



# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PEASANTRY IN ANCIENT INDIA

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The investigation of peasant's history in India overall and Andhra specifically has not gotten sufficient consideration from the professional scholars. It's kind of research work is a new peculiarity. A large number of the early scholars of history focused to a greater degree toward the ordered picturization of the rulers and privileged in light of accessible inscriptional and historical sources. There are anyway a lot of major obstacles to concentrate peasant history; the greater parts of the accounts are connected with just the main areas of the society, for example, the ruling class. But, in Indian history some peasant movements, upsurges, and revolts have been documented, its effect may not be far getting. Moreland properly argued that the basic element of the pre-modern Indian polity was a sovereign who managed, with a military that upheld the high position, and a peasantry that paid for both.<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact in the realms of historical research the peasant remained neglected till recent times when he struck the scholar's eye with all the dramatic force of the apple which fell at Newton's feet. Suddenly, behind the newsmen's headings, about glib politicians, corrupt administrators, vicious landlords and fiery revolutionaries, the great unknown of the peasant majority was detected as one of the major structural determinants which make the so called developing society into what they are. India is still a developing country and any attempt at tackling peasant problems would require proper understanding of the subject. India is a country of countless survivals from its hoary past and the present can be better understood with reference to the past as far as our sources permit and conclusions are legitimate.

Very recently historians in India seem to have shifted their interest from the study of primordial stratification to class-division of rural society. Indian society is, primarily, an agrarian one and still, so far, social scientists in India, except a very few, conducted their research studies on the caste and tribal levels. The core problems of our poverty-stricken peasantry, were, however, more or less left out. The logic, possibly, was that in a welfare state like India, the rural poor will be taken care of by the government itself. In consequence, some studies focusing on such problems as land reform, community development and the green revolution. All these studies had, however, been made on structural level. None of them addressed to the man behind the plough or the man whose dynamism made the structural changes possible.

As indicated by sociology definitions, British India was a peasant society. By a wide margin by far most of the number of inhabitants in the subcontinent lived in rural areas, and well over a large portion of the working people was locked in basically in cultivation. These areas were not detached groups: the urban populace was little by examination yet significant and urban magnates kept up with significant social, financial, and political connections to the field to get the constant flow of agricultural products that supported urban life. The state was coordinated into regional provinces that rose above lines of caste and clan and whose complex regulatory aspects mirrored the agrarian income potential. Clear social, cultural,

financial, and political differences could be and were made among town and country. In particular, the normal unit of creation was the family, which could possibly have claimed the land whereupon it worked however, notwithstanding, guided its consolidated labour to the farming of harvests.<sup>2</sup>

### **Definitions of Peasants and Peasantry:**

Definitions of human gatherings emerge or are made for various purposes, as well as social control, legitimate assurances, social logical examination, aggregate activity, and informal depiction. Such definitions could conceivably cover and match. Once in a while groups subject to segregation proper reverse and celebrate earlier pejorative marks. Also, related words in various dialects are barely ever totally coterminous. Despite the fact that regularizing definitions seem to fix an article in an ageless manner, practically speaking definitions generally change over the long haul and manifest differing levels of severity.

- a. Historical definitions, for example, those from social orders where peasants established a estate-like, caste-like, corporate or subjected class, portrayed by explicit limitations on geological or social portability, restricted privileges, and commitments to offer types of assistance and perform specific reverence behaviours for super ordinate groups.
- b. Social logical definitions from human sciences, social science and the trans-disciplinary areas of peasant and agrarian investigations.
- c. Activist definitions utilized by agrarian revolts, especially through Campesina and its component associations that self-distinguish as peasants.
- d. Normative definitions, including those proposed by common society associations and by the Advisory Committee of the Human Rights Council.

The initial two classifications will be analyzed at more prominent length than the last two, which will simply be the subject of short remarks. It ought to be famous at the start that definitions that emerge or emerged with regards to one of these classes now and then overflow into at least one of different classifications. The legitimate and institutional codification of “campesino” in Mexico<sup>3</sup> and in Bolivia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for instance, has for each situation aspects that are without a moment’s historical and normative, and these thusly impacted the two social researchers and agrarian activists in the individual nations.

