

# NCERT Solutions Class 8 Social Science (Exploring Society India and Beyond) Chapter 3 The Rise of the Marathas

## Question Answer (In-Text)

### The big Questions (page 61)

**Question 1. Who were the Marathas? How did they manage to become the largest pan-Indian power before the British took over?**

**Answer:** The Marathas were brave and powerful people from Maharashtra in the Deccan region. They spoke Marathi and followed Hindu traditions. With leaders like Shivaji, they built a strong empire, fought against the Mughals, protected Indian culture, and ruled large parts of India before the British rule. Later they even fought three wars with the British, and were the last strong Indian rulers before British rule started. Maratha rulers worked for the public well-fare, patronised art and culture, were religious tolerant and never oppressed their people. They secured their feet in trade, maintaining one of the developed transport system. In short, the Marathas were on the peak, thriving, when the British entered India.

**Question 2. What were some features of their governance?**

**Answer:** The Marathas followed a well-organised system of rule. Shivaji made sure officials were honest, ended old unfair rules, and built strong forts for protection. He formed a group of eight ministers to help in governance and worked for the welfare of all people, no matter of their religion. They implemented a periodically transfer system for many officials to control their powers and prevent exploitation. Shivaji even gave pensions and offered jobs in military to the wives and sons of the soldiers who died in battle.

**Question 3. What impact did the Maratha Empire leave in Indian history?**

**Answer:** The Marathas played an important role in Indian history. They stopped the Mughals from fully controlling India and built a strong empire. Shivaji promoted good rule, protected people, and respected all religions. Their bravery and leadership later inspired Indians in the fight for independence against British rule. Spreading across India, the Marathas shaped regional politics and stood firm against colonial powers, forging a legacy of loyalty, patriotic spirit, and decentralised governance that continues to influence India's political landscape today.

## Let's Explore

**Question 1. Have you ever heard the term 'bhakti'? What does it mean to you? Choose a bhakti saint from any part of India and learn about their life, their teachings, and the message they shared. You can also find one of their poems or bhajans and share it with your classmates. (Page 63)**



**Answer:** (Suggestive Answer] Yes, I have heard of the term 'bhakti'. For me it means, having a deep belief and respect for God. Mirabai is a famous bhakti saint. She was from Rajasthan. She had a deep faith in Lord Krishna. She left her luxurious life and chose to sing and worship Lord Krishna for the rest of her life. Her bhajans are really inspirational. They teach how to build a firm faith in God and to love Him with our whole hearts. One of Mirabai's famous bhajans is uPayoji maine Ram ratan dhan payo" which means "I have received the precious jewel of God's name; these treasure troves are beyond all the wealth, and I hold it with great joy and love."

**Question 2. Try to find out more about guerrilla warfare. Which other countries in the world adopted this method? What geographical advantages did they utilise for this? Discuss your findings in groups. (Page 66)**

**Answer:** Guerrilla warfare is a very famous ancient fighting tactic to conquer powerful enemies. In this warfare, the soldiers divide themselves into small groups where they use surprise attacks, make pitfall traps, and quick movements in battle fields. Many countries such as Afghanistan, Vietnam and Cuba etc. used this warfare. The soldiers utilise thick forests, mountains and rugged hills and caves to crush their enemies.

**Question 3. Pick an event from Shivaji's life and, with your classmates, stage it as a play. (Page 69)**

**Answer: (Suggestive Answer)**

1. Title: The Killing of Afzal Khan
2. Scene: Afzal Khan planned to kill Shivaji with a hidden weapon during a meeting at the foot of Pratapgarh Fort in Maharashtra.
3. Afzal Khan: (hugging Shivaji) Come, Shivaji, let's be friends.
4. Shivaji: (pulls out his wagh nakh and shouts) You betrayed me! (They fight. Shivaji wins.)
5. Narrator (walks around the stage): Shivaji's courage and planning saved him and defeated a great threat.

**Question 4. Have you heard of the dance form 'Bharatanatyam'? Did you know that this dance form has a deep connection with the Marathas? Can you find out what this connection was? (Page 80)**

**Answer:** Yes, I have heard of the dance form 'Bharatanatyam'. It is a veiy famous classical dance of Tamil Nadu. When the Maratha rulers ruled Thanjavur in South India, they supported and promoted Bharatanatyam and formed a deep connection with it. The Maratha emperors built temples help the dancers grow, and supported preserve the art form.

## Think About It

**Question 1. If you could time-travel and meet Shivaji, what three questions would you ask him and why? (Page 65)**

**Answer:** If I could time-travel and meet Shivaji, I would ask him following three questions:

1. How come you won so many battles with fewer soldiers as compared to your enemies? What're the secrets behind it? Through this question, I can know his idea of unity.
2. What encourages you to persuade this level of religious tolerance within yourself? This question would help me understand his idea of unity and tolerance.
3. When and where did you acquire the idea of Swarajya from? What inspired you to fight for it? This would help me know more about his background, vision and motivation.

