3. An Empire Across Three Continents

1. If you had lived in the Roman Empire,where would you rather have lived - in the towns or in the countryside? Explain why.

Answer: One would have preferred to live in the towns in the Roman Empire, because the cities could withstand the famines and droughts with its abundant food storage than the countryside. Cities were also centers of the imperial power with many opportunities for works in the administration and military.

2. Compile a list of some of the towns,cities,rivers, seas and provinces mentioned in this chapter,and then try and find them on the maps. Can you say something about any three of the items in the list you have compiled?

Answer:

Towns: Alexandria, Carthage, Pompeii, Cairo, Mecca

Cities: Naples, Sicily, Galilee, Campania

Rivers: Guadalquivir, Rhine, Euphrates, Danube

Seas: Aegean Sea, Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Caspian Sea

Provinces: Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Gallic

Campania: The best kinds of wine came from Campania.

Sicily: It, along with Byzacium, exported large quantities of wheat to Rome.

Mediterranean Sea: It was the heart of Rome's empire. Rome dominated the Mediterranean and all the regions around that sea.

3. Imagine that you are a Roman housewife preparing a shopping list for household requirements. What would be on the list?

Answer:

As a Roman housewife, my shopping list for household would include wine, wheat, barley, beans and lentils and frankincense.

4. Why do you think the Roman government stopped coining in silver? And which metal did it begin to use for the production of coinage?

Answer:

(i)The monetary system of the late empire shifted from the silver-based currencies to gold, because the Spanish silver mines were exhausted.

(ii)The Roman government ran out of sufficient stocks of the metal to support its monetary system with silver coins.

(ii)Constantine introduced the new monetary system based on gold, and there were a huge circulation of gold coins throughout late antiquity.

ANSWER IN A SHORT ESSAY

5. Suppose the emperor Trajan had actually managed to conquer India and the Romans had held on to the country for several centuries. In what ways do you think India might be different today?

Answer:

If the Roman Emperor, Trajan had actually managed to conquer India, the country would be different today on following aspects:

(i) Changes in language, culture, literature, art and architecture, and administration and Iegal Ia ws.

(ii) Close cultural interaction; conversion into Christianity, and the cultural influence of Hinduism on the Roman Empire

(iii)Legal protection and property rights for Indian women

(iv)The cruel institution of the Roman slavery would have taken root in India.

(v) The idea of public baths would have been adopted.

(vi) India would have benefitted from the Roman engineering skills in building massive aqueducts to carry water, the use of hydraulic mining techniques, and water-powered milling technology.

(vii) The olive oil production and wine consumption would have become part of Indian food culture.

6. Go through the chapter carefully and pick out some basic features of Roman society and economy which you think makes it look quite modern.

Answer:

Basic features of Roman society:

(i)The nuclear family was one of the more modern features of Roman society.

(ii)Siaves were included in the family as the Romans understood this.

(iii)The idea of the public baths was another modern element.

(iv)Regarding the institution of marriage, wife did not transfer her dowry to her husband's authority but retained full rights in the property of her natal family.

(v)Women enjoyed full property rights, and became an independent property owner on her father's death.

(vi)Divorce was an easy process; it needed no more than a notice of intent to dissolve the marriage by either husband or wife.

Basic features of the Roman economy:

(i)Diversified applications water power around the Mediterranean and the use of hydraulic mining techniques, and water-powered milling technology

(ii) Well-organised commercial and banking networks and the widespread use of money in silver and gold