### **Conditions of Peasants in Andhra:**

The agricultural classes including land owners tenants and farming work. There were inamdars who were appreciating whole rural on unimportant possessions. Another class of land proprietors who have recovered the land charge by making an irregularity instalment to the Government. The ryotwari pattadars are peasant owners form another class. Resulting to the development of anicuts on the waterways Godavari and Krishna there was a noticeable development, in the cultivation economy. Agricultural work had expanded from 14.5% to 21.4%. It is seen that this is because of the grouping of land possession and the enormous scope relocation of agrarian labourers. The Brahmin land proprietors fizzling in cultivation sold their territories and took new roads in education and different occupations.

The other proletariat classes like the Kammas, Reddys, Naidus and so on started to focus on the farming efficiency by utilizing labourers from their castes of the peasants or their relatives. The development in business crops agriculture too added to the place of working class. Hence this class of proletariat who took toward the English education offered the help to the native elite which at first contained Brahmin class. In spite of weighty tax collection, wasteful arrangement of water the executives and absence of satisfactory transport facilities, there was surplus in cultivation. This added to the improvement in transport and urbanization.

The phenomenon of land transfer and the concentration of land expressed in terms of caste, land were rapidly passing out from Brahmins, artisan sections and the agricultural labour castes. Brahmins have almost lost their lands because: (a) traditionally they are averse to the menial and physical work such as ploughing and other works related to cultivation, (b) incurred heavy expenses for social ceremonies, to maintain their leisurely lives, and to finance the education of their children, and (c) many of them have migrated to towns mostly getting employment in the imperial administration and sold their lands to the rich ryots in the Village.

The rich ryots lent money on inam lands, taking them on long leases. The inamdars, being Brahmins, did not cultivate their land themselves, while the ryots have the means enough to carry cultivation, and also buy the lands if the need arises. Among the Sudra castes such as Reddis, Kammas, Kapus, etc., the well-off sections profited out of rise in the prices of agricultural produce, money lending and trade in commercial crops. Sayana observes that the Reddis and the Telagas are also losing lands in the districts where their population is spare, while the Reddis in Nellore district are acquiring more and more land. The Kammas are seen more and more enterprising in acquisition of land and of late in business enterprise. Kshatriyas are not usually found as landowning community except in some villages in few taluks of the West and East Godavari districts.<sup>4</sup> He also states that the carpenters and smiths were losing their lands, while the weaver, barber and oil-crusher were able to hold what they own.

Commercialisation of agriculture further enhanced the speed of transfer of ownership of land thereby increasing the number of landless labourers. It also brought in a large number of merchants, traders and middlemen who further exploited the situation. The peasant now depended on them to sell their produce during harvest time. Because the peasants now shifted to commercial crops, food grain production went down. So, less food stock led to famines. It was therefore not surprising that the peasants revolted. The adverse impact of the British rule on the political, economic and social spheres resulted in sharp reaction of the peasants against the foreigners. This led to a series of the anti-British movements throughout the country as well as Andhra. Peasants and tribes rebelled against exploitative rulers.

The economic decline of peasantry and artisans were reflected in major and numerous minor famines. All these factors only helped to spread anti-British feeling which ultimately culminated in their revolts. The British were not very sensitive to the feelings of the peasants they ruled ruthlessly. Hence, reforms introduced by them to put an end to some social customs made the people believe that the Government wanted them to be converted to Christianity. As a result, the English East India Company's rule in India witnessed a large number of uprisings and rebellions.

The pre-British India where forest plots and nomadism prevailed was supplanted by a place that is known for inactive cultivation. The community of peasants and small money lenders formed the lynchpin of the British state. It gave a preferable customer base to Lancashire cotton over the migrants and tribals. The production of cotton, indigo, sugar, jute, cereals and tea and coffee cultivations prompted expanded interest for farming work. The differentiations among the proletariat of settled cultivations regions which depended on their conventional position and activities were currently made based on ownership of land and resources. The customary local village group was categorized into prominent hereditary gentry (zamindars) and other rich peasants who had before enjoyed impressive influence in the rustic regions. Anyway in the British time the force of the prominent sections in the rural group was disintegrated. The British rule finished what it called slavery and the act of making slaves in war was additionally put down.

