The study of peasant movements is viewed within the context of the sociology of social movements. The sociological perspective used for understanding the social movements is also appropriate to the study of peasant movements. The term 'peasant movement' has been used in this study to refer to organised collective mobilisation by peasants against perceived injustices, discrimination and exploitation imbued with common consciousness and ideology to achieve the goals set for itself directed at effecting changes in the existing social structure. The concept of 'peasant' includes all sections of land owners (viewed in terms of operational holding) who derive their livelihood from agriculture. It excludes the agricultural labourers. 'Land' is considered as the crucial defining characteristic of peasant. The physical or ordinary acre has not been used in identifying various strata within the peasantry but the 'standard acre' concept has been used as explained in Chapter II. The orthodox Marxist approach of defining peasants has been avoided to eliminate bias in the initial stages. It has been felt that the empirical situation would clarify the specific characteristics of different strata of the peasantry in terms of the Marxist criteria. Based on the standard acre concept, those operating upto 9 standard acres are designated as 'small peasants', those operating between 9.1 and 18
standard acres are termed as 'medium peasants' and those operating above 18 standard acres are termed as 'big peasants'. The classification of peasants into three strata is used for empirical analysis only. For the analysis at the macro-level ordinary acre has been used and the peasantry are divided into four strata, namely, marginal, small, medium and big. Those who operate up to 1 hectare are classified as marginal farmers, those operating between 1.1 to 2 hectares are designated as small farmers, those operating between 2.1 and 4 hectares are termed as medium farmers and those operating above 4 hectares are designated as big farmers. This classification was necessary to understand the macro level picture as the data on the secondary sources are mostly available on this basis only.

The theoretical framework utilised for analysing the peasant movements in Coimbatore district considers objective factors as necessary conditions and subjective factors as sufficient conditions for the emergence and growth of peasant movements. The objective conditions includes the historical analysis of the social, economic and ecological conditions and the new technological inductions that has brought about changes in the agrarian structure during the Post-Independence period. Apart from the relevance of technological factors, the role of ecological setting has been considered as a major variable in not only accounting for the variations
in the agrarian structure but also in shaping the peasant movements in Coimbatore district during the seventies. The ecological setting has been classified with reference to the sources of irrigation i.e., well and canal. The area primarily irrigated through wells are termed as 'dry' eco-type (irrigated), those irrigated primarily through canal are classified as 'wet' eco-type and where both canal and wells constitute important sources of irrigation, are classified as 'dry-cum-wet' eco-type. A point of clarification at this juncture is necessary. Ordinarily the term 'dry' refers to such areas which are completely depended on rain-fed cultivation and have no other source of irrigation. In this study the term 'dry' is not used in that sense but covers the dry areas irrigated through wells. For sake of convenience in the present study the term 'dry' is used to connote dry (irrigated) area rather than the area primarily depending on rain-fed sources. In fact the dry area depended on rain-fed sources have been excluded from the purview of the present study. Another point which needs clarification is that the percentage of area irrigated does not give clear-cut understanding of the potentialities of assured irrigation. For example, both in the wet and dry-cum-wet eco-types irrigation through canal is available. However, in the wet eco-type the old canal which irrigates the entire area ensures adequate water supply throughout the year. On the other hand, in the
dry-cum-wet eco-type the canal supplies water only for 5 to 6 months in every two years. Thus the peasants have to depend more on wells than on canals in the dry-cum-wet eco-type. Further, well is not as dependable and assured source of irrigation as canals. This aspect has been adequately focused both in Chapter II and Chapter V. The subjective factors include the examination of the goals and ideologies, means and methods of mobilisation, mass base of the movement, leadership and organisation.

The focus of analysis in the present study is to examine the contribution of the objective and subjective factors in the emergence and growth of peasant movements in Coimbatore district during 1970, 1972 and 1978-81. In order to highlight the objective factors which have contributed to the emergence and growth of the peasant movements, the agrarian structure of the district during the Pre-British, British and the Post-Independence period has been analysed. The crucial objective factors which served as the economic basis for relative deprivation were subjected to in-depth analysis. These included the examination of the conditions contributing to the ecological crisis, the analysis of cost of production and the unremunerative prices arising therefrom, and the mounting debt burden faced by the peasantry. The major focus has been to see the variations in the objective factors with respect to the different ecological settings. The analysis of the subjective factors starts with the examination of the
emergence and growth of peasant movements in Coimbatore
This is followed by the analysis of the variations in the
nature of the movement in the different eco-settings both
at the macro and micro levels. Here, it may be pointed out
that the macro-level analysis includes the district
and larger eco-settings and the micro level includes
the analysis of the situation at the panchayat union
(block) and the village levels. In order to analyse the
mass base of the movement, the participation by different
strata of the peasantry has been adequately examined at
the empirical level. The ecological variations with
respect to participation in the movements have also been
examined. The organisational pattern of the TNAA from
the state to the grassroots level, their ecological
variations, the social origins of the leaders at the
grassroot level, their participation in political
activities and peasant movements have also been examined
at length. The ideological moorings of the peasant
movement and its organisation has also been examined in
this study. The study has examined several hypotheses
in the context of the objective and subjective factors
with reference to the variable of ecology and class
positions of the peasants. In the context of objective
factors the hypotheses of ecological variations have
been examined with respect to the cost of irrigation,
the net return per acre and incidence of indebtedness.
Hypotheses on such objectives factors have also been examined with respect to the class position of the peasants. In the subjective factors the hypotheses includes the examination of the variation in the participation of peasants in the movements with reference to ecological variations and class positions. The hypothesis with respect to the social origins of leadership has been examined with reference to the variables of land holding size and asset structure.

The universe of the present study happens to be the district of undivided Coimbatore which includes the present Periyar district as well. For the purpose of the present study, it has been classified into three eco-types. The dry eco-type has four taluks and 21 panchayat unions (blocks), the dry-cum-wet has four taluks and 11 panchayat unions and the wet eco-type has one taluk and 9 panchayat unions. One panchayat union has been selected from each eco-type which represents the predominance of specific source of irrigation in each eco-type. In the selection of panchayat union, the criteria were that it should not only represent the specific eco-type settings but also has a strong base of the peasant movements and peasant organisation in the specific eco-type setting. One village was selected from each of the three panchayat unions based on similar considerations. Finally, the selection of
peasants from each village was undertaken by adopting simple random procedure. Table of Random Numbers was used in selecting those peasants who had the formal membership of the peasant organisation. Obviously, those who did not have the formal membership of the peasant organisation were excluded from the sample. The formal members constituted nearly one-third of the total land-owning peasants in each village. It also excluded agricultural labourers in the sample. The sample size of the peasants were 50 from each of the three villages constituting 150 in all. Apart from the selection of peasants in the sample, 27 leaders were also separately selected from among the office bearers of three panchayat unions and the three villages.

