ABSTRACT

The present thesis entitled Industrial Relations in Ancient India deals with an important aspect of ancient Indian economic history, namely the relation between the employer and the employee. Divided into seven chapters, the thesis takes into account important elements in the industrial relation in ancient India.

The chapter entitled 'Introduction' points out the scope and method of study on this subject. Relevant information, though severely inadequate and fragmentary is extracted from the epigraphic materials, law-books, religious texts and secular literature.

The second chapter (Types of Industries and Their Development) aims at making a survey of the evolution of different types of crafts and manufactories and their gradual development from the time of the Harappan civilization (c. 2350-1750 B.C.) to the end of the 6th century A.D. with particular emphasis on major changes in industrial activities.

In the third chapter, (Industrial Relation in Guild Organization) attempt has been made to point out how industrial guilds (अर्गन) played a vital role to foster the spirit of cooperation and compactness among craftsmen following a common occupation.
The fourth chapter on Industrial Relation in J State Enterprise exhibits the nature of industrial relation in a managerial state. This chapter is mainly devoted to the study of the economic control of the Maurya empire which functioned as a productive unit parallel to other private enterprises. The state's role as an employer is particularly highlighted here.

The fifth chapter (Working conditions) is a survey of the working conditions of workers which are deemed as one of the determining factors to keep the relation between the employer and the employee congenial to industrial production.

The sixth chapter (Protection of Labour and Social Security) discusses the protective measures which were recommended by ancient Indian theoreticians for safeguarding the interests of workers from injustice of the employer.

In the Epilogue conclusion has been arrived at that the employer in ancient India enjoyed a distinctly advantageous position vis-a-vis the employee. Despite the recommendations of theoreticians to observe humane treatment to workers, the efficacy of those prescriptions was not above doubt. The ideals of the organization of guilds may suggest more amiable industrial relation.