The low caste people who had before been denied of holding land were becoming poor peasants. In Andhra the abrogation of standard regulation against the holding of land by the low castes unfavourably impacted the accessibility of work. Anyway at times stress of land income and farming depression constrained the peasants to become landless workers. In South India the army residencies were cancelled and supplanted with cash income and money lease. The expert weavers additionally took to cultivation.

Rural landless pay work's haggling power declined because of British state's debilitation to inner relocation. There was no development in the rural ways of life. The rural administration group declined and this brought about the development of money acquiring landless field workers. There was expansion in the level of farming peasants and landless cultivation labourers.

### **Conditions of Peasants in India:**

British India additionally had a history of important religious assortment. For sure, some guests to the subcontinent throughout the last 25 centuries from Alexander to Al-Biruni to Attenborough have neglected to make note of this reality.<sup>5</sup> Indian peasants didn't live in friendly and religious detachment, from the world or from one another. Peasants are resolved those inquiries by supporting the assaults on and controls of social ordered progression, or at least, caste. The narrative of those assaults and manipulations, and their suggestions for provincial India, make up an enormous piece of the history portrayed in this work. In any case, this history additionally incorporates huge religious and social change, which ought not to be disregarded.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the world that peasants lived in, and assisted with making, came to involve a focal area in the history of British and patriot India. That world is with us still, almost three fourth of century since freedom from Colonial rule, and, it tends to be contended, adds to the continuous emergency of religion and the state in India.

Britain after having the political control over India to uncover the Indian economy to the resistance of European business sectors, that were exceptionally industrialized and furthermore to present a uniform arrangement of capitalist economy in the country. This brought about the total vanishing and disorganisation of the old monetary system, withdrawing of Indian native businesses and the ensuing economic failure of the farming peasants, because of the strain welcomed on agrarian land by virtue of the downfall of the metropolitan and rural craftsman's and handiworks.

British rulers very successfully penetrated into the depth of the Indian villages. Pre-British invaders in India did not disturb the existing revenue administration structure. Millions of the rural folk remained, therefore, indifferent to the ruling class. Economic historians are still continuing their debate on the pre-British agrarian structure. The main issue of their contention is the type of ownership of land prevalent in pre-British period. Henry Maine and Sir Charles Metcalfe viewed the ancient village society as an undifferentiated one.

A study of peasantry of any age is actually viewing means and relations of production because peasants were the primary producers. It has been revealed in researches that, in Colonial countries, the peasants are the true revolutionary class. It therefore, seems absolutely imperative on the part of historians to assess the role of the peasantry as an agent of change. This study makes an attempt to project the history of peasantry and peasant movement against the backdrop of social movement. While conceding to this viewpoint, we find to our great dismay that the historical analysis of Indian peasant movement is still very few and far between. What little is available, is based on secondary sources and concentrate primarily on the general peasant movements.

The peasantry lately has been the topic of much discussion. The peasant's reality, culture, society and economy keep on giving rich bits of knowledge into the intricacies of historical progress. The history of the peasantry in Andhra during the colonial times was nothing but the history of its movements. Because of this reason this study lengthily covers the peasant movements in India as well as in Andhra Pradesh state. This work mainly deals with the history of peasantry and its movements against the local zamindars as well as British rule in Andhra which at last prompted the abolition of the permanent settlement by the Government of Madras following freedom. The motivation behind this research is to reveal that enormous individual and unconstrained discontent as well as coordinated peasant protests has been a significant element of the historical backdrop of provincial India.

Peasantry of India through the ages has been a rural society and even now our planners to modernise them find it hard to achieve even a modicum of success. Hence in some respects what could be said about peasants of Colonial India might hold true even for peasants of free India. Our study would also help us in providing a new insight into Colonial Andhra. Difficult it is to define peasantry as a concept; Western social researchers wound up adroitly debilitated by the predominant typology, pre-industrial versus industrial or modern societies. In view of the rapidly increasing many peasant works, there is a little humorous if not misshapen in the breakdown of scholars as yet to reach even a common agreement on the very existence of peasantry as a valid concept.

