CHAPTER ONE
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AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS IN ANDHRA DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD
(Ryotwari Area)

Any study on agrarian movements requires an understanding of the production relations in agriculture in the concrete area and historical context. The first and second chapters of this thesis, therefore, deal with the changing conditions of the agrarian population and the emergence of a new class structure during the British rule in the coastal districts of Andhra. The first chapter confines itself to the agrarian relations in the ryotwari area, because the two types of land revenue systems - ryotwari and the zamindari - resulted in comparatively different structures of agrarian relations, though the oppressive and debilitating conditions of the toiling peasantry remained more or less same in the two regions.

The East India Company, which obtained a grant of all the five Circars, viz., Chicacole, Rajahmundry, Elpore, Kondapalli and Cuntur, from the Emperor Shah Alam in 1765 and direct management in 1769, was committed to one task: how to systematically extract
land revenue in a seemingly chaotic and diverse revenue-farming methods then existing without causing much disturbance to the prevailing social statuses. In their drive to realise stable revenue, the Britishers wanted to establish definite and legal property relations in land so as to pin down the responsibility for revenue payment, but ignored the conventional rights of those who cultivated the land. Thus, the two types of land tenures effected by the British in Andhra were, as Marx wrote, only "so many forms of fiscal exploitation in the hands of the Company."\(^2\) Marx wrote, 'The Zaminderi and the ryotwari were both of them agrarian revolutions effected by the British ukases, and opposed to each other; the one aristocratic, the other democratic; the one a caricature of English landlordism, the other French peasant proprietorship; but pernicious, both combining the most contradictory character – both made not for the people, who cultivate the soil, nor for the holder who owns it, but for the Government that taxes it."\(^3\) He noted that the British political power unlike the previous conquests, struck at the base of the 'unresisting and unchanging' Indian society and that the England
had to fulfill a double mission in India - 'one destructive, the other regenerating - the annihilation of the Asiatic Society and the laying of material foundations of Western Society in Asia.'

I. Introduction and the Immediate Results of the Ryotwari System

Ryotwari, which forevermore influenced the development of Indian society, is a system of land revenue collection, where the government directly dealt with the individual landholder without the presence of middleman. It was also a recognition of the fact that Indian agriculture has been based on owner-cultivators. Ryotwari was a sharp departure from the earlier revenue systems in a sense that a set of written rules regarding the financial arrangements between the colonial authority and the Indian peasant were established in legislation and enforced by the 'impersonal' bureaucratic machinery and the imperial courts of law in which such rules are referred in defence of one's claims. Whereas it assured the peasant, as long as he holds the patta, the government would not attempt to put anyone else in possession and would not exercise any powers of
attachment or resumption of land without first dealing with him, it also assured an elastic revenue for the government as more and more land was taken up for cultivation and as the yearly demand was liable to revision once in thirty years from the time of first settlement. The British had put an end to the evasion of revenue payment through issuing patta, which was not any muniment of title but was merely intended to establish responsibility of one person, for a specific period and area, for payment of land revenue. The creation of concrete and legal forms of private property in land was meant not for the welfare of the peasant but to draw revenue systematically and substantially to the government.

Frykenberg argues that ryotwari hardly brought any radical change in the social relations as the revenue settlement was made mostly with the leaders and not with the labouring cultivators. The patta was liable to revision in each Jamabundy. The different places where it was to be conducted were previously notified, at which the Tahsildar with his establishment, Sheristadar or the head native official as an agent of the Collector to examine
the accounts as prepared in the taluk, the kammas and the 'heads of the villages' were present. Patta was granted to the person, who had the best prima facie evidence to claim the possession. The colonial administration heavily depended for settling the land rights, remissions and variations in the boundaries, etc., on the native clerks, and the heads of the village who were mostly from the 'respectable Sudras' such as Reddis, Kammas, Kapus and Velamas, and sometimes Rejus or even Brahmins too. In this process, it was possible that the numerically substantial toiling sections of subordinated inferior castes were ignored and thus the new fiscal arrangements failed to break the traditional yoke of caste stratification, and in fact, it was reinforced.

The progressive features of the ryotwari settlement, however, were: the demarcation of the fields and registration in the name of the ryot gave birth to a legal right on the land specified (including the right to alienate), a fixed assessment in money for thirty years was, in theory at least, laid upon the field,
not upon the produce or the person, though these were mainly advantageous to the substantial—landholding sections. But it was the brutal nature of the British merchant which determined the doom of Indian people. The powers the British administration had acquired to collect revenue were extensive and its method of land revenue collection was systematic which also reveals the swindling nature of a merchant. Most of the cultivable waste, lankas (islets), tops, etc., were brought under the assessed area. Unauthorised free holdings (jeroyati lands) were registered and irregularities which enabled the cultivators to bear up against the burden of excessive demands under the native rule were plugged. With the conversion of conventional measurements of land into acres, the ryots had to pay more money for the same area, as the unit of assessment changed and the acreage was increased. In all the districts the surveys have shown an increased area under occupation, stating that the original accounts 'understated' the actual areas in occupation.

