

under the One-fourth Rule was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  horsemen, the officer had the option of bringing either three or two horses. If he brought three *sawars* to the brand, the supply of provision to the extent of half-a-*sawar* was to be added to his salary, and if he brought two *sawars* the supply of provision to the extent of one-half of a *sawar* was to be deducted. In case of a rank of 15 *sawars* he was required to bring only four horses for branding. The *zamindars* were to bring *sawars* to the number of half of their *sawar* rank for branding. The quality of the horses to be brought to the muster was also carefully regulated. According to the *faman* cited above, *tazi* horses were not to be branded in any province except in the Deccan, Ahmadabad, Bengal and Orissa.<sup>1</sup>

However, according to the *Khalasat-us-Siyag*, *mansabdars* drawing their salaries in cash were to bring only Turki horses for branding, and *jagirdars* had to make up  $2/3$ rd of the required number with Turki and Yabu horses and  $1/3$  with Tazi.<sup>2</sup>

Branding was also enforced to check the animal corps required under the *zat* rank.<sup>3</sup> Branding was not enforced in the case of *mansabdars* of 5,000 *zat* or above, but all *mansabdars* below this rank had to submit to it.<sup>4</sup> In the 25th R. Y., we find Aurangzeb issuing an order that all the *mansabdars* serving in the Deccan up to the *zat* rank of 5,000 should bring their horses (required against the *zat* rank) for branding.<sup>5</sup>

A serious view was always taken of cases where the *mansabdars* failed to maintain the required contingent. Thus, on one occasion, it was reported to Aurangzeb that a hundred gunners were appointed under Sa'adat Khan but at the time of checking only sixty-five were present and thirty-five came afterwards. The Emperor ordered that attendance certificate be refused.<sup>6</sup> The *mansabdar* whose contingents fell below the required number was punished by demotion or fines, and his *jagir* was often reduced.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, in special circumstances, the Emperor might reduce the quota of *sawars* which a *mansabdar* was required to maintain. Thus in the 38th R. Y., Aurangzeb reduced the contingent

<sup>1</sup> *Miftah-i-Ahmad*, Vol. I, pp. 228-29; Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Khalasat-us-Siyag*, f. 54b.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> *Akbarat*, 21st Shawwal, 25th R. Y.

<sup>5</sup> *Waqi-i-Ajmer*, p. 537. On another occasion the Court was informed that the sons of Raja Rai Singh did not maintain more than one hundred *sawars* and at the time of branding borrowed the *sawars* of Hararnath Kachwaha. It was also recommended by the officer concerned that the Raja be directed to explain why he was not maintaining the requisite contingent (*Ibid.*, p. 542).

<sup>7</sup> *Miftah-i-Ahmad*, Vol. I, pp. 203-04; *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign*, pp. 165-72. It is further stated that out of the total amount of 450,000 *dam*, sixty-eight thousand eight

of Hamid Khan from  $1/4$ th to  $1/5$ th.<sup>1</sup> In 1685 when Firoz Jang Bahadur was ordered to set out with provisions and a large force to reinforce Prince Azam at Bijapur, the Emperor exempted the *mansabdars* of 100 to 400 stationed at the court from the brand under the  $1/3$ rd Rule, to enable royal officials to purchase their horses for replenishing the Cavalry of the Prince.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the emperor exempted a *mansabdar* who was given a conditional promotion, from *dagh* (branding) to the extent of his conditional promotion only.<sup>3</sup> In some cases, the Emperor exempted the *mansabdar* from *dagh* for a limited period. Thus, in the 38th R. Y., Aurangzeb exempted Baqi Khan *Kotwal* and *Faujdar* of Shahjahanabad from *dagh*.<sup>4</sup> In the 8th R. Y. of Aurangzeb, when Mir Aziz wanted to go to Haj, he was exempted from *dagh* till his return.<sup>5</sup>

#### RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION

In theory all *mansabdars* were appointed directly by the emperor, and, as far as possible, candidates for enrolment as *mansabdars* were required to appear personally before him. The imperial eye was considered to be sharp and penetrating enough to discern the merits and demerits of every man. Abul Fazl says, "His Majesty sees through some men at the first glance, and confers upon them high rank."<sup>6</sup> The *Bakhshi* was responsible for presenting all candidates—Irans, Turanis, Rumis, Ferangis, Hindis and Kashmiris—who came for service before the emperor.<sup>7</sup>

However, another method of recruitment was that the leading nobles of the empire, particularly governors of provinces and leaders of military expeditions, recommended persons for appointment to the emperor. Their recommendations were generally accepted and *mansabs* were given to the persons they recommended.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes, the emperor ordered

<sup>1</sup> *Akbarat*, 25th Ziqada, 38th R. Y.