The unlimited diversity seen among the peasants of different regions, countries and continents make any generalization or definitions untenable, yet the existence of peasantry as a realistic concept can be claimed for both empirical and conceptual reasons. The differences among the peasant economies are naturally to be expected on account of varied historical experiences which should not stand in our way, at identifying minimum characteristics of this social category. A sociological generalization does not imply a claim of homogeneity or an attempt at uniformity.

In order to understand and assess the position of peasantry of any period and country the question regarding ownership of land must command our highest attention. But our difficulty arises from the fact that there is hardly any agreement among the authorities of ancient India on the theory of land ownership. Generalizations have been made by the scholars sometimes in favour of royal ownership and sometimes in favour of private ownership or communal ownership.<sup>7</sup> But the fact remains that no theory propounded so far is free from controversy. Naturally our task is difficult, almost impossible. Nonetheless, we will have to attend, in all humility, because the question of land ownership is central to the life and status of peasantry in any society.

The history of mankind is a history of unending struggle to attain higher forms of life to develop forces of production and to change correspondingly the production relations. Being a part of the nature, the human beings have been struggling to control and conquer it so as to suit them better. On the other hand they waged struggles to end the unequal social relations that existed and to establish a better social order. These struggles always correspond to the stage of the development of a particular society its land, agriculture, industry and trade, the nature of the ownership of the means of production and the degree of economic and social oppression.

It is also felt that unless the peasantry made conscious no social reform policy initiated by the urban middle class can be a success. Not only revolutionary upsurges but social reform measures can also be a success only if millions of peasantry were mobilized. To understand social change, brought by reform or by revolution, one has to look at the awakened peasantry of today. The peasantry however is not a homogenous body and also all the sections within the peasantry do not react identically. So first of all we must look at the definition and classification of the peasantry. The majority of the inhabitants of transitional societies or emerging nations are usually termed peasant because of the agrarian themes that dominate their way of life.

It is also important because the entire progress of the country is hinged on the correct and urgent solutions to the peasant question as the agriculture cannot be developed if the substantial sections of rural population is impoverished and deprived of the land and the industrialisation of the country get impeded if the rural poor cannot buy a minimum quantity of manufactured goods. The peasant question becomes all the more important because of the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist nature of Indian agriculture in which the development of capitalism though slow and halted it may be only further enriches a few without any substantial improvement in the living conditions of the landless agricultural labourers and poor peasants. This semi-feudal, semi-capitalist nature of the Indian rural society, this transitional stage, makes certain classes of peasants and the mass of labourers revolutionary because under feudalism as such the subdued

and submissive peasants were mostly unable to think of a struggle against the feudal lord or the king to promote their rights and under capitalism it is only a conflict between capital and labour.

The conceptualisation of the peasant as a different class and the rise of the labourers as a particular new class prompted the development of peasant's and workers history throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It would be a misstep to imagine that peasant and workers established a completely new subject, nor would it be correct to say that there was no interest in the subject before the rise of communism.

The Indian ruling classes face serious limitations to develop agriculture completely on capitalist lines, despite their efforts, due to several factors firstly taking the size of the country and magnitude of the agrarian problem they do not possess required industrial base or capital accumulation; secondly, it is at a stage of world development when the capitalist order is in a crisis, thirdly, the kind of land ownership pattern that exists in India which include millions of small land owners, imposes certain limitations for the development of capitalism and fourthly such a process, wherever proceeding, would only increase the class of wage workers and poor peasants. The revolutionary role of certain peasant classes and the agricultural labourers, therefore, gains predominance in solving the agricultural problems of this country.