The revenue rates were fixed, at the time of first settlement, when the prices of foodgrains
were relatively high (1860-1870) and consequently the averages taken would be also high. The severity of the burden thus increased as the prices declined immediately after the settlement, only to rise in 1898 to the same level as they were in the year 1868. The assessments were revised by the Resettlement of Krishna and Godavari districts in 1898, resulting in an increase of 24 per cent. The government's argument that the increase in the gross ryotwari demand represented an extension of cultivation was only partially true. The Board of Revenue also took note of the undue weight over the ryots, largely consisted of small peasants, but defended that the coastal districts 'can bear the charge'. Also making assessment according to the capacity of land and survey number, not according to the capacity of the peasant, was ignoring the differences among the landholders in Indian agriculture and to the detriment of small landholder. The Board of Revenue, Madras, observed: 'When a tax is new it is bitterly felt but as the people get more and more used to it, their dissatisfaction wears away... (however) any considerable fall in the prices of produce would make the burden unbearable, and it may safely be said that the load cannot be increased or even shifted without danger.'
With the network for revenue collection was extensive and coercive, almost hundred per cent revenue demand was collected; near about 95 per cent was collected without arrears, and nearly 99 per cent of the revenue demand was realised before sale, and the rest by sale, which was a new introduction on the Indian soil. The payment of revenue demand in cash becomes all the more burdensome, especially in bad seasons and in a place where the drought and famine were the frequent visitors, and the economic depressions broke the back of the peasantry. When the land does not have much saleable value, the British resorted to outrageous methods for collecting land revenue. Torture was made an enough deterrent for the ryot to get money either by selling his agricultural implements and animals, or some other property, or by borrowing from the moneylenders.\(^9\)

The government also authorised the landlords, if the tenants fail to pay the rent, to distress, with the aid of the police if necessary, the crops and movable property of the tenants and to enter on the land; a warrant accordingly granted and entrusted to a police officer. The administration was also
empowered with several rules and regulations to extract revenue from the peasants. The very social and economic position of the landlord and the governmental powers normally force the ryots to pay off the arrears by mortgaging or selling everything they owned. Things settle down without frequent interference of the revenue officials and the court decrees. The ryots and the tenants were in an adverse position as most of them were not aware of the Acts, the legal complexities and intricacies, nor they had sufficient financial strength and social status to fight out their case against the powerful landlord or the Collector. As back as in 1855, the Tortures Commission observed: 'Many of the parties and witnesses die before the Court can examine them (the cases); source of the most important were then bought off or induced to soften or retract their evidence or accusations.'

II. The Impact of Irrigation Works and the Growth of Commodity-Production:

With the construction of anicut on Godavari river, at Dhavaleswaram (1850), the barrage over Krishna, and the anicut across the Pennar river at
Nellore in 1862-63, intended primarily to expand the revenues of the colonial government, the lands in the ayacut areas were intersected with canals, not only converting the waters into money through irrigation, but also for navigation purposes. The introduction of railways and steamers afforded easy passage for transportation of commodities. Most of the land was brought under cultivation, and 'the big ryots came forward with darkbats ever at the end of fasli, offering to pay the assessment for the whole year, though they could derive no benefit in that year.'

Writing shortly after the construction of the anicut on Godavari and digging the canals dependent on it, a British administrator wrote that the gradual substitution of tiled houses for thatched, the better dress, and the more universal adoption of rice as an article of diet were all silent but certain indications of the 'improvement of the agricultural classes'. Prof. N.G. Range, noted that 'almost all the land available in the deltaic villages has been brought under very intense cultivation and the famines and failure of crops, which visit the dry lands so frequently, have been unknown ever since the wet cultiva-
tion has been brought to the Krishna and Godavari deltas. He also noticed that the prices of land, the standard of living, the general intelligence and progressive spirit of the people have shown a tendency to rise. The rich peasants were keeping the accounts of expenditure and returns on their land. Registering the changes in Krishna district in 1918, it was stated, in Slater's study, that there was 'more money in the village now than twenty years ago, more produce is now exported from the village than before. The introduction of railway nearby has revolutionised the commercial conditions of the village....There is a greater inflow of foreign goods into the village. Kerosine oil has completely driven out castor oil.' In the first two decades of the present century the prices of the commodities produced were more than doubled, and the prices of land had increased by three or four folds. But the money is ultimately finding its destination into the hands of the rich moneylenders. Formerly, there was enough corn in the land and there was a sort of self-sufficiency. Now, there are more debts, consequently more ruin of families with higher rates of interest, and greater servitude and misery. Even in the dry villages of the Guntur district, Kanga found that the
Introduction of the culture of tobacco and groundnut has enriched unduly several big ryots of many villages which are dependent on dry crops. These ryots had taken a fancy for marrying their young people to those of deltaic villages, where the big ryots (Ranga actually refers to landlords) were already prosperous. The youngmen in deltaic villages were taking a liking to town life, and the Kamma women had begun to spend much money upon ornaments. Ranga says that all these attributes were true to the village economies of Guntur, Krishna and Godavari districts, where mainly the Kammars and Kapus have been the landowning castes. Due to the construction of Godavari anicut 'the wealthier classes were much benefitted', and the main government purpose behind the construction of the anicuts, the expansion of revenue collections, was fulfilled.17

Throughout the nineteenth century, and particularly the first half, large sections of the peasantry were ruined, due to the localised nature of markets, which were generally managed by the local landlords, limited transport facilities, low prices, compulsions to sell the produce mainly to pay the revenue, at the rates available in the local markets, rigid implement-
tation of cash payments and the absence of adequate remissions. Only towards the end of the 19th century and the early 20th century the prices started stabilising and at times growing, markets were extended, exports increased, and the production of commercial crops, especially, cotton, tobacco and the groundnut had been greatly increased. If we see the cropping pattern of 'money' crops there was steady trend for increasing commercialisation, though the area under cereals and pulses continued to be predominant.18

