

MHI-10: URBANISATION IN INDIA

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Total Marks: 100

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Q.2 Discuss the layout and chief characteristics of Mohenjodaro.

Answer Mohenjo-daro, also known as the "Mound of the Dead Men," is one of the most well-preserved and significant ancient cities of the Indus Valley Civilization. Located in modern-day Pakistan, Mohenjo-daro is believed to have been inhabited between 2600 BCE and 1900 BCE. The city was discovered in 1922 by archaeologist R. D. Banerji and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

One of the most striking features of Mohenjo-daro is its layout, which is unlike any other ancient city of the time. The city is built on a grid system with a well-planned street network that is intersected by major thoroughfares, dividing the city into rectangular blocks. The streets are narrow and are designed to accommodate pedestrians and carts, while the houses are constructed on raised platforms with a central courtyard.

The houses in Mohenjo-daro are built of mud bricks and are typically two or three stories high. The walls are thick and are designed to provide insulation against the extreme temperatures of the region. The houses have flat roofs, which were often used as living spaces, and are connected by a system of staircases and corridors. Some of the houses have multiple rooms, including a kitchen, living room, and bedroom, while others are much smaller and consist of a single room.

Another distinctive feature of Mohenjo-daro is its sophisticated drainage system. The city has a complex network of interconnected sewer lines that run under the streets and houses. The sewer lines are made of fired clay pipes and are designed to carry both wastewater and rainwater away from the city. The system was so advanced that it is believed to have been more efficient than many modern-day cities.

The city also had a well-developed water supply system, with numerous wells and reservoirs that collected rainwater during the monsoon season. The water was then stored in large underground tanks, which were lined with bitumen to prevent seepage.

Mohenjo-daro was also home to several public buildings, including a granary, a marketplace, and a Great Bath. The Great Bath is one of the most well-known structures in the city and is believed to have been used for religious or ceremonial purposes. The bath is made of baked bricks and has a large central pool, surrounded by a veranda with steps leading down into the water. The pool was lined with bitumen to prevent seepage and was fed by a system of channels that brought fresh water from a nearby reservoir.

The city also had a thriving economy, with evidence of trade with other civilizations, including Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf region. The people of Mohenjo-daro were skilled craftsmen, producing pottery, jewelry, and textiles, among other goods.

In conclusion, Mohenjo-daro is a remarkable example of an ancient city with an advanced urban planning system, sophisticated engineering, and a thriving economy. The city's layout, with its grid system, raised houses, and narrow streets, was unlike any other city of its time. Its complex drainage and water supply systems were also highly advanced, and the city's public buildings, including the Great Bath, are a testament to the city's cultural and religious practices. Mohenjo-daro is a fascinating site that offers a unique glimpse into the daily lives of the people who lived there over 4,000 years ago.

Q.4 Explain R.S. Sharma's theory of urban decay. What has been the nature of the response to this theory? **For more assignments solutions whatsapp on 9518198837**

Ans. R.S. Sharma, an eminent historian of ancient India, proposed a theory of urban decay to explain the decline of urban centers in ancient India. According to this theory, Indian cities went through a cycle of growth and decline due to

various internal and external factors. In this article, we will explore R.S. Sharma's theory of urban decay and the response it has received.

R.S. Sharma's theory of urban decay is based on his analysis of the archaeological and literary evidence available from ancient India. He argues that the urban centers in ancient India grew and prospered due to several factors such as favorable ecological conditions, economic stability, and political security. However, over time, these factors began to decline, leading to the decay and eventual abandonment of these cities.

Sharma identifies several factors that contributed to the decline of urban centers in ancient India. Firstly, he points out that the ecological conditions that were favorable for the growth of these cities, such as fertile soil and abundant water resources, began to degrade due to deforestation, soil erosion, and overuse of water resources. As a result, agricultural productivity declined, leading to food shortages and famine.

Secondly, Sharma argues that economic instability played a significant role in the decline of ancient Indian cities. The economy of ancient India was primarily based on agriculture and trade. However, the decline in agricultural productivity due to ecological degradation led to a decline in trade and commerce, which in turn led to a decline in urban prosperity.

Thirdly, social unrest was another significant factor that contributed to the decline of ancient Indian cities. According to Sharma, social unrest was caused by several factors such as caste-based discrimination, political instability, and religious conflicts. This unrest led to the migration of people from urban centers to rural areas, leading to a decline in urban population and economic activity.

