

CLASS VI

VITAL VILLAGES, THRIVING TOWNS

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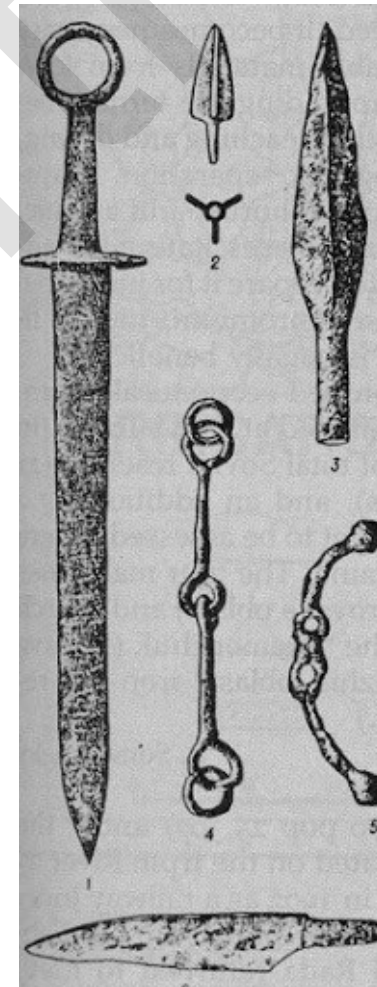
Chapter – 8 content

- Iron tools and agriculture
- Other steps to increase production: irrigation
- Who lived in the villages ?
- Finding out about cities: stories, travelers, sculpture and archaeology
- Coins
- Coins
- Crafts and crafts persons
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❑ Iron tools and agriculture



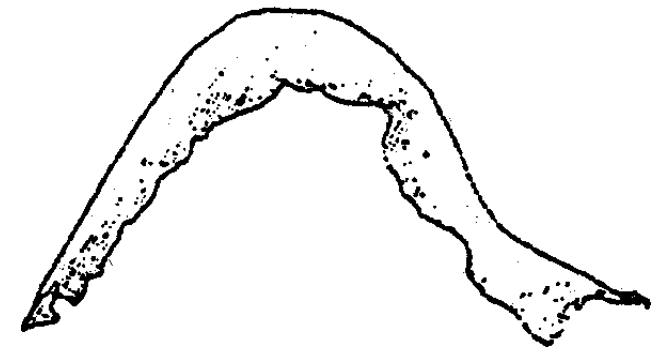
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❑ Iron tools and agriculture

Iron came into use around 3000 years ago. About 2500 years ago, the use of iron tools increased. These included axes for clearing forests and expanding land and iron ploughshare in increasing production.



Tongs



Sickle

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- Some of the largest collections of iron tools and weapons were found in the megalithic burials.
- Around 2500 years ago, there is evidence for the growing use of iron tools.
- These included axes for clearing forests and the iron ploughshare.



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☐ Other steps to increase production: irrigation



❑ Other steps to increase production: irrigation

- Irrigation was also used to increase production other than use of new tools and the system of transplantation.
- Irrigation works that were built during this time included canals, wells, tanks, and artificial lakes.

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☐ Who lived in the villages ?



❑ Who lived in the villages ?

- There were at least three different kinds of people living in most villages in the southern and northern parts of the subcontinent.

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• In the Tamil region (site : Sangam literature).

- ✓ Large landowners were known as vellalar.
- ✓ Ordinary ploughmen were known as uzharar.
- ✓ Landless labourers, including slaves, were known as kadaisiyar and adimai.

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- **In the northern part of the country**

- ✓ The village headman was known as the grama bhojaka (often the largest landowner).
- ✓ Independent farmers were known as grihapatis.
- ✓ Landless labourers were known as the dasa karmakara (had to earn a living working on the fields owned by others.)

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- In most villages, there were also some crafts persons such as the blacksmith, potter, carpenter and weaver.