The methodology of the present study includes both historical analysis and empirical study. It studies the peasant movements both at the macro as also at the micro level. Macro level as discussed earlier includes the district and the eco-settings whereas the micro level includes the panchayat union and the village. The study of the movement is both _ex-post facto_ as also the study of on-going movement. The movements of 1970 and 1972 are parts of _ex-post facto_ analysis and the movement during 1978-81 includes the study of the active phase i.e., on-going movement. The historical analysis is mostly based on the secondary sources whereas the
understanding of the agrarian structure and peasant movements at the micro level is a part of the empirical analysis. The primary data collection were based on interview schedules which were constructed to collect data on the existing agrarian structure, participation of the peasants in the movements, the social origins of leadership, their political participation and participation in the movement as also the organisational pattern. It also included the collection of exhaustive data on cost of cultivation/production of the principal crops grown by the peasants. Apart from the use of the interview schedule the minutes of the TNAA and its official records were also consulted to cull out information on the issues focused in the meetings and the strength of the membership and the number of branches opened by them until June, 1980 in the district of Coimbatore. Case study technique was also used to collect data particularly to study specific agitations launched by the TNAA. Technique of analysis consisted of formulating the basis for computation of various input costs which is shown in Appendix I. For the analysis of cost of production and computation of net return Cost A₁ and Cost-C concepts were used which has been explained in Chapter II. Apart from this a participation index was constructed to examine the level of participation by the peasants in the peasant movements.
in the district and the basis for the construction of the participation index is shown in Chapter II.

The historical analysis of the agrarian structure during the Pre-British period of this district suggests that it evolved as a distinct cultural region known as 'Kongu Nadu' within Tamil Nadu and it also had its separate political identity. However, politically it was always dependent and ruled by outsiders and economically also it was weaker as compared to the Chola cultural region and Chola empire. The earliest settlers were Kongu Vellalas who settled first in the relatively fertile tracts and then spread to the less fertile tracts of Kongu Nadu which is coterminus with the undivided Coimbatore district. The other two important peasant castes i.e., Okkaligas and Kammavar Naidus came much later. One of the special features of the agrarian structure of Kongu Nadu has been its inhospitable ecological setting which historically has been responsible for its social, economic and political backwardness as well. Apart from the small Cauvery delta, the major part of the district was dependent on rains for growing crops. It was only during the British period that the peasants started utilising wells as one of the important source of irrigation. The wells have to be dug very deep to extract water. The Kongu Vellalas constituted the numerically preponderent caste in the district followed
by Chakkaliyans who were a poor second. Okkaligas and Kammavar Naidus were numerically far less. All the peasant castes have a strong tradition of depending on family labour. Because of the ecological constraints, paddy has not been the traditional principal crop, rather millets consisting of Cholam (Jowar) Cumbu (Bajra) and Ragi (Finger millet) were the principal crops. The growing of cotton acquired a commercial scale from the end of the 19th century. It is to be underlined that the success of the ryotwari system of land tenure owes its credit to this district to a considerable extent. The strong tradition of peasant culture also continued during the British period. The excessive land revenue charges of the British made conditions difficult for the peasants. The depression of the thirties in this century further contributed to the economic difficulties of the peasants who were severely caught into the trap of indebtedness at the hands of the moneylenders. This witnessed sporadic unrest of the peasants in the district. But it could not be channelised into organised struggles. The peasant movements in the district was relatively weak during the British period. The sinking of wells increased considerably towards the end of the 19th century and continued unabated in the beginning of the 20th century. This gave boost to the commercialisation of agriculture.
The results of agrarian transformation in the district of Coimbatore during the Post-Independence period reveal certain interesting trends. One of the important features has been the consistent and gradual decline in the percentage of cultivators and substantial increase in the proportion of agricultural labourers to total workers. The proportion of male agricultural labourers has increased over time and there has been simultaneous decline in the proportion of female agricultural labourers. Similarly, there has been a considerable increase in the proportion of marginal farmers and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of medium and big farmers. The percentage holding of small farmers have shown a remarkable stability over time. The percentage of operated area controlled by marginal and small farmers have shown some increase whereas it has shown decline in respect of big farmers. There has been an overwhelming change to owner-operated holdings. The area under paddy, cholam and sugarcane have shown considerable increase over time. One of the significant changes is the increase in the percentage of area irrigated both by wells and canals which is crucial for agrarian transformation. The area irrigated through canals increased from 23.57 per cent to 47.90 per cent within a period of 25 years. This was accompanied with the increase in the percentage of area irrigated to the net cropped area which showed a rise from 22 per cent in 1950-51 to 41.67 per cent in 1975-76. There has been a relative decline in the
use of conventional implements and a sharp increase in the use of modern ones. The most impressive of these changes is with respect to the induction of electrically-operated pumpsets in which the district of Coimbatore occupies top position in the state. There has been tremendous increase in the induction of tractors as well. This is also accompanied by substantial rise in the use of fertilizers. The effect of the increase in the irrigation potentialities and technological induction had its definite impact in the increase in the productivity of paddy by 80 per cent in 25 years inasmuch as it had the highest productivity in respect of this crop in the state. There has been moderate increase in productivity in respect of few other crops also like cotton, cumbu, sugarcane and cholam. The poorest performance among the commercial crops was that of the groundnut. The agrarian transformation reveals certain disturbing trends as well. The state of Tamil Nadu as also the district of Coimbatore tops the list among all the states in the country in respect of the proportion of population not owning land at all. The major beneficiaries from the standpoint of asset accumulation have been the richest section among the peasantry. Correspondingly, there has been a decline in the real wages of agricultural labourers. Over 50 per cent of the rural population were below poverty line.

