The economic structure is the backbone of every civilization. It is also the best parameter to judge the degree of advancement of a particular civilization. The ancient Indians perhaps realized the significance of these economic factors at a very early date and gave due importance to the development of the material infrastructure in the society. That is why artha is considered to be one of the important trivarga second only to dharma or the righteous conduct. Artha is defined by Kautilya, the author of the Arthaśāstra. He says “Manushyāṇāṃ vṛttirartham” i.e. Artha is the sustenance or livelihood (vṛtiḥ) of men. Thus Arthaśāstra is the science of acquisition and protection of the earth. Artha is normally understood to stand for the material well-being as also the means of securing wealth. K. P. Jayaswal had taken vṛtti in the sense of varṭana and suggested it to mean ‘human population’ but as pointed out by R. P. Kangle it does not convey the complete sense of the sentence. D. R. Bhandarkar took artha here in the sense of dangāṇī. He argued that ‘wealth’ should be taken in the sense of varṭa but here it stands for polity. Of these the explanation given by Kangle appears to be most suitable as he clarifies that vṛtti cannot be disassociated from varṭta and thus the only meaning applicable to it is the acquisition of wealth for the protection of earth.

Varṭta in the sense of livelihood is well-known term throughout the ancient literature and is applied to the economic activities of man. Its significance for the survival of an individual as well as the society on whole hardly requires an explanation. Kautilya, however, seems to have gone deeper in the issue and declares that it is possible for the state to keep its own people as well as the enemies in check through varṭta only because both treasury and army are sustained through it. According to him agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade constitute varṭta or economy as they yield grains, cattle, money, forest produce and labour. It is obvious from this definition that trade here includes industrial production and all other connected commercial activities including export and imports. Labour is considered an important part of economic activity and it probably includes vishti or forced labour by the state. It is natural as all the income of the state depended on the revenues it
received through taxation. More production and commercial activities would naturally bring more revenues to the state. As early as the time of the Rgveda, the king is called the ‘extractor of the tribute’ or bali hṛṣṭ. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa the king is called ‘eater of his subjects’ because he extracts tax or tribute from them. Even the Mahābhārata recognizes the significance of the state income and treasury when it says that the essence of the king is treasury so the king must always increase and strengthen the treasury.

**Agriculture**

Agriculture has remained the primary occupation of Indian people through the ages. Indian economy was known to be an agro-economy till very recent times. The highly developed state of agriculture in Punjab is evidenced since the Rgvedic times. The early Vedic civilization that spread over the land of Saptasindhu was primarily an agro-pastoral civilization. People lived in villages and their main occupation was agriculture. We find numerous references to farmers, cultivation of fields, corn-fields, crops, granaries and preservation of seeds amongst others to provide us a fair picture of agriculture during the period. There have been constant praises for agriculture in the Vedic literature, which indicates that it was the foremost of economic activities. An entire hymn in the Rgveda has been devoted to kshetrasya pati or the ‘lord of the field’ to achieve success in cultivation. We find a similar hymn in the Atharvaveda also. Keith and Macdonell are of the view that it should be applied to the ‘god presiding over each field’. Though it can also mean the owner of the field or the farmer but the first meaning seems to be more accurate. That way it would also indicate that like each individual family had its own deity or kuladevata, each field also had its own deity. At another place in the same text people are advised to adopt agriculture as a means to gain wealth in place of the game of dice. The significance of agriculture is further evident as in the coronation ceremony; the king was crowned for the sake of agriculture, common good, prosperity and progress. In the Atharvaveda, prayers have been offered to deities to get plentiful crops, ample rain for the crops and to avoid natural calamities like drought, lightening etc.