The response to Sharma's theory of urban decay has been mixed. Some scholars have accepted the theory as a valid explanation for the decline of ancient Indian cities. They argue that Sharma's theory provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex historical processes that led to the decline of these cities.

However, some scholars have criticized Sharma's theory for oversimplifying the historical processes that led to the decline of ancient Indian cities. They argue that the theory overlooks the role of external factors such as invasion, conquest, and colonization in the decline of these cities. Moreover, some scholars have pointed out that not all ancient Indian cities experienced a decline and that some cities continued to thrive even after the decline of others.

Despite these criticisms, Sharma's theory of urban decay remains a significant contribution to the study of ancient Indian history. The theory has led to a re-evaluation of the historical processes that led to the decline of ancient Indian cities and has contributed to a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the growth and decline of urban centers in general.

In conclusion, R.S. Sharma's theory of urban decay provides a compelling explanation for the decline of ancient Indian cities. The theory highlights the role of ecological degradation, economic instability, and social unrest in the decline of these cities. However, the theory has also been criticized for oversimplifying complex historical processes and overlooking the role of external factors. Nevertheless, Sharma's theory remains a significant contribution to the study of ancient Indian history and has contributed to a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the growth and decline of urban centers.

Q.5 Write short notes on any two of the following. Answer in about 250 words each. **For more assignments solutions whatsapp on 9518198837**

b) Representation of cities in the Arthashastra

Ans. The Arthashastra is an ancient Indian treatise on statecraft and governance, written by the philosopher and statesman Kautilya in the 3rd century BCE. The treatise provides a comprehensive account of the administration of ancient Indian cities, their social organization, and their economic activities.

In the Arthashastra, cities are represented as important centers of trade, commerce, and cultural exchange. Kautilya emphasizes the importance of cities

in the economic development of the state and highlights their role in generating revenue for the kingdom.

The Arthashastra describes the social organization of cities, including the division of the population into various social classes such as the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. It also provides guidelines for the appointment of officials who were responsible for the administration of cities and the maintenance of law and order.

Kautilya also discusses the importance of infrastructure in the development of cities. He suggests that the construction of roads, canals, and other public works is essential for the growth of trade and commerce. He also advocates for the establishment of markets and fairs in cities to promote trade and the exchange of goods.

Furthermore, the Arthashastra provides guidelines for the management of public health and sanitation in cities. It suggests the establishment of public hospitals and the appointment of doctors to provide medical care to the citizens.

In conclusion, the Arthashastra provides a detailed account of the representation of cities in ancient India. It highlights the importance of cities in the economic development of the state and emphasizes the role of infrastructure, social organization, and public health in the growth of cities. The treatise provides valuable insights into the administration of ancient Indian cities and their importance in the development of early Indian civilization.

c) Janapadas and Mahajanapadas

Ans The Janapadas were ancient kingdoms or tribal territories in India that existed from the 8th century BCE to the 6th century BCE. These Janapadas were largely independent and were ruled by different rulers or kings. There

were sixteen major Janapadas in ancient India, including Kuru, Panchala, Vatsa, and Magadha.

The Mahajanapadas, on the other hand, were the sixteen most powerful and prosperous kingdoms that emerged after the decline of the Janapadas. These kingdoms emerged between the 6th century BCE and the 4th century BCE and were characterized by their large size, powerful armies, and sophisticated administrative systems.

The Mahajanapadas were more centralized than the Janapadas, and their rulers were known as Mahajanapadas. These rulers were often engaged in wars with one another to expand their territories and gain more power. Some of the most powerful Mahajanapadas were Magadha, Kosala, Vajji, and Avanti.

The emergence of the Mahajanapadas marked a significant transition in ancient Indian history, as they laid the foundation for the emergence of the Mauryan Empire in the 3rd century BCE. The Mauryan Empire was founded by Chandragupta Maurya, who was able to unify most of the Mahajanapadas under his rule.

The Janapadas and Mahajanapadas played a significant role in shaping the political, social, and cultural landscape of ancient India. They were important in the development of early Indian civilization and were instrumental in laying the foundation for the emergence of larger empires and kingdoms in the later periods of Indian history.

SECTION-B

Q.6 Critically examine the characteristics of the temple towns in the peninsular India. For more assignments solutions whatsapp on 9518198837

Answer Temple towns in peninsular India are characterized by their unique religious, social, and cultural attributes. These towns have played a significant role in shaping the religious and cultural landscape of India for centuries. In this

essay, we will critically examine the key characteristics of the temple towns in peninsular India.

