In India after independence with rapid agricultural modernization brought about by the land reform measures, irrigation, market relations and other infrastructural developments the study of agrarian relations and rural development commands high research priority. Previously, sociologists and social anthropologists were predominantly studying village communities and the interest on specific issues of agrarian relations such as land reform measures, problems of agricultural labourers, differentiation among the peasants, land transfers, agricultural indebtedness, agrarian movements, etc. began to attract the attention of the scholars since seventies. However, most of these studies have not been successful in providing clear understanding of the dynamics of agrarian relations pertaining to the phenomena of land transactions, landlessness, land concentration and the consequent changes which generate a lot of unanswered queries. Hence, the issue of 'otherside of development' has largely been neglected by these studies. The main purpose of the study is to examine the process of land alienation and depeasantisation, its nature, extent and intensity in an agriculturally developed village of Sambalpur district of Orissa. It tries to highlight the inbuilt mechanism of agrarian relations in creating land alienated and depeasantised households within the triangular matrix of land, labour and credit through concrete empirical realities.
Though the study cannot claim to cover all the aspects in sufficient detail, it establishes the fact that the process of land alienation and depeasantisation has deep historical roots. It has picked up rapid momentum in the post-independent period under the impact of canal irrigation, mechanisation, expansion of formal credit facilities, land reform measures and other infrastructural developments. The studied village does not comprise of homogeneous peasant households, it is internally differentiated into rich peasants, middle peasants, small peasants and agricultural labourers in terms of land ownership, rate of exploitation of labour, indebtedness to formal and informal credit agencies, etc. and forms an integral part of the exploitative order at large. The rich peasants have immense control over the village land, labour and informal and formal credit organisations and other land based resources. They also occupy vantage positions in village power structure. This socio-political and economic strength enables them to appropriate the benefits of the expansion of the forces of production. The poor peasants because of their poor resource ownership position fail to reproduce themselves within the prevalent exploitative land, labour and credit relations and thereby get impoverished and depeasantised in due course of time.

The study is divided into ten chapters.
The first chapter projects the problem of the study and its significance. The second chapter contains the review of the existing relevant literature with objectives and hypotheses. In the third chapter the conceptual framework of the study has been outlined. The fourth chapter covers methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. The land-labour relationship of Sambalpur from precolonial to post independent period have been explained in the fifth chapter. The sixth chapter provides a detailed comprehensive account of the village studied which includes its history, pattern of settlement, demographic composition, occupational structure, economy, resources, etc. In the seventh chapter types of land, cropping pattern, types of labourer, rate of exploitation of labour and nature of both formal and informal credit structure have been dealt with. The existing patterns of agrarian inequality and its association with the power structure have been analysed in the eighth chapter. In the ninth chapter the nature, extent and the intensity of land alienation and depeasantisation have been examined. The last chapter deals with an overall generalization of the findings of the study and this follows with a few suggestions relevant to policy implications.