III. Revision of Revenue Rates and the Impact of the Economic Depression:

In 1926, the Madras Government proposed to raise the revenue rates by 18.75 per cent to siphon off whatever the benefits accrued by a section of the peasantry. The series of years of relatively high prices, during and after the First World War, until the Great Depression set in, no doubt, gave some relief to the peasantry from the extortionate demands of the Government. The question, however, is to what extent the rise in prices had benefitted various classes of peasantry, and how far the resettlement rates were justifiable with reference to the classes of those myriad small peasants who had either no
surplus produce at all or whatever obtained from the price difference was swallowed up by increase in the costs of cultivation. A rise in prices made life in rural areas more difficult to all the labourers, and even to those peasants who had less to sell than to buy.\textsuperscript{19} Largely benefited from the rise in prices were the landlords, and substantial landholding sections, who (a) were the producers of commodities, prices of which had risen faster than the costs of production, and (b) had high marketable surplus to be brought into the market when the prices were high.

In his report, the Special Settlement Officer stated that during the Second Settlement, i.e. between 1899-1925 the trade and commerce in the districts had considerably developed, cultivation had extended by 326,221 acres, the value of the land had gone up from about two to five times, and the prices of various standard grains had risen by 100 to 119 per cent.\textsuperscript{20} But he ignored to take note that the allowances made for unprofitable areas included in the pattas were inadequate,\textsuperscript{21} and the costs of cultivation have increased at a faster rate. The Economic Enquiry Committee calculated that 'the cost of main-
tenance of an average family according to the low standards, has increased by 159 per cent during the last thirty years'. The Committee, which itself was rich peasant biased one, says: 'In most rural parts, the value of the agricultural produce is insufficient, after meeting the demands of Government revenue, for the maintenance of the agriculturists, so that while a few people get richer and a small number remain on margin of subsistence, the majority are running into debt and losing their hold on land which is frequently changing hands. Also significant was that the rich ryots, who had benefitted during the years of price rise were not willing to part away more produce than they did in the boom years. These sections were also in a position, as they were on firmer financial and social grounds, to organise the various sections of the peasantry against the increase in the settlement of rates (especially after the Great Depression).

IV. Indebtedness, Land Transfer and the Disintegration of the Peasantry:

Indebtedness and land transfers were the two striking features of Indian agrarian relations
during the colonial period. It is generally accepted that indebtedness is a cause for a stunted economy, or in other words, a financially free peasantry is a condition for economic progress. Marx says that the characteristic form in which usurer's capital exists in periods antedating capitalist production is by lending money to small producers who possess their own conditions of labour, mainly the peasant.

Every payment on money, ground-rent, tribute, tax, etc., which becomes due on a certain date, carries with it the need to secure money for such a purpose.... This same usury, however, becomes one of the principal means of further developing the necessity for money as a means of payment by driving the producer ever more deeply into debt and destroying his usual means of payment since the burden of the interest makes his normal reproduction impossible.

Much of the indebtedness, especially among the small and middle peasants, was due to the heavy incidence of land revenue. The principle of taking half the net as land revenue from big and small ryots alike, mangled the latter's economy, and led in India 'to the highest land-tax in the world'. The ryots borrow when they do not possess enough means to carry cultivation or when the yearly crops, on which they depend for several yearly payments, fail;
from these two factors the other compulsions to borrow originate. They borrowed from a local agriculturist moneylender, or a 'sowcar', or a merchant in the town, while a tenant-farmer borrowed mainly from the landlord, normally at the beginning of an agricultural season and the repayment was made from the crop, after the harvest. While the professional moneylenders were keen to mulct the peasant to the last pie in regular instalments in form of cash or kind, the agriculturist moneylenders normally interested in appropriating the debtor's lands. The Government credit scheme did not show any encouraging results, and the Cooperative Credit Societies served the needs of a few big ryots who could offer better security, than the poorer classes whose security mainly lies in labour. Limited in scope they were not suited to the needs of the ordinary debtor who requires long term loan and more easy instalments for repayment. The Courts and the Government, who saw the moneylender as a source of revenue income via peasantry, were on the side of moneylenders and no uniform procedure was followed in application of the Usurious Loans Act. The debtors, except a few
landlords, poor and despondent seldom contest the claims of their rich and powerful creditors, who invariably engage good lawyers to represent them.

Several investigations into the Andhra districts of Madras Presidency show that (1) the total number of persons indebted in terms of percentage of the respective classes, was greater in the lower income groups than that in higher ones. Also, we note that the landlord's per head debt, quantitatively speaking, was higher compared to the rest of the sections of peasantry and the landless labourers if we take the incidence of debt. But given their respective resources of income, debt of small peasants and the landless was more burdensome. That means, while there was a progressive relation between the land owned and the amount of debt, there was an inverse relation between the land owned and the burden of debt. (2) We also notice that irrigation and commodity production lead to high incidence and volume of debt. The volume of per capita debt in the Circars was much higher than the average for the Madras Presidency. Thus, there was a direct relation between wet cultivation and commodity production and the debt. (3) Between the years 1939-45, during which
the prices of food crops and cash crops increased by one-and-a-half and two-folds respectively, there was a marked fall in the coastal Andhra districts in the per capita debt of the class of landlords, middle and small peasants and tenants; but the burden of debt on the landless labourers had increased by nearly 50 per cent. Still, the middle and the small peasants shared each 41 and 38.7 per cent and together 79.7 per cent of the total rural debt in the Presidency in 1945. Thus the direct relation between the benefits of price rise and the landholding is clear to us in this place once again; and in the case of landless it had negative effect. In creasing indebtedness among the agricultural labourers was also attributed to the system of employers advancing loans to agricultural labourers 'with a view to tying them down to their work'. In his report, Naidu says, any aggravation of the debt position of the landless labourers 'will be fraught with serious consequences to agriculture, for discontented and grossly indebted farm labourers are the most combustible material'.

