CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

TRADE

Trade may be understood in its widest sense as the reciprocal traffic of materials or goods directed by human agencies from one place to another or one individual to another. It has been defined as mercantile employment carried on as a means of livelihood or profit. When a single person disposes of his own goods to some other person, then exchange is carried out. Earlier it was in the form of barter in which the two parties exchanged either goods/services or goodwill. The invention of the monetary system made it possible to dispose of goods for a token representative value that could in turn, be exchanged for other goods. The monetary system enabled trade to become a larger social activity instead of merely a person to person relationship or social activity on a small scale, like local trade.

Local trade has led always to the development of local centres. In rural communities, their varied requirements gave rise to wandering traders and market places, conveniently accessible to any nearby communities. Such local trading gave rise to permanent markets which then graduated to a variety of towns and cities. Long distance trade on the other hand, means commercial exchange between residents of different areas. As states and nations emerged, they began to formulate national commercial policies.
Trading among such different nations based on their own national policies of goods and services locally available developed as international trade. Thus, it is a repeated sequence of institutions created by regular trade between a multiplicity of traders.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Trade has been an economic activity in Indian subcontinent since ancient times. The diversity in the geographical distribution of wealth renders it necessary for man to obtain from distant areas those commodities which are not produced or available within his own localities. The varieties of human wants accounts for an extensive system of exchange between the inhabitants of nations (Prasad, 1977:8). In the earliest settled societies, distribution was through sharing of agricultural produce or products by the farmers with the labourers and artisans from whom he procured various services and implements. Thus barter system came into being within the village and along the neighbouring village settlements.

Thus uneven distribution of economic resources over the face of the earth has led to the dependence of human existence on transport and exchange of goods. The growing needs of man led to surplus agricultural production over local needs and this led to the rise of commercial exchange necessitating transport, trade routes, guilds, currencies, ports and finally towns and cities. This commercial exchange led to a cycle of trade and in turn helped in the development of industries in different
areas. Thus trade between different geographical boundaries grew and has dominated all the societies of the world. It has a broader meaning and hence signifies an exchange of goods and services. Trade has also been defined as the mutually appropriate movement of goods between hands' (Polyani, 1957:266). The archaeological research carried out on trade shows that it offers material approach such as subsistence, technology, economy or ideological approach like religious and social relations (Ray, 1986:1). It was also an important branch of state finance, where it was well supervised by the State.

From the ancient times we get evidences of how certain cities came into prominence due to the development of a specific craft which in due course became famous. In spite of the primitive routes, the merchants transported the local products from one establishment to another. As the routes developed, these establishments blossomed into commercial centres thronged by prosperous traders.

DEVELOPMENT

In the prehistoric period, man was basically a part of his environment. He lived in natural dwellings and gathered fruits, nuts, roots and hunted animals for his subsistence. At a later stage, food gathering was transformed into food production in the form of agriculture and the domestication of animals. Thus, he began to control his environment. This along with the use of pottery, made his home economy
better and the surplus theory became prominent (Prasad, 1977:10). The barter system started within the families or tribes. With a more settled life, man started living in communities. Thus the surplus production and barter of commodities came into vogue. The exchange of commodities which were previously carried out among the neighbouring tribes and villages, gathered momentum and the people came in contact with outsiders. In this regard an interesting piece of evidence comes from the Lower Palaeolithic period. The discovery of a few fragments of red ochre nodules found on the exposed floor of Locality V at Hunsgi (Karnataka) suggests that these red ochre pieces must have been obtained at the site from a long distance for body decoration or such other purposes (Paddaya, 1984:356). The excavator believes that the red ochre nodules are not found in natural formation in and around Hunsgi.

