

Chapter 10: Eighteenth-Century Political Formations

Intext Questions:

Question 1: See Chapter 4, Table 1. Which group of people challenged Mughal authority for the longest time in Aurangzeb's reign?

Answer: Marathas challenged Mughal authority for the longest time in Aurangzeb's reign .

Question 2: How then can the lord keep the armed force he should? How can he pay the soldiers who should go before him when he goes out, or the horsemen who should ride behind him?

Answer: Economy is most important thing for any economy. If it fails, even the mighty king couldn't be able to pay salaries neither in cash nor in kind. So rich and powerful people rob the poor in all forms. An anarchic situation exists in society. No proper order and rules are being over-ruled. The worst situation is people die out of hunger.

Question 3: In trying to consolidate their rule, why did Mughal Subadars also want to control the office of diwan?

Answer: The Mughal Subadars wanted to control the offices of Diwan, so they could appoint their loyalists instead of the workers in Diwan offices appointed by the Mughals and stop Mughal's influence in their province.

Question 4: What is the Khalsa? Do you recall reading about it in Chapter 8?

Answer:

- The body or company of fully initiated Sikhs, to which devout orthodox Sikhs are ritually admitted at puberty. The Khalsa was founded in 1699 by the last Guru (Gobind Singh). Members show their allegiance by five signs (called the five Ks): kangha (comb), kara (steel bangle), kesh (uncut hair, covered by a turban, and beard), kirpan (short sword) and kuccha (short trousers, originally for riding).
- Yes, we recall it.

Imagine

Question: You are a ruler of an eighteenth-century kingdom. Tell us about the steps you would take to make your position strong in your province, and what opposition or problems you might face while doing so.

Answer: Steps to be taken to make the position strong in our province:

1. Check on depletion of resources: financial and military.
2. Check or stop wars.
3. Check on powerful mansabdars.
4. No appointment of nobles to control revenue offices and military administration.
5. Not allowing governors to become strong.

Opposition/Problems to be faced while doing so:

1. Opposition from financial officers and military.
2. Problems from nobles/governors.
3. Problems from mansabdars.
4. Opposition from nobles.
5. Opposition from governors.

LET'S RECALL

1. Match the following:

1)subadar	a)a revenue farmer
2)faujdar	b)a high noble
3)ijaradar	c)provincial governor
4)misl	d)Maratha peasant warriors
5)chauth	e)a Mughal military commander
6)kunbis	f)a band of Sikh warriors
7)umara	g)tax levied by the Marathas

Answer:

1)subadar	a)provincial governor
2)faujdar	b)a Mughal military commander
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6)kunbis	f)Maratha peasant warriors
7)umara	g)a high noble

Question 2: Fill in the blanks:

1. Aurangzeb fought a protracted war in the
2. Umara and zamindars constituted powerful sections of the Mughal
3. Asaf Jah founded the Hyderabad state in
4. The founder of the Awadh state was

Answer:

1. Deccan.
2. nobility.
3. 1724, eighteenth century.
4. Burhan-ul-Mulk Sadat Khan.

Question 3: State whether true or false:

1. Nadir Shah invaded Bengal.
2. Sawai Raja Jai Singh was the ruler of Indore.
3. Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth Guru of the Sikhs.
4. Poona became the capital of the Marathas in the eighteenth century.

Answer:

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True

Question 4: What were the offices held by Saadat Khan?

Answer: Sa'adat Khan held the offices of Subadari, diwani and faujdari. In other words, he was responsible for managing the political, financial and military affairs of the province of Awadh.

LET'S DISCUSS

Question 5: Why did the Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal try to do away with the jagirdari system?

Answer: The Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal tried to do away with the jagirdari system to prevent cheating as well as the Mughal influence in their kingdoms. The Nawabs of Awadh reduced the size of jagirs and appointed his own loyal servants to vacant positions. The accounts of jagirdars were checked to prevent cheating and the revenues of all districts were reassessed by officials appointed by the Nawab's court. In an effort to reduce the Mughal influence in Bengal, Murshid Quli Khan transferred all Mughal jagirdars to Orissa and ordered a major reassessment of the revenues of Bengal.

Question 6: How were the Sikhs organised in the eighteenth century?

