1. Discuss social organisation; and improvements in agriculture, crafts and trade during the ‘Gupta Period’.

Ans: The social organisation of Gupta Empire was highly influenced by religion. Hinduism divided people of Gupta Empire into five classes.

The highest was composed of Brahmin (priest and teachers), Kshatriya (rulers and warriors), Vaishya (merchants and artisans) and ending with Sudra (unskilled workers).

The Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya were included in Twice Born Groups i.e., incarnation or rebirth.

The Pariah were outcaste and are considered untouchable. They were hardly considered a part of society, making it the lowest class.

The division of the people was called the Caste System. Different classes were never allowed to speak or even look at each other. The belief in ones Dharma, or purpose in life, was to be their own class and do what that class demands of you kept in line.

POSITION OF WOMEN

Based on their status and religion in society the freedom of women is depended. But their was a general role for women to play in the society. All women were to rise the children and do all the household works. The women of the Gupta Empire were to please their husbands. In the Hindu religion, women were at the bottom of the social caste. They were often forced to married at young age to ensure virginity. They were like a toys. They were owned by their fathers and were passed on to their husbands. But, women who were wealthy or who had powerful families could get educated. Some women becomes philosophers, wrote poetry and played music. One of the most disadvantages of the women of the Gupta Empire were, they were not allowed to remarry. Widows sometimes committed Sati, or by setting themselves on fire. Women who were widows committed Sati because they lost a place to live as property was not inherited by widows from their husbands. Unmarried non-virgin was not wanted in the society.

STATUS OF PEOPLE

According to Fa hein, a Chinese pilgrim, people of higher caste in Middle-India did not kill any living creature, nor drink intoxicating liquor, nor eat onions or garlic.

In contrast to the higher class, the lower caste people (Chandalas) lives sharply different. They lived in totally separate area, usually situated outside the cities. It was a social practice that when the Chandalas entered the gate of a city or market they used to