



# UNIQUE STUDY POINT

## Chapter 6 Towns, Traders and Craftspersons

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**Question 1:** Fill in the blanks:

- (a) The Rajarajeshvara temple was built in \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) Ajmer is associated with the Sufi saint \_\_\_\_\_.
- (c) Hampi was the capital of the \_\_\_\_\_ Empire.
- (d) The Dutch established a settlement at \_\_\_\_\_ in Andhra Pradesh.

**Answer:** (a) The Rajarajeshvara temple was built in **1010 A.D.**

- (b) Ajmer is associated with the Sufi saint **Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti.**
- (c) Hampi was the capital of the **Vijayanagara** Empire.
- (d) The Dutch established a settlement at **Masulipatnam** in Andhra Pradesh.

**Question 2:** State whether true or false:

- (a) We know the name of the architect of the Rajarajeshvara temple from an inscription.
- (b) Merchants preferred to travel individually rather than in caravans.
- (c) Kabul was a major centre for trade in elephants.
- (d) Surat was an important trading port on the Bay of Bengal.

**Answer:**

- (a) True
- (b) False
- (c) False
- (d) False

**Question 3:** How was water supplied to the city of Thanjavur?

**Answer:** Water was supplied to the city of Thanjavur from tanks and wells.

**Question 4:** Who lived in the “Black Towns” in cities such as Madras?

**Answer:** Merchants, artisans (such as weavers), native traders and craftspersons lived in the ‘Black Towns’.

**Question 5:** Why do you think towns grew around temples?

**Answer:** Towns grew around temples because temples were central to economy and society. Temple authorities used their wealth to finance trade and banking. Also, the large number of pilgrims provided ample opportunities for traders and artisans to conduct business.

**Question 6:** How important were crafts persons for the building and maintenance of temples?

**Answer:** Craftspersons were very important for the building and maintenance of temples because:

- (i) The Vishwakarma community consisting of goldsmith, bronzesmiths, blacksmiths, masons and carpenters played an essential role in the building of temples.
- (ii) Weavers such as the Saliyar or Kaikkolars were the prosperous communities who made ample donations to temples.
- (iii) The craftspersons of Bidar were skilled in copper and silver works who played an essential role in adorning of temples with art and craft.

**Question 7:** Why did people from distant lands visit Surat?

**Answer:** People from distant lands visited Surat because it was the gateway of trade with west Asia.

- Surat was the gateway for trade with West Asia via the Gulf of Ormuz. Surat has also been called the gate to Mecca because many pilgrim ships set sail from Surat.
- In the seventeenth century, the Portuguese, Dutch and English had their factories and warehouses at Surat.
- The textiles of Surat were famous for their gold lace borders (zari) and had a market in West Asia, Africa and Europe.
- The state built numerous rest-houses for people from all over the world who came to the city.
- The Kathiawad seths or mahajans (moneychangers) had huge banking houses at Surat.
- The Surat hund is were honoured in the far-off markets of Cairo in Egypt, Basra in Iraq and Antwerp in Belgium.
- Due to these reasons, people from distant lands visited Surat.

**Question 8:** In what ways was craft production in cities like Calcutta different from that in cities like Thanjavur?

**Answer:** The craft production in cities like Calcutta was different from that in cities like Thanjavur in the following ways:

**In Calcutta:**

(i) Craftspersons were not free to sell their own crafts and textiles as they were controlled by the European companies.

(ii) They worked on a system of advances which meant that they had to weave cloth which was already promised to European agents.

(iii) They had to reproduce the designs supplied to them by the Company agents

**In Thanjavur:**

- (i) Here the craftspersons were independent and were free to sell their own products.
- (ii) They developed the crafts on interest and they were creative and specialized.
- (iii) Their production focused on the needs of the temple and the pilgrims.

**Question 9.** Compare any one of the cities described in this chapter with a town or a village with which you are familiar. Do you notice any similarities or differences?