Indra was considered to be the lord of plough (śirapatih). Maruts and Aśvins were also concerned with cultivation. The farmer is referred to by several names. Thus we find vapa (sower), kināśa (ploughman), krśivala (plougher), krśivala (plougher),
karśhīvana\textsuperscript{23} (cultivator), idāvālī\textsuperscript{24} (farmer), etc. used for the cultivators in the texts. Some scholars have taken karśhīvana to mean winnower\textsuperscript{25} whereas Ghosal thinks that it stands for ‘cultivator’\textsuperscript{26}. We think either way it indicates a farmer as both cultivation and winnowing are connected with agriculture. Macdonell and Keith have dwelt upon the agriculture during the Vedic times in detail in their work under the heading of krshi\textsuperscript{27}. They are of the view that ploughing was known to the Vedic people before they separated from the Iranians or in other words before the age of the Rgveda because these scholars have believed in the old theory of the Aryan migration from the West. With the view that the Vedic people belonged to Saptasindhu itself the argument has to be changed to mean that cultivation was known to them from the beginning or at least when the Rgveda was composed. It is clear from a passage in the Rgveda where Aśvins are spoken of as concerned with the sowing of grain with plough\textsuperscript{28}. V.S. Agrawala is of the view that the term krshivala is a post-Vedic word introduced by Pāṇini for agriculturist\textsuperscript{29}. He refers to the Sūtra 5. 2. 112 in this connection. The ploughman was known as hālīka or sairika according to the Ashtadhyāyī\textsuperscript{30}. There were three types of farmers. One who did not have their own plough called ahali\textsuperscript{31}, second who owned their own plough called suhali and the third whose plough was in bad condition called durhali. Kautilya refers to the earlier view that pastureland should make way for agricultural land\textsuperscript{32} but does not recommend it. It seems that by his time this had become an obsolete view. He, however, agrees that encroachments by pastures on agricultural land should not be tolerated\textsuperscript{33}. At the same time he also says that a person who clears forest land to make it arable should be considered its owner. These references indicate that he was in favour of all kinds of agricultural development for boost to the state economy.

The Atharvaveda associates Pṛthī Vainya with the origination of ploughing\textsuperscript{34}. But its implications are very complex as it also refers to the question of the ownership of land. Though there is no reference to the question of the ownership of land, it is sometimes argued that the entire land remained under the state ownership as king is called by names like kshitipati and bhūpati. The king is also known to be the legal claimant of share in the produce. One sixth (shaḍbhāga) of the produce was king’s share according to the dharmaśāstras. We have already referred to his being known as the extractor of tribute. In a story even the right of a person to donate land is challenged. Pāṇini does not give a clear picture about the ownership of land as all the
terms used by him refer to the cultivation of land by farmers but none about its ownership. He, however, talks of the measurement of the individual fields in order to distinguish them from one another. He also refers to kshetarakara as the revenue official who kept records of the land. Megasthenes has also referred to the existence of such royal officials who used to keep records of the land and fixed revenue thereupon. In the later times we find references to the individual ownership of land. For instance, Kautilya says that the person who clears the forest land to make it arable is the owner of that land. In the chapter on Śūnyaniveśa he talks of settlement on unoccupied land making the tiller as the owner. However, it appears that in theory the king was the owner of the land but for all practical purposes it remained under the private ownership. Even the state honoured the ownership rights of the individual and limited its claim to the revenue accrued from all arable lands. In the Smṛtis also it is said that if a person dies with any legal heir, his property should go to the state. It clearly indicates towards private ownership of land. R. P Kangle has discussed the issue in detail and finds no doubt about the existence of the private ownership of land during the Mauryan period.

Various implements used in agriculture are referred to. For instance, sīra, lāṅgala and phāla were the terms used for plough. Sīra (also known as sīla) was dragged by a team of oxen, sometimes four, six or even twelve, controlled by a goad (āśtra) held by the ploughman. Of these phāla seems to refer to ploughshare and not to the whole of plough contrary to the view taken by Pranati Ghosal. The use of a large number of oxen for ploughing indicates that large and heavy ploughs were used. Smooth handle of plough called tsaru and pointed lance or pavīravat are referred to as parts of plough. A harrow or a hoe was called laya or layu and sickle was known as sṛṇi and dātra. Titau was sieve for winnowing and sūrpa was the winnowing basket. Lāṅgala does not find mention in the Ashādhyāḍ but we hali and jītya for a large plough.