The agrarian transformation during the Post-Independence period also showed ecological variations.
The proportion of cultivators to the total workers was the lowest in the dry eco-type. The pauperisation process was more distinctly pronounced in the wet eco-type. The increase in the proportion of agricultural labourers was characteristic of all the eco-types but it was more sharply pronounced in the dry-cum-wet eco-type. The increase of marginal farmers is more in the dry-cum-wet eco-type. The percentage of operated area controlled by marginal farmers is very low in all the eco-types but it is the least in the dry eco-type. The concentration of operated area is quite high in all the eco-types but it is maximum in the dry and the dry-cum-wet eco-types. The area operated under tenancy was higher in the wet eco-type. The induction of electrically-operated pumpsets have been more pronounced in the dry eco-type followed by the dry-cum-wet eco-type and the least in the wet eco-type. In terms of irrigation potentialities and assured irrigation canal excelled wells. The percentage area under paddy and groundnut was very high in the wet eco-type followed by the dry-cum-wet eco-type and the least in the dry eco-type. Cholam and cotton were the principal crops in the dry eco-type. The dry-cum-wet eco-type represents the mixture of the cropping pattern of the two other eco-types. There has been a considerable decline in the area under cotton both in the dry and dry-cum-wet eco-types during the Post-Independence period.
The general picture of the agrarian transformation reveals certain important features like the increase in the area under irrigation through canals and wells and the enormous rise in the induction of electrically-operated pumpsets which generated the objective conditions necessary for the emergence of peasant movements in Coimbatore district during the seventies. However, the more significant impact of these changes were revealed in the crucial objective conditions which served as the basis of relative deprivation and acted as stimulants to the peasant movements. One such disturbing trend is the development of what is termed as 'ecological crisis'.

It is necessary to point out that the percentage of area irrigated is not a proper and correct indicator of the irrigation potentialities. The wells are a much less assured source of irrigation. The cost of construction of wells including deepening and induction of deep bore-wells is prohibitive in the dry eco-type village and equally burdensome in the dry-cum-wet eco-type. The dry eco-type peasants spent nearly ₹61368 per well as against ₹33540 by the peasants in the dry-cum-wet eco-type. The peasants in the wet eco-type are completely free from this burden. The irrigation cost per hectare in the dry-cum-wet eco-type was 14 times more as compared to the wet eco-type and in the dry eco-type it was 22 times more than that of the wet eco-type. Seen from class point
of view, the small peasants in the two eco-types have to bear 18 times more cost per hectare as compared to their counterparts in the wet eco-type. The medium peasants have to bear 23 times more cost and the big peasants 15 times more cost than their counterparts in the wet eco-type. Thus the brunt of the ecological crisis is faced by the peasants in the dry and dry-cum-wet eco-types. The hypothesis on cost of irrigation with respect to ecology and class position of the peasants were adequately substantiated through the results. All these developments culminated in a heightened feeling of relative deprivation, dissatisfaction and discontent among the peasants in the dry and dry-cum-wet eco-types. The objective conditions were ripe to mobilise the peasants on this ground in the beginning of the seventies. The dry eco-type was first to evince the relative deprivation with respect to this and the movements in the early seventies was accordingly felt severely first in the dry eco-type and then in the dry-cum-wet eco-type. Here, it is necessary to reflect on the impact of the ecological crisis in the dry-cum-wet region inspite of the opening of the canal irrigation system. It has been mentioned earlier also that the canal supplied water in the dry-cum-wet eco-type only for 5-6 months every two years which ipso facto compelled the peasants in this eco-type to rely more on the wells. However, the opening of the new canal in the dry-cum-wet
area during the sixties gave impetus to land reclamation and construction of new wells. This necessitated the peasants in the dry eco-type also to spend heavily on the construction of wells. The funds for such heavy investments were procured through the institutional agencies. The role of ecology in the emergence and growth of peasant movements during the seventies is clearly revealed from this analysis. Both the medium and the big peasants had not only invested huge amounts on wells and pumpsets but also incurred more electricity charges. The small peasants had also invested considerable amount in such effort. This was the reason that the hike in agricultural electricity tariff became one of the major rallying point to ignite the peasant movements during the seventies. All the classes of the peasants have been a victim to the race of the technological revolution. The technological revolution accentuated the ecological crisis having its direct bearing on the relative deprivation of the peasants. Though the hike in the agricultural electricity tariff reflected the manifestation of the anger of the peasants but the deeper reasons lay in the ecological crisis which enhanced the cost of irrigation considerably for the peasants in the dry and the dry-cum-wet eco-types.

Another aspect of the precipitating objective factor was the unremunerative price received by the
peasants. This was clearly revealed through the cost of production/cultivation analysis. The net return with respect to cotton crop in the dry eco-type village showed negative return indicating the real loss sustained by the peasants. The hypothesis of high cost of production and very low net return in the dry eco-type was amply substantiated with respect to the cotton crop. However, the net return in respect of sugarcane crop was higher in the dry eco-type as compared to the two other eco-types which afforded partial relief to the peasants in the dry eco-type. The hypothesis of higher cost and lower return in the dry eco-type with respect to sugarcane crop was not substantiated. Consequently the peasants in the dry eco-type fastly switched over to sugarcane crop and reduced the area under cotton. The results also showed that the net return both with respect to per acre and per quintal cost was lowest for the big peasants and the highest for the small peasants. The hypothesis with respect to the class of peasants was not substantiated with respect to the two principal crops of the dry eco-type, namely, cotton and sugarcane. The relative decline in the overall net return and consequent relative deprivation was severely felt by the medium and big peasants. Paddy and groundnut were the two principal crops of the dry-cum-wet village. The net return for groundnut was higher in the dry-cum-wet eco-type as compared to the wet eco-type. The net return in paddy has been higher in the wet
eco-type as compared to the two other eco-types. It was found that with respect to the crop of groundnut the net return per quintal made only marginal difference among the different classes of peasants. The wet eco-type has been particularly affected by the considerable fluctuation in the net return of turmeric crop which provided the major rallying point for mobilising the peasants in this eco-type in the late seventies. On the whole, one witnesses that the high cost of production and the low return hit hard the peasants in the dry eco-type followed by the peasants of the dry-cum-wet eco-type.

