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HISTORY OF INDIA : 1707-1950

B.H.I.C.- 134

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By: Prieti Gupta



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QUESTION PAPER

June – 2023

(Solved)

HISTORY OF INDIA: 1707-1950

B.H.I.C.-134

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note : Answer any **five** questions. Attempt at least **two** questions from each section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION-I

Q. 1. What were the motives behind the introduction of the permanent settlement in Bengal? What was its effect on the position of the cultivators?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 59, 'The Permanent Settlement in Bengal'.

Q. 2. Discuss the process of the British conquest of Bengal.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 26, 'The British Conquest of Bengal 1757-65'.

Q. 3. Write a note on the growth and consolidation of the Mysore state.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 15, 'Rise of Mysore' and 'Role of War' and 'Militarization in Mysore'.

Q. 4. Write short notes on the following:

(i) The Eighteenth-Century Debate

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 1, 'The Eighteenth Century Debate'.

(ii) The Emerging Vision of the Empire

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 38, 'The Emerging Vision of the Empire'.

(iii) Revenue Institutions

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 86, 'Backwardness of Indian Agriculture'.

(iv) Administrative system of the Marathas

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 23, 'The Marathas'.

SECTION-II

Q. 5. Examine the role of literature in the development of national consciousness.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 110, Q. No. 6.

Q. 6. Describe the major trends of socio-religious reform movements in India during the 19th century.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 93, Q. No. 4.

Q. 7. Discuss the ways in which colonial and nationalist legacies influenced the shape of post-colonial polity.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 144, Q. No. 4.

Q. 8. Write short notes on the following:

(i) Commercialisation of Agriculture

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 58, 'Commercialisation Under the British'.

(ii) Ideological basis of extremism

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 103, 'Ideological Basis of Extremism' and Page No. 104, 'Extremists in Action'.

(iii) Hind Swaraj

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 120, 'Idea of Hind Swaraj'.

(iv) Communalism in the 20th century

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-12, Page No. 129, 'Communalism in the 20th Century'.

■ ■

QUESTION PAPER

December – 2022

(Solved)

HISTORY OF INDIA: 1707-1950

B.H.I.C.-134

Time: 3 Hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note : Answer any **five** questions. Attempt at least **two** questions from each section. All questions carry equal marks.

SECTION-I

Q. 1. Discuss the socio-economic context of the rise of the independent states in the 18th century.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 3, 'Socio-Economic Context of Rise of Regional Policies'.

Q. 2. Did war and militarization play a role in the state formation of Mysore and Hyderabad?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 15, 'Role of War and Militarization in Mysore' and Page No. 16, 'Hyderabad as an Independent State' and Page No. 17 'Financial and Military Groups'.

Q. 3. Discuss the permanent settlement in Bengal. What effects did it have?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 59, 'The Permanent Settlement in Bengal'.

Q. 4. Write short notes on the following:

(i) The utilitarians

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 37, 'The Utilitarians'.

(ii) Siraj-ud-daullah and the British

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 26, 'Siraj-ud-daullah and the British'.

(iii) Warren Hastings

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 36, 'Warren Hastings and the British Image of India'.

(iv) Mahalwari settlement

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 61, 'Mahalwari Theory and Practice' and 'Effects of the Mahalwari Settlement'.

SECTION-II

Q. 5. Discuss the ways in which a democratic state came up in the post-independence India.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 146, Q. No. 2 and Page No. 142, 'Institutional Pillars of the Democratic State'.

Q. 6. Discuss Gandhiji's role in the Indian National Movement.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 120, Q. No. 2 and Page No. 121, Q. No. 3 and Q. No. 4.

Q. 7. Discuss the main ideas of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Was he a rationalist?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 92, Q. No. 3, and Page No. 89, 'Ideas of Ram Mohan Roy'.

Q. 8. Write short notes on the following:

(i) Significance of Reform Movements

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 91, 'Significance of Reform Movements'.

(ii) Cripps Proposal

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 118, 'Cripps Proposal'.

(iii) Revolutionary nationalism

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 104, 'The Rise of Revolutionary Nationalism'.

(iv) Commercialization of agriculture

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 65, Q. No. 1.

■■

Sample Preview of The Chapter

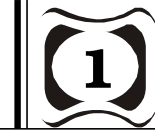
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HISTORY OF INDIA: 1707-1950



Interpreting the Eighteenth Century

INTRODUCTION

The eighteenth century in India appeared as an age of dissolving certainties as the Mughal Empire was at its decline stage. Various warrior-peasant groups (Jats, Rohillas, and the Sikhs) are becoming strong while the fiscal system of Mughal Empire was getting weak.