This situation was common in the Mesolithic period. They too must have developed long distance contact with the contemporary Mesolithic communities. Archaeological antiquities recovered from excavated Mesolithic sites such as Langhnaj (Sankalia, 1965), Tarsang (Sonawane, 1984), Kanewal (Mehta et. al. 1980) and other sites of Gujarat revealed dentallium shells of marine origin. The occurrence of these dentallium shells at these sites could be explained as brought from the region of the Arabian Sea. It seems that these shells were used by these Mesolithic communities as ornamental beads since such shells have natural perforations. They indicate a movement within the range of about 200 Kms.
In the Harappan culture the elaborate social structure and the standard of living must have been maintained by highly developed system of communication and trade. The discovery of Harappan ports such as Sutkagendor, Balakot and Sotka-Koh on the Makran coast and Nageswar, Navinal, Prabhas, Megham and Bhagatrav in Gujarat has given a coastal bias to Indus civilization (Rao, 1979:230). The common articles found at the Harappan sites and other contemporary sites of Sumer, show a lively interaction between these two cultures. The antiquities like the clay seals and trinkets of Sumerian origin found at Harappa, Mohenjodaro and Lothal and the Indus beads, seals and weights found at the Sumerian sites points to a flourishing trade between Harappan and Sumerian sites during the third and second millennium B.C. Certain objects like clay seals afford evidence of social and cultural relationships between Elam, Mesopotamia and Harappan sites. Among these, the most important are five seals of typical Harappan origin found at various sites of Elam and Mesopotamia (Saletore, 1973:45). A cylindrical roll seal traced at Susa, its prototype found at Mohenjodaro and two specimen found at Ur, shows the presence of close commercial links between the above centres (Saletore, 1973:45). The layout of the towns in Harappan sites shows similarity to those of the sites of Ur (Mackey, 1912:25-26). Trade of goods and exchange of culture can also be vouched from the discovery of identical weights and measures at all the sites and similarity of the animals depicted on the seals and also on the walls of ancient Egypt (Mackey, 1912:83-84).

Of inland and maritime travel, there are evidences in plenty recovered from almost all the mature Harappan sites of Gujarat. The terracotta
models of bullock carts or toy carts, representation of ships on seals or as graffiti marks on potsherds, shell compass, terracotta model of ships are a few of them. The Harappan economy has abundant evidence of long distance trade and craft production of a wide range of special luxury material during the urban phase. The Harappans had a well developed chain of exchange system with transportation of goods taking place both over short and long distances and backed by professional faith at all levels of distribution.

In this regard, interesting evidences have been brought forth from the recently excavated sites of Gujarat. In the light of new evidences, a review of the commercial and cultural contacts provides an interesting picture of the development of trade within our area of study. Among the Harappan sites, the important centers in Western India are Lothal, Nageswar, Nagwada, Kuntasi, Padri, Rojadi, Sikarpur, Surkotada, Dholavira, etc. These sites have revealed many antiquities which give ample proof of interaction with other contemporary sites.

Lothal (72 14'25"E and 22 31'35"N) has revealed evidences of specialized craft activities such as bead making, ivory and shell working and bronze smithery. The discovery of etched carnelian beads and non-etched long barrel-shaped beads of Harappan origin in Kish and Ur (in Iraq), Jalalabad and Susa (in Iran) suggests that they were in great demand in the West. A Persian Gulf seal and several circular seals bearing Indus motifs and scripts found in Bahrain and Failaka Islands suggests that the
Persian Gulf Islands took an active part in the Indo-Sumerian trade. The close resemblance in the shape of copper objects such as barbed fish hooks, tanged arrow heads, splayed chisels, hollow nails and rivets with flat heads commonly found in Susa and Lothal may be attributed to exchange of ideas through trade between these two cultures (Rao, 1979). Reserved slip-ware is considered of a foreign origin occurring in most of the mature Harappan sites of the Indian subcontinent including Gujarat. It is found in the Sargonoid level at Brak and Ur (Wolly, 1979:331-339) which suggests that there might have been an interchange of materials among these sites. The so-called dock at Lothal has other interpretations too. One of them that it was used as a tank. No matter what the brick lined enclosure at Lothal might be, it is clear that the site was an important manufacturing and trading centre on the south-eastern edge of the Harappan Civilization during the mature Harappan phase (Possehl, 1992:125).