The results of the two objective conditions, namely, the ecological crisis and the rising cost of production and low return contributed to mounting debt burden for the peasants in the dry and the dry-cum-wet eco-types. The institutional indebtedness was found to be fairly high among all class of peasants. The hypothesis in this context was substantiated. The incidence of institutional indebtedness was lowest in the wet eco-type. Of the total debt, the small peasants had contracted 44 per cent, the medium peasants 28 per cent and the big peasants the remaining 28 per cent. This showed that the institutional indebtedness affected all the three classes of peasants. The average debt increased with the class position of the peasants which substantiated the hypothesis in this respect. The proportion of loans contracted for the purpose of construction of wells and induction of
pumpsets was highest in the dry eco-type followed by the dry-cum-wet eco-type village. The fact that three out of every four sample peasants were steeped in debt irrespective of their class position is a clear indication of their economic stringency. This also significantly contributed to arouse the feeling of the relative deprivation. The institutional credit became a burning issue for the peasant movement during 1978-81. It alone acted as a major rallying point to mobilize the peasants. The role of the government in giving loans for crop production as also for irrigation, induction of pumpsets and in fixing the prices of agricultural commodities was very crucial. It brought the peasants directly within the orbit of the government policies and so the relative deprivation and consequent mobilization of the peasants was principally directed against the government in the peasant movements of the seventies in the Coimbatore district as also in the state of Tamil Nadu.

The objective factors like ecological crisis, unremunerative prices and mounting debt burden provided the necessary conditions for the emergence of peasant movements in the district. However, the subjective factors provide sufficient conditions for the emergence and growth of the peasant movements. In subjective conditions the focus has been the precipitants to the peasant movements during 1970, 1972 and 1978-81, the issues raised, the spread
of the movement, means and methods employed at the macro level particularly at the level of the district and the eco-types. The mass base of the movement has been examined at the micro-level consisting of panchayat union and village. The organisational pattern of the movement has been discussed from the state to the grassroots level. The social origins of leadership has been examined at micro level. The ideology of the peasant movements and the organisation has also been examined.

The peasant movement in 1970 in the district had the benefit of the experience of miniature struggles conducted in the sixties in the district which had also shaped the formation of a district level peasant organisation in September, 1967 which was dominated by big landowners. The precipitant to the 1970 peasant movement in the district was the hike in the agricultural power tariff from 8 paise to 10 paise per unit. The movement was directed to one-point demand of reduction in agricultural electricity tariff. Token fast, processions, picketing, bullock-cart processions, district-wide hartals were the important means and methods of the movement. The picketings were organised at the panchayat union, taluk and district levels. In the demonstrations and bullock-cart processions over 15000 peasants had participated. The movement could thus mobilise substantial number of peasants. This movement was exclusively confined to the dry eco-type areas in the
district. The DMK government of Tamil Nadu came with heavy hand in suppressing the movement. The peasants were mostly peaceful and non-violent. The violence initiated by the government resulted in the killing of three peasants and arrest of several hundred peasants. The leadership of the movement was in the hands of the leading big peasants of the district. There was active involvement of some of the political leaders particularly those belonging to the Congress (O) as they had contradictions with the ruling party of the state. They were also drawn from the leading castemen of the three prominent peasant castes, consisting of Kongu Vellalas, Okkaligas and Kammavar Naidus. The movement resulted in the reduction of agricultural tariff by one paise per unit by the government i.e., from 10 paise to 9 paise. Though the material achievement was marginal, yet the very point of partial success and a new level of heightened peasant consciousness were the major success.

The 1972 peasant movement in the district was triggered off by multiple issues. The precipitant was again the increase in power tariff by the government by three paise i.e., from 9 to 12 paise per unit. The other precipitants were the introduction of agricultural income tax on crop basis, the increase in land revenue and cess, etc. The Coimbatore District Agriculturists' Association this time placed a 12-point charter of
demands which included the withdrawal of increased power tariff for agriculture, remission of agricultural loans, stopping of attachment proceedings against defaulters, abolition of newly-levied land tax and agricultural income tax, fixation of remunerative prices for agricultural produce, etc. The peasant movement started on 19 May, 1972 and continued until July, 1972. The means and methods of the movement were similar to the ones used in 1970. This time they had also stopped payment of electricity dues and also launched a three-day milk and vegetable strike. The most effective means was the blockade of the entire city of Coimbatore by mobilizing 20000 bullock-carts which the New York Times described as 'paton tanks of Indian villages'. One of the significant features of the peasant movements in 1972 was that it was not confined to the boundary of Coimbatore district but reverberated to some of the other districts in the state with similar eco-types. An All-Party Action Committee at the state level was also formed to lead picketings in all the important centres of the state. The peasants were by far peaceful and non-violent but the Tamil Nadu government again took recourse to violence resulting in the killing of 15 peasants of which two belonged to Coimbatore district and the rest belonged to the other districts. A state wide bandh was also organised on 6 and 7 July, 1972. The repression of the government was followed by negotiations resulting in the
partial acceptance of 11 out of 12 demands by the government. The peasant movement in the district by 1972 had attained a level of maturity. The key issues were the rise in the electricity tariff and the remunerative price. The participation of women had contributed to the militancy and radicalisation of the movement. Even in 1972 the dry eco-type was the main focus of the movement though some areas of the dry-cum-wet eco-type were also involved in the struggle. The peasant movements of 1970 and 1972 amply demonstrated that its sources were rooted in the changes in the agrarian structure and the precipitants were the hike in the agricultural electricity tariff. It may further be pointed out that the hike in electricity tariff was just the tip of the iceberg. The rationale was more deeply rooted in the agrarian structure particularly on such objective factors as ecological crisis, unremunerative prices for agricultural produce and mounting debt burden. The leadership of the movement in 1972 was also similar to that of the 1970. This time apart from Congress (0), CPI also actively associated and participated in the peasant movements. The success of these two peasant movements provided newer ideas to the rank and file of the peasants. They demanded the formation of a peasant organisation at the state level without any political affiliation so as to have complete non-political character. This led to the culmination of the formation of a state-level peasant
organisation named as 'Tamil Nadu Agriculturists' Association' (TNAA) on 13 November, 1973 with its headquarters in Coimbatore. The commitment and sacrifice of C. Narayanaswami Naidu made him the obvious choice for the presidency of the TNAA. The years 1974 and 1975 witnessed severe drought in the state as also in the district of Coimbatore. The agricultural electricity tariff was once again raised from 12 paise per unit to 16 paise per unit during the emergency rule in 1976. This was, however, implemented after AIADMK assumed power in 1977 headed by MGR. The government did not seem to have learnt lessons from the past mistakes of increasing the agricultural tariff which on every occasion acted as the precipitant to the movement.

