

# **AGRARIAN SYSTEM IN EARLY MEDIEVAL ORISSA**

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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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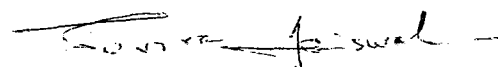
## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "Agrarian System in Early Medieval Orissa (c 750-1200 A.D.)" submitted by Mr. Pramod Kumar Satapathy in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation should be placed before the examiners for their consideration for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy.



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## A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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I must be failing in my duty without acknowledging my thanks to many of my friends for their good gesture and help. Lastly but not the least, I am thankful to Sh. Satya Pal Singh for the meticulous typing. However, I am alone responsible for the views expressed in the present work.

*Pranod Kumar Satapathy.*  
- PRAMOD KUMAR SATAPATHY

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to study the agrarian system of Orissa in early medieval times. Attempt has been made to assess the nature of relationship among the different classes of the society based upon the distribution of landed property. The possible co-relationship with the state structure as a necessary fulfilment to the needs of this sort of economy has also been stressed.

Although researches have been undertaken on the regional history of Orissa from the first half of the 19th century<sup>1</sup> and it grew in volume by the beginning of the 20th century<sup>2</sup> enriching our knowledge about the history of the period, the scholars have analysed the events in a general manner. Basically they dealt with the political history of the period. Only recently endeavour has been made to discuss the socio-economic dimensions of our period.

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1. Andrew Stirling is the first historian to work on Orissan history; It was published under the title, 'An Account Geographical, Statistical and Historical of Orissa proper or Cuttack' (1828).
  2. A comprehensive bibliography of works done can be found in Das, M.N. (ed.) Orissa; A comprehensive Bibliography of an Indian State, Bhubaneswar, 1978, referred to henceforth as OACBI.

As these authors<sup>3</sup> have not analysed the economy of early medieval period in a comprehensive manner, much remains to be done regarding the topic we are going to discuss.

Our discussion centres round the issues concerning the agrarian system. It is very difficult to analyse the topic in a detailed manner due to lack of space and time. Nevertheless we have tried to raise the main points and attempted to answer them as far as possible.

We have used mainly epigraphic records of our period inside and outside Orissa, archaeological remains, such as, temples and sculptures, excavation reports and

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3. Shah, A.P., Life in Medieval Orissa, CAD 600-1200, Varanasi, 1976.

Das, B.S., Studies in the economic history of Orissa, Calcutta, 1978.

Subuddhi, U., The Bhauma-Keras of Orissa, Calcutta, 1978.

Das, M.N.(ed.), Sidelights on history and culture of Orissa (Cuttack, 1977) referred to henceforth as (SHCO).



contemporary as well as later literature as our source material.

Most of the epigraphic records of our period have been edited by S.N. Rajguru<sup>4</sup>, and D.C. Sircar.<sup>5</sup>

The epigraphs furnish valuable information regarding administrative units, duties and power of different officials. But they supply scattered, fragmentary and incomplete information about patterns of agriculture and the nature of landlord-peasant-relationship. However, they yield more reliable evidence than the literary sources of the time which are based on primarily legendary and mythical themes. The presence of royal seal in many of the charters proves their authenticity.

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Eschmann, Kulke and Tripathy (ed.), The Cult of Jagannath and the Regional Tradition of Orissa, referred to henceforth as (CJRTO), Delhi, 1978.

Rath, B.K., Cultural history of Orissa, Delhi, 1983, referred to henceforth as (CHO).

4. Rajaguru, S.N., Inscriptions of Orissa Vol.I-IV (1958-66) referred to henceforth as (IO) Bhubaneswar.
5. Sircar, D.C., Select inscriptions Vol.I, Calcutta, 1965.

Unfortunately the epigraphs often refer to an unknown era or are dated in terms of regional years. This poses problems in determining the correct chronology of the various dynasties. As the problem of chronology is a complicated task beyond the scope of our work we have accepted the generally accepted date.

