

Eighteenth-Century Political Formations

Q1. What are the common features of the three regional states of Bengal, Awadh and Hyderabad?

Ans. Three common features amongst these states were:

First, though many of the larger states were established by erstwhile Mughal nobles they were highly suspicious of some of the administrative systems that they had inherited, in particular the jagirdari system.

Second, their method of tax collection differed. Rather than relying upon the officers of the state, all three regimes contracted with revenue-farmers for the collection of revenue. The practice of ijaradari, thoroughly disapproved of by the Mughals, spread all over India in the eighteenth century. Their impact on the countryside differed considerably.

The third common feature in all these regional states was their emerging relationship with rich bankers and merchants. These people lent money to revenue farmers, received land as security and collected taxes from these lands through their own agents. Throughout India the richest merchants and bankers were gaining a stake in the new political order.