

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS CLASS – 11 HISTORY

CHAPTER- 2 AN EMPIRE ACROSS THREE CONTINENT

Question 1.

The text has referred to three writers whose work is used to say something about how the Romans had treated their workers. Can you identify them? Record the section for yourself and describe any two methods the Romans used to control labor.

Answer:

Yes, those three writers were-Tacitus, Columella, and Pliny the Elder.

Tacitus writes on labor controlling networks. He states the slaves were misbehaved and tortured to the extent, they sometimes committed the murder of their owners. He has written that a City Perfect (as of today's Mayor or Chief Councillor) was murdered by one of his slaves which ultimately, resulted in riots, so uncontrolled as the slaves besieged the senate-house. However, the convict was executed. It shows the senators did not take notice of so grave a situation. No laws reducing punishment were passed particularly, made for the slaves.

The slaves were sometimes grouped into gangs or smaller teams and sternly supervised. As per Columella, another historian of that period, most groups were made in each group of ten slaves. The Natural History writer, Pliny who was also Elder (councilor) to administration, states that slaves were chained together by their feet so that they could save the expenditure incurred on supervision and a permanent measure to keep them busy with the work so assigned to them. He further states, a seal was put upon the workmen's apparel and they had to wear a mark or a net with a close mesh on their heads.

Agricultural labor was also in a pathetic state and the same conditions prevailed when we talk of workers in factories and workshops. A law was passed in 398 C.E. allowing branding upon the body of laborers/ workmen so that they would be recognized if and when they run away and try to hide. Private employers began doing contracts in term of debts when they would provide the laborers/workers at the time of joining for a period of 25 years ahead and thus, debt bondage oppressed their instincts to the extent, they tolerated every draconian treatment and had surrounded them in servitude although they were free.

Question 2.

It is told that some specific events and circumstances add new words to the vocabulary. Can you state the event that added the term Draconian? Please, explain.

Answer:

Yes, “Draconian” a specific term got popularity owing to Draco, the Greek lawmaker in the Roman empire. He, during the early sixth century B.C.E., had recommended a law in 398 C.E., which referred to workers being branded so they could be recognized if and when they run away and try to hide.

It was gross inhuman treatment with the laborers i.e. the main active and sensitive part of the project/ work. Hence, the pains inflicted upon laborers by branding so severe and harsh to mankind would have accumulated and said law, we see added to the dictionary since then for all kinds of rules, regulations, decrees, orders, implications, and ordinances equally implied.

Question 3.

What were Frankincense and its origin?

Answer:

It was an aromatic resin used in perfumes. It was extracted by the process of piercing the bark of Boswellia trees. The Arabian peninsula was suitable for the natural growth of those trees in forest areas there.

Question 4.

Describe the living standard of Aristocrat’s (nobles) during the Roman empire.

Answer:

These were those rich people called members to the senate in government like councilors of modern period. They owned a medium city like big area with all affluent and appurtenance facilities and ease. Hippodromes, fora, temples, fountains, and different kinds of baths were essential components to their possession.

Every councilor had an income of 4,000 pounds of gold per annum from their properties not including grain, rice, and other produce which, if sold, would have exchanged for at least 1500 pounds. The second class people came into being when Gallienus imposed a prohibition on the recruitment of senators into the army in order to prevent control of the empire from falling into their hands. Their income was one thousand or fifteen hundred pounds of gold per year. It has been mentioned by Olympiodorus, the historian of that period.

Question 5.

What period, you would say or the contemporary historian had stated as “Late Antiquity”, why would have this phrase used for, explain.

Answer:

It was the period around the fourth to seventh centuries. The term “antiquity” is archaeological and denotes the period around the modern and the past i.e. medieval period. Several natural and economic changes were witnessed by this period about that of three centuries. Constantine and Diocletian were the emperors of that period. It was Diocletian who inserted division of power in army and civilians including senators. He curtailed the territories less productive and minimal importance in view of defense i.e. strategy.

Constantine on his part had reinforced the division of power made by his predecessor viz. Diocletian and is remembered for circulation of gold coin solidus weighing 4.5 grams. This measure brought economic stability. the empire as there was no dearth of supply from North Africa. He established his second capital at Byzantium (Istambul in Turkey at present) and named I Constantinople (i.e. the palace of the emperor Constantine). Cotta industries got patronage of these two rulers and factories mainly h of oil presses and glass factories, was established.

Question 6.

Who was Nero and why is he famous even today?

Answer:

Nero was a Roman citizen known to the Greek language and one of the extremists among the slaves/workers/workmen coerced and tortured badly by their factory owners, land-owners, and senators. He led the motion violently when a slave convicted as the murderer of Lucius Pedanius Secundus was being taken to execute under the order of the senate. He rebuked the population for watching deafly; the injustice, so severe practiced on the slaves. The crowd was ready to attack senators and the jailor got blows of stones and was tortured in their hands. This was the first mass agitation led by Nero.

Question 7.

Who were plebs Sordida? Do you see they resemble modem film stars and sportsmen? How?

Answer:

In context to the Roman empire, plebs Sordida were the unkempt lower class people but addicted to circus and theatre display including slaves. Their activities were confined to observe the moods of their owners mostly senators and keep them at mirth. There were no laws preventing their execution on the displeasure of their owners. Thus, that section of society was of the least value and even today, these activities are called pastimes i.e. merely for recreation at leisure and these people are like soothsayers in Shakespearean plays.

The theatrical quality, however, has preferred by the public to the extent, one may see one or more lessons on text-books recommended by NCERT by virtue of their keen observation of society and its instincts soaked into the ocean of western culture and cunning manners. Travesty of words and dialogues, the electronic media has technically sorted and pseudo trends are being implanted into human minds.

The logic for such are invincible in globalization and trying to create a universal soul that would make humanity universal. We are thus, soon, going to be universal-men once described by our culture as-“Ayam Nijah Paroveti Ganana Laghuchetsam, Udara Caritanamatu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.” No doubt, it is a renaissance but just reverses the cycle of the renaissance that had begun since thirteenth century C.E. from Italy.

Question 8.

What had resulted when debt-bondage did the attack on the labor instincts?

Answer:

The workmen/laborers/coolies/workers/servants etc. suffered when draconian tricks were practiced on them severely. It gradually hammered nails in their head and heart of them, it gave birth to rebellion in Judaea against Roman domination e.g. great Jewish revolt of 66 C.E. The revolutionaries destroyed the money lenders' bonds to won popular support.

Question 9.

Who was the exception of labor coercion?

Answer:

Despite labor coercion to a severe degree by virtue of draconian laws, the emperor Anastasius of the late fifth century offered high wages in course of the frontier city of Dara constructed by him. It is pertinent to mention that that the entire city was built by workers in less than three weeks' time. We also came to know through Papyri that widespread wage-labor had become inputs of the Mediterranean by the sixth century especially, in the east.

Question 10.

Describe some less-advanced states under the Roman empire.

Answer:

Numidia (modern Algeria) witnessed transhumance during the Roman empire. There were pastoral and semi-nomadic communities. Transhumance was the regular animal movement of the herdsmen between the higher mountain regions and low lying ground in search of pasture for sheep and other flocks. They had oven-shaped huts (Papalia) with them, all portable. In Spain, the villages called Costella was inhabited by the Celtic speaking peasantry. However, with the expansion of Roman estates in North Africa, the pastures of these communities were drastically reduced and their movements more tightly regulated.