Of the various stage of cultivation, the Vedic texts refer to i) the ploughing of the field, ii) sowing of seeds, iii) harvesting ripe corn, and iv) threshing and separating husk from the corn. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa has summed it up providing details in a concise manner. Other texts of the later Vedic period also dwell upon it. The flourishing agro-economy in Punjab during the Indus Valley Civilization is...
beautifully reflected in the archaeological remains of the period. The large granaries at places like Harappa and Lothal speak volumes for the advancement in agriculture during this period. Some scholars like D. D. Kosambi were of the view that the Harappans did not know the use of plough and dug the fields with hoe. This view was primarily based on the presumption that the Harappan culture is older than that of the Rgvedic culture. The moment we drop that idea the entire theory becomes redundant by itself. However, the finds from Kalibangan in Rajasthan have set the seal of certainty about the knowledge of the Harappans about ploughing the fields as the archaeological evidence from there has yielded remains of the ploughed fields. Even a terracotta model of the plough has been found from Banawali in Haryana. The Greek writers express their surprise at the fertility of the Indian land and skill of the Indian farmers. Panini refers to ploughing of field twice or thrice. For deep ploughing the fields were ploughed in opposite direction. It was called sambākaroti. There were agricultural crops as well as wild or naturally grown crops. Normally three crops were sown as noted by Panini, Āsvayujyā sown in autumn, graishmaka sown in summers and vāsantaka sown in the spring season. Kautilya talks of several types of crops. In the section devoted to the ‘Director of agriculture’ he provides details of agricultural operations.

The rivers like the Sarasvatī and the Indus as well as their tributaries must have formed the land very fertile and water must have been easily available besides plentiful rains. No remains of canal irrigation have been found so far. We do not know if tanks, reservoirs and wells were used for the purpose of irrigation in the Vedic and the Harappan periods or not. There is evidence from the Brāhmaṇa literature that people to a large extent depended on the rain for irrigation of the crops but some indirect references to artificial irrigation were also available. Panini has referred to fields being watered naturally by rains as also by artificial irrigation by canals (kālya) and wells (kūpā). In connection with Punjab, it is interesting to note, that the celebrated author has referred to the soil being enriched by the river Devikā in Madra (Central Punjab) that was excellent for Śāli variety of rice. He also mentions a number of other rivers and rivulets in this connection. A large variety of grains, pulses, vegetables and fruits were produced. We have already referred to them in the previous chapter on Daily Life under the heading food and drink. The above discussion leaves no doubt that agriculture was not only primary occupation and in
advanced stage of development but also the backbone of economy in Punjab during the period of our study.

Various crops were grown from the Vedic times onwards. Grains formed the main crops and were not only cultivated with care but several varieties of the same were developed and produced. *Yava* and *dhānya* are mentioned in the early texts. Barley or *Yava* is known from the earliest times and finds mention in the *Ṛgveda*. The *Atharvaveda* also mentions it as also several other texts. The *Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇa* says that it was harvested in spring whereas *Tīṭṭirīya Sanhitā* places its harvest in the summer. Some scholars think that the term in the *Ṛgveda* is used in the general sense and may also denote wheat and other grains also. A close perusal of the text indicates that probably wheat and rice were also indicated by this common term. However, in the later texts it was definitely used for barley. Hopkins was of the view that its cultivation during the *Ṛgvedic* age is not certain but Keith and Macdonell find it quite probable. It finds mention in the *Āṣṭadhyāyī* of Pāṇini also who also refers to a dish *Yavāgū* prepared from barley. Barley has remained a popular edible grain to this day with common people.

Definite reference to wheat called *Godhūma* is not to be found in the *Ṛgveda*. It is first mentioned in the *Samhitās* of the *Yajurveda* and the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and is definitely distinguished from rice (*Vṛtiḥ*) or barley (*Yava*). The wheat grains have been recovered from the granary at Harappa and also from Kalibangan, the two most important sites of the Indus civilization. The latter has yielded the evidence of its cultivation also. It continued to be the most important of the grains used as staple food in Punjab needs no elucidation. It sounds strange to say that it was not known in the time of the *Ṛgveda* in Punjab because the archaeological evidence indicates to its existence from a very early time. We may, therefore, agree with the view that the term *Yava* in the early Vedic period denoted grains in general including wheat or its absence in the text may be taken as pure accidental.