<sup>2</sup> *Makasi-i-Ajmeri*, p. 264-65; *Dihkati*, 90b.

<sup>3</sup> *Akbarat*, 23rd Safar, 36th R. Y., 2nd Safar 43rd R. Y. 29th Moharram 38th R. Y.; 300 *sawars* out of the conditional *mansab* of Khuda Banda Khan were exempted from branding (11th Ramzan, 45th R. Y.).

<sup>4</sup> *Akbarat*, 28th Rabi I, 38th R. Y.

<sup>5</sup> *Akbarat*, 7th Jamada II, 8th R. Y.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 248 (Tr.), 124 (Text), Chandra Bhan Brahmam's *Gulshasta*, f. 8a. Pratab Singh and others, five persons, the sons of Sunder Das Sisodia, were presented to emperor Aurangzeb for the award of *mansabs* and they were awarded suitable *mansabs*. (*Akbarat*, 8th Zilhi, 30th R. Y.). Man Singh and others, the sons of Raja Rai Singh were presented to emperor Aurangzeb for the award of the *mansabs*. All of them were granted suitable *mansabs*. (Ist Shaban, 24th R. Y.). Jahan Khan, *Kalim* of Bihar, visited Aurangzeb in the 11th R. Y. and was awarded a *mansab* of 5,000/5,000. Cf. *Khalat* Khan, Vol. II, p. 234. Munim, f. 141a.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 100. For the duties and functions of the *bakhshi* see *History of Orissa*, f. 11b-17a.

persons recommended by nobles for the award of a petty *mansab* to be presented at a review and after that the *mansab* was awarded.<sup>1</sup> Princes of the royal family also recommended persons to the Emperor for appointment and their recommendations were accepted in most cases.<sup>2</sup>

Once a recommendation was submitted to the Emperor and approved by him, an elaborate procedure was followed for preparing the appointment order. The royal approval was sent to the *diwan*, the *bakhshi* and the *sahib-i-taujib* (military accountant) for inspection. It was presented to the Emperor once more after it had passed through these imperial officers, and after the Emperor had approved a second time, the formal appointment order (*farman*) was drawn up, requiring the seals of various officers, specially the *diwan* and *bakhshi*, before it was issued under the seal of the *wazir*.<sup>3</sup>

Every candidate for a *mansab* had to provide a surety (*zamin*) and this rule was very rigorously enforced. Manucci says, "All soldiers, high and low, generals and captains, are forced to give surety and without it they cannot obtain employment. The practice is so common and so general that even the princes find it necessary to conform to the custom."<sup>4</sup> It appears that professional bankers or money-lenders of standing were accepted as sureties by the administration.<sup>5</sup> Persons standing as surety were held responsible for the behaviour of the *mansabdar* and undertook to meet any claims of the government against the *mansabdar* concerned, if the latter failed to meet them.<sup>6</sup> Sureties were, therefore, difficult to obtain and were apparently bought. Thus it was regarded as a great

Zigada, 39th R.Y.; Sardar Singh Hara was given the *mansab* of 500/200 on the recommendation of Ruhullah Khan (2nd Shawwal, 25th R.Y.); Dandak Rao, the *Zaminidar* of Alwar Kunda was given the *mansab* of 500/200 on the recommendation of Rustam Dil Khan (1st Mahraram, 45th R.Y.); Raj Singh was appointed *faujdar* of Toda on the recommendation of Saiyid Abul-lah Khan, the *razim* of Ajmer, and was given the *mansab* of 400/300 (18th Shaban, 43rd R.Y.); Saiyid Shah was given the rank of 5,000/2,000 on the recommendation of prince Bihar Bakht (24th Shawwal, 45th R.Y.); Donbri Rao was given the rank of 1,500/1,000 on the recommendation of Taryiyat Khan (*Madari-i-Afkan-i-Taimuriya*, f. 131a).

<sup>1</sup> Baharnad Khan recommended some of his servants to emperor Aurangzeb for the award of *mansabs*. The Emperor ordered the candidates to be presented for review (*Akhbarat*, 21st Rabi I, 44th R.Y.).

<sup>2</sup> Jagat Singh and others were recruited in the imperial service on the recommendation of Prince Shah Alam (*Akhbarat*, 8th Shaban, 24th R.Y.); Prince Azam recommended (*Akhbarat*, 13 Ramwan, 13th R.Y.). Aurangzeb recommended to Shahjahan a number of persons for the grant of suitable *mansabs* and his recommendation was accepted (*Akhbarat*, 13th R.Y.). Aurangzeb recommended to Shahjahan a number of persons for the grant of *mansabs*. (*Adab-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 100a-109a).