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■ Grama bhojaka

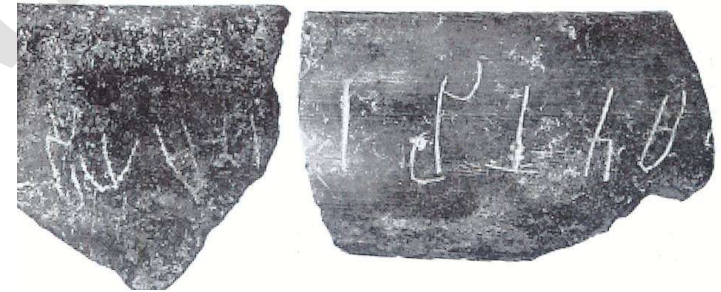
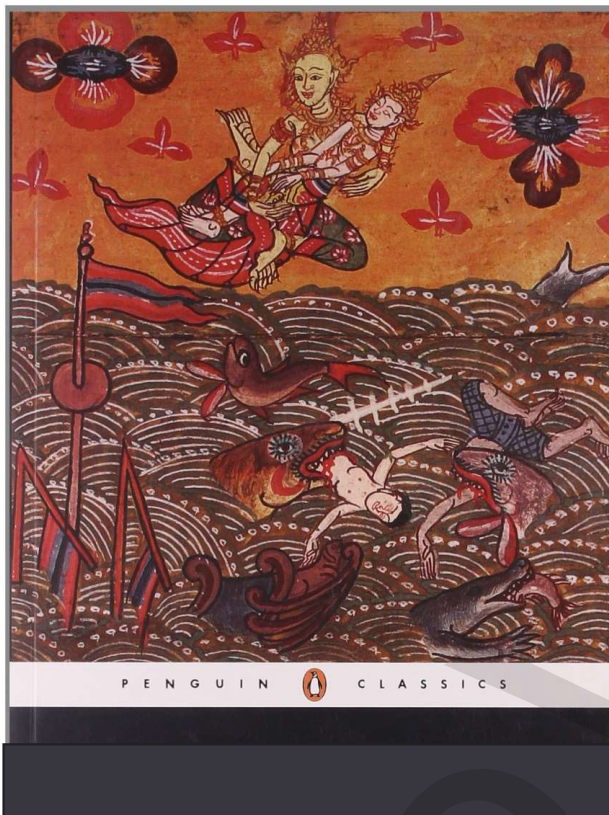
- The village headman was known as the grama bhojaka.
- The post was hereditary.
- Generally, he had slaves and hired workers to cultivate the land.
- Besides, as he was powerful, the king often used him to collect taxes from the village.
- He also functioned as a judge, and sometimes as a policeman.



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❑ Finding out about cities: stories, travelers, sculpture and archaeology



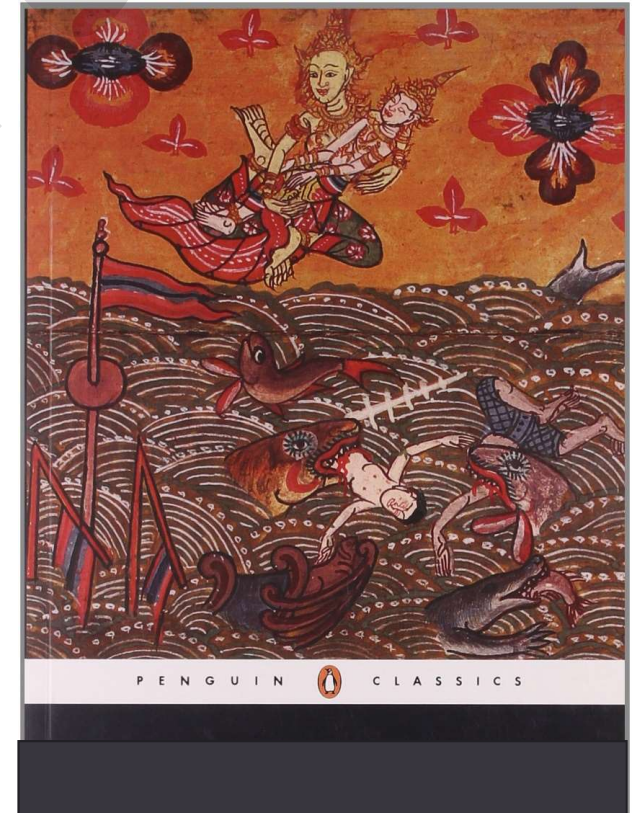
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❑ Finding out about cities: stories.