Like wheat, rice too does not find a specific mention in the *Ṛgveda* and the case may be considered at par with that of wheat. Pranati Ghosal following some of the earlier views has stated that the absence of its mention indicates that it was unknown to early Vedic Indians. This view is hardly acceptable for we find copious references to it shortly afterwards. It could not have been introduced and developed so
quickly in the region of Punjab. The view of Macdonell that it was known in south and east India and became popular after the Aryan expansion in these directions does not have much force unless we believe that migrations were from the Gangetic plains to the Indus region. In the later texts not only the grain is mentioned but it became synonym for all grains dhānya and several of its varieties are mentioned. It is mentioned in the Atharvaveda\(^{31}\) and in the later texts\(^{72}\). We are told that it ripened in autumn though there were several varieties of rice\(^{39}\). Tanḍula was a term for common rice\(^{34}\). The Taittirīya Sanāhitā talks of unhusked Tanḍula as akarna and husked rice as karna\(^{35}\). Vṛihi variety also had two types - kṛṣṇā and śuklā\(^{76}\). A very fine variety of rice was called Mahāvṛihi\(^{77}\). Nīvāra was a wild variety of rice\(^{78}\). This variety was recommended to be used by those living as anchorites in the third stage of life or the Vānaprasthas. Another variety was that of the red rice called hāyana\(^{79}\). Masūṣya was another variety of rice mentioned in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa\(^{80}\). The fast grown varieties of rice were known as Āṣuka\(^{81}\) and Plāsuka\(^{82}\). In addition to these Pāṇini has talked of Shashthikā\(^{83}\) and Yavaka\(^{84}\) varieties also. The latter reminds us of the word Yava for grain in the early Vedic age and may be taken as an indication that originally these grains including rice were known by that name. Śāli was another fine variety of rice mentioned by Pāṇini\(^{85}\). This variety is also mentioned by the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsian Tsang who was served this fine rice called Mahāsāli at Nalanda. He has called them as grains of rich people\(^{86}\). Sāyaṇa\(^{87}\) refers to another variety called Prthuka. It is possible that the type was grown in the region of Prthudaka modern Pehowa in Haryana, which is even now known for fine quality rice cultivation.

Several other types of grains and pulses were also known from an early date. Mention may be made of Kulmāsha (beans), Garmut (wild beans), Mudga (beans), Masūra (beans), Śyāmāka, Priyaṅgu, Khalva and Aṣu\(^{89}\). Khalakula, Upavāka, Gavidhkā, Tīrya or Tīla (seasame), Taila (seasome oil), Masūra and Masūṣya also find mention as grains\(^{89}\). Most of them are mentioned by Pāṇini also at a later date\(^{90}\). Amongst the pulses he refers to Mudga, Māsha and Kulattha besides the grains known as Yavānī and Gavedhkā\(^{91}\). V. S. Agrawala has explained that Aṣu is known as chainā and is commonly used as a food grain in Punjab and Sindh-Sagar Doab in the extreme north-west\(^{92}\).
Cattle Rearing

Next to agriculture was cattle rearing, which formed as important economic pursuit as agriculture. In fact it is generally believed that man first took to pastoral pursuits and afterwards became an agriculturist. The point may be as debatable as the issues like hen and egg but it goes well without saying that one is complimentary to the other. Both cattle rearing and agriculture formed equally important occupations in the economic life of ancient Punjab.

Cow has remained the most sacred animal right from the age of the Rgveda. There are numerous references to this effect in the texts. It was not merely because of its religious importance that cow was declared aghanyā or 'not to be killed’ but it along with the other cattle formed the unit of wealth also. There are numerous references when the price of an article has been evaluated in cows. Even when it was said that the wealth of a person was stolen and hidden in a cave and was recovered with the help of Indra, the wealth was nothing but cows. The Rgveda contains two full hymns addressed to the cows. Cows were addressed by various names such as dhenā (milch cow), dheuu (milch cow), dughā, usrā, usriyā, karki (white cow), grśṭī (young cow), dhenuṣṭrī (barren cow), nivānyā (cow with a strange calf), rohinti (red cow), vasā (barren cow). Vasiṭā, etc. There are prayers for the protection of cows, their safe shelter and food. Panini also refers to several of these names for cows and provides other facts regarding their rearing and importance. There are references to cow-sheds, pastures, cow-herds and so on, each having a special term.

