

Name: _____ Date: _____

Towns, Traders and Craftspersons

Q1. What was the role of a samanta or a zamindar?

Ans. _____

Q2. What would a traveller visiting a medieval town expect to find?

Ans. _____

Q3. How did the system of advances snatch the freedom of the weavers?

Ans. _____

Towns, Traders and Craftspersons

Q1. What was the role of a samanta or a zamindar?

Ans. Usually a samanta or, in later times, a zamindar built a fortified palace in or near these towns. They levied taxes on traders, artisans and articles of trade and sometimes “donated” the “right” to collect these taxes to local temples, which had been built by themselves or by rich merchants. These “rights” were recorded in inscriptions that have survived to this day.

Q2. What would a traveller visiting a medieval town expect to find?

Ans. This would depend on what kind of a town it was – a temple town, an administrative centre, a commercial town or a port town to name just some possibilities. In fact, many towns combined several functions – they were administrative centres, temple towns, as well as centres of commercial activities and craft production.

Q3. How did the system of advances snatch the freedom of the weavers?

Ans. Indian textile designs became increasingly refined. However, this period also saw the decline of the independence of craftspersons. They now began to work on a system of advances which meant that they had to weave cloth which was already promised to European agents. Weavers no longer had the liberty of selling their own cloth or weaving their own patterns. They had to reproduce the designs supplied to them by the Company agents.