- Jatakas stories that were probably composed by ordinary people, and then written down and preserved by Buddhist monks.



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❑ Finding out about cities: sculpture and archaeology

- Sculptors carved scenes depicting peoples' lives in towns and villages, as well as in the forest
 - ✓ were used to decorate railings, pillars and gateways of buildings that were visited by people.



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- Many of the cities that developed from about 2500 years ago were capitals of the mahajanapadas were surrounded by massive fortification walls.

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- In many cities, archaeologists have found rows of pots, or ceramic rings arranged one on top of the other.
- These are known as ring wells.
- have been used as toilets in some cases, and as drains and garbage dumps.
- These ring wells are usually found in individual houses.

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We have hardly any remains of palaces, markets, or of homes of ordinary people. Perhaps some are yet to be discovered by archaeologists. Others, made of wood, mud brick and thatch, may not have survived.

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☐ Finding out about cities: travelers

- Accounts of sailors and travelers who visited the early cities also provided information about the past.
- One of the most detailed accounts that has been found was by an unknown Greek sailor. He described all the ports he visited.

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❑ Coins



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❑ Coins

- Archaeologists have found several thousands of punch-marked coins belonging to this period.
- The earliest coins which were in use for about 500 years were punch marked coins.
- They were made up of silver or copper have been found belonging to this period.

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▪ Punch-marked coins

Punch-marked coins were generally rectangular or sometimes square or round in shape, either cut out of metal sheets or made out of flattened metal globules (a small spherical body). The coins were not inscribed, but were stamped with symbols using dies or punches. Hence, they are called punch-marked coins. These coins are found over most parts of the subcontinent and remained in circulation till the early centuries CE

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❑ Cities with many functions

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❑ Cities with many functions

- A city performed a variety of functions.
- Mathura was an important settlement for more than 2500 years as it was located at the crossroads of two major routes of travel and trade.

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- ✓ Mathura was important because it was located on the crossroads of two major routes of travel and trade from the North-West to the East and from the North to South. Mathura was also a production center of fine sculptures.
- ✓ It was also a center for arts, crafts, religion and administration according to inscriptions that have been found.

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- Around 2000 years ago Mathura became the second capital of the Kushanas.
- Inscriptions from Mathura mention goldsmiths, blacksmiths, weavers, basket makers, garland makers, perfumers.

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❑ Crafts and crafts persons

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❑ Crafts and crafts persons

- Archaeological evidence for crafts which include extremely fine pottery, known as the Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW).
- The famous centers for cloth manufacturing were Varanasi and Madurai, where both men and women worked.

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- Many crafts persons and merchants formed associations called shrines.
- Functions of shrines:
 - ✓ These shrines of crafts persons provided training, procured raw material, and distributed the finished product.
 - ✓ organised the trade.
 - ✓ served as banks, where rich men and women deposited money.

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❑ A closer look - Arikamedu



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☐ A closer look - Arikamedu

- Between 2200 and 1900 years ago, Arikamedu was a coastal settlement where ships unloaded goods from distant lands.
- A massive brick structure, which may have been a warehouse, was found at the site.

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- Finds also include pottery from the Mediterranean region, such as amphorae (tall double-handled jars that contained liquids such as wine or oil) and stamped pottery, known as Arretine Ware, which was red-glazed named after a city in Italy.
- Roman lamps, glassware and gems have also been found at the site.