Though the agrarian movement in this area is nearly one and half centuries old and important agitations and struggles were organised under the control of the Congress, Communists and the peasants and labourers organisations. The researchers in social sciences had not paid adequate attention to study the changes in peasant relations during the British rule and after. The perception and the role of the Congress and Communists, the pattern of these movements and factors behind them the classes that participated the ideology, leadership and functioning of these organisations, the aspects for the fall of the peasant struggle in this region.

Several peasant revolts occurred in the beginning of the twentieth century following the intercession of the Congress and Communists at long last prompting the abolition of the Zamindari system. The Andhra area saw a few peasant revolts and was in the very front of the nationalist disturbance. Peasant inclusion in freedom movements and upheavals has brought up interesting issues for social researchers and for historians specifically. In India, the problematic of peasants and the Indian national movement has produced much discussion on inquiries of insights, drive, initiative, mobilization and connections with Indian national movement. Progressively there is acknowledgment that to completely get a handle on the complex idea of the Indian national movement it is fundamental to attempt regional and micro level investigations.

This work on history of peasantry in Andhra is an endeavour to investigate, at the level of the sub-region, the political nexus among Peasants, Congress and the Communists. Micro local level investigations support in analyzing with a more noteworthy level of exactness speculations and theory placed at the all-India level. It permits us to investigate more meticulously the interchange of financial, political, social and cultural elements in the explanation of critical inquiries, for example, elements prompting peasant movements,<sup>8</sup> separation in peasantry, peasant progressive cognizance, consistently types of peasant opposition, peasant view of patriotism and inquiries of authority and activation.<sup>9</sup>

The inquiries that this work endeavors to deal with in this setting are; what was the idea of peasant separation around here? What was the effect of melancholy on the peasants? Was it because of their devotion to a few conceptual origination of Indian nationhood or was it the expectation that their decision could have a vital bearing on their own social and financial condition? One more critical viewpoint that is inspected in this work is there was any relation of Congress and Communists with peasants. It has commonly been accepted, that the peasantry was drawn to patriotism since it found in it a solution for its own concerns, a faith in the country and a feeling of prosperity relation to it. Here again one should be wary while concentrating on the idea of peasantry India. It has in some cases been contended that all the peasant movements addressed a patriot power pointed toward collapse the British power. In a nation where the staggering part of individuals established peasantry, any movement which collided with the dominantly

Bristith construction of government should have been visible as confront to expansionism. This question that requires a nearer assessment is the way these were observed by the peasants.

The literature of the peasant insurrection in British India is just about as old as imperialism itself.<sup>10</sup> The Indian land and the peasants are the objects of interest by the British authorities since the beginning of British power. The foundation of the British administration in India was joined by an unmitigated debacle for the cultivation of India. The pace of accumulation of cultivation prosperity fell very low attributable to the merciless loot did by the agents and authorities of the Colonial rule in India for the sake of gathering income, the disregard of administration and water system and the precise annihilation of native enterprises, a progression of starvations which desolated and eliminated the nation, motivating the peasantry, at different parts, against the landowners, grower, moneylenders and the Colonial rulers who remained behind them.<sup>11</sup>

Apart from the issue of lease, different aspects like removals, estrangement of land, usury, and other insistent ways likewise supported for the development of peasant dissatisfaction. Yet again anyway it should be noticed that these differentially affected various areas of the peasants.

### **Historicity of Land System and Peasantry:**

However, the word land can be defined as rural or agricultural area, as contrasted with urban ones, and the factor of production consisting of all natural resources. India has for some time been addressed as a position of ageless peasants and to the Colonial officer; the peasant addressed an India that was honourable, fair, and great.<sup>12</sup> Totally free of patriotism, numerous peasants of Gangetic India in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century's started to voice clearly issues with the subservient condition that society and the state attributed to the individuals who worked the soil.

It steadily turned out to be certain that a considerable lot of those peasants considered themselves not as astronomically made workers (shudra) without any history, yet as the relatives of heavenly hero tribes (kshatriya) solidly established in the Indian past. The components of those declarations, the discussions attracted upon to verbalize them, and the elite response to them uncover abundance of data about peasant culture as well as of famous philosophical change during the British period. The British doubt of religion with regards to peasants (and warriors) was additionally rumours in the tales that coursed all through the domain over the explosion of the 1857 revolt.

