



Jamia Millia Islamia

Name of Scholar: Paramjeet Kaur

Name of the Supervisor: Prof. Nishat Manzar

Name of the Department: Department of History and Culture

Topic: Middle Class in Mughal India

Abstract

According to Lewis and Maude, the concept of a 'middle class' emerged in the 14th century England. This emerged with the rise of a trading community, which monopolized certain spheres of trade and gradually organized itself into associations and groups. It was an urban-based class, which represented the old regime. This old regime consisted of fief and personal service class. This new class, called middle classes, included not only the merchants, but also professionals like lawyers, physicians, printers, master-artisans, etc., who as individuals, appeared to be independent of the feudal nobility.

Most modern scholars denied the existence of the *middle class* in Mughal India. It was due to statement made by François Bernier, a French traveler that *There is no middle state in Delhi. A man must be either of high rank or live miserably.* This statement has generated intense discussion among the historians. It has been tried to explore the presence of a 'middle class' in Mughal India. It can safely be assumed that there were, definitely, various groups in rural and urban areas that constituted a 'middle class', though not in a modern sense.

For the present work sources in Persian language and in the translation have been studied. I have also relied on the English Factory Records, reports, census, diaries, travelogues and some missionary's accounts.