Besides cow, ox or bull was equally important but was not designated as aghanyā. It was yoked in plough for cultivation and was perhaps also used as beast of burden (vāha) sometimes. It was known by names like rshabhā, usra, usriya, anadvāḥ, trivatsa, turyavāḥ, maryaka, mahoksha, mahārshabhā, vāha and vrshabhā. Besides these horses, goats, sheep were also tended and vastly used for various purposes. Goats and sheep provided milk and wool besides meat. Horse was the favourite means of transport for the Vedic men and remained so even afterwards. Dog was domesticated for guarding the house and property. They were considered faithful friends of man. The Mahābhārata contains interesting story of a dog accompanying the Pāṇḍavas on their last journey towards the Himalayas. Several other domestic and wild animals were known and used for various economic purposes. Kautilya also
refers to cattle and their utility and upkeep. He refers to special pasturelands\textsuperscript{101}. There is mention of the state-owned animals as well as privately owned cattle. Various taxes on different types of animals as the state share have been recommended by Kautilya\textsuperscript{102}. He has devoted a full chapter to godhyaksha or ‘superintendent of cattle’\textsuperscript{103} as also special departments under the charge of separate officers for horse\textsuperscript{104} (cavalry) and elephants\textsuperscript{105} for army. The significance of elephants in the army is further attested by the fact that during the Macedonian invasion of Alexander the Great, King Porus is said to have fought seated on an elephant. Chandragupta Maurya after defeating Seleucus Nikator in 306 BCE presented him with five hundred elephants as a term of friendship. Kautilya was also aware of the slaughter of animals as a part of economic factor and has recommended as separate department for regulating animal-slaughter\textsuperscript{106}. Here it is interesting to note that he provides a list of animals and birds whose killing was banned by the state. He also lays down rules for traders in meat and the quality of meat to be sold. The Buddhist work \textit{Dīghanikāya} recounting the significance of cattle says that protection of animals is a must because they provide grains, strength and beauty. It also recommends assistance to cattle breeders, farmers and traders\textsuperscript{107}. The Buddha said that like parents and relatives, animals are close friends\textsuperscript{108}.

\textbf{Industrial Crafts, Production and Occupations}

The civilized society has manifold requirements in its daily life for the personal use as well as for material progress. This can only be provided by developing various kinds of industrial crafts for which skilled craftsmen are required. In the early times when the needs of man were limited, the items of day to day use were produced locally in villages and cities but with the growth of population and advancement of civilization there was tremendous industrial development through the ages that in its turn led to trade and commerce. The industrial production is directly connected with the principle of demand and supply and we see it clearly reflected through the ages.