Monumental evidence is of use in supplying corroborative evidence regarding the existence and location of important centres of the different dynasties. We can also glean a picture about production from the items consumed in these places. Places like, Jaipur, Ratnagiri, Udayagiri-Lalitagiri complex and Kendrapara (all in Cutteck District), Puri, Bhubaneswar, Prāci valley and Dayā valley, (all in Puri District), Binka and Patne (in Bolangir), Baud and Gandharadi (in Phulbani), and Khijjing (in Mayurbhanj) contain most of the historical monuments of our period.

Although Orissa suffers from paucity of literary sources in early medieval period, works like the Rama

Carita<sup>6</sup> of Sandhya-Karanandi, the Pavanaduta<sup>7</sup> of Dhoyi, the Tirtha Cintamani<sup>8</sup> of Vacaspati Misra, are important in corroborating various points. The Rama Carita describes the State of Orissa during the rule of Palaking Rāmapala. The Pavanduta refers to Yayati nagara, the capital of "Somavamsis". The Tirtha Cintamani gives a description of various shrines at Bhubaneswar.

Purānas, such as the Ekāra Purāna,<sup>9</sup> give the details of the establishment of temples and pilgrim centres in Bhubaneswar, thus adding to our knowledge of the location of different places.

Lexicons, such as the Abhidhāna Cintamani<sup>10</sup> by

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6. Rama Carita (ed.) by H.P. Shastri, Calcutta, 1910.
  7. (ed.) by M.M. Chakravarti, Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal (New Series), JASB (NS), I, pp. 53-68, Calcutta, 1905.
  8. (ed.) K. Smrititirtha, Bibliotheca India, 1912.
  9. (ed.) R. Gargavatu, Cuttack, 1933.
  10. In Abhidhāna- Sangraha, Vol.II (New series) 1964 Varanasi.

Hemachandra (AD 1088-1172), and works like Manasollāsa<sup>11</sup> by "Someśvara, III" (AD 1127-38), constitute important sources of information regarding different crops, crafts and agriculture of Orissa.

The Mādala Pāñji,<sup>12</sup> the temple chronicle of the Lord Jagannath temple at Puri is based on a late tradition current amongst the temple priests regarding the late Somavaṅśis, the Eastern Ganges and the Suryavaṅśis. Although it preserves a substratum of historical truth,<sup>13</sup> it can be used only for cultural history of Orissa with caution. It's usefulness for the economic history of the period is minimal.

Foreign accounts like, the account of Huen-Tsang,<sup>14</sup> who provides interesting information on the fertility of

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11. (ed.) G.K. Shrigondekar, 2 Vols, Gaekward Oriental Series, Baroda 1926, 1939.
  12. (ed.) by A.B. Mohanty, Cuttack, 1940.
  13. Rath, B.K., op.cit., pp. 141-153.
  14. Beals, Buddhist records of the Western World, London.

the soil, types of crops, territorial limits of different units of Orissa, etc., and "The Regions of the World" (Hidud-al-Ālam<sup>15</sup>), which mentions geography of some places of Orissa, are useful for our purpose. So basing upon these sources, we have tried to construct the agrarian system of early medieval Orissa.

Chapter I deals with the physical setting of the region and the historical background of the various geographical units. The fertility of the soil, the use of irrigational facilities, different crops and fruits, agricultural implements, the influence of outside world upon communication net-works, important population clusters, and the role of geography in state formation, all these things, have been analysed from different angles.

Chapter II discusses Landrights and the mode of distribution of landed property among the various classes in early medieval Orissan-society. The relationship between the ruler and the landlord, between the ruler and

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15. Tr. in Russian by V. Minorsky and retranslated in English, Oxford University Press, 1937, p. 241.

the peasant, and between the landlord and the peasant, which came into being with various land-rights and claims over landed property has been analysed in Chapter III.