<sup>3</sup> The details of procedure are described in Ibn Hasan, *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 93 ff. see also *Ain*, I, p. 136 and *Zawabih-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 17, 30b.

<sup>4</sup> Manucci, Vol. II, p. 377.

<sup>5</sup> Jentelakana, No. 353, *Fath-i-Muhammad*; "The surety of Illakn Sahu for one lakh of Rupees in favour of Shawal Singh Khattar who was given the charge of *pargana* of Illinur was accepted through a *harab* taken from the Mughal court" A.1. (14th, 50).

<sup>6</sup> See the undertaking of a *zamin* in *Kirgan-i-Awridan*, f. 21a, *Zawabih-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 19b, 25a, 32b.

concession to the Deccan when Aurangzeb exempted them from this obligation.<sup>1</sup>

The procedure for the grant of promotions to *mansabdars* was similar to the procedure for the grant of the initial *mansab*. The recommendation (or *tajiiz*) for promotion was usually made by princes, commanders or governors, under whom the *mansabdar* happened to be serving.<sup>2</sup> It was the general custom for the Emperor to award promotion in *mansabs* on the occasion of the festivities,<sup>3</sup> at the beginning of the regnal year, and on his birthday celebrations.<sup>4</sup> But promotions were also granted on other occasions, such as the beginning or the end of a military expedition.<sup>5</sup>

Promotions were awarded for various reasons. Gallantry in military service and merit occupied a high place,<sup>6</sup> at the other end of the scale were promotions granted on receipt of a handsome present or *reshkash* from a noble.<sup>7</sup> Promotion was also generally, though not invariably, given when an officer was found to be really deserving a higher post. In any case, we often find the ranks of the *mansabdars* being increased simultaneously with their appointments to higher posts. A list of such promotions, where the increase granted was in the basic personal rank (and not *masrut*, i.e. to be relinquished when the *mansabdar* was transferred from that post), is given below. However, there are cases of appointments to higher posts without a corresponding increase in the *mansab*. An increase in the *mansab* was usually proportionate to the rank being quite exceptional. Normally, a promotion by an additional *mansab* of more than 50 per cent of the original was not granted, as a

<sup>1</sup> *Selected Documents of Aurangzeb's Reign*, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Akhbarat*, 29th Rabi II, 8th R.Y. (Qutbuddin Khan, Raghunath Singh and Inayat Khan were promoted to higher ranks).

<sup>3</sup> *Madari-i-Alamgiri*, passim.

<sup>4</sup> In 1665 Prince Muhammad Muazzam, along with Maharaja Jaswant Singh, was appointed to safeguard the Mughal frontier against the Shah of Persia. The nobles who were appointed with the Prince were promoted and awarded *khilats* and titles etc. *Alamgir Nama*, pp. 976-77. In 1661 when some *zamindars* of Jammu rebelled, all officers who were sent to punish them were promoted, pp. 757-58. After the conquest of Bijapur, all the *mansabdars* from the rank of 20 up to 7,000, who had been conducting military operations against Bijapur, were promoted (*Fatah-i-Alamgiri*, f. 105b). The names of all the nobles, who were promoted after the conquest of Bijapur, are given, and their original *mansabs* and promotions are separately indicated; *Zawabih-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 153b-53a. When Hyderabad was conquered, all *mansabdars* who were participating in the siege were promoted, ff. 163b-63a.

<sup>5</sup> In 1666 when the Afghan leaders submitted, Aurangzeb promoted all nobles who were conducting the war against the Afghans (*Alamgir Nama*, pp. 1056-57). After the conquest of Parandhar, when Shivaji surrendered, all nobles serving with Raja Jai Singh in the expedition were promoted (*Alamgir Nama*, 907-908). After the conquest of Khulna, at the recommendation of Fatah Ullah Khan, Aurangzeb promoted all *mansabdars* of the frontier hood of the Khan (Khaif Khan, Vol. II, p. 494).

<sup>6</sup> *Dikhasht*, f. 97a-b, 115a and passim; *Adab-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 21b-22b, 25a.

<sup>7</sup> See Chapter V, Section "The Conduct of Nobles in Administration".