In the Rgvedic period we find people engaged in professions of spinning and weaving, metal-working, pottery, carpentry, chariot-making and various other arts and crafts that were required both for the social survival and material development. In the long list of occupations during the Vedic age there are references to \textit{kulāla} or \textit{kaulāla} and \textit{mṛtpacha} (potter), \textit{karmāra} (smith), \textit{dhamāṭr} (smelter), \textit{takshaṇa} (carpenter),
jyākāra (bow-maker), rathakāra or yantr (chariot-maker), bidalakāri (female basket-maker), manikāra (jeweller), rajayitri (female dyer), rajusarja (rope-maker), vayūtī (female weaver), vāya (weaver) and hiranyakāra (worker in gold)109. Of these potter, weaver, smith and chariot-maker occupied important position in society in the early Vedic age. So much so that rathakāra was given a share in the Rājasūya sacrifice being performed at the time of the coronation of the king. The archaeological evidence from the Harappan sites also indicates an advanced and flourishing state of arts and crafts. The spindle whorls discovered from here indicate that spinning and weaving was well-known. This is substantiated from the discovery of the remains of red-coloured cloth by Daya Ram Sahni from Harappa. Mackay also discovered the remains of thread wrapped around certain articles and finds the use of cotton threads and clothes110. A large number of images from the Harappan sites also show them in various dresses which appear to be intricately woven with designs on them. The dying of clothes was also known. Mohen-jo-daro has yielded evidence of the tank used for dyeing clothes. Thus the textile industry during the period must have been in advanced stage. Even the texts of the Later Vedic period attest to the same. The art of pottery and terracotta during this period is evident from a large number of pots in numerous varieties and fabric. Terracotta figurines and seals also indicate in the same direction. Pottery was made with a special red slip over which black pigment was applied to make designs. Clay was mixed with lime and mica. Both hand-made and wheel made pottery was produced which was expertly baked in fire. A variety of bowls, dishes, vases, pots, dish on stand, pitchers, etc. were made for day to day use. The extensive use of baked bricks also speaks of the skill of the Harappans in the field. Metal craft was also well-known. There is no evidence of the use of iron but copper and its alloys are frequently mentioned. The famous bronze image of a dancing girl from Mohen-jo-daro is a living example of the same. Even the precious metals like gold and silver were used for making jewellery etc. Kunal in Haryana has yielded the armlets and a tiara made of silver. The same place has also yielded pieces of a gold necklace and a large number of micro gold beads111. Jewellery in inferior metals like copper and bronze has also been discovered. It includes bangles, rings, ear-rings, etc. Of the weapons, copper arrow-head, axes, swords, knives, daggers etc have been found. The fish-hooks and utensils are main objects of household use discovered from the Harappan sites. The use of shell, ivory, reed and semi-precious stones, was also
widely prevalent. The beginning of second urbanization in the post-Vedic period was very significant age for industrialization. The use of iron had already been introduced long before this time. The iron swords and arrow-heads made during this period were of high quality and were in great demand even beyond the frontiers of Punjab in Persia as early as the sixth century BCE. The conventional industrial crafts of the Vedic and Later Vedic periods like spinning and weaving, metal-craft, carpentry, basketry, etc. continued during this period. However, the position of chariot-maker was lowered now. The Buddhist literature, especially the Jātakas, refer to the practice of numerous such crafts during the period under discussion. The sippas or sīlpas are mentioned in the Buddhist Jātakas. The term was specially used for pottery though other crafts were also known by this name. Pāṇini also refers to them. He uses the term kāri for craftsmen. He uses the terms like grāmaśilpi, grāmataksha, rājaśilpi, etc. for various categories of craftsmen. Further he distinguishes between those craftsmen (especially carpenters) who worked in their own workshops or went to people’s places for work. The craftsmen employed for the royal work were held in higher esteem. The term kāru-śilpi was used by the later writers for craftsmen. Most of the old terms continued to be used during this period as also in the subsequent periods. Kautilya also refers to industrial crafts in detail. He provides separate sections for crafts in different metals. Even Megasthenes has observed the highly developed industrial crafts in India and refers to a several craftsmen. Thus we find a continuous flourishing state of the industrial crafts during the period under discussion.

Trade and Commerce

Production alone, whether agricultural, pastoral or industrial, cannot be fruitful until it is put to optimum use by way of trade and commerce for proper distribution and consumption. This essential feature of economics was realized by the Indian people at a very early stage in the Rgvedic period itself. Throughout the period under discussion we find the gradual development of trade and commerce in Punjab from the early Vedic age through the Harappan period and into the post-Vedic and the Mauryan times. With the advancement of civilization, it is natural that, production must have increased manifold. But with that the needs of man must have also increased. It was therefore, difficult to remain self-dependent. This must have given rise to the exchange of surplus goods for those required or what is called as the barter
system. Since the exchange with goods was cumbersome process new ways had to be devised, which led to the origin and development of monetary system. First, precious metals or cows were used for the purpose but later on coined money replaced them all and has come down to the present times as accepted media of exchange.