Answer: Organisation of Sikhs in the 18th century:

1. Regional state-building in Punjab.
2. Guru Gobind Singh fought several battles with Rajput and Mughal rulers.
3. Set Khalsa in 1699.
4. After the death of Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Bahadur rose in revolt.
 - He was captured in 1715 and executed in 1716.
5. Jathas were formed in 18th century.
6. The combined force was known as dal Khalsa.
7. The entire body used to meet at Amritsar at the time of Baisakhi and Diwali to take collective decisions known as resolutions of the Guru (gurmatas). Guru Gobind Singh had inspired the Khalsa with the belief that their destiny was to rule (raj karegakhalsa).
8. The Sikh territories in the late eighteenth century extended from the Indus to the Jamuna.
9. Cultivators paid 20% of the product for their protection.

Question 7: Why did the Marathas want to expand beyond the Deccan?

Answer: The Marathas wanted to expand beyond the Deccan in order to control trade and agriculture and therefore receive tribute. Moreover, expansion would bring enormous power and resources to the empire. They also earned untold booty and resources from the wars they fought. Therefore, they wanted to expand beyond Deccan.

Question 8: What were the policies adopted by Asaf Jah to strengthen his position?

Answer: Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah founded the state of Hyderabad and gained control of financial and political administration:

1. He brought skilled soldiers and administrators from the north and gave them opportunities in the south.
2. He combined the offices of Subadari, faujdari and diwani.
3. He appointed mansabdars and gave them Jagirs.
4. Collected taxes through bankers and mahajans.
5. He ruled independently without seeking directions or interference from Delhi.
6. His decisions were merely confirmed by the Mughal Emperor.

Question 9: Do you think merchants and bankers today have the kind of influence they had in the eighteenth century?

Answer:

1. Yes, I think that merchants and bankers today have the kind of influence they had in the eighteenth century.
2. For example, Reliance Company has entered into electricity distribution in Delhi.
3. It has already installed new electric meters that run much faster than the previous meters.
4. In this way, the common man suffers, as he would have suffered in the 18th century.
5. And the state government won't do anything in this matter.
6. This proves the merchant/banker connection with governmental authorities.

Question 10: Did any of the kingdoms mentioned in this chapter develop in your state? If so, in what ways do you think life in the state would have been different in the eighteenth century from what it is in the twenty-first century?

Answer: One example:

- Hyderabad (now in Andhra Pradesh)
- Now democracy, right to vote, freedom of speech, well organised Judiciary and all people guaranteed certain fundamental rights.
- No dictatorship

LET'S DO

Question 11: Find out more about the architecture and culture associated with the new courts of any of the following Awadh, Bengal or Hyderabad.

Answer: Architecture and culture associated with the new courts of the following:

Awadh, Bengal or Hyderabad.

	Awadh	Bengal	Hyderabad
Architecture	No trace	No trace	No trace is seen
Culture	Consolidation of power through making the power strong. Decentralisation of revenue collection. New social growth emerged.	Considerable change in zamindari system. Close collection between state and bankers	Welfare of the people in the mind

Question 12: Collect popular tales about rulers from any one of the following groups of people: the Rajputs, Jats, Sikhs or Marathas.

Answer:

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was born as a peasant boy and turned around his destiny to become one of the greatest Hindu kings in India and a hero for the Marathas. Shivaji's origin story shows how he is so much more than just an anti-Muslim warrior.
- Despite having died 300 years ago- on February 19, 1627, Shivaji's name and presence are continually felt around India, and especially in Maharashtra. Chhatrapati Shivaji was one of the bravest, most progressive and sensible rulers of India.
- Shivaji established a royal name for himself in history with his administrative skills by upholding the Swarajya values and the Maratha heritage.
- He was known for his bravery and tactics with which he won numerous wars against the Mughals. Known as the Father of Indian Navy, Shivaji was the first to realise the importance of having a naval force, and therefore he strategically established a navy and forts at the coastline to defend the Konkan side of Maharashtra.
- The Jaigad, Vijaydurg, Sindhudurg and other such forts still stand to testify his efforts and ideas. Shivaji was a dependable supporter of women and their honour.
- He opposed all kinds of violence, harassment and dishonour against women. Anyone under his rule caught violating woman's rights was severely punished. In fact, women of captured territories were also released unharmed, and with integrity.