

UPSC Mains – GS Paper 1

Chapter 1: *Transition of the Eighteenth Century*

*Based on **From Plassey to Partition** by Sekhar Bandyopadhyay*

Q.1 [Mughal Decline and Regional Powers]. "The decline of the Mughal Empire did not result in a political vacuum, but in the rise of regional powers with their own legitimacy." Discuss with examples.

Q.2 [Historiography of the 18th Century]. Critically analyze the nature of the eighteenth century in India: was it a period of decay or transformation?

Q.3 [Economic Resilience]. How did the economic structure of India sustain itself despite political fragmentation after Aurangzeb?

Q.4 [Role of the Marathas]. Evaluate the role of the Marathas in shaping the political landscape of eighteenth-century India.

Q.5 [Agrarian Structure and Revenue]. How did the weakening of Mughal central authority impact agrarian society and revenue collection?

Q.6 [Battle of Plassey]. "The Battle of Plassey was less a battle and more a betrayal." Examine in the context of the East India Company's rise.

Q.7 [European Trading Companies]. Discuss the impact of European trading companies on Indian politics during the first half of the 18th century.

Q.8 [Successor States]. What were the key features of successor states like Awadh, Bengal, and Hyderabad? How did they maintain autonomy?

Q.9 [Dark Age Debate]. Was the eighteenth century truly a "dark age" in Indian history? Discuss with reference to recent historiography.

Q.10 [Urban Economy]. Describe the socio-economic profile of urban centres like Murshidabad, Surat, and Delhi in the 18th century.

Q.11 [Company's Political Rise]. Examine the transformation of the East India Company from a trading body to a political power in the 18th century.

Q.12 [Regionalism and Colonial Resistance]. How did regional politics in the 18th century affect India's resistance to colonialism?

Q.13 [Succession Policies]. To what extent did the failure of succession policies under the Mughals contribute to the decline of imperial control?

Q.14 [Carnatic Wars]. Assess the nature and significance of the Carnatic Wars in the context of Anglo-French rivalry in India.

Q.15 [Forces of Political Transformation]. Examine how internal and external forces together contributed to the transformation of Indian polity in the 18th century.