A part of land under agriculture was called as Kshetra or Field. Aside from these terms ploughed land was known Sunasira after the divine beings Suna and Sira individually Sun and the Wind. The word Krishi demonstrated agriculture alongside other secondary financial activities, for example, cattle-rearing and obtaining of essential carries out and reasonable seeds. In the twilight of Indian culture, when iron was not known, ploughing of virgin land was a troublesome assignment. It needed normally, the coordinated work of the entire local area and hence mutual proprietary right over land was recognized only in the monarchical form of Government. In the conservative states the rule of common responsibility for property, continued to exist in a slightly modified form. In all likelihood, there must have been an association between the exclusive rights and the type of Government.

Gradually the tribe broke up into lesser social part of family attested by the terms as Vamsa, Kula and Gotra. In this situation the patriarch had unrestricted powers over the family or Vamsa subsequently father's absolute right was also challenged and division of property during father's life time was also possible. The obtaining of property through one's education gave a stimulus to the person's different proprietary right in the family. Manu is emphatic on the point that Vidhyadhana belongs to one who acquires it.<sup>13</sup> However, in some areas clan ownership continued, resulting in to the birth of so called republican states. The nature of the clan had changed over the years and the land was jointly owned by all of land was the order of the day.<sup>14</sup> The clan is known as the constituting families. In fact, the Gana-state was a

congregation of several Kulas and m families of nobles and the society of such states were clearly divided between the nobles and the slaves.

In the governments, the land-holders assumed the part of a mediator connecting the state and the genuine ploughers of soil, while in the theocracies there was maybe no such group on the grounds that the land holders were additionally the wielders of the political power. The idea of private property howsoever incipient more has consumed away the flawless union among the republicans. With the development of commercial economy and accelerated course of urbanization collectivist economy was disturbed paving the way for the development of private economy. The ascent of a group of Gahapatis and the Kutumbikas signifies an unmistakable takeoff from the first common order.

With the Mauryans came new land system, their main concern being exploitation of land resources for building up and sustaining an all-Indian imperial structure. Hence the two doctrines adopted by the Mauryan state were (1) ultimate state ownership of all the land which could deprive anybody of his land and disposing it off as it suited the best interest of the state. (2) Mere land holding was not adequate in the economy of Kautilya. Land should go to the ownership of the individuals who could utilize it. The upshot of this was emergence of state as the best land-master and there grew up a class of genuine makers occupied with limited scope creation. The mention of share-croppers indicates that the land under state farming was a lot bigger than the stock of work and so could be leased out to others on attractive terms.<sup>15</sup>

It is noticed that the difference between the Mauryan and the post-Mauryan principles of taxation which vary in their social beliefs and political strategy. Whereas Kautilyan ideology emphasised maximum exploitation of land resources, Manu advocates equilibrium in light of a legitimate concern for the ruler and the administered in the duty of taxes. To quote his typical but picturesque advice as the bloodsucker, the calf and the honey bee take their food gradually, so should the ruler his yearly assessments. The Santiparvan likewise denies a lord to debilitate the assets of income by weighty taxation. Thus in the light of this changed attitude the Mauryan theory of a state ownership was also to undergo change.

S.K.Maity, has also accepted the theory of royal ownership of land in his monograph on Gupta Economic History. His views therefore deserve proper examination. In his opinion in the period of the Mauryans the regal power was eagerly felt in the main element of the Indian sub-continent. Similarly about two centuries of imperial Gupta administration offered a well-knit Government in much of northern India. The power and influence of the Guptas for a long time remained uncontested and unquestionable. In such conditions it would not be abnormal that all lands were considered at last having a place with the lord. The preeminent power was vested in the crown and personal legitimate responsibility for land was gotten from the lord and dependent upon his last power. The person could benefit from property calmly, inasmuch as he put in his taxes to the state.