In Chapter IV, we have tried to answer the question, how the State structure developed and sustained the agrarian system. The general discussion on feudalism has been touched upon and we have attempted to show how land donations to secular and religious beneficiaries in an area abounded by tribals gave rise to feudal characteristics.

Before we discuss the above issues, it will be useful to trace a brief outline of the political history of our period.

After the "Sailodbhavas of Kangoda (roughly, Ganjam and Puri District), Bhauma-Karas came to rule a large stretch of territory-known as Tosāli towards the end of the first half of 8th century A.D. Tosāli comprised mainly the whole of the coastal Orissa. Bhauma-Kara era commenced from 736 AD.<sup>16</sup> Important among the Bhauma-

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16. Subuddhi, W., op.cit., pp. 63ff.

-Kara kings were "Śivakara deva I (c 756 AD - 790 AD), "Subha-Kara deva I (c 790 - 809) AD, "Subhakaradeva II (809 - 829) AD, "Śantikaradeva II (c 836 - 839 )AD and Dandī Mahādevi (c 916 AD).

While "Śivakaradeva I was the king who extended Bhauma-Kara Kingdom upto Kalīṅga, Dandī Mahādevi, the powerful woman ruler had landgrants in northern as well as southern Tosāli to her credit. It has been said<sup>17</sup> that Śubhakaradeva I bore the burnt of Rastrakuta invasion under Govinda III around 802 AD. Devapāla of Gauda is also said to have exterminated the "utkala Kula"<sup>18</sup> when Śiva Kara deva II was ruling Tosāli.

These two invasions passed through without having any long-term impact but they show the strategic importance of Tosāli at that time.<sup>19</sup> The later Bhauma-Karas and the early "Somavamāsis were contemporaries and at one

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17. Altekar, A.S., The Rastrakutas and their times, Poona, 1967, p. 65.

18. EI, II (1904), pp. 160 ff.

19. Subuddhi, U., op.cit., p.68.

stage, when Bhauma-Karas were in coastal Orissa, Somavamsis ruled parts of Western Orissa, i.e., Dakṣiṇa Kosala. The "Bhauma-Karas continued upto 940 AD when 'Somavamsis occupied this region.

From the later years of the 9th century upto the conquest by Coḍaganga deva, the Somavamsis played a spectacular role both in political and cultural spheres. Mahāśivaguptā a Janamejaya I, (885 - 925) AD of this dynasty, not only wrested a part of the Bhanja dynasty from Ranabhanja and brought the entire eastern kosala region under his control, but he also successfully repulsed the kalacuri attack in the west. It was he who encouraged brāhmanas from outside to settle in his empire by making them land donations<sup>20</sup> on a large scale. Yayāti Mahāśivaguptā I (925-55 AD), another important ruler of the dynasty, drove away the Bhanjas who tried to attack the Bhauma-Karas in northern Tosāli and later annexed the Bhauma-Kara Kingdom into that of the Somavamsis, thereby uniting utkala and Dakṣiṇa Kosala. While

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20. Rath, B., op.cit., p. 62.



Dharmaratha Mahōśivaguptā II (AD 980-1000) was powerful<sup>21</sup> enough to burn Gauda of Vīgraha pāla II (c 980 AD) and to attack Andhra country of the Vengis (c 999 AD), Rajendra Cola inflicted a crushing defeat upon another Somavamāsi King Indra-ratha in about AD 1020.<sup>22</sup>

Yayāti II (1021-1040 AD), also seems to be very powerful. He strengthened Orissa within its geographical limits proclaiming himself as the Lord of Kalinga, Kangoda, Utkala and Kōsala, the four traditional divisions of Orissa.<sup>23</sup>

It was Codaganga deva who finally ousted Somavamāsis from Orissa in about c 1110 AD. Bhanjas of Khinjali who had their kingdom in Baud-Phulbani area before the foundation of Somavamāsi kingdom became powerful enough to prevent for a while Yayāti I to occupy Bhauma-Kara Kingdom. It was Ranabhanja who consolidated the Bhanja

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21. OHRJ, Vol. XII, p. 62.(1962).