Excavations at Nageswar (22 20' N, 69 03' E) has yielded evidences of shell industry (Hegde et al. 1990). Shell artefacts form an important part of the Harappan relics. The popularity of the shell artefacts among the Harappans is reflected through their wide distribution throughout the Harappan domain. The source material, such as suitable marine gastropods are restricted to a few shallow coasts and inlets. The enterprising Harappan craftsmen through their wide trade network system could have searched for suitable raw material resource areas to sustain the needs of various centres situated far and near. The most common species of gastropods exploited at Nageswar were T.Pyrum and C.Ramoscus (Hegde et al. 1984:125). From the vast amount of industrial debitage as compared to the
finished shell products encountered from Nageswar, it can be clearly inferred that it was a shell working centre and would have regulated the flow of finished commodities and even raw materials to cater to the demands of the various contemporary Harappan centres (Sonawane, 1992). Likewise, excavations carried out at Nagwada (23° 20' N and 71° 41' E) brought to light interesting features of specialised craft activities carried out by its inhabitants. Archaeological data recovered from this site clearly demonstrate that a variety of stone beads and shell objects were manufactured here by processing semi-precious stones and marine gastropods (Hegde, et. al. 1984). Vast amount of debitage along with finished industrial products were found from this site. Therefore, it is possible to infer that some of them might have been imported. It also indicates some trade with other contemporary sites. In this regard, interesting evidence comes from Kuntasi. The discovery of living quarters of craftsmen producing beads, copper artefacts like rings, bangles, knives and arrowheads proved its leaning towards industrial fields. But the most important object is an unusual copper ring bearing two spirals of Cretan style which suggests an exchange of goods between the Harappan and the Cretans. An inscribed seal made of faience depicting a regular figure similar to that found at Harappa is also reported from Kuntasi. The spiral motif was considered sacred in the Cretan civilization which flourished in the Mediterranean region around the same time as the Harappan culture. Dholavira (23° 53' 10" N and 70° 13' E) has also yielded interesting evidence of a local bead manufacturing industry. Lying on the coastline, along with several favourable anchorage points, it was possible to carry
out long distance trade with other countries. Furthermore, Kutch lies intermediate to Sind and Saurashtra (Bisht, 1991:406). As seen by various evidences traced above, it may be stated that the foundations for flourishing sea-borne and inland trade of the later periods was already laid during the mature phase of the Harappan period.

Langhnaj was a hunter/gatherer encampment. It has yielded a copper knife along with Harappan type steatite beads and black and red pottery. These are all products of sophisticated Harappan technology, and could have come to the inhabitants of Langhnaj through trade or barter. The radiocarbon date from Langhnaj has been found to be 2452, 2427, 2374, 2366 cal. B.C. which is in agreement with the occupation of Lothal (Possehl, 1992:125). It seems the Harappan dealt with things like copper knife, steatite beads and pottery found at Langhnaj, for the raw materials and other natural products that the hunter/gatherer could have collected in the course of their economic existence. Thus the workshops at Lothal were supplied with agate and other semi-precious stones needed for bead manufacturing, along with resins, string, wax and other useful products needed for its commercial success. Ivory and other products found at Lothal might have come from such people as well. The above evidence clearly suggests that the Harappans and the Mesolithic hunter/gatherers were involved in some kind of bilateral, balanced system of reciprocity.

Even the excavations carried out at Bagor (Rajasthan) shows that during Phase II, the Mesolithic hunter/gatherers had developed contact with contemporary Chalcolithic cultures, indicated by the presence of copper and
beads at this site. Most interesting are the triangular arrow-heads with holes on the tangs which are exactly similar to the Harappan examples. This clearly shows that the Mesolithic culture of Rajasthan had some symbiotic relationship with the contemporary settled agricultural communities. Carbon 14 dates available from this strata supports such a possibility (Misra, 1973).