New independent states are emerging. At that time, Ahmad Shah (1748-1754) and Shah Alam-II (1759-1816) were blinded, and another, Alamgir-II (1754-1759) was assassinated by nobles. Thus, the political fortunes of India were clearly moving in a different direction. British East India Company, had succeeded in conquering much of eastern India and had begun to interrupt the state affairs in other parts of the sub-continent. In this way, the company was slowly creating the bases of an early-colonial system of rule. Due to these changes, the eighteenth century has attracted the attention of a number of modern historians. The areas of debate are centred around the reasons for the transition of the Company from a commercial to a political entity, the nature of its social and economic impact etc.

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: SALIENT FEATURES

To understand the salient features of this time period, it is necessary to understand the changes taking place during this period. The first major change is the division of the Mughal Empire into regional and even smaller sub-regional political entities. Second, historians have studied the eighteenth century as a 'long' century in order to understand its full implications. According to modern analysis, the basis of the political dynamics of this century lies in the fragmentation of

the Mughal Empire around 1680. There is another third perspective, which looks at the relationship between the Indian economy and the world economy. The Europeanisation of early modern trade influenced the nature and future of India's trading life in the eighteenth century and brought a lot of wealth to India. The profits were significant from the Indian point of view. From the perspective of understanding the eighteenth century, these developments are significant. The eighteenth century saw a worldwide economic expansion compared to the seventeenth century, and India's maritime trade flourished at this time exceptionally. Therefore, the idea that the eighteenth century is considered an era of economic isolation is not correct.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DEBATE

Due to the rapid and significant changes, different interpretations have been given by historians on almost every subject in the eighteenth century. In order to understand this century has been made in two parts-till 1750 and after 1750. The period up to 1750 has been classified mainly from the point of view of debate into two distinct approaches-the empire-centred and the region-centred approach. Similarly, the debates after 1750 are classified under the Indianist and Europeansist approaches.

Under the empire-centred approach, some historians consider the centrality of the Mughal Empire and its institutions and its role in the process of society and economy as the main factor in the decline of the Mughal Empire. According to this the fall of the empire had disastrous consequences, leading to political disorder and anarchy in the country. Recent interpretations have seen this collapse as the deterioration of the structure. But no positive thoughts emerged from it. The regional states are often accused of not developing their potential as an independent state

beyond the power of Mughal province. In contrast to the empire-centred view that recognizes the dominant role of the empire, region-centred views center the social groups living in different parts of the empire. These regional powers radically changed the structure of Mughal regional rule, leading the establishment of autonomous states at one stage in Bengal, Awadh and Hyderabad. The Marathas and Sikhs like polities were arising at another level against the Mughals. Also, many of their political systems were the replication of Mughal administrative systems. In this modified regional perspective, the Mughal elite and their officers established ownership rights over agriculture by further consolidating their power and also got the right to collect revenue. With the course of time, they became hereditary estates. Their position was further strengthened by the commercial development in the regions.

In the context of the situation after 1750, the European approach gives prominence to the dominance of the victorious expansionist, according to which anarchy and disorder prevailed in India at that time and hence it was defeated in the face of European power. This is the most prominent view of the nationalist and Marxist historians of India. According to this nationalist ideology, due to the anarchy that spread in India in the eighteenth century, this nation became a colony of a foreign power. The traditional Marxist ideology, while condemning the British rule, considers it the root of the end of the feudal disintegration of the eighteenth century. Some scholars believe that the British rule was in constant pursuit of profit, goods and markets and had no progressive aspect. Some of the common beliefs in the view of historians are as follows:

- Order and stability can only exist in a larger pan-India political system, and since this stability ended in the eighteenth century, this period brought chaos, anarchy and collapse.
- Political discontinuity came in this century.
- The British rule was a fundamental disjuncture, based on foreign and unknown hegemony and it was far from the traditions of Indian governance or culture.