22. History and Culture of Indian People Vol. A, p.61.

23. Vide Das, M.N., op.cit., p. 96.

Kingdom. Other important kings of the dynasty were Satrubhanja, Nettabhanja II, and Silabhanja I. The Bhanjas most probably supported the last two female rulers of Bhauma-Kara dynasty to maintain their position in Bhauma-Kara throne. They appeared to have been originally the feudatories of the Bhaumas and the Somavamsis as none of the rulers are found in the records to have borne the sovereign titles of the rulers of this period.<sup>24</sup>

Another branch of Bhanjas also figured from the grants in Khijjingakota. They probably came into prominence in the first half of the 10th century AD. They ruled in an unbroken line of succession till their extinction as ruling family in 1949 AD.<sup>25</sup>

Ranabhanja c 1024 AD, and Satrubhanja c 1050 AD were two powerful rulers of this dynasty. Towards the end of the fifth century AD, a dynasty established its stronghold in Kalinga. They are known as Gangas of

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24. Panigrahi, K.C., History of Orissa, Cuttack, 1981, p. 138, referred to henceforth as (HO).

25. ibid., p. 139.

Kalinga Nagara. The beginning of the Ganga era has been fixed as 498 AD.<sup>26</sup> Indravarman I, Hastivarman, Indravarman II, Indravarman IV, Devadra Varman, Ananta Varman and Devendra Varman III were the important kings of this dynasty. By the end of 6th century AD Indravarman II was the master of entire Kalinga.

The early Gangas gave way to imperial Gangas most probably towards the end of 9th century AD. Vajrahasta V (AD 1038-1069), Rāja-Rāja I (1069-1076) and Anantavarman Codagangadeva were the famous kings of this dynasty upto the 12th century.

Taking the advantage of the weakness of Somavamāni Kings Rāja Rāja I occupied a portion of Southern Orissa. But it was Codaganga who occupied Orissa driving out the Somavamānis. The Ganga rule continued upto AD 1435, when they were overthrown by Suryavamāni King Kapilendra deva.<sup>27</sup>

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26. For a discussion on the date of early Gangas see, Ganguly, D.K., Historical Geography and Dynastic History of Orissa, referred to henceforth as (HGDHO) Calcutta, 1975, pp. 230-233.

27. Panigrahi, K.C., op.cit., pp. 152-154.

Another minor dynasty which ruled over Orissa at that time was the Nandas of Jayapura who ruled roughly from the 9th to the 10th century AD. Devananda I and Dhruvananda were the important rulers of this dynasty. Tungas of Yamgarta-mandala were powerful under Vinita tunga (c885 AD) and later under Gayada tunga. Sulkis who figured in part of Dken-kanal District towards the last part of the 8th century AD, were a dynasty of recokening under Ranastambha (c839 AD).

Thus we have seen that various rulers ruled in early medieval Orissa from different territorial units. Where as the Bhauma-Karas and the Somavamsis were the important ones among them, the other minor rulers, probably their feudatories also ruled contemporaneously.

CHAPTER I

" THE LAND AND THE PRODUCE "