At this juncture it is interesting to note that the network of inter-regional and extra-regional exchange systems of the Chalcolithic societies of the Western India, which were either contemporary to the Harappans or post Harappans in date. Among these, the first and the foremost is the Kayatha culture, a contemporary of the Harappan culture. The excavated evidence of Kayatha displays a very high technological achievement as is evident from the discovery of copper axes, two semi-precious stone bead necklaces besides over 40,000 steatite micro-beads having unmistakable Harappan affinity. This certainly suggests some pattern of exchange between the Kayathians and the Harappans of Rajasthan. There are also proper reasons to believe that the Aharians of the Banas Chalcolithic culture supplied copper to various Malwa Chalcolithic settlements confined to the Malwa plateau. It seems the people of Malwa had trading contacts with Gujarat, especially with the Western coast of Saurashtra from where they have obtained conch shells for bangles. On the contrary, the people of the Prabhas culture had inherited the trade of the Harappans, though by the middle of the second millennium, the overseas trade with West Asia had become just a trickle. The evidence of a seal amulet and an obsidian flake
found at Somnath, point to some trading contact with West Asia or with the Persian Gulf region in the later half of the second millennium B.C. The Jorwe people too traded with many of their contemporaries including the hunter/gatherers. The discovery of Daimabad bronze hoard and the barbed arrow-head together with two spiral-headed copper pins from Inamgaon certainly recalls their contact with the Late Harappan communities of further north. It seems they might have obtained gold and ivory from Karnataka, copper from Rajasthan, conch shells from Saurashtra coast and amazonite from Rajapipla mines of South Gujarat (Dhavalikar, 1981-83:73-76). Their contact with the Neolithic sites of southern peninsula are also clearly established by the variety of artefacts reported from excavated sites representing both cultures. It is more probable that the Jorwe people might have obtained polished stone celts from South Indian Neolithic sites by supplying in turn, painted Jorwe pottery and copper objects to them (Agrawal 1984).

Thus during the post urban Harappan phase, evidence for economic activity as a sign of long distance trade was virtually absent. Hence, specialised production and range of products was much reduced. The mosaic of stylist traits which emerges in the post-urban phase is indicative of shortened ranges of craftsmen and trade inter-exchange (Possehl, 1982).

When we come to the Vedic period, our knowledge of trade and commerce is mostly based on the literary data available to us. Most of this information is not supplemented or supported by the archaeological evidences.
In the Rig Veda, Vanij was a common term for merchants. The Rig Veda mentions about barter and Satman coins which were used as medium of exchange. The merchants offered prayers and oblation to seek divine grace for success in trade (Max Muller, 1890). Varuna was the Lord of the marine trade (Max Muller, 1890). Indra was the leader and he was regarded as trader and also the leader of commerce (Whitney, 1962). The Pānis mentioned in Rig Veda (Max Muller, 1890) refer to Dasyus. They were traders and held a prominent place in the field of trade and commerce as they belonged to the wealthy section of the society. The Pānis were a rich and enterprising merchant class and solely devoted to the cause of gain through trade. The production of Indian goods was in the hands of Aryans rather than Pānis. The Aryans and Pānis bore enmity towards each other. Indra had warned the Aryans not to deal with the Pānis (Max Muller, 1890).

So the commercial activities can be dated to the Rig Vedic period if the Pānis of the Rig Vedic period are believed to be identified with the Phonecians (Asthana, 1974:311). The traders of this period collected the surplus left over from their way to some commercial centres of the Western coast where the large vessels lay in anchor for import and export of goods. The Varchin and Sambara families monopolised the cotton industry and mastered the production of ornaments during that time (Max Muller, 1890). Though some scholars opine that Aryans had no knowledge of the ocean, the mention of strong winds, shipwrecks and ships with hundred oars in Rig Veda certainly suggests that the Vedic Aryans had a definite knowledge of the sea (Max Muller, 1890). The Rig Veda (Max Muller, 1890) and the later Samhita (Whitney, 1962) mentions that sea trade was carried out by boats.
The epics give reference of trade contacts with several countries in distant land. Merchants, along with their goods used to travel far and wide for commercial purposes and to take advantage of the new opportunities (Raghuvir, 1938:67.22). Bharata called on all the leaders of different industries to accompany him to the forest and influence and cajole Rama to come back (Raghuvir, 1938:36). This statement itself shows the importance given to the traders. Since they were the wealthy class, they must have held important positions in the society. The traders played an important part during the war as we find that they supplied commodities and acted as guilds in different localities. Sugriva asked them to go and search for Sītā in the islands, cities, mountains (Raghuvir, 1938) and in another place they were asked to go to the land of silk threads. Both the epics mention places like Suvarnadvipa and Yadavadvipa. The people and warriors were asked to go to the Red Sea (Raghuvir, 1938).