Name	Post	Previous Rank (if known)	Promotion	Source
1. Shah Nawaz Khan	<i>subedar</i> of Gujrat	5,000/5,000	1,000/1,000 <sup>2-3h</sup>	<i>Alamgir Nama</i> , p. 210.
2. Fidai Khan	<i>faujdar</i> of Oudh and Gorakhpur	4,000/2,000	1,500 <i>sauwars</i>	<i>Adab-i-Alamgiri</i> , f. 260a
3. Amir Khan	<i>subedar</i> of Kabul	4,000/4,000	1,000/1,000 (2-3h)	<i>Alamgir Nama</i> , p. 661.
4. Shahamat Khan	<i>faujdar</i> of Ghazni	3,000/1,000	1,000 <i>sauwars</i>	<i>Adab-i-Alamgiri</i> , f. 286b.
5. Arab Khan	<i>faujdar</i> of Bah-rach	3,000/700	800 <i>sauwars</i>	<i>Adab-i-Alamgiri</i> , f. 279b.
6. Muhammad Beg	<i>faujdar</i> of Miyan Doab	1,000/600	500/100	<i>Adab-i-Alamgiri</i> , f. 241.
7. Kangar Khan	<i>faujdar</i> of Sikandar-pur	1,000/400	500/300	<i>Adab-i-Alamgiri</i> , f. 280a
8. Mahmud	<i>faujdar</i> of one of the <i>mahals</i> .	1,000/200	800 <i>sauwars</i>	<i>Mir'at-al Alam</i> , ff. 160a-160b.
9. Tarbiyat Khan	<i>faujdar</i> of Orissa promoted to the rank of 4,000/3,000 (500 × 3-2h)			<i>Mir'at-al Alam</i> , f. 208a.
10. Itram Khan	<i>faujdar</i> in the vicinity of Akbarabad.		1,000 <i>sauwars</i>	<i>Adab-i-Alamgiri</i> , f. 280b
11. Zabardast Khan	<i>faujdar</i> of Hoshangabad promoted to the rank of 1,000/1,000 (2-3h)			<i>Mir'at-al Alam</i> f. 160a-160b.

glance at the promotions set out in our authorities will make clear. Thus, the author of *Ma'asir-al Umayya* expresses surprise at the sudden promotion by Aurangzeb of Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur Zafar Jang from 700 *zat* to 5,000.<sup>1</sup> All *mansabs* above 7,000/7,000 (2—3h) were reserved for princes of the Imperial family.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ma'asir-al Umayya*, I, 813.

<sup>2</sup> When Jai Singh had reached this rank, he could be rewarded further only by way of *nam*, but not by further increase in rank (*Alamgir Nama*, p. 618); *Alamgir Nama* of Hatim Khan, ff. 109a, 124a; *Mir'at-al Alam*, f. 160a; *Mir'at-i-Jahan Nama* f. 268a. The only noble who ever passed this barrier was Asaf Khan, who was awarded the rank 9,000/9,000 (2-3h) by Shahjahan. But Shahjahan decided that this was an exceptional case and no other noble was to be promoted beyond 7,000/7,000 (Lahori, *Badshah Nama*, II, p. 25).

## ESCREAT

No discussion of the pay and conditions of service of the nobles can be complete without considering how far they enjoyed security of the wealth accumulated by them during their tenure of service and could pass it on to their heirs. Cases of punishment for specific crimes or faults apart, the Mughal nobles generally seem to have enjoyed such security during their life-time. But it is a matter of controversy whether the wealth of a noble could safely pass on to his legal heirs. There is some evidence that the king claimed a right to the property of all his deceased officers.

The claim of the king over the possessions and riches accumulated by his officers dates from an early period in the history of monarchy among the Musalmans. The introduction of slavery provided the Abbasid Caliphs a legal pretext (i.e. in terms of the *shariat*) for claiming the property of their officers. The property acquired by a slave, under Muslim law, always belonged to his master in the life-time as well as after the death of the slave, while the property of a free man went to his sons or blood relations.<sup>1</sup> The Sultans of Delhi too used to have a large number of slave officers. Even a Sultan so anxious to maintain conformity with Muslim law as Firuz Tughlaq justified the confiscation of the property of an officer of his on the ground that he had been his manumitted slave.<sup>2</sup>

The Indian Mughals seem to have followed the Delhi Sultans in not having any real slave-officers of status and yet in making claims upon their 'free' officers that could only be made under Muslim law upon slaves. This royal claim to succession is not elaborated in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, but is noticed by a series of European travellers from the time of Akbar onwards.<sup>3</sup> Among the earliest is, perhaps, that found in Hawkins, where we are told that "the custom of this Mughal Emperor is to take possession of his nobles treasure when they die, and to bestow on their children what he pleaseth, but commonly he dealeth well with them and

<sup>1</sup> See Levy, *Social Structure of Islam*, Cambridge, 1957, p. 78. The appointment of slaves (generally of Turkish birth) gave the Abbasids and other rulers, who preferred to base their government on slave-officers, a *shariat* or legal right which they would not have had over a bureaucracy recruited from free-born citizens. The *shariat* places the slave, whatever his status, under three restrictions: he cannot marry without the permission of his master; when he dies his master, is his sole heir; lastly, all his children, in their turn, are the slaves of his master. This extraordinary authority which the *shariat* gives to the master over his slaves is probably the cause of those slave bureaucracies, which we find recurring in Islamic history.