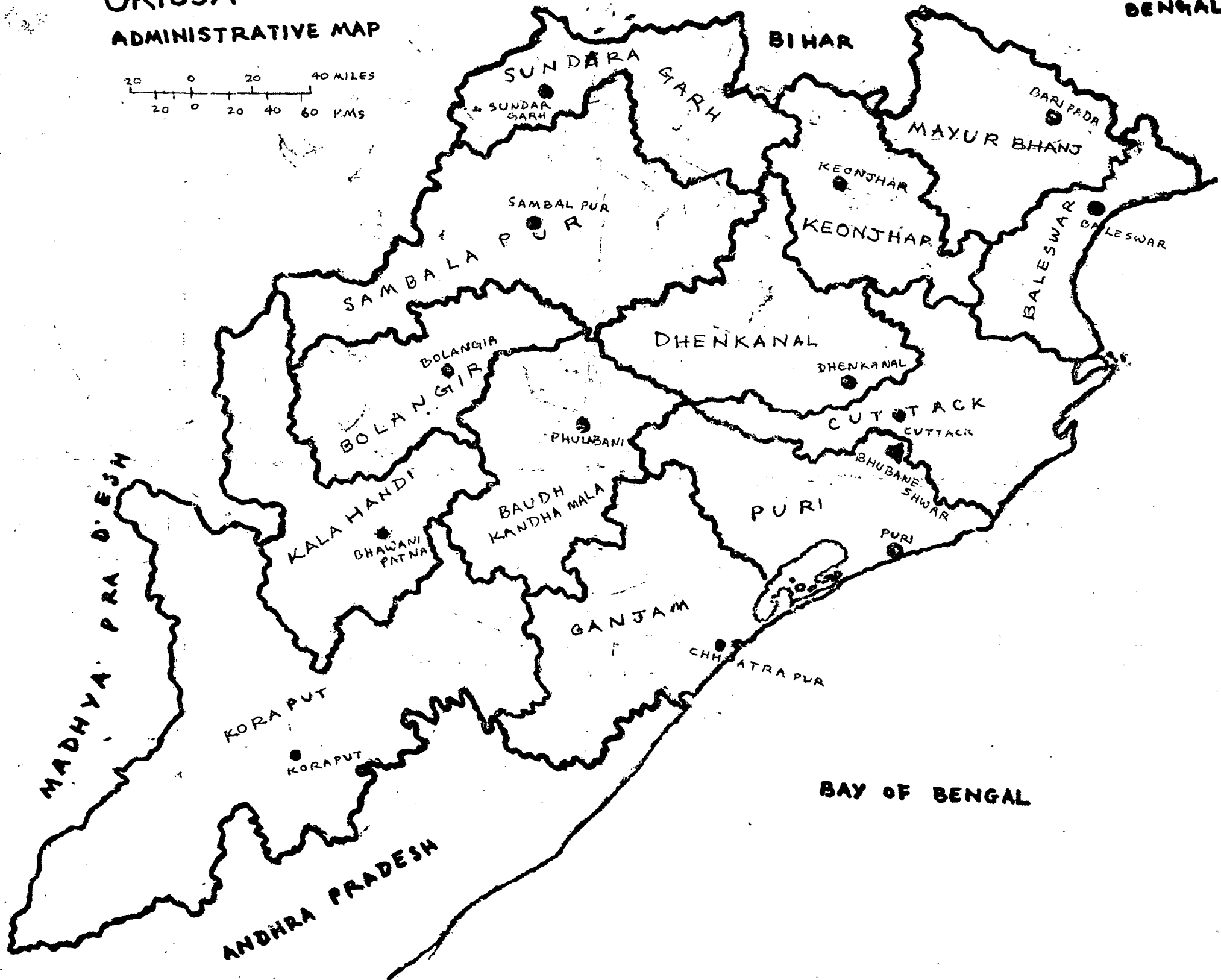
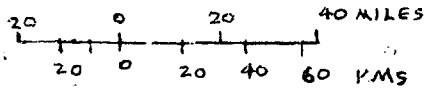
The study of the physical setting of a region helps to understand, to an appreciable degree, the different socio-economic processes associated with it. An investigation into the cultivation techniques, crop patterns, decision about starting new settlements, etc., needs the consideration of various geo-morphological determinants, the terrain, water, soil etc.