The sound administration of Bhishma brought about towns occupied by traders, merchants and artisans of every field (Siromini, 1905). During this period good and fair management was provided by the State to the foreign merchants (Siromini, 1905). The Indian traders imported slave girls from the region of Caspian Sea and they established trade with Mesopotamia and Egypt (Dutt, 1905). The trade and guild of money lending are mentioned in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa. The haggling of the market already known in Rigveda had now become an important feature of commerce (Whitney, 1962). Garments, coverlets and goat skin are among the articles of commerce mentioned in the Atharva Veda (Whitney, 1962). The Satapatha
Brahmana speaks oftthe Eastern and Western oceans, most probably referring to the Indian Ocean or the Arabian Sea. The Sutras of Panini mentions about the imports from the north. The objects like spindle-whorl and activities of spinning and weaving are mentioned in the Apastamba Sutra.

From sixth century B.C. onwards, the Buddhist literature, especially the Jatakas provide evidence of India's relation with other countries mostly with Egypt and Mesopotamia (Asthana, 1976: 163). The Dīgha Nikaya mentions journey to distant land through seas. A king's son, pure bred, cedes his share of kingdom to his sister, turns into a trader and travel with his caravan (Rhys Davis, 1911). The Sankha Jataka (Cowell, 1913:441) mentions the ship-wrecked traders on a voyage from Banaras to Suvarnabhumi. Hundred of these traders were lucky enough to obtain the services of Suparga as their pilot (Cowell, 1911:463). The Milindapāñha (Trenckner, 1880:299) refers to the ship owners visiting Sindh, Surat, Coromandal coast and Bengal. The Mahājanaka Jataka (Cowell, 1913:32) tells about the regular commercial exchange between India and Babylon, China and Suvarnabhumi. The Milindapāñha mentions that India had trade relationship with China and other foreign countries (Trenckner, 1880:351). The traders of Surat and Barukachcha traded not only with western countries but also with eastern countries via Ceylon. The traders held an important place in the State. They were respected and honoured (Cowell, 1913:382). Buddhist texts refer the word Kahapāṇa for a coin. Loans were given on security of gold and they carried interest called Vriddhi (Cowell, 1913:31). The term Sreni, which frequently occurs in literature and inscriptions of this period is defined
as a corporation of people belonging to the same or different castes but following the same trade (Majumdar, 1974). Mention of eighteen guilds in the Jātakas shows the extensive character of guild system.

According to Herodotus Indians had to pay tribute of three hundred and sixty talents of gold dust. They also had to pay annual road cess to Darius the ruler of Egypt (Rawlinson, 1916:403). Darius perhaps, for correct assessment of tribute, sent Skylax of Caryanda for the survey of river routes of the Indus. Later, he conquered the Indians and made use of the sea in those parts (Rawlinson, 1916:44). Darius adopted a free trade policy with a view to make Persia a competitive market. The opening of the Suez Canal had a decisive influence on the commercial history of Nearer Asia and of Egypt.