During the early Vedic period a people called Pañis were professional traders. Though they were generally looked down upon, probably because of their profession that involved profit making on the expense of others, they find copious references in the texts. They were rich but did not give offerings to gods. They are described as misers were very good traders and businessmen. Though there is a great variance of views about them, it seems they formed the entrepreneur class of traders who made huge profits by buying and selling goods from place to place. Besides Pañis we find references to vanij and vaniyya for trade in the Rgveda. We know that articles were sent from one region to another during this period. Gandhāra was known for fine wool and fine quality blankets were exported from here to eastern provinces. Sindh was popular for salt and guggula (incense). It was also known for fine breed of horses. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa refers to fine horses of Sindh which is supported by other texts like the Brhadāraṇyaka Upanishad. There are several other items of trade that find mention. Trade was carried out both by land routes and by maritime activity in the rivers. Boat find frequent mention but it is doubtful if trade with foreign lands was carried out at large scale. It seems barter continued to be the primary medium of exchange though there are several references to nishka as a sort of gold coin. Gold dust in bags was also used as medium of exchange and of course cows were unit of wealth. Numerous example of evaluating an item by number of cows are found.

However, there was a great progress in the time of the Indus Civilization in trade and commerce. The cities had market places for exchange of goods. Fixed weights and measures were known. Since highways were fully developed and the Harappans had seaports like Lothal maritime activity was at full swing. It has been established now that trade with the Western Asian countries like Mesopotamia and those of Persian Gulf was carried out during this period through the sea routes. There are several items which were not found in Punjab and must have been imported. Silver probably was imported from Afghanistan and gold too must have come from outside. We do not know if it came from South India or from the foreign lands.
Copper came from Rajasthan. Thus both inland and foreign trade were popular. In the post-Vedic and the Mauryan period trade and commerce further flourished. Both Pāṇini and Kautilya refer to various activities connected with trade that indicate both domestic and foreign trade in flourishing condition. Pāṇini specifically refers to Uttarapatha which has been identified with modern G. T. Road that connected Pāṭaliputra with Gandhāra and went beyond through the Khyber Pass. It clearly shows that Punjab lay on the main trade route and was prosperous land. It was from here that different trade routes went to China, west Asia and the eastern and southern provinces of India. It had its value as melting pot of not only cultures but also trade and commerce.

Overall we find the economic condition of Punjab as flourishing during the period of our study and it was not only the cultural hub and cradle of civilization in India but also the hub of economic activities of all sorts through the ages.
Notes and References:

1. 15. 1. 1-2.

2. *Hindu Polity*, 5, n. 3.


8. According to Kangle arts and crafts were not included in it as they come under *kārākaśīlavakarma*, *op. cit.*, 166. We shall discuss it later on.

9. VII. 6. 5; X. 173. 6.

10. VII. 29.

11. Śāntiparva, 119. 16.

12. *RV.*, IV. 57. 3; 57. 8; X. 34. 13; 117. 7; *AV.*, III. 17. 1; III. 17. 9, etc.


14. III. 17.

15. *Vedic Index*, I, 211.


17. *MS.*, I. 2. 2; III. 6. 8; *TS*, VII. 1. 11. 1; *SB*, 5. 2. 1. 25.

18. III. 17. 2; III. 17. 9; VII. 18. 1-2.


20. *RV.*, I. 117. 21; I. 168. 7; *AV.*, VI. 30. 1.

21. *RV.*, IV. 57. 8; *AV.*, IV. 11. 10; VI. 30. 1.

22. *RV.*, X. 34. 13. Its opposite ‘not cultivable’ is also used here.


24. Sāyaṇa on *AB*, 5. 3.


I. 117. 21.

Agrawala, V. S., Pāṇinikālīna Bhārata, 198.

4. 476; 4. 4.80.

6. 2. 187


Ibid., VIII. 4. 39-40.

VIII. 10. 24.

IV. 1. 23.

III. 2. 21.

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III. 3. 123 and IV. 2. 45.
I. 1. 24.

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IV. 13.

VII. 2. 10. 2.

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V. 1. 90.

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6. 2. 13.

