

Name: _____ Date: _____

Eighteenth-Century Political Formations

Q1. How did Murshid Quli Khan become powerful in Bengal?

Ans. _____

Q2. Who were the Jats? How did they consolidate their power during the late 17th and 18th centuries?

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Q3. How were the Sikhs organised in the eighteenth century?

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Q1. How did Murshid Quli Khan become powerful in Bengal?

Ans. Bengal gradually broke away from Mughal control under Murshid Quli Khan who was appointed as the naib, deputy to the governor of the province. Although never a formal subadar, Murshid Quli Khan very quickly seized all the power that went with that office. In an effort to reduce Mughal influence in Bengal he transferred all Mughal jagirdars to Orissa and ordered a major reassessment of the revenues of Bengal. Revenue was collected in cash with great strictness from all zamindars.

Q2. Who were the Jats? How did they consolidate their power during the late 17th and 18th centuries?

Ans. The Jats were prosperous agriculturists. They consolidated their power during the late seventeenth and eighteenth-centuries. Under their leader, Churaman, they acquired control over territories situated to the west of the city of Delhi, and by the 1680s they had begun dominating the region between the two imperial cities of Delhi and Agra. Towns like Panipat and Ballabgarh became important trading centres in the areas dominated by them. Under Suraj Mal the kingdom of Bharatpur emerged as a strong state.

Q3. How were the Sikhs organised in the eighteenth century?

Ans. Under a number of able leaders in the eighteenth century, the Sikhs organized themselves into a number of bands called jathas, and later on misls. Their combined forces were known as the grand army (dal khalsa). 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 (gurmata)". A system called rakhi was introduced, offering protection to cultivators on the payment of a tax of 20 per cent of the produce.