The Phoenecians, who had good knowledge of sea, came in contact with India in 7th and 6th Century B.C. by the Red Sea route and also by the caravan route from the shores of the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean coast of Syria (Agrawal, 1977:48). The vast wealth of India attracted the foreigners from time to time. Greeks under Alexander were in search of fresh avenues, to expand their political as well as commercial control. Merchant vessels accompanied Alexander during his campaign. The thirst of wealth inspired Alexander to conquer Arabia and also India, where the products like spices, gold and precious stones were found in plenty. Arrian says that Alexander had heard about the products of India from the Phoenecians and the Arabs. So it is concluded that the Arabs and the
Phoenicians traded with India much before the Greeks (McCrindle, 1894). Alexander's invasion didn't make political impact on the Indian subcontinent permanently but opened new vistas for sporadic contact between the two, for commercial and cultural interaction.

The Greeks were known to Indians as Yavanas or Yonas. In Panini's Ashtadhyayi, there are several references of Yavanas. The Ramayana (Raghuvir, 1938:12-13) refers to Yavana with a number of other tribes as the Śaka, Kirātas and Kambojas. The Yavanas are mentioned in Mahābhārata (Siromini, 1905:28,44) in which the conquest of Yavanas by Nakula is mentioned. If these identifications are presumably correct then there was contacts between India and Greece during the Later Vedic period onwards. Similarly the sixth century B.C. marks the cardinal epoch in the Chinese history. The State of Tsin carried out great reforms both in the economic and political fields.

The trade during the Harappan period paved way for the commercial exchange of the later subsequent periods. There was an all round progress and its influence is seen in several spheres. The development of advanced techniques of sea voyages and land routes opened new vistas to trade in different kinds of goods. With the development of trade the markets came up which in turn developed into commercial centres. The prosperity of trade and commerce led and helped in the prosperity of a country.
AIM

The foresaid data gives us ample information about the material exchanged between India and other countries right from the pre-historic period to the full fledged development of trade organisation in the Harappan and in the subsequent periods. The subject trade which is a part of ancient Indian economy, has attracted many scholars. They worked on various aspects of trade. Motichandra worked on 'Trade and Trade Routes of Ancient India' (1977), Chakravarty also carried out studies on 'Trade and Commerce of Ancient India from 200 B.C. to 450 A.D.' (1966), Prasad gives an detailed analytical review of 'Foreign Trade and Commerce in Ancient India' (1917). Likewise Asthana has worked on 'History and Archaeology of India's Contact with other Countries from Earliest Times to 300 B.C.' (1976). Ray worked on 'Monastery and Guilds - Commerce under Sātavāhanas' (1986). Chaturvedi give detail account on 'Foreign Influx and Interaction with Indian Culture from 600 B.C. to 100 A.D.' (1985). Many foreign authors have also worked on India's trade relation with other countries. Besides this, many stray articles on this subject has been written by various scholars like Mehta, Thosar, Dhavalikar, Gupta, etc.

While reading on this fascinating subject of both maritime as well as inland trade, it became quite apparent that emphasis was not laid on this particular area of study and further, not dealt in any comprehensive scale. The focus of earlier works was laid mainly on the trade of a particular cultural period or of a particular dynasty. Sometimes the trade was dealt
in general covering whole of ancient India or just an aspect of sea trade and land trade was studied. Therefore the author here has tried to focus attention on trade carried out in Western India with special reference to Gujarat. It was an important region for trade activities, because of its situation in the Western Lithoral and thus had direct contacts with the foreign world. Thus the aim of this study is to review the trading activities carried in Western India from 3rd Century B.C. to 7th Century A.D. This study will give more emphasis on the organisation and workings of guilds and merchants, on the articles traded and the trade routes are traced with the help of archaeological finds and literary sources.

A review has been carried out on the ancient Indian trade of Western India from the earliest times upto the Mauryan period in the introductory chapter, so as to understand and study the subject under proper and broader perspective. This study helps us to analyse systematically the various aspects of trading activities that emerged in Western India during the historical period.