The peasant movement during 1978-81 apart from being precipitated by the rise in the agricultural tariff, was sparked off by such other precipitants as forcible recovery of the institutional loans as also the levy of additional security deposit and surcharge by Tamil Nadu Electricity Board. The TNAA presented a 9-point charter of demands in which the major issues related to the reduction of power tariff from 16 paise to 12 paise per unit, remission of all institutional loans and fixation of remunerative prices for farm produce. The provision of better amenities for farm labourers was a tenuous issue to incorporate the support of the agricultural
labourers. April to June, 1978 witnessed massive mobilisation of peasants in different districts of Tamil Nadu including the district of Coimbatore. One of the important features of the movement of this period was the active involvement of the peasants in the dry-cum-wet eco-type in the movement in 1978 and the involvement of the wet eco-type in the district also. The reasons for the involvement of the dry eco-type was the ecological crisis, lack of remunerative prices for agricultural produce and the mounting debt burden. The involvement of the wet eco-type was due to the appallingly low price for the turmeric crop which affected all strata of the peasantry. The main thrust of the movement was to follow the Gandhian path of non-violence. The means and methods of the movement were similar to the earlier ones like picketing, demonstration, blocking of roads by mobilising bullock-carts in large numbers. This time they also used the technique of felling trees to block the roads in various parts of the state and at certain places they also destroyed culverts and bridges. The effectiveness of the peasant movement during this period was strengthened due to the launching of 'No-Tax' campaign which gave a call to the peasants to stop completely the payment of cooperative dues, the dues of land development banks and commercial banks, stopping payment of electricity tariff, land revenue, etc. This campaign was a total success and was terribly irksome to the government. The
government used strong arm methods to contain the movement but the violence perpetrated by the government, further intensified and radicalised the movement. On 2 May 1978, it reduced the agricultural tariff by 4 paise per unit for small farmers (operating up to 5 acres) and 2 paise per unit for the other farmers. This was not acceptable to the TNAA as they did not accept the division of the peasants on these lines which would weaken their peasant base. The TNAA projected the vertical solidarity of the peasants and did not subscribe to the notion of classes within the peasantry. The government was also stubborn. It was not prepared to give substantial concessions to the peasants. The TNAA decided to teach a lesson to the ruling AIADMK Party in the elections. They got the opportunity in early 1980 Parliamentary elections when they defeated AIADMK thoroughly by supporting DMK-Congress(I) alliance. But this also did not bring any relief to the peasants in the state as the Congress Government did not extend concessions to them. Subsequently in the Assembly elections held in June 1980 the peasants again overwhelmingly extended their support to the AIADMK on the assurance of MGR to accede to all the demands. However, their hopes were belied after MGR came to power. This time he was more ruthless than ever in the past. The coercive apparatus of the government was used heavily against the peasants of the state when in December, 1980 the government
initiated 'Operation Power Disconnection' by mobilising heavy police force. Thousands of peasants were arrested and few were killed.

The analysis of the movement at the micro level shows that in the formal membership of the TNAA only one-third of the peasant households were included and two-thirds were practically excluded. The empirical data also revealed that there was no active participation and involvement of these two-thirds peasant households who were not the formal members of the TNAA. The formal members of the TNAA belonged to the high-ranking Kongu Vellala caste as also those of Kammavar Naidu who were another high-ranking cultivating community. Most of these formal members operated irrigated lands whether through canals or wells. Almost all their wells were energised through electric pumpsets. A considerable proportion of them belonged to the class of big and medium peasants i.e., the core of the dominant peasantry. The role of the youth in the peasant movements was more marked in the dry-cum-wet and wet eco-type regions. Quite a number of them had some educational and political background as well. The 'No-Tax' campaign was very successful in all the eco-types. The analysis of the primary data suggests that the core issues in the dry eco-type and the dry-cum-wet eco-type were high cost of irrigation, hike in the electricity tariff, debt
burden and lack of remunerative prices. In the wet eco-type the lack of remunerative agricultural prices was the issue which agitated the peasants most followed by the exploitation at the hands of the traders. In the initiation of the peasant movements in all the three periods, the dry eco-type has always played the leading role. The dry-cum-wet and the wet eco-types were drawn into the vortex later. The means and methods of agitation were much more radicalized during the 1978-81 period of the peasant movement. The participation of the peasants in the dry-cum-wet eco-type far excelled than those of the other two eco-types. The participation index showed that there was a strong association between higher class position and higher participation. The hypothesis of the high level of participation of peasants in the dry eco-type, moderate in the dry-cum-wet eco-type and low in the wet eco-type was not fully substantiated. The dry-cum-wet eco-type village was distinctly marked with respect to high participation followed by the dry eco-type village and the wet eco-type village had relatively lower level of participation. The hypothesis of high level of participation by big peasants, medium level of participation by medium peasants and low level of participation by small peasants was adequately substantiated.

**Consequences of the Movement**

The emergence of an independent peasant organisation of the TNAA was instrumental in spearheading the
the movement in 1978-81. The TNAA was able to evolve a clear-cut organisational pattern from the state to the district as also to the grassroots level covering the panchayat union and village. One of the significant features was that the movement of 1970 and 1972 gave boost to the organisational growth and the emergence of a strong organisation which in turn, activised and strengthened the movements. It acted as the spring board for mobilising and conscientising the peasant masses. The objective factors in the form of the worsening economic conditions of the peasants acted as the basis of relative deprivation. The feeling and perception of relative deprivation among the peasants was induced and motivated by the formation of a solid peasant organisation like the TNAA. The role of organisation as a subjective factor was adequately fulfilled by the TNAA. It instilled confidence among the peasants that only strong collective mobilisation could exert potential pressure on the government to yield to their demands. Another striking feature has been that the areas which experienced mobilisation earlier were also the places where the organisation at the grassroots level evolved first. The large number of peasant organisations at the grassroots level was accordingly evolved first in the dry eco-type followed by the dry-cum-wet eco-type. The wet eco-type was the last to be drawn into/vortex of the movement and consequently the organisational spread at the grassroots level also
came last in the wet eco-type. However, all the three eco-types had sizable growth of peasant organisations at the grassroots level by the end of 1980. The organisational pattern consisted of four tiers i.e., the state, district, panchayat union and village levels. The state level general body was the policy making body. The executive or the working committee at the state level as also at the lower levels were the major architect not only in concretising the policy decisions but also in the mobilisation of peasant masses. The action or agitation committees at various levels were an informal body but playing the important supplementary role to the working committee in conscientising and mobilising the peasant masses.

