
27. Tent for storing fruit (*mewa khana*).
28. Tent for the Imperial plate (*rikab-khana*).
29. The Imperial kitchen (*matbakh*).
30. The Imperial bakery (*nanba-kahana*).
31. Store room for spices (*hawej-khana*).
32. The Imperial guard.
33. The Arsenal (*qur-khana*).
34. Women's apartments.

35 to 41. Guard houses.

Source: First Volume of the *Ain-i-Akbari*, tr. H. Blochmann, 3vols, Low Price Publications, Delhi 1989, pp. xxi-xxiii.

Image-V

Mughal Family Tree