Since trade crosses the vast boundaries of space and time, it is therefore necessary to restrict the area of study, to a smaller and particular region. This will help us to understand the pattern of trade activities carried out within India and with other countries. By restricting the area of study one brings about human interaction in patterns of social structure in a more comprehensive manner incorporating various aspects related to trade and commerce. In a way it will help us
understanding the major developments in trade which took place in the economic history of human civilization of Western India. Further, it will enable us to know about its impact on other cultural aspects of the period under review.

**SOURCES**

This subject is interdisciplinary and has appealed to the historians, archaeologists, geographers and economists alike. The sources too, are vast and varied in nature. In addition to archaeological evidences, Indian and foreign literary sources, the use of geographical, geological and other informations are also incorporated for understanding various facets of the subjects under review. The study based on literary sources sometimes give doubtful chronology and the data collected by archaeological excavations or explorations were meagre or insufficient at times. Therefore, extensive research can be carried out only by combining both the sources. Thus an attempt has been made here to corroborate the archaeological as well as literary sources for thorough understanding of the subject. The most reliable source in this regard are the archaeological evidences which includes inscriptions, coins, seals ceramics and other cultural material remains besides the architectural finds.

Copper plates inscriptions as well as stone inscriptions provide more reliable information. These are the official documents which refer to political divisions and sub-divisions, names of the towns, villages, rivers
and building activities. They are helpful in locating ancient sites as they supply rich geographical data. They mention the conquests, the social life, the migration of people, grants and donations, purpose of donation, various public works and the guild system. Besides this, the copper plate also contain the geneology of the donors who were mostly local rulers. To reconstruct history of a region these provide direct evidences as well as information about the various aspect of culture.

Similarly, the inscribed coins give us the names of kings who issued them and indicate their possible rule over this region. It played an important part in the economic activity and helped us to know about the commercial exchange and smooth flow of goods. The metals used for minting coins showed the prosperity of that period. Culturally it helps us to know about the art, religion and society of that period. The ceramic types found from the excavations are of valuable help in knowing the stratigraphic sequence. It is a significant aspect of the material culture. It serves as an index of cultural growth. Pottery provides solid archaeological base to support the literary evidence on trade connections. Other antiquities like the seals, beads, weights and measures, teracotta objects and shell objects help us to know the economic status, their subsistance and way of life. This in turn help us to know the commercial exchange pattern of the region. It also helps us to know about prosperity of the region. The availability of raw material along with the manufacturing wastes of various stages of process can be detected if there was any particular industry and this inturn will enable us to know about the exchange pattern between different
regions. The architectural remains enable us to understand about the cultural contacts, social and economic life of a particular community and also throws a great deal of light on the art and religious practices of the society, prevalent in a given region.

The next important source is literature. There are Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Jaina works, along with the accounts of foreign travellers. The ancient literature throws light on political, social and economic aspects of the region. It traces the commercial knowledge of the people of those days. The foreign accounts provide first hand information recorded during the period of our study.

The Brahminical sources include the Vedas headed by Rigveda which gives us a brief historical as well as traditional account of the period. The Purānas are useful in working out the chronological history of the various dynasties. The two epics refer to agriculture, cattle breeding, industry and trade as a means of livelihood and society as a whole. The ancient Indians had rightly studied vartā (economic theory) in relation to labour, production, distribution and exchange and called this system as Lokavyavahāra. It is no doubt a profit making machinery of wealth or Dhanam. This Dhanam can be explained in connection with trade and commerce as a source of profit. The works of Manu in Manusmriti puts down the rules of conduct to be strictly followed by the rulers and his people alike.

Of the other works of this time, the most important source is the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya. Among other aspects, it provides information on
trade, commerce and industry, which can be used for our study. However, the work is used keeping in mind, the fact that it is largely a normative plan. Among other Sanskrit works the Pāṇini's Aṣṭadhyāyi, though of an earlier date, gives information on the level of economic development of pre-Mauryan times. The Śārīra of Apatamba, Gautama, Baudhayāna and Vasishṭa, which has been dated from 600 B.C. to 300 B.C. by P. V. Kane, throws light on the aspects of trade. The works of Kālidāsa and Daṇḍin's Dasakumaracarita refers to the economic life of this period. Rules for traders are noted in the Yajñāvalkya and Narada-Śārīra. The Brāhaspatīśārīha throws light on the coinage of the time. The Amarakośa supplies a wealth of information about the articles of trade and navigation system.

