

Work, Life and Leisure

Extract Based Questions - Work Life and Leisure

1) 103 Read the following extract taken from the textbook and answer the questions: In 1899 G.G. Agarkar wrote about Bombay: The enormous expanse of Bombay city; its great and palatial private and governmental mansions; broad streets which accommodate up to six carriages abreast.... the struggle to enter the merchants lanes; the frequent troublesome noise of passenger and goods trains whistles and wheels; the wearisome bargaining in every market, by customers who wander from place to place making enquiries with silver and notes in their pockets to buy a variety of commodities; the throngs of thousands of boats visible in the harbour ... the more or less rushed pace of official and private employees going to work, checking their watches... The cloudy of black smoke emitted by factory chimneys and the noise of large machines in the innards of buildings ... Men and women with and without families belonging to every caste and rank travelling in carriages or horseback or on foot, to take the air and enjoy a drive along the sea shore in the slanting rays of the sun as it descends on the horizon ...' G.G. Agarkar, The Obverse Side of British Rule or our dire poverty'.

(a) How was Bombay acquired by the British?

(b) How did it expand so quickly?

Answer:

(a) Bombay was given as dowry when king Charles II married the Portuguese princess Catherine of Braganza. King Charles then gave it on rent to the East India Company.

(b) Bombay first became a major outlet for cotton textiles. It then became an important administrative centre and by the 19th century it became a major industrial centre. In 1819 Bombay became the capital of the Bombay Presidency. All these developments led large communities of traders, bankers, artisans, factory workers. etc. to migrate to Bombay.

2) Study the picture and answer the questions based on it.



(a) What kind of building does the picture depict? In which city were they generally found?

(b) Give two features regarding life in these buildings.

Answer:

(a) The building depicts a chawl. They were generally found in Bombay

(b) Each chawl was divided into smaller one room tenements which had no private toilets. The homes being small streets and neighborhoods were used for a variety of activities like washing cooking and sleeping. Streets were used for various types of leisure activities. Chawls were also places where exchange of news about jobs strikes riots or demonstrations took place.

3) Study the picture and answer the questions based on it.



(a) What were the functions of pleasure gardens in the 19th century.

(b) What forms of entertainment were available for the elite and the common people?

Answer:

(a) Pleasure Gardens provided facilities for sports entertainment and refreshments for the elite.

(b) Cultural events like the opera theatre and classical music performances were available for the elite. Working classes met in pubs to have drinks exchange news and unwind after a long day of work. Libraries art galleries and museums were established. Music halls became popular among the lower class and by the early twentieth century cinema became a source of great entertainment for mixed audiences.

4) The Many Sides of Bombay
My father came down the Sahyadris
A Quilt over his shoulder
He stood at your doorstep. With
nothing but his labour I carried a tiffin box
To the mill since childhood I was cast the way
A smith forges a hammer I learned my
ropes Working on a loom Learnt on occassion
To go on strike My father withered away toiling
So will I, and will my little ones
Perhaps they too face such a nights
Wrapped in coils of darkness
Excerpted from the poem Maze Vidyapeeth (1975) by Narayan Surve.

(a) What kind of life of a labourer is depicted through these lines?

(b) Explain the pathos and hopelessness hidden in these lines.

(c) Do you think in modern day, the life of a labourer has changed in Bombay? If so how?

Answer:

(a) The poet describes how long back his father came to Bombay to become a labourer. Years have passed. His son too has become a labourer. His father passed away toiling for others without changing his own fate. He knew he too will die in the same way and so will his son.

(b) A deep pathos and hopelessness mark these without speaking about it. A life which has no goal or motivation a knowledge that there is no social mobility for them a life without hope is difficult to live. But on most big cities hundred of them are destined to inconsequential lives.

(c) In present day the life of a labourer in Bombay has definitely shown improvement. There are labour unions and various other organisation to look after their interests. Now they hope for a better future send their children to school and there are instances of social mobility. Their children are moving out for the drudgery to a better life by virtue of their own abilities. Government too have passed various laws to protect their rights.