**Answer.** Comparison between Surat and Delhi

Surat	Delhi
Emporium during the Mughal period due to the production of various goods.	It was also an emporium during the Mughal period.
Gateway to West Asia due to the trade centre.	Basically administrative town.
Cosmopolitan city.	Cosmopolitan city.
Factories and warehouses.	Factories and warehouses.
Known for cotton textiles.	Known for business, trade, and commercial pursuits.

**Question 10.** What were the problems encountered by merchants? Do you think some of these problems persist today?

**Answer.** Problems encountered by merchants

1. Merchants had to pass many kingdoms and forests.
2. Travelled in caravans.
3. They had to carry goods on the back of camels, donkeys and horses.
4. Their goods were looted frequently.
5. Competition with European traders.
6. Harsh climate and routes killed several merchants on the way or in the middle of their journey.

7. Most of these problems are not there today. The mode of transport has improved along with security.

**Question 11.** Find out more about the architecture of either Thanjavur or Hampi, and prepare a scrapbook illustrating temples and other buildings from these cities.

**Answer.** Do this yourself with the help of your history teacher.

**Question 12.** Find out about any present-day pilgrimage center. Why do you think people go there? What do they do there? Are there any shops in the area? If so, what is bought and sold there?

**Answer.** Present-day pilgrimage Centre: Haridwar.

1. People go to Haridwar to take bath in the holy Ganga.
2. They take bath in the Ganga river and worship it.
3. Yes, several shops are there.
4. Offerings are sold at these shops.
5. Prasad is the main article that people buy there.

### **Extra Questions**

#### **Very Short Answer Questions**

**1. What were the towns that developed in medieval India?**

**Answer:** In medieval India, many towns developed. These included administrative centres, temple towns, pilgrimage towns, and port towns.

**2. Define 'Lost wax' Technique.**

**Answer:** The Lost wax technique was the technique to make a statue. It was used by Chola's frequently. This technique involved several stages.

**3. Name the important trade centre during Mughal period.**

**Answer:** Surat was an important trade centre during the Mughal period. It began to decline towards the end of the 17th century.

#### **4. Which place is known as 'gate of Mecca' and why?**

**Answer:** Famous historical city Surat is called the gate of Mecca because many pilgrim ships set sailing from here.

#### **5. Give brief description about decline of Surat.**

**Answer:** Surat was an important trade centre during Mughal period. It began to decline mainly because of the decline of the Mughal empire.

### **Short Answer Questions**

#### **1. How do we know about growth of cities in 17th century?**

**Answer:** The sources of history to know about the history of this period are travellers' accounts. Monserrate, Ralph Fitch, Thomas Roe, Domingo Paes, Nicolo Conti and Abdul Razzaq Samarqandi were some of the major foreign travellers in this period. Their accounts give us details about the life of this period.

#### **2. How was Hampi an important town? Describe its architecture?**

**Answer: (i)** Hampi, a famous town in Krishna-Tungabhadra region was founded in 1336 in the Vijayanagara empire.

**(ii)** The technique of interlocking was used and no mortar or cement was used to wedge walls.

**(iii)** The arches, domes and pillared halls had niches for holding sculptures.

**(iv)** They even had well-planned orchard and pleasure garden with motif containing sculptures of lotus and corbels.

### 3. How did Masulipatnam become an important town?

**Answer: (i)** The town of Masulipatnam or Machilipatnam (meaning fish port town) was located on the delta of the Krishna river.

**(ii)** In 17th century, the town was an important centre of activity.

**(iii)** The port of Masulipatnam was constructed by the Dutch. William Methwold, a Factor of British East India Company described Masulipatnam as a small and unwalled town.

### 4. What were the main causes of the decline of Surat?

**Answer: (i)** Surat began to decline towards the end of the seventeenth century because of many factors.

**(ii)** The loss of markets and productivity because of the decline of the Mughal Empire.

**(iii)** Control of the sea routes by the Portuguese.

**(iv)** Competition from Bombay (present-day Mumbai) where the English East India Company shifted its headquarters.

## Long Answer Questions

### 1. What factors led to the growth of new cities in the 17th century?

**Answer:** Many factors led to evolution of cities and trading centres. These factors were as follows:

**(i)** Travel was safe for traders as peace and prosperity prevailed.

**(ii)** There was a good network of roads for transportation that linked the country. Rivers were also used for efficient transportation.