On the other hand, the Indianist perspective considers this transition to colonialism as a differential and emphasizes the long-term association of Europe (especially the British) with India. They do not consider the increasing power of the British as a one-sided process of conquest and subjugation. This ideology

emphasizes the idea of how the conditions of Indian society gave rise to British rule. The Indian approach does not support the fact that the eighteenth century was a period of anarchic conditions. According to this, the successor states of the Mughal Empire provided political stability to India. According to this view, India's commercial and military sophistication continued even into the eighteenth century and the Company used it to its advantage. Expanding commercial opportunities as-well-as Indian factors contributed to the determination of British rule in India. The British rule was based on the ideals of the Indian system of governance, agro-business arrangements and the efficiency of human resources, and they adapted it simply to fulfill their commercial needs. According to the Indian approach, the eighteenth century was a continuation rather than a stagnation, in which the existing institutions and structures remained. But their form changed and commercial processes expanded all around. Those subscribing to this view are often referred to as the 'Cambridge School'. Together they constitute the group of 'revisionist' historians.

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE, ITS DECLINE AND THE GENESIS OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Modern historians have not given special support to the theory of moral depravity, weak governance and the orthodox ideology of communal policy in the context of the decline of the Mughal Empire. According to him, at that time the events were happening so fast that it was not possible for any one person to control it. According to Irfan Habib, due to the self-limiting capacity of the economy to expand, there occurred an unrestrained tendency of the Mughal fiscal system leading to the tripolar confrontation between the imperial ruling class, the hereditary landholding classes (the Zamindars) and peasants. Athar Ali believed that the crisis occurred because of the growing shortage of jagirs.

J.F. Richards looked at *bejagiri* (i.e., absence of *jagirs*) as a major cause for Mughal decline and pointed towards the Deccan to be a deficit area that generated *bejagiri* leading to the Mughal decline. Besides, he has also held, *jagirdari* crisis to be of an administrative and managerial nature.

According to an interesting argument by Marshall Hodgson, the main reason for the success and decline of all three Muslim empires, the Ottomans, the Safavids and the Mughals, was the correct use of gunpowder. Because of this, they did not adopt the changing new technologies in the field of warfare happening in the

Western Hemisphere. Iqtidar Alam Khan also believed that while guns, cannons and ammunition promoted the power of the empire, powerful subjects used them to arm themselves and to resist state interference. Stewart Gordon also testified that in the eighteenth century how Marathas used a very large and motley military labour market that included Europeans. Therefore, to understand the decline of the Mughal Empire, both a long-term and a conjunctural view are important. The long-term view is that the Mughal Empire provided a number of institutions ostensibly to centralize power leading to periodic crises in institutional and fiscal arrangements of the empire, which the Mughals were unable to sort out effectively. The conjunctural problems include the Deccan crisis, sustained anti-movements by the Jats and Mewatis in the Ganges-Yamuna Doab region in northern India, and Sikh protests in Punjab, etc. Trade and commerce expanded in the eastern Indian regions, but economic difficulties increased due to lack of adequate recovery. These conjunctural crisis further aggravated the long-term conflicts between state and local imperatives that had arisen in the past, leading to the decline of the empire. This means that in analyzing the decline of the Mughal Empire, it is necessary to study the ever-changing relations of the center and the local regions including their fluidity and the constant tensions between the nobility and the local chieftains. The most of the regional groups got benefited from the process of centralization by the empire. As the empire accumulated wealth through the revenue system, there existed a tendency to be encroached upon by local groups, which increased mutual tensions.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF RISE OF REGIONAL POLITIES

The factors of the decline of Mughal empire are also included in the region-centric perspective of the empire. For example, Andre Wink, propounding the theory of 'Fitna', held that the polity was constantly crumbling due to factionalism and moving away from centralisation. Stephen Blake has presented the paternal-bureaucratic explanation of the Mughal system in this context. According to this, the Mughal rulers remained busy in balancing personalized style of rule (the patrimonial) with a highly militarized and centralized vision of the empire. M.N. Pearson also recognized that the Mughal rulers could not bridge the gap between an ancestral, highly personal rule and their military aspirations. Muzaffar Alam showed that the local noble and regional elite continued to strengthen

their position under this royal process. But the nature of these elite classes was not the same everywhere. The people of Awadh belonged to the upper class of society (Ashraf) while in other places there were some lower class elements such as Jats, farmers in Punjab, or Sadgop zamindari in Bengal etc. Merchants and bankers played a crucial role in underwriting them for consideration. So, the diverse system at that time was under multipolar tension. C.A. Bayly attributed the crisis to the rise of various military, commercial and political factions, known as contractors, who unitedly 'took advantage of the growing trade and production of the Mughal Empire. This rise does not mean a decline. This means that with social displacement new institutions emerged.

