

Name: _____ Date: _____

Towns, Traders and Craftspersons

Q1. Explain why Surat was the gateway for trade with West.

Ans. _____

Q2. How was Hampi in its heyday in the 15-16th centuries? When did it fall to ruin?

Ans. _____

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Q1. Explain why Surat was the gateway for trade with West.

Ans. Surat was the gateway for trade with West Asia via the Gulf of Ormuz. The city was cosmopolitan and people of all castes and creeds lived there. In the seventeenth century the Portuguese, Dutch and English had their factories and warehouses at Surat. According to the English chronicler Ovington who wrote an account of the port in 1689, on average a hundred ships of different countries could be found anchored at the port at any given time. There were also several retail and wholesale shops selling cotton textiles. 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 to take care of the needs of people from all over the world who came to the city.

Q2. How was Hampi in its heyday in the 15-16th centuries? When did it fall to ruin?

Ans. In its heyday in the fifteenth sixteenth centuries, Hampi bustled with commercial and cultural activities.

i. Moors (a name used collectively for Muslim merchants), Chettis and agents of European traders such as the Portuguese, thronged the markets of Hampi.

ii. Temples were the hub of cultural activities and devadasis (temple dancers) performed before the deity, royalty and masses in the many-pillared halls in the Virupaksha (a form of Shiva) temple.

iii. The Mahanavami festival, known today as Navaratri in the south, was one of the most important festivals celebrated at Hampi.

Hampi fell into ruin following the defeat of Vijayanagara in 1565 by the Deccan Sultans – the rulers of Golconda, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Berar and Bidar.