The Jain canonical literature including the Aṅgas, Upāngas, Gāthās, Churnīs and their commentaries is full of interesting information on commercial activities. The Buddhist Jātaka stories are proved to be more informative in this regard, as they enrich our knowledge on trade means of communication and commodities traded. These Jātaka stories are illustrated in the form of sculptural relics at Barhut and Sanchi, which depicts means of communication and traders. These depiction are used as an important source of our study. Other Buddhist works which are useful are Divyāvadāna and Milindapanha.

Valuable information of this period comes from the foreign literature. The Indica of Magasthenes as reported by drain is an indispensable source. It gives information on political history as well as the commercial life of
the contemporary period. Both the works of Periplus and Pliny contain useful and vast information related to commerce between India and the West. It mentions the various marketplaces and ports of India and its advantages and disadvantages for approach. Pliny gives an account of commodities imported to Rome and their comparative prices in the markets. (Rockhem, 1961) Strabo gives information about caste and costumes in his work. The guide to geography worked by Ptolemy contains tables of Indian names and places followed by figures giving latitudes and longitudes (Jones, 1917).

The Chinese and Arab travellers have left interesting details about their travels through India. Huien-Tsang and I-Tsang visited many places in India and have recorded their first-hand knowledge about India and their times. Chau-Ju-Kai who was the inspector of foreign trade in the later years gives information on the exchange of commodities.

Besides these archaeological and literary sources, the works of various scholars of nineteenth and twentieth centuries carried out on this subject under review was also referred and treated as a source. Besides this, some important articles were written by G. Watt (1908) on the commercial products of India. It throws light on the foreign trade and commerce in ancient India. The sea route from the mouth of the river Indus to Egypt was explored by a mariner named Skylax under commission from Darius (Rockhem, 1961:656). The Arabs and Indians moved in the sea because they were more conversant with the wind system of the Arabian sea long before the sailors of the Mediterranean countries. The Arabs acted as
middlemen also (Adhya, 1966:121). "The commerce between the Roman Empire and India" is quite useful for our studies though the basic facts are taken from the Periplus (Scoff, 1974) and Pliny's (Rockhem 1961) works. Charlesworth's "Roman Trade in India" and Rawlinson's "Intercourse between India and the Western World" are more descriptive and helpful as a source of study. Other works of this century on commercial contacts include the works of Motichandra (1977), Chakravarty (1966), Adhya (1966), Kausambi (1956), Asthana (1976), Mookherji (1972), Ray (1986), Dhavalikar (1990) are very important on which our study can be based, and they all give important information on various aspects of trade, banking, and means of communication. Some of the articles of Mehta and Thosar are important as they have written about the commercial activity of this area.

Thus with the help of archaeological and literary sources, I have tried to enlarge our understanding by synthesizing the available data.

METHODOLOGY

After going through the previous work, it was felt that the area under review requires much more careful, well planned scientific survey for better understanding of various facets related to trade and commerce. Therefore all the available archaeological and literary sources are put together and utilized in order to give coherent picture of the subject.
concerned. For this the archaeological sources in the form of material remains of the past are found to be more reliable than the literary sources. In most of the cases the author have tried to use the primary sources in their original content for the interpretation of the archaeological data recovered from excavations as well as explorations carried out in this area. The author have also tried to interpret and identify the ancient sites mentioned in various literary works, by carrying out careful field survey to some extent. It has enabled the author to decide the nature of the habitational area to know more about various activities related to trade and commerce, carried out at such places. For finding such spots, topographical sheets of the quarter inch map were used to locate them.

The places mentioned in known records, the area through which the ancient routes passed and the trading centres located on the Western coast as well as in the hinterland area were also examined carefully, keeping in mind their geographical and ecological factors.