The examination of the social origins of leaders revealed that the older generation were prominent in the dry eco-type and younger generation in the other two eco-types. The older generation leaders had participated actively in the peasant movements in 1970 and 1972. In the later period of the peasant movement during 1978-81, they contributed their rich experience to guide the spread and growth of the movements in the two other eco-types. The dry-cum-wet and wet eco-types were the most active during the peasant movements of 1978-81 and it was the younger generation who played a crucial role in participating in the peasant movements and in giving leadership to the movement in these two eco-types. The empirical analysis
of the data clearly revealed that higher the educational level of the leaders, greater was the efficacy and more important was their role in decision-making. The leaders were overwhelmingly drawn from the dominant Kongu Vellala or Gounder caste of the district. Most of the leaders depended exclusively on agriculture for their livelihood but a small section among them who had the non-agricultural base of supplementing their livelihood excelled others in leadership potentials and decision-making. The pure tenants and agricultural labourers were conspicuous by their absence in the leadership position. Size of ownership holding had a positive bearing to the holding of the leadership position. Those owning more than 10 acres constituted 40 per cent of the leaders and played a crucial role in decision-making. They include the 'medium and big peasants' as per the concept used in the present study but belong to the class of rich peasants and capitalist farmers, according to Marxist criteria. They also had substantial asset structure and gross income. Asset structure had a positive bearing on the holding of leadership position. The landholding size and asset structure were significantly associated with leadership position and the hypotheses in this respect were thus adequately substantiated.

The leaders exhibited high degree of organisational participation. Their political preference varied from DMK to Congress (I) and AIADMK. The leaders were generally averse to the radical means of participation like blowing up
the culverts and bridges, setting ablaze the buses, blocking the roads by felling trees, etc. However, they played a crucial role in conscientising and mobilising peasant masses. The leadership was overwhelmingly thrown from the peasant stock and there was no outside leadership particularly in the more matured stage of peasant movements between 1978-81.

It is time to assess the consequences of the movement in terms of the success or failures to achieve the goals set for themselves and also in terms of effecting changes in the social structure. In the 1970 movement the goals were very limited. It was confined to one demand i.e., to reduce the hike in the agricultural tariff. This was aimed at immediate and short-run goal. The consequence of the movement of 1970 was the reduction of electricity tariff by one paise per unit which was only partial acceptance of the demand put forward. The movement of 1972 had enlarged the goals of the peasant movement to 12 demands which, indeed, indicates the confidence that the peasant organisation felt, it could take up. This in itself is ample measure of success in qualitative and subjective terms which is also indicative of the rising peasant consciousness. The consequence of the 1972 movement was the partial acceptance of the demands like reduction in electricity tariff, minor changes in the agricultural income tax imposed on the well-off peasants, etc. In terms of the achievement of its goals, the success
was more deeply felt in 1972 movement as the government had partially accepted 11 out of 12 demands. However, these had not led to any major structural changes. The cost of the success was heavy. 15 peasants lost their lives. One of the measures of the latent content of changes is the perceived threat by the government. The extent of violence perpetrated and repression unleashed on the peasants by the government is indicative of the fact that it perceived much greater potentialities of the changes in the structure due to the peasant movements in 1970 and 1972 in the district. The success of the movement is again evinced at the qualitative and subjective level. The leadership both in 1970 and 1972 were political in character and drawn from heavy weights of landed gentry. The limitation in the growth of peasant movement due to involvement of political parties was realised by the peasants gained through the experience of 1970 and 1972 peasant movements. They could realise the divisiveness within the rank and file of the peasants due to political affiliation. It was realised that the solidarity of different strata of the peasantry can be maintained by keeping the peasant organisation as non-political in character. This led to the emergence of an independent non-political peasant organisation in the form of the TNAA. Indeed, it was a distinct forward march within a short period of three years. In the historical past there was hardly any past experience of peasant movements of the
landowning peasantry. The past experience of peasant movements facilitate the mobilisation of peasants in conducting fresh struggles. But in spite of the absence of such experience, the peasants had made a considerable headway in the development of the subjective factors. Both the 1970 and 1972 movements had thrown up the leaders from rank and file of the peasants at various levels. This was, indeed, a major gain of the movements of 1970 and 1972. There was both qualitative and quantitative transformation in the growth of peasant movements and peasant organisations in the next period of 1978-81. There was both vertical and horizontal growth of peasant organisations in different eco-types of Coimbatore district during this period. This could be possible only due to the rich experience gained during the peasant movements in 1970 and 1972. The peasant movement of 1978-81 exploded the myth of reliance on outside leadership. The experience of the dry eco-type peasants in the peasant movements of earlier two periods was brought handy to extend the movement into the other two eco-types of the district. The issues raised in 1978-81 movement were much more deeply-rooted in terms of effecting structural change. They aimed at not only reducing the agricultural tariff but also at the abolition of all institutional loans taken by the peasants, the fixation of remunerative prices and the generation of greater irrigation potentialities through canals. The experiences of the leaders of Coimbatore was adequately
utilised to extend the movements to the other districts of the state. The peasant movement had paralysed the economy of the state government by refusing to pay the institutional dues, the electricity dues, land revenue, etc., which came to several hundred crores. The threats to structural change this time was much more severely felt by the government. Its repressive arms were strengthened and fell very heavily on the peasants. The climax was the 'Operation Power Disconnection' campaign launched by the government in December, 1970 in which thousands of peasants were arrested and several of them were killed. The electricity dues and other institutional dues were realised with heavy hands. It was, indeed, a severe blow to the peasant movement and organisation which was not prepared to face such heavy repression. This was because the basic ideological thrust of the movement was to conduct the struggle on Gandhian lines with non-violent means. The language of violence perpetrated by the government was not a part of the peasant cognitive and cultural ethos. The pensive mood of the peasants on the aftermath of repression also weakened the morale of the core of the leadership of the peasant organisation. They were in a blind alley to shape the future course of the movement. The inevitable had happened which they have been persistently wanting to avoid. Although the period of the militant struggle from 1978 to 1981 the non-political character of the peasant organisation was its major strength. The leader-
ship of the peasant organisation could gauge the mood of the peasants that they wanted to shun the path of agitation. The idea dawned in the minds of the leaders that it is only through the formation of an independent political party that the Government could be taught a lesson. This substantiates the observation of Oommen of a peasant movement traversing the path of 'mobilisation to institutionalisation'. The TNAA was transformed into a political party and named as 'Indian peasants' and Toilers' Party' which was founded in 1982. Subsequently they contested some byelections and also the general elections but could not make any dent. This was, indeed, a great setback to the peasants of Tamil Nadu who had made great sacrifices particularly in the peasant movement of 1978-81. The death of the doyen of the peasant organisation of the TNAA, C. Narayanaswami Naidu, shattered even the lingering hopes of the peasants. They are left rudderless today. The united TNAA is today split asunder with independent peasant organisations emerging in different districts. The caste factor which was given a back seat during the active period of the movement raised its head everywhere to evolve fresh peasant organisations on caste lines. The secular dimension retreated to primordial identity categories. This was, indeed, love's labour lost. Inspite of the undesirable consequences, the peasant movement particularly of 1978-81 is indicative of the far-reaching structural changes which is inherent and
latent in the goals of the movement. The major issues thrown up in the peasant movements of the seventies aimed at the strengthening the base and economic as also political power of the dominant peasantry. This movement though has tenuously included couple of demands of agricultural labourers but the contradiction of the dominant peasantry with the agricultural labourers is quite apparent. The ideological moorings of the peasant movements and the peasant organisation clearly reflect its implications for structural change or resisting certain kind of structural change. The empirical analysis has clearly revealed the strong resistance of the dominant peasantry to basic class questions like land reforms, giving lands to landless labourers, giving adequate wages to them and so on. The strengthening of the dominant peasantry is bulwark against such structural changes which could mitigate the sufferings of the agricultural labourers and poor peasants. The peasant movements of the seventies have definitely pushed back the subaltern classes and their path to liberation severely in the district of Coimbatore and the state of Tamil Nadu. It has further been able to strengthen its mass base. Though the various governments of Tamil Nadu increased the agricultural electricity tariff in the past, they no more dare to do so. On the other hand, the peasants have wrested substantial concessions from the government by getting exemption of the payment of agricultural tariff
for the peasants possessing up to 5 acres. The agricultural tariff rates have been changed over to flat rate system of Rs. 50 per Horse-Power annually which was what the peasants were fighting for. The government is now quite sensitive to lay its fingers on aspects which affect the interests of the dominant peasantry. The peasant movements of Tamil Nadu have been the path-finder to the growth of similar movements in other states especially in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Punjab. The model of the peasant organisation evolved by the TNAA has been followed in other states and in these peasant movements also the same issues were raised as in the peasant movements of Tamil Nadu in the seventies. It also gave birth to the 'Indian Farmers' Association' in 1980. This has forged the possibility of the unity of the dominant peasantry at All-India level to act as a powerful pressure group to extract their share of the cake.