Along these lines the duty on crops and different produces of the land came to be looked on as a kind of lease as a trade-off for tenure.<sup>16</sup> As a matter of fact literacy evidence and foreign accounts also contain references creating an impression of royal ownership of the land. At one place Manu said that the ruler was a ultimate lord of the land and entitled therefore to his share of treasure and minerals. Brihaspati, a law giver of the Gupta period frankly declares that the king is the lord of all. Megasthenese, the ambassador at Mauryan court, makes similar observations putting the matter more clearly. He says, the second caste comprises of husbandmen, who shape the mass of the people and are of an extremely gentle and mild nature. The whole of the land belongs to the crown and the husbandmen till it on situation of receiving as wages one fourth of the crop.<sup>17</sup> The views of the law-givers and foreign writers, quoted above, would naturally lead one to believe in the theory of royal ownership of land.

Even the earliest law-givers do not categorically support the theory of royal ownership. Gautama unequivocally declared that animals, land and women o are not lost to the owner through another's possession. Here we are clearly informed that land was declared one of the subjects which could be

possessed by private individuals' that its possession could change hands and that its adverse ownership was not barred or made illegal by a period of limitation. Similarly another law-giver, Apastamba also clearly recognised private ownership of land, its lease and tenancy. He laid down that assuming an individual who has taken a rent of land for agriculture and doesn't endeavour and consequently, it bears no yield, then, at that point, on the off chance that he is rich he is compelled to pay to the proprietor of the land the worth of the harvest that should have been developed.

U.N.Ghoshal has also discussed Greek evidence on the point in detail and concluded that the comprehensive statement of Megasthenes was a rash generalization from certain tendencies of development of the land tenures that had already begun to manifest themselves.<sup>18</sup> Yajnavalkya distinguished between acquisition by purchase or gift and hereditary possession. In this view the acquisition by purchase or gift as a claim, superior to that of possession but not to that of hereditary possession; but even a lawful acquisition by purchase or gift was not a strong claim if there was no proof of possession.<sup>19</sup> Thus Narada also recognizes the position of private ownership inland which could be sustained by legal titles.

The views of Katyayana are hardly different from Brhaspati and he has also laid down laws regarding possession, title and proprietary rights in land.<sup>20</sup> Thus the rise, development and establishment of the concepts of possession, ownership, title and proprietary rights are the land marks in Indian economic history, proving beyond all reasonable doubts that all land certainly never belonged entirely to the state. As a matter of fact, Savara's commentary on Jaimini's well-known passage (which enjoins) that the earth is not to be gifted because it is common to all can clarify the position with regard to land ownership more conclusively than the various statements of law-givers who some time contradict themselves.

Bhupendra Nath Dutta traced land-ownership back to the Vedic age. He ruled out any idea of communal ownership in land. In Rigvedic period it was clearly stated that the property of the father was bequeathed to the sons. Egalitarian village structure and village council was nothing but a myth. "In this way, at the close of the Vedic age, the following socio-economic relations are to be found: the King is developing more and more absolute power and exacting revenues from his subjects. There is a ruling class around him. Again a landlord class owning village has taken its rise. The cultivators and the peasants had in many cases landlords over them. Much of the rights on land have been curtailed upon. Thus from the Vedic-rishi of a cultivator to the landlord-ridden and exploited agriculturists at the closing period, the dialectics of historical materialism have wrought much changes".<sup>21</sup>

Dutta carried on his search of private ownership in land in the Buddhist literature, in the writings of Manu, in the inscription of the Gupta age and came to the conclusion that feudal hierarchy was present in each age. He traced back the origin of forced labour and crop-sharing in the writings of Manu. The Mughals also did not rule out the rights of the landlords. The Eastern region of India under the Pala and Sena kingdoms was subdivided into various grades of intermediary estate holders. Then, at that point, in the Pala period of Eastern India the inscriptions bear a fantastic cluster of the primitive hierarchs and state authorities. This list is conceded in the following time of the time of the Senas. From this huge rundown of middlemen landlords whose posts beginning from the ruler or the lord down to the peasant (Karshaka) are referenced in the grant places, we deduce that Eastern part of India had as of now around then, different grades of middle person domain holders. The contemporary multifaceted sub-feudination of the lands of Bengal probably had its antecedent in this time.