**Question 2. Shivaji issued strict instructions to his officials not to mistreat the subjects or to forcefully grab even a blade of grass from them. In one of the letters issued to his officials, Shivaji says: (Page 73)**

**Answer:** "Wood, from big trees like teak is required for the Navy. If needed, secure permission for cutting the trees from the forest and then proceed. Other trees like the mango and jackfruit are also useful, but do not touch them. Because such trees take many years to mature, and the people look after them like their children. If you cut them, will their sorrow ever end? If you accomplish something by oppressing others, it perishes soon, along with the oppressor. There is harm in the absence of such trees as well. Therefore, do not use force in any circumstances."

**Question 3. Based on Shivaji's letter, what can you tell about his values as a ruler?**

**Answer:** Based on the above letter we can conclude that Shivaji perused values like compassion, justice, and environmental responsibility. He took the accountability of his people and always protected them. He emphasized an ethical governance and avoided oppression. He valued the emotions of his people and supported them grow throughout his rule. He promoted humanity, religious tolerance and a principled leadership style. The letter also demonstrates his deep love for nature, art and literature.

## Question Answer (Exercise)

### NCERT Questions and Activities (Page 82)

**Question 1. Analyse how geography (particularly mountains and coastlines) influenced Maratha military strategy and state formation.**

**Answer:** The Marathas lived in the Western Ghats mountains and near the west coast of India. The mountains helped them build strong forts for protection and secret paths for surprise attacks. The coastline helped them create a navy to protect maritime trade. These natural features made their military strong and advance.



**Question 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:** Kanhoji Angre – The Maratha Sea Lion Kanhoji Angre was a brave Maratha navy chief who protected India’s west coast in the early 18th century. He fought against the powerful British and Portuguese ships that tried to control Indian trade. Even though his navy was smaller, he used smart ideas and sea knowledge to defeat them many times.

He built strong sea forts like Vijaydurg and kept watch over the Arabian Sea. The European powers feared him because he never let them win easily. Kanhoji made sure that Indian traders could do business without being looted by foreign powers. One big challenge he faced was fighting better-equipped European navies, but his courage and clever tactics helped him win. That’s why he is still remembered as India’s first great naval hero.

**Question 3. If you could visit one Maratha fort today (such as Raigad, Sindhudurg, Gingee, or Pratapgarh), 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:** (Suggestive Answer) If I could visit one Maratha fort, I would choose Raigad Fort. Raigad Fort was the capital of Chhatrapati Shivaji’s empire. It is located on a high hill in Maharashtra and is surrounded by deep valleys, which made it very safe from enemies. Shivaji was crowned king here in 1674, and that is why this fort is very special.

The fort has strong stone walls, big entry gates, secret paths, and beautiful buildings like Queen’s palace, Shivaji’s throne, and market area. There are 1,737 steps to reach the top, or you can take a ropeway. From the top, you can see beautiful views of the mountains all around. This fort is important in history because it was the heart of the Maratha empire, and Shivaji ruled from here with justice and bravery. Visiting Raigad Fort would help me learn more about our history and Shivaji’s great leadership.

**Question 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 when the British wanted to rule India, the Marathas were the main power, not the Mughals. The Mughal Empire was already weak, and the Marathas controlled most parts of India like Delhi, Gujarat, and Malwa.

The Marathas fought three wars with the British, and were the last strong Indian rulers before British rule started. Hence, to take control of India, the British had to defeat the Marathas, not the Mughals. This shows how powerful the Marathas had become.

**Question 5. Compare how 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 and the later Marathas had religious tolerance and treated every other religion and beliefs with huge respect and equality. Shivaji was a devout Hindu, but he never attacked mosques or hurt people of other faiths. When he sacked Surat, he spared religious places and even protected the house of a kind man. He also had Muslim soldiers and officers in his army. Later, under the Thanjavur Marathas, a Muslim poet named Ambar Husain was allowed to write about the Bhagavad Gita, which shows religious harmony. This proves that the Marathas believed in respecting all religions and living together peacefully.

**Question 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 very important for the Marathas because they gave them safety and control. The forts were built on high hills and had strong walls, which made it hard for enemies to capture them. When big armies like the Mughals attacked, the Marathas hid in forts, planned their next move, and used guerrilla warfare. From the forts, they could watch the roads, store food and weapons, and protect their people. That’s why the forts were called the “core of the state” -A they helped the Marathas stay strong and fight back, even against larger and more powerful enemies.

**Question 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:** If I design a Maratha coin, it will show the greatness and values of the Marathas. On one side, I will draw Shivaji’s face with a sword and a fort behind him. This shows his bravery and how he protected the kingdom using forts. I will also add the saffron flag, which stands for Hindu culture and unity.

On the other side, I will write in Sanskrit like Shivaji’s royal seal. Around the edge, I will draw small picture of a ship (for the Maratha navy), a book (for learning and justice), and hands shaking (for respect to all religions). This coin will show that the Marathas were brave, fair, wise, and respected every religion.

**Question 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:** I think the most important contribution of the Marathas was that they protected Indian culture and freedom when foreign powers like the Mughals and British were trying to rule India. Shivaji built a strong and fair kingdom, respected all religions, and started the idea of Swarajya (self-rule). The Maratha army fought bravely, even after Shivaji’s death, and stopped the Mughals from taking full control. Leaders like Tarabai and Ahilyabai Holkar also did great work in war and peace. The Marathas ruled large parts of India and kept Indian traditions alive. That’s why their contribution is so important.