Implications of the Study

In this study an unorthodox approach was adopted to define 'peasants'. The standard acre concept was used and the peasantry was identified into three strata consisting of small, medium and big peasants. The agricultural labourers were excluded from the definition of the peasants. The exploitation basis used in the Marxist classification particularly exploitation through wage labour, rack-renting and usury were not meaningful in
the present study. The peasants who were involved in the peasant movements of the seventies in Tamil Nadu and in the district of Coimbatore were not subjected to these forms of exploitation. Rather, they were encountered with a situation in which the agricultural policies of the government like the problems associated with the fixation of remunerative prices, reduction of input prices, the lowering of the agricultural tariff, etc., were the major questions which affected the peasants. The analysis of the agrarian situation revealed that the dominant section of the peasantry were going through economic stringency due to the substantial increase in the cost of cultivation and the gradual decline in the net return. It is indicative of relative deprivation faced by them over a period. The contention of the present study is that the analysis of the peasant movements of this kind cannot be analysed by following the exploitation model. The relative deprivation perspective affords a better understanding of the reality of the problems associated with the dominant peasantry. This was one of the reasons which prompted the use of land as the crucial variable for identifying different strata of the peasantry. However, an attempt was made to locate the small, medium and big peasants of this study in the Marxist classification by applying the criteria evolved by Utsa Patnaik and Ashok Rudra. It was found that the 'small peasants' of the present study were similar to middle peasants, the
'medium peasants' predominantly reflected the characteristics of the rich peasants and the 'big peasants' were partly rich peasants and partly capitalist farmers. The analysis has clearly revealed the emergence of capitalist farmers within the peasantry in Coimbatore district. The unbiased use of the standard acre concept has enabled the proper identification of the participation by the various strata of the peasants in the peasant movements.

The second aspect of the implications of the present study relates to the definition of 'peasant movement' adopted in this study. The definition of peasant movement used here may seem controversial at the face value. A question can be raised as to whether the movements of the dominant peasantry could be characterised as peasant movements. This point has also been raised at several places in this work. Here, the peasant movements have broadly been identified as belonging to two categories—one focusing wholly on the issues of the subaltern and the other focusing on the issues of the dominant peasants. The subaltern peasant movements were characteristic of such movements as Moplah peasant uprisings, Tebhaga movement, Telangana uprising and Naxalite movements. The agrarian transformation strengthening the economic power of the dominant peasantry has evinced the emergence of the movements participated and led by the dominant peasants. The analysis in this study has shown that there has been
substantial participation of the middle and rich peasants in the peasant movements of the seventies in the district. Therefore, it would be appropriate to characterise it as peasant movement. Of course, the core of the leadership was thrown up by the capitalist farmers. There is also no gainsaying the fact that the substantial beneficiaries of these peasant movements are the capitalist farmers. Yet, the agricultural policies strongly impinge on the various sections of the landowning peasantry as their quality of life is dependent on the price they ultimately get for their products. This reality has to be understood in the proper context. The peasants are not fools as they are painted out to be by several scholars. The analysis of the present study has clearly shown that the agricultural labourers and poor peasants have not participated at all in these peasant movements. They could clearly perceive that this peasant movement is not aimed at mitigating their sufferings. The issues like institutional indebtedness, agricultural tariff and remunerative prices directly affected the interests of the middle and the rich peasants also. So this peasant movement has involved adequate participation of these strata of the peasants. As the core element of participation in the movement is drawn from the middle and rich peasants, it could be adequately characterised as peasant movements with the leadership of the capitalist farmers.
In the peasant literature the debate on the participation of various strata of the peasantry have been carried out exhaustively. The 'middle peasant thesis' was strongly put forward by Eric Wolf and Hamza Alavi. This myth has been strongly exploded in the study of peasant movements in India by Dhanagare and Oommen in particular. On the other hand, the participation of agricultural labourers and poor peasants have been upheld. The present study raises the question that the peasant movements need to be distinguished in terms of the subaltern peasant movements and the movements of the dominant peasantry. The location and identification of the participation by the different strata of the peasants need to be focused with the reference point of the specific peasant movements. It is not sound to look for middle peasants participation in all the peasant movements or to look for the poor peasants participation in all the peasant movements.