With the sudden fall in prices during the years of the Great Depression the solvency of many petty and
medium landowners was rudely shaken and this led to large scale land transfers, unemployment or under-employment, and migration to near and distant places. Payment of land revenue and debts works out a grave hardship when the value of money is increased and the value of the produce correspondingly diminished; sales were also not possible even at low market prices. Sale of cattle, ornaments, household articles or handing over crops and lands were found to be widely prevalent methods of payment. There was a general trend of conversion of unsecured debts into secured or mortgage debts. Sathianadhan says that the 'small holders, who constitute the bulk of the agricultural population of this Presidency, is gradually making way for the large landholder, who while absorbing the lands of the cultivating small farmer, seldom cultivates the land himself.' 32 He also states that 'a very large proportion went to big absentee landlords, particularly agriculturist money-lenders. This shows that many small and medium landholders were and are being rendered landless and destitute because of foreclosure of their debts.' 33

The direct result of growing usury capital in the rural areas was the constant change in the ownership of land, mainly from the middle and the small peasants
to the agriculturist moneylenders. The relation between the peasant creditors and the peasant debtors synchronised with the relation between the usury capital and the disintegration of the peasantry in the countryside. All the enquiries into the agrarian conditions and indebtedness, in Andhra areas, show that the number of agriculturist moneylenders comprise nearly half of the total number of moneylenders. We have noted earlier that the agriculturist moneylender not merely contents with squeezing surplus labour out of his victim, but also acquires possession of latter's condition of labour, i.e. the land. The rich peasants among these agriculturist moneylenders, especially those growing cash crops must be investing a part of their money capital into agriculture increasing production and profits. Primarily it was the professional moneylending retards the disintegration of the peasantry, without altering the mode of production, making it more wretched, compelling reproduction to proceed under more pitiable conditions.

As Marx said to what extent this process of formation and concentration of large amounts of money capital, ruining landowners, impoverishing
the small producers through usury does away with the old mode of production and puts capitalist mode of production in its stead depends entirely upon the stage of historical development and attendant circumstances. In the absence of modern tools of agriculture and a developed modern industry the usury capital failed to completely transform itself into industrial capital, directly subordinating labour to itself. Nevertheless all the money capital was not converted into usury capital alone, which itself inherently contains the germs of industrial capital and this not merely impoverished the peasantry, but caused its disintegration, flung many a owner-producers into the ranks of tenants and labourers, and effected new structures of land control and with that new social classes in the Indian countryside.

It was largely the concentration of land led to indebtedness and impoverishment among the vast sections of peasantry in Indian agriculture. Given the areas which was taken up for cultivation and brought under irrigation - a wet acre of land nearly gives an output double to that of unirrigated area for paddy - the population pressure and overcrowding
upon land, could not be merely identified with deindustrialization. According to Sayana for the period 1891-1941, the rural population to total population decreased by 3 per cent; the available cultivated area per head went down only from 0.78 in 1911 to 0.69 in 1941.

The phenomenon of land transfer and the concentration of land expressed in terms of caste, land was 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 inamars, 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 and jaggery, etc. Sayana observes: 'The Reddis and the Telagas are also losing lands in the districts where their population is sparse, 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.'

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.

V. Class Differentiation and the Position of Different Classes in Rural Andhra:

What was this new social structure that had evolved during the nineteenth and first half of the present century, and what were the conditions of various classes. The revenue statistics of Madras Presidency do not show the distribution of peasants according to the area. The grouping of 'cultivating
owners', 'tenant cultivators', etc., throws no light on the size of holdings, and in consequence makes no distinction between various classes of peasantry and landlords. It is also very little use to classify ryots with reference to the average area held by each ryot, since lands are of all degrees of degrees of fertility and irrigated lands differ so enormously in value from unirrigated lands. As Srinivasa Ragavaiyanger said, it is for this reason revenue assessment may be taken as a better basis for determining the different peasant classes. The calculations in the table (see the table) are based on the assumption that the agricultural income is proportional to revenue assessment, which is true only as a rough approximation. By this we will only broadly indicate the manner in which the ryots were distributed into different agrarian classes, without exactly determining the percentages of each class of ryots. The purpose is only to know the class position of the rural population; there is no pretension of being exact and complete. We have taken the figures for the fasli 1310, which were available in detail only upto the period.

Srinivasa Raghavaiyanger estimated in 1893, basing on Settlement calculations, that one acre of
ordinary dry land gives an outturn of Rs.17, taking good and bad seasons together, which was assessed at Rs.1.12.0. There was an increase from 14-18 per cent because of resettlement in 1898, but there was great regional-wise disparity. The average assessment in the three Government taluks of Vizagapatam on dryland was Rs.1-1-0.42 The average rate of assessment in Krishna district on dryland was Rs.2 per acre.43 We also do not see any reason why the outturn should increase as there was neither improvements in the methods of production and the process of agricultural produce by 1900. When the ryot cultivates the land himself without employing hired labour, deducting the Government land revenue and the cultivation expenses what the ryot will have to spend in cash or grain, which amount to Rs.2 per acre, he left for subsistence about Rs.13-4-0. Srinivasa Raghavaiyangar estimated that Rs.9 a month would enable an average ryot’s family to subsist according to the standards of living in force among the ryot population. Hence family requires Rs.108 per annum to maintain itself. According to the Economic Enquiry Committee, the cost of maintenance in 1900 A.D. of an ordinary peasant family (defined as having 10 acres of dry land) of four adults (taking five persons
equivalent to 4 adults for food consumption etc.) was estimated to be at Rs.96 per annum. So a peasant family should have a minimum of 8 acres of land paying an assessment of Rs.2 for subsistence, provided they do all the work themselves and do not employ hired labour.

