

Tribes, Nomads and Settled Communities

Q1. Write about Ahom society.

Ans. Ahom society was divided into clans or khels. There were very few castes of artisans, so artisans in the Ahom areas came from the adjoining kingdoms. A khel often controlled several villages. The peasant was given land by his village community. Even the king could not take it away without the community's consent. Originally, the Ahoms worshipped their own tribal gods. During the first half of the seventeenth century, however, the influence of Brahmanas increased. Temples and Brahmanas were granted land by the king. In the reign of Sib Singh (1714-1744), Hinduism became the predominant religion. But the Ahom kings did not completely give up their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism. Ahom society was very sophisticated. Poets and scholars were given land grants. Theatre was encouraged.

Q2. How did tribal societies change after being organized into a state?

Ans. Changes in tribal societies

- i. Considerable social change took place in the subcontinent. Varna-based society and tribal people constantly interacted with each other. This interaction caused both kinds of societies to adapt and change.
- ii. There were many different tribes and they took up diverse livelihoods.
- iii. Over a period of time, many of them merged with caste based society. Others, however, rejected both the caste system and orthodox Hinduism.
- iv. Some tribes established extensive states with well-organised systems of administration. They thus became politically powerful. This brought them into conflict with larger and more complex kingdoms and empires.