<sup>2</sup> *Ain-i-Tarik-i-Firuz Shahi*, p. 445. The officer was Bashir Imad-ul-Mulk, who left behind 12 crores of *tankas*; of this amount, 9 crores were bequeathed to the crown and the remaining 3 crores were distributed among Imad-ul-Mulk's sons, sons-in-law, wives, adopted sons and slaves. But legally the Sultan had no power to inherit a manumitted slave, and Firuz's action must be regarded as an 'act of state'.

<sup>3</sup> Bernier; 211-12; Manucci II, p. 417; Garcin, p. 241; Pelsaert, Tr. Moreland, *Jahangir's India*, pp. 54-56.

unto the eldest son he hath a very great respect, who in time receiveth the full title of his father".<sup>1</sup>

Now, what is clearly stated here and in other European accounts is that the Emperor first actually took possession of the entire wealth of the noble, and then disposed of it as he chose, taking some part of it for himself and leaving the rest to the heirs of the nobles in portions determined by himself. That this was not a figment of the imagination of the foreigners shown by the actual instances from the period of Akbar and Shahjahan.

When Mumtaz Khan died in 1575, all his wealth and property was escheated to the crown, the term used for it being *zabt*. It is true that he had died without heirs (he had one son living whom he had disowned) and so the state could be his only heir.<sup>2</sup> However, when Abul Fazl, who had many sons, was murdered, his entire moveable property was presented before Akbar and it is recorded that as a mark of favour to his family the Emperor refused to confiscate it.<sup>3</sup> The action taken by Shahjahan with regard to Ali Mardan Khan's property upon his death in 1657, offers, perhaps, the best illustration of the actual position before the accession of Aurangzeb.

The whole property of the deceased, amounting in cash and goods, to one crore of rupees, was seized (*baqaid-i zabt dar amad*). From bountiful generosity, the Emperor bestowed thirty lacs on Ibrahim Khan, and twenty lacs on the remaining three sons and ten daughters, while fifty lacs were appropriated to the imperial treasury against the *mutaliba*.<sup>4</sup>

What is of particular interest, here, is that the imperial right did not remain confined to realising the *mutaliba*, i.e. the amount borrowed by the deceased noble from the imperial treasury, but extended to the disposal of his entire inheritance in complete disregard of the Muslim law of inheritance. The law gave equal shares to all brothers and the sisters are given half the brother's share; yet in this case one son (not the eldest) got 30 lacs, while three sons and ten daughters had to rest content with twenty lacs.<sup>5</sup> In the case of a Hindu noble, Raja Bihaldas, Shahjahan asserted his right to deal with the inheritance with a similar disregard of Hindu law. Out of ten lacs left by the Raja, 6 lacs were bestowed on the eldest son, while the other three sons got 3 lacs, 60 thousand and 40 thousand respectively.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Purchas, III, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Bayazid, 349; Badauni, II, 217-18.

<sup>3</sup> *Waqai-i Asad Beg*, Br. M. Or. 1996, f. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Amal-i Salih*, III, 246-8; *Tuhfat-i Shahjahan*, f. 27b.

<sup>5</sup> When Islam Khan died, it was expressly laid down that only the *mutaliba* and the presents he had received from the *zaminars* of the Deccan were to be appropriated to the imperial treasury. The remainder of his property was bestowed upon his heirs, who were ordered to distribute it among themselves according to the *shariat* (Warsi, 16-17). An exception, perhaps, that proves the rule.

<sup>6</sup> Warsi, f. 154.

In effect, therefore, the Emperor did not confiscate the entire property of a noble; he only took his *mutaliba* and if he chose, something more. But theoretically, he was the sole heir and when he passed on the inheritance to the members of the deceased noble's family, he could follow his own will in its distribution. The *Qazis* were not entitled to interfere.

To Aurangzeb is attributed a radical revision of this system by two contemporary historians. They denounce the old iniquitous practice of sequestering the property of nobles, who had no dues to pay to the imperial treasury and declare that Aurangzeb waived all claims to the property of his nobles beyond claiming the *mutaliba*.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, the text of the order which Aurangzeb issued on the subject has survived in the great collection of documents preserved in the *Mirdad-i Ahmadi*.