According to the classification shown in the table, all those pattadars who pay a revenue assessment of less than Rs.10, were mostly wage-labourers and semi-owner peasants, who chiefly live by wages of labour, but also have small holdings to supplement their earnings. In all the five districts of Coastal Andhra, they constitute nearly 45 per cent among the total pattadars. The agrarian problem is essentially the problem of these peasant sections and also the labourers who did not own any land.

The second category are mainly those who can subsist entirely by cultivating their holdings; these were the peasant proprietors who cannot afford to employ hired labour, except during peak times, like harvesting and transplantation. This category may generally be called as middle peasantry, which do not depend on the exploitation of other's labour,
nor they need to sell their labour in order to live, who constitute nearly 33 per cent. Then, we have in the third category those who must farm their lands, but who can employ hired labour for carrying on the manual work connected with the farm. This class of substantial landholders, who had the potentialities to become the rich peasants, not only engage themselves in direct cultivation, but also in direct exploitation of labour, nearly constituting 18 per cent of the total pattadars. All these three categories of peasantry, namely the small, middle and substantial landholders form the main contingencies to fight against feudalism and colonialism.

The rest can safely be called as landlords (assmi) who can afford to, but not necessarily, let their lands and subsist. Some of them carried on cultivation through labourers employed on yearly basis (paleru), and also some times they might lease out portions of their land. But that section of landlords who paid a revenue of more than Rs.500 were like petty zamindars themselves. They had very large extent of lands under their control, but
would not reside in villages where they hold lands and the function of land ownership and its cultivation was being completely separated.

Regarding the position of agricultural labourers, Ranga wrote that the introduction of irrigation brought about a great seasonal demand for labour, which the labourers of any particular village was not able to satisfy, so the competition among the ryots for workers grew from year to year and enabled the depressed social castes to become largely independent. As more and more land was slowly brought under irrigation and with practising of extensive farming, the demand for labour increased, especially in the areas of paddy cultivation, and lands grown with commercial crops like tobacco, betel, turmeric chillies etc., and plantain and lemon gardens. In the period of busy work the demand for labour far surpassed the levels of local supply. The processes of 'deindustrialisation' and 'depeasanisation' had thrown many artisan sections and the small peasants into the ranks of free labourers. This was how the seeds of bourgeois relations were
RENT-ROLL FOR THE FASLI 1310 (1900-1901)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pattadars paying revenue assessment of (in Rs.)</th>
<th>Vizagpatnam</th>
<th>% to the total Pattadars in the district</th>
<th>Godavari</th>
<th>% to the total Pattadars in the district</th>
<th>Kistna</th>
<th>% to the total Pattadars in the district</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 and under</td>
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<td>01,938</td>
<td>05,771</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1 to 10</td>
<td>6,247</td>
<td>22,023</td>
<td>43,028</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6,935</td>
<td>44.32</td>
<td>23,961</td>
<td>39.41</td>
<td>48,799</td>
<td>41.40</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>10 to 30</td>
<td>4,043</td>
<td>26.14</td>
<td>19,561</td>
<td>32.17</td>
<td>37,642</td>
<td>31.94</td>
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<td>III</td>
<td>30 to 50</td>
<td>1,798</td>
<td>11.62</td>
<td>07,558</td>
<td>12.43</td>
<td>14,329</td>
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<td>50 to 100</td>
<td>1,789</td>
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<td>05,946</td>
<td>09.78</td>
<td>11,157</td>
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<td>22.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.61</td>
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<td>0,004</td>
<td>00.02</td>
<td>00,122</td>
<td>00.20</td>
<td>00,203</td>
<td>00.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000 and above</td>
<td>0,001</td>
<td>00.006</td>
<td>00,025</td>
<td>00.04</td>
<td>00,016</td>
<td>00.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
<td>15,465</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>60,789</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>117,845</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Pattadars paying revenue assessments of (in Rs.)</th>
<th>Guntur</th>
<th>% to the total Pattadars in the district</th>
<th>Nellore</th>
<th>% to the total Pattadars in the district</th>
<th>Total Pattadars in the five districts</th>
<th>% to the total Pattadars in the five districts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 and under</td>
<td>08,152</td>
<td>05,529</td>
<td>53.97</td>
<td>215,959</td>
<td>45.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 10</td>
<td>76,245</td>
<td>46,338</td>
<td>51,867</td>
<td>155,102</td>
<td>32.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>84,397</td>
<td>45.65</td>
<td>53.97</td>
<td>215,959</td>
<td>45.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>10 to 30</td>
<td>64,179</td>
<td>34.71</td>
<td>29,677</td>
<td>155,102</td>
<td>32.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>30 to 50</td>
<td>19,053</td>
<td>10.30</td>
<td>08,294</td>
<td>051,032</td>
<td>10.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12,285</td>
<td>06.64</td>
<td>04,824</td>
<td>036,001</td>
<td>07.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>100 to 250</td>
<td>04,436</td>
<td>02.39</td>
<td>01,784</td>
<td>014,910</td>
<td>03.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>250 to 500</td>
<td>00,435</td>
<td>00.23</td>
<td>00,354</td>
<td>002,309</td>
<td>00.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>500 to 1000</td>
<td>00,077</td>
<td>00.04</td>
<td>00,085</td>
<td>000,491</td>
<td>00.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000 and above</td>
<td>00,004</td>
<td>00.002</td>
<td>00,016</td>
<td>000,062</td>
<td>00.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>00,004</td>
<td>00.002</td>
<td>00,016</td>
<td>000,062</td>
<td>00.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>184,866</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>96,901</td>
<td>475,866</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Statistical Appendix for Guntur District, 1906
broadcast on the fertile soils of Andhra. The British policies and the increased commodity production, and impoverishment of large sections of peasantry led to concentration of land, more striking in the irrigated deltaic areas; this simultaneously had generated many hands to meet the growing needs of large farmers, especially the rising rich peasantry. The traditional relationship among the people of a village was getting supplanted by a new relationship based on contract, daily wages - a cash relationship; also a class of propertyless day labourers, though existed at the outset of the British rule, emerged clearly though not completely.48