So far, little work has been done on the historical geography of early medieval Orissa.<sup>1</sup> Whatever has been

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1. Relevant discussions will be found in; Sircar, D.C., Studies in the Geography of ancient and medieval India, (Delhi, 1971), pp.134-49, pp.171-78.
- Ganguly, D.K., HGDHO.
- Misra, B., Dynasties of Medieval Orissa, (Calcutta, 1936).
- Law, B.C., Historical Geography of Ancient India, Paris, pp. 427 ff.
- Panigrahi, K.C., HO.
- Mujundar, R.C., "Physical features of Orissa", in Journal of Ancient Indian History (JAIH), I, (1967-68), pp. 73 ff.
- Sahu, N.K., "History of Kosala and Somavamsis of Utkal", in Orissa Historical Research Journal (OHRJ), III, (1954), pp. 127-36.
- Lal, H., "Bhanja Kings and their country" in Journal of Bihar Orissa Research Society (JBORS), XIV, pp. 113-116.

# ORISSA

## ADMINISTRATIVE MAP



done, does not touch upon the relevant agrarian issues and has largely confined itself to a delineation of territorial units which had different names in different periods.

The entire State of Orissa, which extends from  $17^{\circ} 49''$  N to  $22^{\circ} 34''$  N latitude and from  $81^{\circ} 27''$  E to  $87^{\circ} 29''$  E longitude on the eastern coast of India today, was not covered by any specific name in the ancient or early medieval periods. (See Map No. 1) Some geographical names, such as, Kalinga, Tosali, Utkala, Odra and Dakshina Kosala, were current but these designated certain parts of Orissa along with the other territories. It is necessary to examine the extent of these geographical units in order to have a clear picture of Orissa in the period under study.

The earliest term used for Orissa seems to be Kalinga. Ashoka and perhaps the precursor of the Mauryas,

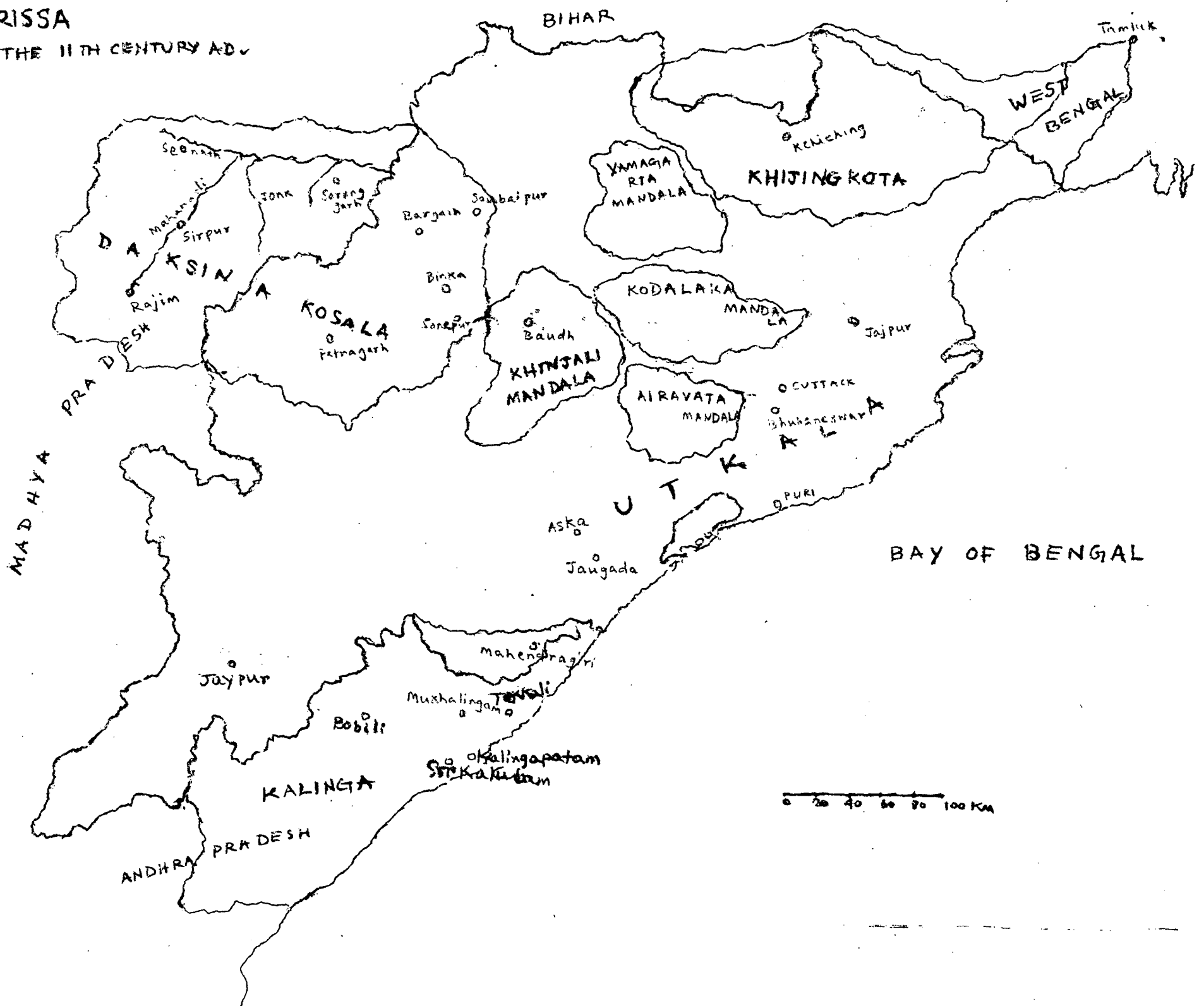
Das, M.N., (ed.) SHCO.