Religious Significance: One of the defining characteristics of temple towns is their religious significance. These towns are home to some of the most revered temples in India, which attract thousands of devotees from across the country. The temples in these towns are often associated with particular deities, and they are considered sacred by the local population.

Cultural Heritage: Another defining characteristic of temple towns is their rich cultural heritage. These towns are often home to ancient temples that are architectural marvels and are intricately linked with local history and culture. The towns are often steeped in traditional art forms, music, dance, and rituals that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Pilgrimage Centers: Temple towns are also known for being important pilgrimage centers. Devotees visit these towns to offer prayers, seek blessings, and perform rituals. These towns are often thronged by pilgrims during major religious festivals and celebrations, which can last for several days.

Economic Importance: Temple towns are significant economic centers as well. The tourism industry in these towns is thriving, and it generates employment opportunities for the local population. The towns are often surrounded by markets, shops, and restaurants that cater to the needs of the visitors.

Social Fabric: Temple towns are known for their strong social fabric. These towns are often characterized by tight-knit communities, where people have strong ties to each other. The local population is often deeply involved in the maintenance and upkeep of the temples and the surrounding areas.

Traditional Practices: The temple towns are also characterized by their adherence to traditional practices. The local population often follows traditional customs and rituals, which are deeply intertwined with the temple culture. These

Architecture: The temples in these towns are architectural wonders, and they represent the height of ancient Indian craftsmanship. The temples are often intricately carved, with elaborate designs and sculptures. The architecture of these temples has influenced the style of many modern buildings in India.

Q.7 Analyse the characteristics of Mughal cities. What was Bernier's idea of 'camp cities'? **For more assignments solutions whatsapp on 9518198837**

Monumental Architecture: One of the defining characteristics of Mughal cities was their monumental architecture. The Mughal emperors were renowned for their patronage of art and architecture, and they commissioned several grand structures such as palaces, mosques, tombs, and gardens. The Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, and the Jama Masjid are some of the most famous examples of Mughal architecture.

Urban Planning: Mughal cities were characterized by a well-planned layout, with wide, tree-lined avenues, and large public spaces. The cities were often

divided into distinct neighborhoods or quarters, each with its own bazaars, mosques, and public buildings.

Water Management: The Mughal cities were often located near rivers, and the Mughal architects and engineers developed sophisticated systems for water management. These systems included tanks, reservoirs, wells, and fountains, which provided a reliable supply of water to the citizens.

Gardens: The Mughals were renowned for their love of nature and developed several beautiful gardens in their cities. These gardens were often designed to provide a peaceful retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city and were adorned with fountains, pavilions, and flowering plants.

Trade and Commerce: The Mughal cities were important centers of trade and commerce. The bazaars in these cities were often filled with goods from across the world, including textiles, spices, and precious metals. The cities also provided opportunities for craftsmen and artisans to showcase their skills and sell their wares.

Now, let's explore the idea of 'camp-cities' put forward by Bernier. Francois Bernier was a French traveler and physician who visited India during the Mughal era. In his book 'Travels in the Mughal Empire,' Bernier put forward the idea of 'camp-cities,' which were temporary settlements that were built to accommodate the Mughal armies as they moved across the country.

According to Bernier, the Mughal emperors and their armies would travel across the country in large, heavily armed caravans, which would set up camp in a new location every few days. The camps were often located near sources of water and were surrounded by a protective wall.

Bernier described the camp-cities as being highly organized, with a clear hierarchy and division of labor. The soldiers would set up their own tents and temporary structures, while the cooks, tailors, and other support staff would set up their own areas.

While the camp-cities were only temporary, Bernier noted that they often had a significant impact on the local landscape. The large caravans would often damage roads and fields, and the soldiers would cut down trees for firewood.

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Bernier's idea of 'camp-cities' provides an interesting perspective on the Mughal armies' movement across the country and their impact on the local landscape. It also highlights the complex organizational structure of the Mughal army and the different roles played by soldiers and support staff in the temporary settlements.

In conclusion, the Mughal cities were characterized by their monumental architecture, urban planning, water management, gardens, and trade and commerce. The Mughal cities continue to be a significant part of India's cultural and architectural heritage. Bernier's idea of 'camp-cities' provides an interesting perspective on the Mughal armies' movement across the country and their impact on the local landscape.

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