Another feature of Indian agriculture is tenancy, which became essential as the maldistribution of land created great demand for the farm land, in the face of its supply being limited and concentrated. Maclean stated that 'the system of tenancy under such (holding immediately from the Government) landholders is, however, fully developed...In the districts on the east coast lands are rented out by the landholders either for a fixed annual payment in money, or for a share in the produce, which is generally half. Ordinary dry and garden lands are rented for money
and irrigated lands for a share in the produce.\textsuperscript{49}

With the lack of alternative sources of investment, the land, which became saleable, had attracted money capital, especially from those ryots who made profits out of agriculture, and the professionals like the lawyers, who minted money due to litigancy; they, in turn, leased it again. Ownership of large tracts of land in many villages, getting employed in Government service, migration to urban areas also contributed to the growth of tenancy. The land held by Brahmans and all trust properties were commonly leased out. The professional moneylenders who snatch away land from the debtor by foreclosing the mortgages, also lease out land. Non-development of modern techniques of cultivation also had its share.

Sayana observes that in wet and delta regions concentration of both capital and land was found. In Nellore, Guntur, Kistna and Godavari districts, the Reddis and Kammas held considerable extent of land. This was why the river valleys of Krishna and Godavari became the most tenancy ridden areas.\textsuperscript{50} We had also in 1920s and 1930s the modern or capitalist kind tenancy. The Economic Enquiry Committee found
that during the boom years the ryots in dry areas, owing more than 10 acres, rented more land than the ryots who were in lower categories. They paid very much lower rent than what was demanded from others due to their great bargaining capacity and stronger economic conditions. The landholders, particularly those who live outside the village, preferred to lease their lands to the rich ryots, though at cheaper rates, as they felt secure about prompt payment of lease money. Sayana says:

'There is feeling of internal dislike in the tenant class against the landholders, as the rents charged by the landlord class are considered to be very high and disproportionate to the expected yield of land.'

To sum up, the consequences of the British rule were that the Indian agriculture was drawn into the world capitalist market (providing raw materials and grain to the British industry and people and market to its industrial goods), and it imposed marked economy on the backward Indian agriculture. The Asiatic feudalism was largely broken down; one among the various changes brought about was the definite rights of private property (in contrast to the concept of enjoying the right of hereditary
occupancy) in land, based on the monopoly of definite portion of globe as exclusive spheres of the will of certain a person to the exclusion of others - i.e. to sell or alienate, mortgage or bequeath the land. Also rules regulating the fixation of the rates of revenue and the terms of collection were laid down, the peasant was made responsible directly to the British Government for the payment of revenue; bourgeois legal mechanisms were established, in which the landholder has the right to challenge the Government in case the latter behaves in violation of the existing law to the grievance of the former; and there existed a modern imperial government to protect the colonial system through its widespread administrative network and instruments of coercion. In Andhra the effect of the better irrigation and transport facilities and the increased market-oriented commodity production replaced the natural economy by a commercialised economy. The peasants' social environment and consequently their social outlook tremendously changed.

Equally important aspects of the agrarian relations during this period were the impoverishment of peasantry, concentration of land, and the emergence
of new class relations in agriculture. Marx wrote that the misery inflicted by the British on India 'is of an essentially different and infinitely more intensive kind than all Hindustan had to suffer before'. The systematic extraction of 'surplus' from the agriculture through heavy rates of land revenue assessment and other cesses and its systematic collection led to great misery, indebtedness and landlessness among certain sections of peasantry and agricultural labourers. The impoverishment of the peasantry and the usury capital and the flow of money into the land, the popular source of investment and basic condition for production, led increasingly to concentration of land. The policies of the British and the changes brought upon in the Indian rural society had mainly benefitted those social classes who possessed money and means to grab these opportunities. The disintegration of village cohesiveness into conflicting classes, the loss of isolated village character and the political-administrative unification had led to horizontal integration of rural classes. In the specific context of Andhra it also led to the consolidation of castes, through similarity of class interests, matrimonial alliances and other means of cooptation.
There emerged a new class structure, different from the old traditional social structure — a class of landlords, different classes of peasantry, and the agricultural labourers. Though the British were not able to transform the agrarian relations completely on capitalist lines — due to their political alliance with the feudal landlords, existence of millions of middle and poor peasants and the underdevelopment of the forces of production — they caused the emergence of landlords and rich peasants, who along with other sections of peasantry and labourers were ready to fight against the political power and exploitative mechanisms of the Britishers.
REFERENCES

1. Cuntur came under the Company's administration in 1788 and Nellore in 1801.


3. Ibid., p.78.

4. Ibid., p.82. Marx also wrote: 'All the English bourgeoisie may be forced to do (in India) will neither emancipate nor materially mend the social conditions of the mass of the people, depending not only on the development of productive powers but on their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premises for both. Has the bourgeoisie ever done more? Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and peoples through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation,' p.85.