The peasant movements studied in the three periods in the district rightly conform to the definition of peasant movements adopted in this study. Peasant movements in each period had evinced collective mobilisation with specific goals and the presence of leadership potentials and the organisational structure. There was specific reasons to include each one of the period as separate peasant movement. One reason was that they varied in terms of the spread of the movement, the variations in the character of leadership and
organisation. In the peasant movement of 1970 it was veered around a single issue whereas those of 1972 and 1978-81 included several issues. The leadership in the 1970 and 1972 movements were drawn from political parties, landowners with substantial landholdings and prominent caste leaders of the district. The peasant movement of 1978-81 had completely divorced itself from all political affiliation and it was purged of the heavy weight of the powerful landowners of the district who constituted the core of the leadership in the two earlier peasant movements. The spread of the movement was also extended both horizontally and vertically in each period.

There are certain policy implications which emerge from the present study. The analysis of cost of production clearly establish adverse terms of trade for agriculture. A more rational system of fixation of remunerative prices is called for so that the landowning peasants are not so heavily pressed economically. This is likely to affect the agricultural production. Further, the rate of interest charged by the institutional agencies including the penalty and surcharge fell very heavy on them. Within a period of four to five years the principal gets almost doubled. This aggravates the miseries on the landowning peasantry. The agricultural loans need to carry very low rate of interest. The ecological conditions in the district of Coimbatore as also in the state of Tamil Nadu
tends to suggest that the problems faced by them are of a recurrent and perpetuating nature. The limitations of underground water potentials would be a continuous strain. The unchecked exploitation of underground water potentials is likely to aggravate the ecological crisis in future as well. The raising of the issues as witnessed during the seventies is likely to be focused again and again. In order to retrieve the maladies faced by the peasants in Tamil Nadu it is necessary that the public works irrigation system should be evolved and the peasants should be charged only monthly water rates. This would considerably reduce their sufferings. The more penetrating solution lies in increasing the canal irrigation facilities in other districts as well by rational utilisation of water resources in the country at large and in Southern India in particular.

Significance of the Present Study

The present study assumes importance on several counts. The studies on peasant movements in India are to a great deal confined to the collective mobilisation of the peasantry against injustices, oppression and exploitation arising from the feudal and semi-feudal agrarian structure. Many of these studies primarily analyse the peasant movements of the subaltern consisting of lower strata of the peasantry. The agrarian
transformation have brought the dominant peasants to the fore of the peasant movement particularly against the government's agricultural policies. There is a great paucity of the study of the peasant movements participated by the dominant peasantry. The peasant movements of the dominant peasantry have acquired ascendency during the aftermath of green revolution. It is time to have a proper scientific appraisal to have an understanding of the character of this movement and to analyse its impact on the contemporary agrarian structure and larger society. The present study partly fulfils this gap and opens a new vista for the study of peasant movements of this kind in other states in the country as well.

The peasant movements have wide-ranging ramifications covering the total social structure which includes the social, economic, cultural, political and other dimensions. An adequate understanding of the peasant movements needs the synthesised skills of different disciplines. The present study has tried to cover the historical, economic, social and political dimensions to analyse the peasant movements in the district of Coimbatore. However, the theoretical grounding is deeply rooted in a sociological framework which has the potentialities to utilise the analytical skills of other disciplines. This aspect has been incorporated in the overall analysis of this study to the extent possible. It has the strength of analysing the peasant movements within the theoretical framework of sociology of social movements. This kind of integrative
perspective has been attempted in very few studies on peasant movements in India. The notable exceptions are the ones attempted by Dhanagare, Oommen, Mukherji and few others.

This study has another salient feature. It does not follow the orthodox approach to define and classify peasants. No a priori stand has been taken to characterise the specific features associated with different class of peasants. The empirical situation has been stressed to indicate the specific characteristics associated with different strata of peasants. The agricultural labourers have been excluded from the definition of peasant as it was not germane to the present study. Land was taken as crucial defining variable of the peasant. But adequate care was taken to homogenise the variability in the characteristics associated with land. The standard acre concept was used to neutralise such variability. This opens new ground to utilise the standard acre concept in understanding various strata within the peasantry. It also enables to understand the peasant movement of dominant peasantry effectively.

The other significance of the present study emanates from methodological angle. It combines the historical analysis with empirical one. It utilises both macro and micro perspective. It is both an ex-post facto and on-going movement study. It also adequately emphasises the study of peasant movements from 'within' and 'without' as highlighted by Oommen. It focuses attention on one of the important
neglected dimensions of the study of peasant movement. This relates to the role of 'ecology' as an objective factor which explains variations not only with respect to the agrarian structure but also in explaining the variations in peasant movement. This is one of the important strengths of the present study. It has also joined the debate on 'middle peasant thesis' as also on 'poor peasant thesis'.

The study has demonstrated that the poor peasants and agricultural labourers do not fall within the orbit of the peasant movement of the dominant peasantry. The contradictions and conflict between the subaltern and the dominant peasantry have not yet sharpened in Coimbatore district. The study tries to examine the mass base of the movement by evolving a suitable participation index. The difficulty in the validation of the middle peasant or poor peasant thesis gets obscured for want of adequate empirical evidence. The historical analysis has the limitation of examining these propositions rigorously.

The present study affords an opportunity to examine the participation by the different strata of the peasantry with adequate empirical rigour.

The study has also certain limitations. It would have been quite fruitful to include the areas where the movement of the dominant peasantry is weak. It would have the advantage of explaining as to why the peasant movements do not arise in certain structural conditions. The other major limitation is that it includes in the sample only
such peasants who have participated in the movement and have excluded other peasants who also come within the purview of the definition of peasant as adopted in the present study. The other limitation is the complete exclusion of agricultural labourers from the purview of the present study. The study could have thrown more insight by including other areas in the state. It would have brought into focus the relevance of factors other than ecology to the emergence and growth of peasant movements of dominant peasantry. The paucity of time and resources has been one of the major constraints in limiting the scope of the study.