The simmering discontent among the peasantry generated by British rule often gave birth to spontaneous outburst. For long there was a misconception that the Indian peasantry was passive and immobile. It was alleged that rigid caste structure prevented them in raising any protest move against the misrule. Kathleen Gaugh took a strong stand against this underestimation of the Indian peasantry and discovered as many as seventy-seven revolts by the peasantry in the Colonial administration. I would contend that peasant movements have indeed been normal both during and since the Colonial time, each

condition of existing India having encountered a few over the beyond 200 years. The littlest of movements presumably drew in a few thousand peasants in dynamic help or in battle. Around 30 movements more likely have impacted a many thousands, and around 12, a few many thousands. The recurrence of these rebellions and the way that somewhere around 34 of these I measured were exclusively or somewhat by Hindus, make me question that the caste order has seriously hindered peasant disobedience in the difficult situation.<sup>22</sup>

### Conclusion:

The preceding survey of the colonial agrarian structure in Andhra demolishes the colonial legacy of development in India. The Indian economic problem especially the rural problem has its roots in the agrarian structure inherited from the past. The contradictions of Indian rural society in the sphere of its land relations under the colonial rule provided insights into the rural underdevelopment and this became the basis of the rural awakening and anti-colonial mobilisation of the peasantry by the socialist and nationalist groups. The changing contradictions between the colonial rulers, feudal lords and the peasantry provides us clues to understand the social and the agrarian structure in the colonial India at its different stages.

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- <sup>2</sup> David Ludden, *Peasant History in South India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 3–14.
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- <sup>5</sup> Richard B. Barnett, "Images of India from Alexander to Attenborough," Jefferson Society lecture, University of Virginia, 16 September 1983.
- <sup>6</sup> A. Appadurai in *Worship and Conflict under Colonial Rule: A South Indian Case* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 6–7.
- <sup>7</sup> Masson-Oursel , Paul; William-Grabowska , Helena De ; Stern, Philippe : *Ancient India and Indian Civilization* (tr. Dobie, M.R.) Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1951, p. 107.
- <sup>8</sup> Charles F. Keyes, *Peasant Strategies in Asian Societies; Moral and Economic Approaches*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. XLII, no.4, August, 6 Introduction 1983, p.56.
- <sup>9</sup> Jim Scott, 'Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance', in *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol.10, no.2, January, 1986, p.6.
- <sup>10</sup> Ranjit Guha, *Elementary Aspect of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1983, p. 1.
- <sup>11</sup> Shive Kumar, *Peasantry and the Indian National Movement, 1919-1933*, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 20-21.
- <sup>12</sup> Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), particularly chapters 3 and 4.
- <sup>13</sup> IX, 206, However, Narada, 1.45 categorises wealth acquired by tillage as spotted wealth, inferior to the white one. Hence, if Vidyadhana of Manu is to be seen in the context of landed wealth, income from it was of inferior kind.
- <sup>14</sup> Rai, Jaimal: *The Rural Urban Economy and Social changes in Ancient India, (B.C. 300 to A.D. 600)*, Bharatiya Vidhya Prakashan, Varanasi, p.14.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid, p .49.
- <sup>16</sup> Maity, S.K., *Economic Life in Northern India (In the Gupta Period) (A.D. 300-550)* Motilal Banarasi Dass, (Revised second edition), Patna, 1970, p.23.
- <sup>17</sup> Me Crindle, John W., *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, Philo Press, Amsterdam, 1971, p.48.

<sup>18</sup> Ghoshal, U.N., Contribution to the Hindu Revenue System, Saraswati Library, (second edition), Calcutta, 1972, p. 227.

<sup>19</sup> Yajnavalkya, Ch. II (27), p.66.

<sup>20</sup> Katyayana, (317), pp.177-78.

<sup>21</sup> Dutta, B., Dialectics of Land Economics of India, (Calcutta, pp. 1950, 139-40).

<sup>22</sup> Gough, K., 'Indian Peasant Uprising' in Desai, A.R. (Ed.), Peasant Struggles in India (Bombay, 1979), p. 86.