In this *farman* issued in 1666 Aurangzeb instructed all the provincial *diwans* that when a servant of the state died leaving no legal heir behind him and without any state dues against him, his property should be deposited in the *bai-ul-mal*. If he owed something to the state, the state dues should be realised and then the rest of the property deposited in the *bai-ul-mal*. If he had heirs and also owed something to the state, they should attach his property within three days of his death. If the property exceeded the amount of his debt to the state, they were to take the amount of the debt only and deliver the rest to his heirs, after the latter had legally established their right. If the state-claims exceeded the property of the deceased, the whole of the property was to be confiscated. If the deceased noble owed nothing to the state, his whole property was to be handed over to his legal heirs and the state officials were asked not to interfere with it.<sup>2</sup> This order was reinforced by another in 1691, which called upon the officers not to attach the property of nobles whose heirs were in government service, because the latter could be asked to pay the *mutaliba* contracted by the deceased.<sup>3</sup>

A number of instances can be cited to show that Aurangzeb's orders were followed and the claim over the property of the *mansabdars* was limited to the *mutaliba*.

In 8th regnal year, on Rahmat Khan's death, it was ordered that the state dues alone were to be recovered from his property and the rest handed over to his heirs.<sup>4</sup> In 1099 A.H. (A. D. 1687) Shakh Mohiuddin, the *sadar* and the *amin* of *jizya* of the province of Gujarat, died.

<sup>1</sup> *Ma'asir-i Alamgiri*, p. 531; *Mirdad-i Alam*, f. 211b.

<sup>2</sup> *Mirdad-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, pp. 135, 267 and 319.

<sup>3</sup> *Mirdad-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, pp. 326.

<sup>4</sup> *Akhbarat*, 9th Janada II, 8th R. Y. : Order issued on the petition of Abdur Rahim Khan son-in-law of Rahmat Khan. In 1662 Ali Yar Beg died; only the *mutaliba* (interest-free) were recovered from the deceased noble's property and the rest was handed over to his heirs (*Wala'at Waga-i of the Deccan*, No. 14, p. 50).

His son, Shaikh Ikramuddin, stood surety for the payment of the state-dues, and so the property of the deceased was not confiscated.<sup>1</sup> In the 44th R. Y. of Aurangzeb (A. D. 1700) when Sher Afgan Khan died, his property was passed on to his legal heirs.<sup>2</sup> In 1113 A. H. (A. D. 1701) when Shuja'at Khan, the *subedar* of Gujarat died, the Emperor permitted his heirs to succeed to his property, which was not confiscated. Only the elephants and horses, etc., belonging to the Khan were taken and sent to the court.<sup>3</sup> In A. D. 1702, Fazil Khan, the *Nabi-i Mir Saman* submitted before the Emperor that a deceased officer, Lutfullah Khan, owed one lakh and seventy thousand rupees to the state, and his heirs had been permitted to succeed to his legacy. The Emperor ordered the horses and elephants of the Khan to be confiscated, but the rest of his property was left to his heirs.<sup>4</sup>

It is, however, not possible to take these examples as a sufficient proof that Aurangzeb basically modified the older practice of escheat. Bernier's statements on this point may be disregarded because they refer to the period before the date of Aurangzeb's first order (A. D. 1666) and, therefore, relate to the system in force before his reform. Yet Mannucci, who wrote at the close of Aurangzeb's reign, says flatly :

"He (Aurangzeb) seizes everything left by his generals, officers and other officials at their death, in spite of his having declared that he makes no claims on the goods of *defunct persons*. Nevertheless, under the pretext that they are his officers and in debt to the crown, he lays hold of everything. If they have widows, he gives them a trifle every year and some land to furnish a subsistence."<sup>5</sup>

The italicised words show that Mannucci was aware of Aurangzeb's order of 1666 and 1691 and, perhaps, of the acclamation of the author of these orders by his courtiers. He says that these orders were in fact often violated and that the Emperor continued to enforce his claims on the property of his officers, which he had publicly renounced.

That Mannucci is not entirely wrong is supported by a number of actual cases, where the right of escheat was in fact claimed.

In A. D. 1694 Mukhtar Khan, the *nazim* of the Gujarat *saba* died, and Muhammad Tahir, the *diwan* of the province of Gujarat along with other

<sup>1</sup> *Mirra-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, p. 319. The property of late Rashid Khan was given to his son, Muhammad Husain, and he was asked to pay the state-dues which his father owed (*Akhhara*, 10th Rabi I, 45th R. Y.). In 1676 Islam Khan Rumi died fighting against the Bijapuris. His possessions amounting to three lakhs of rupees and twenty thousand *asnaif*, which had been confiscated in Ujjain and Sholapur, were restored to his sons and they were directed to pay the state-dues which their father owed (*Ma'asir-ul Umrat*, Vol. I, pp. 246-47).