Mitra, R.L., Antiquities of Orissa, 2 Vols., (Calcutta, 1875-80).

Subba Rao, R., "History of Eastern Ganges of Kalinga" in Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society, VI (JAHRs).



ORISSA  
IN THE 11TH CENTURY AD



Mahāpadma Nanda,<sup>2</sup> expanded the Gāṅgetic military power structure to this area. This served as a base for Khāravēla, the chedi ruler (c 1st century AD) in later period.<sup>3</sup> Hiuen-Tsāng referred to this region as the one which lay to the south-west of kongoda with a mountain on its northern side.<sup>4</sup> But from the close of the fifth century AD till the rise of the Imperial Ganges in the 10th century, Kalinga denoted a restricted area comprising present Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh and parts of Ganjam District of Orissa.<sup>5</sup> (See Map No. 2) Tosāli and its two divisions, i.e., North Tosāli and South Tosāli stretched from Mindapore (West Bengal) in the north to parts of Ganjam in the South. It is open to question whether the river Baitarani or the river Mahanadi served as a boundary line between the

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2. Barua, Old Brahmi Inscriptions (Calcutta, 1929), pp. 288 ff.

3. ibid.

4. Beal, Buddhist Records II, pp. 207-8.

5. Ganguly, op.cit., p. 10.

two divisions.<sup>6</sup> Kongoda of the Sailodhavas was included in this Janapada.<sup>7</sup> This territorial tract remained under the Bhauma-Karas upto its inclusion within the area of the Somavamsis.

The coastal plains, named as Utkala in Bhauma-Kara and Somavamsi epigraphs seem to denote the tract between the river Kapisa (Kasai in Midnapore District) and the Baitarani river in 4th and 5th centuries AD.<sup>8</sup> The wide stretch of territory lying between Dekshina Kosala and the coastal plains by the 9th century AD was called the Odra land. (See Map No. 2). Muslim geographers (c 9th-10th century AD) probably referred to it as urshin or ursfin.<sup>9</sup> Scholars suggest that Odra and Utkala denote the same region in Hsien-Tsang's account.<sup>10</sup>

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6. S.N. Rajaguru opened Baitarani as the dividing line between the two divisions of Tosali in (Inscriptions of Orissa (IO), I, p.152), whereas D.C. Sircar suggests the river Mahanadi for the same.
  7. Rajaguru, S.N., JBORS, XVI, p. 187.
  8. Sircar, D.C., op.cit., p. 174.
  9. Panigrahi, K.C., op.cit., p. 577.
  10. Hsien-Tsang mentioned this country as "U-che" or Odra, referred in Ganguly, op.cit., p. 14.