9. The results of the governmental investigation of cases of torture in 1855 showed the criminal acts in revenue collection. In Nagapatam of Godavari division, the peasants were brought to the Cutcherry and beaten, flogged and were subjected to various physical tortures. 'Thumb screws' were occasionally used. Several of such cases were reported from Ramachandrapuram taluk. Enquiries by Ratcliffe, the then Collector of Nellore, showed that 'the
actual employment of various modes of what may be comparatively termed 'petty' torture to be a fact. In other districts chorata was in frequent use (chorata is a machine, consisting of two stocks tied together at ends, between which the fingers are placed as in a lemon squeezer). The Collector of Masulipatam stated that in 1854 one Akkineni Appanna was declared 'to have been sent through the bazar with chorata on his hands'. See Report of the Commissioners for the Investigation of Alleged Cases of Torture in the Madras Presidency, 1855, pp.34 and 38.

10. Ibid., p.10.

11. The traffic borne on the Godavari, Krishna and Buckingham canals in 1889-90 was 21.44 millions of mounds valued at 6.41 crores and the ton mileage was 36.03 millions. S.R. Aiyanger, op.cit., p.66. The value of exports in the Godavari district has increased from Rs.1,356,336 in 1846-47 (i.e. before the construction of the anicut) to Rs.4,214,745 (i.e. after the construction of the anicut) in 1859-60, an increase of Rs.2,858,409. Henry Morris, Descriptive and Historical Account of the Godavari District, 1878, p.167. The chief exports at the port of Kakinada between the years 1864-72, were cotton, gingelly, oil seeds, sugar and rice. The share of cash crops was overwhelming more than rice; cotton contributed as much as Rs.5,583,139 out of the total of Rs.8,013,377 in 1865-66. Ibid., p.31.


16. Ibid.

17. Nathamuni Mudaliyar, op.cit.
18. For example, cotton had been a predominant crop in Guntur district. In fasli 1312 (1902-03) cotton was grown in 1,73,907 acres out of the cropped area of 1,971,531 acres. Oil seeds mainly castor occupied 67,909 acres; indigo, 53,713 and tobacco 39,627 acres. See Statistical Appendix for Guntur District, 1906. By 1912-13, cotton had become a main crop, grown in 367,598 acres. Cultivation of indigo went down. Statistical Appendix for Guntur District, 1915. By 1927-28 the groundnut crop had shot up to an area of 69,171 acres. Statistical Appendix for Guntur District, 1929. If we see the cropping pattern in 1930-31, the expansion of groundnut cultivation was substantial, and also of tobacco, with a corresponding decrease in cotton grown area. Out of the net cultivated area of 2,022,579 acres the important cash crops were like this - groundnut, 304,834; castor, 25,883; condiments and spices, 86,251; cotton and other fibres, 138,424; tobacco, 65,270 and garden produce 24,630 acres. Statistical Appendix for Guntur District, 1933.

19. According to the studies by such people as Renga, Sathianathan, Slater, etc., the wages did not correspondingly increase with the rise in prices.


21. Many of the ryots would not cultivate a good part of their land (sometimes as much as 50 per cent) in some years, especially of garuvi land. P.J. Thomas and K.C. Ramakrishna, Some South Indian Villages: A Re-survey, 1940, pp.246-47. Large areas of dry lands remain waste every year, mainly due to the delay in the seasonal rainfall and lack of means to cultivate, but continue to pay the dry assessment. The EEC furnished figures proving that 'in the East Godavari district, the area left fallow is a little less than half of the area actually cultivated every year, while in the Kistna and West Godavari districts, the proportion is about one-third.' Report of the Economic Enquiry Committee, vol.I, 1931, p.8. President of the Committee was R.N. Arogyaswami Mudaliyar and Ranga was the Secretary.
22. It was estimated that the cost of maintenance in 1900 of an 'ordinary' peasant family (having five acres of wet or 10 acres of dry land) of four adults (taking that 5 persons are equivalent to 4 adults for food consumption, etc.) at Rs.96 per annum. For the same peasant family the cost of maintenance had increased to in 1929, Rs.261 in delta areas and Rs.236 in the upland areas. *Ibid.*, p.81.


24. Regarding the total debt in the Madras Presidency, on the basis of population assessment and occupied area, various estimates have been made. We notice in them a steady increase in the volume of debt across the periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt</th>
<th>Sir Frederick 1895</th>
<th>MPBEC 1928</th>
<th>Sathianadhan 1935</th>
<th>B.V.N. Naidu 1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per head of population</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per rupees of assessment</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per acre of occupied area</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (in crores)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


26. Sathianadhan, p.27.
27. It was shown in the Reports by Madras Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, Sathianadhan, Sayana, P.J. Thomas, etc., that payment of prior debts takes precedence over all other purposes. These enquiries go against the propaganda by the Britishers that the plight of the ryots was mainly due to his extravagant expenditure, though it made up around 10 per cent of the total debt. The tables given by Sathianadhan and MPBEC are compared here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MPBEC (1928)</th>
<th>Sathianadhan (1935)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payment of prior debts</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural expenses</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of land</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Improvement</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>04.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment of Land Revenue</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage and other ceremonies</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


28. Small and medium landholders were 'the hardest hit of all the agricultural classes....' Though the debt per head among them of ₹.211 and per family of ₹.1,057 is less than the debt per head and family of bigger landholders, the debt per rupee of assessment (₹.29) and the debt per acre (₹.72) is far higher than among those of
who own or hold more land....and about only 18 per cent of them are free from debt....They are the people, who are burdened with the heaviest debt and who are steadily losing their lands to their creditors'. Sathianadhan, p.42.