<sup>2</sup> *Akhhara*, 5th Zilhib, 44th R. Y.

<sup>3</sup> *Mirra-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, p. 345. The property of late Ikhlas Khan was handed over to his sons, only the horses and elephants etc. were confiscated for the State, (*Akhhara*, 19th Rajab, 43rd R. Y.).

<sup>4</sup> *Akhhara*, 7th Shaban, 46th R. Y.

<sup>5</sup> Mannucci II, p. 417, Cf. H. H. Das, *Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb*, 146.

officials confiscated all the property left by him.<sup>1</sup> In A. D. 1682 Muhammad Amin Khan died, and Muhammad Latif, the *diwan* and the officers of the province of Gujarat, confiscated the whole of his moveable and immoveable property, including his animals.<sup>2</sup> After the death of Amir Khan, the *subedar* of Kabul, Aurangzeb directed Asad Khan to write to the *diwan* of Lahore, to attach his property with great care and diligence so that nothing may escape their hands. He was also asked to get information from other sources and to take possession of everything found at any place belonging to Amir Khan.<sup>3</sup> In A. D. 1678 Jaswant Singh died and Aurangzeb ordered his entire treasure and wealth to be confiscated.<sup>4</sup> However, in the case of Jaswant Singh it is known that he had large state-dues against him.<sup>5</sup> We can thus enumerate the cases where property of dead nobles was seized on behalf of the Crown and make a long list, but it is not quite clear in all these cases whether the seizure was only to recover the *mutaliba* or to enforce the right of escheat.<sup>6</sup>

On the basis of this evidence, we may refuse to join the panegyrist of Aurangzeb in regarding him as a reformer, who liberated the nobility from the yoke of the escheat system. We have seen that the 'yoke' was really a light one even before Aurangzeb. It amounted in practice to only : (a) that the state-dues should be the first claim on the estate of a deceased officer and (b) that in disposing of the rest of his property, the king and not the *shariat*, should have the decisive voice. The orders of 1666 and 1691 confirmed the first of these two rights, but theoretically abandoned the second. Yet in practice, as we have seen, Aurangzeb enforced this right whenever he chose. The two orders he issued were self-denying ordinances, which he might, or might not, enforce in particular cases.

<sup>1</sup> *Mirra-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, pp. 310-11.

<sup>2</sup> *Mirra-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, p. 302. For full details of the property of Mohammed Amin Khan deceased which was confiscated for the state, see *Ma'asir-i Alangiri*, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> *Raqaim-i Karaim*, f. 14a. About two lakhs of rupees, some *ashrafis* and jewels belonging to the late Amir Khan, were concealed by his sons but later on the property was discovered and escheated. *Akhhara*, 25th Rabi I, 44th R. Y., *Kalamati-Tajvahan*, f. 24b; H. H. Das, *Norris Embassy to Aurangzeb*, p. 285.

<sup>4</sup> *Wagat-i Aimer*, pp. 77, 81, 83 and 84; *Ma'asir-i Alangiri*, p. 173.

<sup>5</sup> *Mirra-i Ahmadi*, Vol. I, p. 277. Dilir Khan had state-dues against him, so at his death Aurangzeb ordered that his property should be escheated. (*Dilkusha*, f. 83b).

<sup>6</sup> Abdul Nabi, the *gajdar* of Mathura, was killed during a fight by a musket ball, and his entire property was confiscated for the state. (Kannwar, *Tazkara-i Salatin-i Chaghia*, f. 280b; *Ma'asir-i Alangiri*, p. 83). The property of Bakhshtal Mulk Mulkhis Khan was confiscated after his death. (*Akhhara*, 4th Shaban, 44th R. Y. of Aurangzeb). The property of Arshad Khan was confiscated for the state after his death (*Akhhara*, 10th Rabi I, 45th R. Y.). Muhammad Jafar was deputed to attach the property of Qasim Khan deceased (19th Jamada II, 39th R. Y.). The entire property of Shaista Khan deceased was escheated to the crown. (*Ma'asir-ul Umrat*, Vol. II, p. 705). In the 38th R. Y. of Aurangzeb, Khan-i Jahan Bahadur Zafar Jang Kokatah died, the entire property of the deceased Khan was escheated for the state (*Dilkusha*, f. 118b).

