



CLASS - 8

SOCIAL SCIENCE



Chapter 3: The Rise of the Marathas

Questions and Activities

Que 1. Analyse how geography (particularly mountains and coastlines) guided Maratha military strategy and state formation.

Answer:

- The Maratha region had Sahyadri mountains and difficult valleys.
- These hilly areas aided the Marathas in guerrilla warfare.
- Because of the fortifications, they were able to protect themselves from powerful enemies.
- The coastline gave the Marathas an opportunity to develop a navy.
- The Maratha kingdom was strengthened by maritime trade and coastal defence.
- Geography thus played an important role in the military policy and state-building of the Marathas.

Que 2. Imagine you are creating a short biography of a Maratha leader for younger students. Choose one personality (Kanhoji Angre, Bajirao I, Mahadji Shinde, Ahilyabai Holkar or Tarabai) and write 3-4 paragraphs highlighting what makes them inspirational. Include at least one challenge they overcame.

Answer:

Short Biography of Ahilyabai Holkar

- Ahilyabai Holkar was a great and just ruler of Maratha history.
- She was the ruler of the Malwa region and is famous for her simple life, religious tolerance and public welfare.
- He built roads, ghats, temples and dharamshalas in his kingdom.
- She used to listen to the problems of the people and give just decisions.
- The biggest challenge in her life was the death of her husband and son.
- Even after this, he did not lose courage and ruled efficiently.
- His most inspiring attributes were courage, justice, sense of service, and administrative ability.

Que 3. If you could visit one Maratha fort today (such as Raigad, Sindhudurg, Gingee, or Pratapgad), which would you choose and why? Research its history, architecture, and strategic importance. Present your findings as a digital presentation or a poster in class.

Answer: I would like to see Raigad Durg.

Causes:

- Raigad was the capital of Shivaji Maharaj.
- It was here that his coronation took place.
- This fort is situated on a high hill.

History:

- Raigad was a major center of the Maratha Empire.
- Shivaji Maharaj made it his capital.

Architecture:

- It had palaces, bazaars, gates and water collection facilities.
- The fort was designed keeping in mind the security.

Strategic Importance:

- Due to the height, it was difficult for the enemy to attack it.
- It was a symbol of the power and independence of the Marathas.

Que 4. The chapter states, “The British took India from the Marathas more than from the Mughals or any other power.” What do you think this means? What evidence from the chapter supports this idea?

Answer:

- This means that the Marathas were the most powerful Indian power in India at the time of the arrival of the British.
- The Mughal Empire had weakened.
- The influence of the Marathas had spread to north, central and western India.
- The British had to fight many wars with the Marathas to gain power in India.
- That is why it is said that the British snatched India mainly from the Marathas.

Que 5. Compare how Chhatrapati Shivaji and later Marathas treated religious places and people of different faiths. What evidence from the chapter shows their approach to religious diversity?

Answer:

Shivaji's Behaviour:

- Shivaji respected all religions.
- He emphasized on the protection of women and religious places.
- He gave positions to deserving people, irrespective of their religion.

Behaviour of Successive Marathas:

- The later Marathas also sought cooperation from the local people in many areas.
- He gave people from different communities positions in the administration and the army.
- Religious places and traditions were respected.

Conclusion:

- The outlook of Shivaji and the later Marathas was pragmatic and tolerant.
- He embraced diversity as the power of governance.

Que 6. The chapter describes how forts were 'the core of the state' for Marathas. Why were they so important? How did they help the Marathas survive against larger enemies?

Answer:

- Forts were the mainstay of the defense system of the Marathas.
- The enemy's movements were monitored from the mountain fortifications.
- Soldiers, weapons and grain were kept safe in them.
- At the time of war, the forts became safe havens.
- With the help of forts, the Marathas could face powerful enemies like the Mughals.
- Therefore, the fort was considered to be the cornerstone of the Maratha kingdom.

Que 7. You have been appointed as the chief designer for Maratha coins. Design a coin that represents Maratha achievements and values. Explain the symbols you chose.

Answer: I will make a round coin with these symbols:

- Fort: A symbol of Maratha strength and protection.
- Sword: A symbol of courage and valor.
- Ship: A symbol of the Maratha navy and sea power.
- Saffron Flag: A symbol of freedom and self-respect.
- Grain Earrings: A symbol of the prosperity and well-being of the subjects.

Message: This coin will depict the valour, independence, organisation, sea power and welfare of the Marathas.

Que 8. After this introduction to the Maratha period, what do you think was their most important contribution to Indian history? Write a paragraph supporting your opinion with examples from the chapter. Then share and discuss your ideas with classmates.

Answer: In my view, the most important contribution of the Marathas was to strengthen the spirit of self-government and independence in India. Shivaji Maharaj started from a small area and created an organized state. The Marathas withstood great empires with fortifications, guerrilla warfare, strong administration, and the support of the masses. Later, the influence of the Marathas spread to large parts of India. He proved that with courage, organization and the support of the masses, powerful enemies can be faced.

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