**(iii)** The structure of taxes was uniform.

**(iv)** Mandis or places, where farmers sold grains gradually developed into small and big towns.

## **2. Describe the rise of administrative towns in India.**

**Answer: (i)** Thanjavur was the capital of Cholas located on the banks of Kaveri river.

**(ii)** King Rajaraja Chola got the famous Rajarajeshwara temple built in Thanjavur.

**(iii)** The town had bustling markets.

**(iv)** The Saliya weavers from Thanjavur and Uraiyur used to produce fine quality cloth for temple festival, king and nobility dresses, and coarse cotton for the masses.

## **3. Describe the rise of temple towns and pilgrimage centres.**

**Answer: (i)** Temple towns were important centres of urbanisation and led to development of cities, economy and society.

**(ii)** Pilgrims also gave huge donations to temples.

**(iii)** Temples provided important places of settlement.

**(iv)** Priests, workers, artisans and traders settled in these towns. These were called temple towns. Towns emerged around temples like Somnath (Gujarat), Madurai in Tamil Nadu, and Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh.

## **4. How did small towns emerge in India?**

**Answer:(i)** Gradually, from the 8th century onwards, small towns emerged in India. They emerged from large villages.

**(ii)** They had a 'mandapika' where villagers sold their produce.

**(iii)** Likewise, there were market streets, called 'hatta', full of shops.

**(iv)** Similarly, streets were lined with different artisans like potters, sugar makers, toddy makers, smiths, etc.



**(v)** Many villagers came to buy local articles and sell products like horse, salt, saffron, betel nut and spices (like pepper) from distant places.

## **5. How did new traders, towns emerge in 16th and 17th century?**

**Answer: (i)** In the 16th and 17th centuries, the British, Dutch and French formed East India companies and began expanding towards the East.

**(ii)** Thus while Europeans, particularly the British, began controlling sea trade, commerce and political power, Indians began to work as agents for them.

**(iii)** The increased demand of goods like textiles led to expansion of crafts like spinning, weaving, bleaching, dyeing, etc.

**(iv)** Bombay, Calcutta and Madras saw the new rise. These are nodal cities today.

**(v)** Under the new system, Indian merchants and artisans moved into Black Town built by European Companies while the latter lived in superior residencies of Fort St. George in Madras or Fort St. William in Calcutta.

### **Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)**

#### **1. Examine the rise of port and trading towns in the 17th century.**

**Answer: (i)** Several port and trading towns developed due to their close proximity to the sea shore.

**(ii)** Some important towns in Gujarat were Cambay, Surat, Masulipatnam and Nagapattinam were important ports on the East Coast.

**(iii)** Cochin, Sonargaon, Goa, Surat and Masulipatnam were important ports for external trade. Indian silk, muslin and Calico (cotton) fabric were exported to Europe.

## 2. How did Masulipatnam decline as a major city?

**Answer: (i)** When Mughals expanded their played power to Golconda, the then Governor Mir Jumla, himself a merchant, played off the Dutch against the British.

**(ii)** In 1686-1687, Golconda was captured by Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb. This forced European companies to search for alternatives.

**(iii)** Thus, the European traders moved to the new cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

**(iv)** Due to all this, Masulipatnam lost its prominence after the 18th century, which it never regained.

## 3. How was Hampi an important centre of commerce and culture?

**Answer: (i)** Hampi in its prime in 16th and 17th centuries was an important centre of commerce and culture.

**(ii)** The important trading communities were Moors, Chettis and Europeans (particularly Portuguese).

**(iii)** The temples were the centre of cultural activities and devdasis (temple dancers) performed before the deity, royalty and the masses.

**(iv)** The other important occasion was Mahanavami festival performed on the Mahanavami Dibba (a special platform). Here, the king received guests, accepted tribute from subordinate chiefs and watched dance and music.

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