On a more general view, taking the Mughal 'system of escheat' as a whole, it is difficult to agree with some European travellers and modern writers<sup>1</sup> in considering it the source of all evils. Bernier, for example, denounced it as 'a barbarous' custom. He declared that it made it impossible for families to retain their status and wealth: "The king being the heir of all their possessions, no family can long maintain its distinction, but after the Umarrah's death, is soon extinguished, and the sons or at least the grandsons, reduced generally to beggary..."<sup>2</sup> Moreland suggests that the escheat system created great insecurity for the nobles and was the reason why the nobles spent huge amounts on luxuries and did not save and invest.<sup>3</sup>

These statements assume that the Emperor in practice exercised his rights over his nobles' property and confiscated it entirely or the larger part of it. This is far from the truth. All the nobles were not spend-thrifts; many of them saved and accumulated large amounts. Pelsaert, indeed, was surprised that despite the escheat system the nobles continued to amass wealth, and was led to believe that wealth was loved for its sake alone.<sup>4</sup> In fact every noble felt confident that his wealth, after meeting the *mutaliba*, would remain with his heirs, although one son (generally the eldest but possibly another son who was his or the king's favourite) would get more than the others. This was why they amassed wealth and accumulated riches. The escheat system had, therefore, a more theoretical and legal than economic significance.

## MANSABDARS WHOSE SAWAR RANK EXCEEDED THE ẒĀT RANK

## APPENDIX A

Name	Rank	Source
1. Faujdar of Gorakhpur (Name not given)	3,000/4,000	<i>Akhbarat</i> , 28th Moharram, 43 R.Y.
2. Kishore Singh Hara	2,500/3,000	" 28th Jamada, 38 R.Y.
3. Khwaja Muhammad Arif Mujahid Khan	2,500/2,800	" 16th Rabi II, 39 R.Y. Kamwar, f. 273a.
4. Rao Dalpat	2,500/2,700	<i>Dilkusha</i> , f. 136a.
5. Hadi Khan	2,000/2,400	<i>Akhbarat</i> , 13th Ramzan, 13 R.Y.
6. Ram Chand	2,000/3,000	<i>Ma'asir-i-Alangiri</i> , 423
7. Qabud Khan	2,000/2,500	<i>Alangir Nama</i> , p. 120.
8. Sardar Khan	2,000/2,500	" " p. 629.
9. Sher Afgan	1,500/1,700	<i>Ma'asir-i-Alangiri</i> , p. 381.
10. Alah Dad Khan	1,500/2,000	<i>Akhbarat</i> , 15th Jamada II, 46 R.Y.
11. Dilir Si/o Bahadur Rohela	1,000/1,200 (500x2-3h)	<i>Alangir Nama</i> , p. 661.
12. Mohasham Khan	1,000/1,200 (1,000x2-3h)	<i>Akhbarat</i> , 15th Jamada II, 46 R.Y.
13. Kakur Khan	1,000/1,200	" 16th Rajab, 24 R.Y.
14. Saiyid Hasan Ali Khan	1,000/1,200	" 8th Ziqada, 39 R.Y.
15. Itikhar Khan	1,000/1,500	" 26th Ziqada, 43 R.Y.
16. Kr. Bijai Singh	1,000/2,000	" 26th Rajab, 45 R.Y.
17. Mamar Khan	1,000/1,200	" 9th Ramzan, 44 R.Y.
18. Rahman Dad Khan	1,000/1,500	" 4th Ziqada, 46 R.Y.
19. Samandar Khan	1,000/1,200	" 15th Jamada II, 46 R.Y.
20. Abdul Samad Khan	1,000/1,100 (300x2-3h)	" 1st Moharram, 45 R.Y.
21. Muhammad Murad Khan	900/1,000	" 7th Ziqada, 38 R.Y.
22. Bahram	1,000/1,700	" 10th Rabi I, 45 R.Y.
23. Kartalab Khan	900/1,000	<i>Alangir Nama</i> , p. 1039
24. Najaf Quli	800/1,000	<i>Akhbarat</i> , 26th Safar, 45 R.Y.
25. Fatch Jalauri	700/1,400	" 5th Moharram, 45 R.Y.
26. Aurang Khan	700/900 (400x2-3h)	" 15th Shaaban, 24 R.Y.
27. Hafiz Khan	700/900	" 28th Ramzan, 46 R.Y.
28. Khwaja Khuda Yar Khan	700/1,000	" 29th Safar, 46 R.Y.
29. Agha Quli Khan	700/800	" 14th Rabi II, 44 R.Y.
30. Rawat Mal Jhala	700/900	" 9th Ziqada, 40 R.Y.
		<i>Akhbarat</i> , 4th Moharram, 45 R.Y.

<sup>1</sup> Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, 3rd ed. 1935, pp. 175-76.

<sup>2</sup> Bernier, 211-12; See also Careri, p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> *India At the Death of Akbar*, pp. 262-63.

<sup>4</sup> Pelsaert, Tr. Moreland, *Jahangir's India*, pp. 54-56.