29. According to Sayana the number of sales on land on the average was higher in the deltaic and settled regions than in the dry tracts. Even in the dry tracts, the number of transactions related to irrigated lands (well or tank) usually exceeded the number of sales in purely dry lands. The frequency with which each survey number or plot of land changing hands was found greater in the deltaic regions.

30. The per capita debt in the upland regions of the Circars in 1939 was among the big landholders (25 acres and above) Rs.525 (258), the medium landholders (between 5 and 25 acres) 60 (34), the small (under 5 acres) landholders 44 (21), the tenants 85 (25) and the landless labourers 6.8 (9.6); the Nellore region it was 179 (36), 120(93), 52 (42), 14 (16) and 6.7 (10.1) respectively; in the coastal regions of Circars it was 282 (174), 93 (86), 56(47), 201(19) and 7.0 (10.3) respectively (the figures in the bracket show the per capita debt of each class in 1945), Naidu, p.108.

31. Ibid., p.43.

32. The total ryotwari area that changed hands from 1931 to 1934 for the Madras Presidency, excluding Malabar and South Canara, was calculated at 10,357,000 acres. Sathianadhan, p.6.

33. Ibid., p.33.

34. Sayana found a certain chief trend of land sales during 1930-45: 'The bulk of the transactions have taken place among the agriculturists themselves, the land passing from the groups of small economic status to those of big economic standing...', Sayana, p.27.

35. V.I. Lenin, Development of Capitalism in Russia, 1956, pp.185-187.

37. Statement of Pattadars and holdings for certain selected villages in the Krishna, East and West Godavari districts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Owning (in acres)</th>
<th>% of ryots</th>
<th>Extent of area</th>
<th>Average holding of a ryot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 05 but less than 10</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>607.43</td>
<td>06.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 but less than 15</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>559.69</td>
<td>13.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15 but less than 20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>710.22</td>
<td>18.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20 but less than 25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>412.51</td>
<td>22.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 25 but less than 30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>493.92</td>
<td>29.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 30 but less than 50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1165.01</td>
<td>40.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 but less than 80</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1174.98</td>
<td>65.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 80 acres</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>897.40</td>
<td>128.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


38. This we can see from the Statistical Appendices to various districts for different periods. District Manuals also give figures for tremendous increase in cultivation in terms of acreage.

39. Sayana, p.32.

40. Ibid., p.127.

41. The difficulty we face in this is that these pattas include both the single and joint pattas, which makes it extremely difficult to identify a peasant with one patta. But mostly joint pattas are included family members.

42. IGI, vol.XXIV, p.335.

43. Ibid., vol.XV, p.332.

44. REEC, op.cit., p.61. The settlement calculations put the figure at $5.60 per annum which is too low.

45. In this category also included were some from artisan classes and small inamadars who do not cultivate their lands on their own and rent out their petty holdings; this number, however, would not be substantial.
46. Agricultural labourers, employed on yearly basis, were generally from the same castes or sometimes from the harijan castes, mainly take part in ploughing, bunding, manures carting etc. A palayu was also to look after other agricultural operations, guard the haystacks, bring fodder for cattle and stay in the farm looking after the fields. They were chiefly paid in grain, besides once or twice meals a day with occasional free advances. The line between the farm servants and those landless who lease in lands, without in possession of any cattle or implements, or sharing system, called palu, is very thin.


48. Lenin had exactly said this, though in the Russian context. The size of the farm of the class of capitalist farmers, in the majority of cases require a labour force larger than that available in the family, for which reason the formation of a body of wage labourers, is a necessary condition for the existence of the well-to-do peasantry. The spare cash obtained by these peasants in the shape of net income is either directed towards commercial operations and usury, which are so excessively developed in rural districts, or, under favourable conditions, is invested in the purchase of land, farm improvements, etc. Development of Capitalism in Russia, p.177. Dharma Kumar's study on Land and Caste in South India showed that there was a sizeable agricultural labour group - whether serfs or free landless labourers - in South India at the outset of the British rule.

Regarding the conditions of the agricultural labourers, A.I. Stuart, sub-Collector of Rajahmundry (in 1872) said that the ordinary rates of wages obtained by a labourer was 3 annas a day. According to Boswell the yearly labourers in Nellore in 1872 have got in dry villages from 12 to 18 tooms of jonna (1 toom=37 Madras measures valued at Rs.1-12-0); in the wet villages the grain payment was 18 tooms. John A.C. Boswell, Nellore Manual, vol.1, 1873, p.412. In 1918 in upland areas of Krishna district the daily men
labourers were paid four annas and the labourers employed on yearly basis were paid Rs.50 per annum. Narayana Murthy, p.115. In deltaic villages, according to Ranga, the wage for men for doing spade work was 8 annas in 1925-26, which was 4 annas in 1900-05. Ranga, vol.I, p.183. The condition of agricultural labourers in those villages lie in the vicinity of the railways or big towns was better than those in the interior villages.


50. Sayana, p.229.

51. REEC, pp.33-35.

52. Sayana, p.275.