The study of political processes of the eighteenth century has focused on three types of governance systems. The first was based on the replica of the earlier Mughal systems of governance, with the Mughal Subedars of the Nawabs of Awadh and Bengal ruling these provinces as successor states and adopted the same Mughal customs and customs. Maratha, Jats and Sikh states came in the second category. They originated independently from the Mughal Empire, so their nature was different. These states established new political and administrative systems for consolidation. These states posed a real challenge to the Mughal Empire. The structures included in the third category were very significant from the political point of view. These includes many local principalities of Muslim, Hindu or tribal origin located in the frontiers of the semi-autonomous states. After being defeated in the Ganga-Yamuna Doab region, the Rajput dynasties conquered from Gujarat in the west to Awadh in the north, establishing small kingdoms by migration and settlement.

The Afghan chieftains established their kingdoms by an innovative combination of conquest, revenue-farming and trading with the northwest areas. The zamindars of Burdwan and Qasim Bazar constituted organizations through revenue contracts (Ijara) and trade in Banaras Raj and Bengal respectively. Ahom kings of Hindu descent in the north-east border prevented the Mughal Empire from growing around 1680 and kept Assam independent until the British invasion. The monarchy in the south was centralized in Mysore around 1760. David Ludden told that small domains from the territory of the Nayakas that were sub-ordinated to Vijayanagar, based on temples, improved their militarisation. On the Malabar coast,

there was a treaty relationship between the coastal states and the zamindar houses, who shared the profits from trade, land and labour. After the invasion of Mysore, the monarchy was started in this region by Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 1. What are the two transitions witnessed by the 18th century?

Ans. The two transitions seen in the eighteenth century are as follows:

- *First*, the Mughal Empire disintegrated into regional and even smaller powers, which is believed to be the main reason for this change. This change was not limited to the redistribution of political power among regional and social groups, but was much more than that. In the middle of this century, the English East India Company succeeded in gaining political dominance after winning the battles of Plassey (1757) and Buxar (1763), which were formed solely with the aim of making commercial profit from India. This brought about a change in the maritime trade organization. After establishing dominance over India, the East India Company increased their military and commercial power to hold their influence.
- *Second*, historians have studied the eighteenth century as a 'long' century to understand its effects. According to modern ideas, the political upheaval in this century is linked to the fragmentation of the Mughal Empire around 1680. After 1720, the regional politics shows signs of stability. From 1750 onwards the process of new political relations begins under the Company's hegemony, which continues till 1820. By this time all major indigenous regimes had been either annexed or had become subsidiary allies of the Company. Thus, in terms of political importance, the eighteenth century assimilate the last two decades of the seventeenth-eighteenth century and the first three decades of the nineteenth century. In terms of economic perspective also the notion of 'long-term' century is beneficial. It has been proved that the political stability in the regions was accompanied by regional economic re-

orientation. However, there occurred economic declination in some places also. In other places, economic growth was led by the local landowners and the business class. The prevailing view supports economic disorder from the middle of the century, while modern research suggests that even after the Company came to power, indigenous structures were not completely destroyed, although some impact had been observed. Even in Bengal, where the Company's rule was the most intrusive, trade and agriculture prospered in a slightly altered form, which lasted till first two decades of the nineteenth century. After that, the slow pace of prosperity of the eighteenth century gradually started coming to an end.

Q. 2. What was the relationship between the Indian economy and the global economy in the eighteenth century?

Ans. The relationship between the Indian economy and the global economy has been observed under modern thought. According to it, the Indian Ocean formed an extensive trading network with the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and the Europeanization of early modern trade influenced the nature and future of India's trade in the eighteenth century. In this long period of trade, India always played an important role in providing goods and other services. Indian goods were in great demand in the European world. Therefore, from the point of view of Indian trade, India got a fair benefit from it and much wealth flowed into India through this channel. The links between India's commercial life and merchant capital were linked to Agra and Delhi as well as to Africa, South-East Asia and Europe. The mediation of early colonialism further strengthened this process of global economic expansion. An example of this lies in the changes in intra-Asian trade in the late eighteenth century when the trade of India and West-Asia turned towards East and South-East Asia under British commerce. Since the eighteenth century saw worldwide economic expansion as compared to the seventeenth century. Also, India's maritime trade flourished exceptionally at this time. Therefore, the view that the eighteenth century is an era of economic disjuncture or crisis cannot be supported.

Q. 3. 'The eighteenth century was a century of universal decline.' Comment.

Ans. According to the prevailing orthodox concept, the principle of moral depravity, weak rulers and communal policy etc., have been cited as factors for