

## **6<sup>th</sup> Standard Social Science**

### **Vital Villages, Thriving Towns**

**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.

**Landowners and Labourers:** In the south, large landowners (Vellalar), ploughmen (Ezhava), landless labourers and slaves (kadaiyyar and adimai) were amongst the main community members. In the northern parts, the village headman (grama bhojaka) was hereditary, who was the biggest landowner and used to collect taxes for the King.

**The Earliest Tamil Compositions:** Sangam literature was composed 2300 years ago. It was called as Sangam because it was written and compiled in Assemblies known as Sangams of Poets which were held in the city of Madurai.

**Findings Of Cities:** Jatakas were stories composed by ordinary people, but written and preserved by Buddhist monks. Other kinds of evidence to find out about life in some of the early cities are sculptors' carved scenes depicting people's lives.

**Cities and Travel Accounts:** Another way of finding out about early cities is from the accounts of sailors and travellers who visited these cities and kingdoms.

**Coins:** Punch marked coins, which were in use for about 500 years, were called so because the designs were punched on to the metal- silver or copper.

**Cities and its Functions:** 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 centre of fine sculptures.

**Crafts and Craft persons:** Extremely fine potteries known as the Northern Black Polished ware were produced. There were famous centres such as Varanasi in the North, and Madurai in the South.

**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.

In the Indian subcontinent, use of iron began about 3000 years ago. It developed more and more 2500 years ago. Axes and the iron ploughshare became popular.

New tools and the system of transplantation increased production, and irrigation also came into use.

In the Tamil region, there existed three kinds of people—the large landowners, the ordinary ploughmen and the landless labourers (including slaves).

In northern India, the village headman, independent farmers, workers, etc. lived in villages.

The Jatakas were stories that were composed presumably by ordinary people and written down and preserved by Buddhist monks.

These tales give light on the life of people in these times.

Ring wells (rows of pots or ceramic rings arranged one on top of the other) have been found in several cities. They were probably used as toilets or drains and garbage dumps.

Accounts of sailors and travellers depict life in early cities. The account of an unknown Greek sailor tells about Bharuch.

Archaeologists have found several coins belonging to this period. Designs were punched onto the metal to prepare them.

Mathura, an important settlement for more than 2500 years. It was located at the crossroads of two important travel and trade routes. It became the capital of the Kushanas about 2000 years ago. It was also a religious centre.

Archaeologists have also found evidence for crafts, like the extremely fine pottery called Northern Black Polished Ware. There were famous cloth centres at Varanasi and Madurai. Craftspersons and merchants formed associations called 'shrines', that helped them in their work.

Between 2200 and 1900 years ago, Arikamedu was a coastal settlement.

**Ring Wells:** Rows of pots, or ceramic rings arranged one over the other is known as ring wells.

**Sangam' Literature:** Ancient Tamil texts that were composed in assemblies called 'Sangams' have been referred to as the 'Sangam' literature.

**Shreni':** An association of craftspersons and merchants was called 'shreni'. 'Shrenis' provided training, raw material, etc. They also served as banks.

**The Jatakas:** These were stories probably composed by ordinary people and then written down and preserved by Buddhist monks.

**About 3000 years ago. (around 1000 B.C.)** – beginning of the use of iron in the Indian subcontinent.

**2500 years ago (around 500 B.C.)** – increase in the use of iron, development of cities and the punch-marked coins.

**2300 years ago (around 300 B.C.)** – the ‘Sangam’ literature.

**Between 2200 and 1900 years ago between C.100 B.C. and C.100 A.D.)** – settlement in Arikamedu (in Puducherry).