Portions of Western Orissa, viz. Sambalpur, Sonpur,<sup>e</sup> Bamra, Raikhol region was known as Dakshina Kosala. This also comprised Rajpur and Bileaspur Districts of Madhya Pradesh. But the Somavamsis refer to the upper Mahanadi delta, i.e., the Sambalpur, Bolangir area, by the same geographical name.<sup>11</sup>

Between the main historical areas of central and western Orissa were several smaller territorial units like Kodalaka-mandala (Dhenkanal-Thalcher area), in the middle of the Brahmani valley, the Khinjali-mandala (Sonapur, Baud area) in the middle of the Mahanadi valley and the Yamagartta-mandala, in the upper Brahmani valley. Another famous isolated territory was in Khijjanga Kotta, at the upper Baitarani river, known through its ruined capital 'Khiching'.<sup>12</sup> (See Map No. 2).

These territories were either situated in the delta regions of the various rivers flowing into the Bay of Bengal or upstreams in the valleys, especially of the

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11. Banerjee, K.D., History of Orissa, pp. 210-221.

12. Referred in Kulke, H., "Early state formation and Royal legitimisation in Late Ancient Orissa", in et. al. (ed.) side lights, pp. 104-8.

central Mahānadi river. Six rivers, such as <sup>the</sup> Subarnarekhā, <sup>the</sup> Budhabalanga, <sup>the</sup> Baitarani, <sup>the</sup> Brāhmani, the Mahānadi and <sup>the</sup> Rishikulyā, developed deltas in the coastal plain. Even within the coastal plains whereas the middle coastal plain have the benefit of an active delta growth, with a high yield per unit of land, the northern plains are under-developed, the southern delta has a peculiarity of dead level flat surface with a higher frequency in a failures of rain fall.<sup>13</sup>

In early Medieval Orissa, the territorial units were usually separated from each other by mountains or jungles. Lying along the coastal region to the west is a broken rugged country with a succession of hilly ranges, with five valleys in between, which shows peninsular characteristics. The river valleys and flood plains in Orissa lie between the 76 metre and 153 metre contour lines. Interspersed within the mountain range are the rolling uplands which have mostly undulating topography. A large tract of the whole area abounded with forests,

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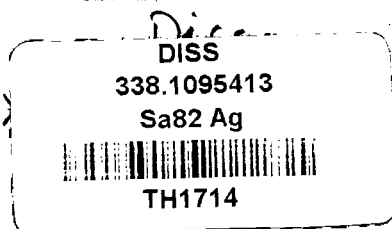
13. Sinha, B.N., "Morphological Regions of Orissa", in The Indian Geographical Review, VI, I, (August, 1961).



in earlier times. Even now about 39.12% of the total land is under forests. The abundance of forests had naturally important consequences; a larger supply of fuel and timber, large pastoral grounds and finally a favourable land: man ratio, making possible a large scale of cultivation and inducing shifting cultivation in certain areas. More extensive forests probably contributed through transpiration to marginally larger rainfall as well, but whether the difference could ever have been significant is questionable.

Although epigraphs of the period refer to, different types of land, such as Sagarttosara,<sup>14</sup> (barren-land), Sajala Sthala<sup>15</sup> (marshy land), "Sunyaksetram" (fallow or cultivable non-arable land), Prastara-Ksetram-Pramukham (rocky-land),<sup>16</sup> we find predominance of alluvial soil along the coastal zone with laterite to its western margin, black earth in middle Brāhmani uplands and yellow

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14. EI, XI, p. 96. TH-1714  
 15. ibid.  
 16. ibid., XIX, part VII, p. 278.



earth in upper Mahānadi valleys. Hiuen-Tsāng also in his account speaks of the fertility of the soil in the region of Odra and Kosala, attributing the abundance of crops and grains to that reason. Kalinga finds mention as a regularly cultivated land. These forests and jungle were continuous, fruits were abundant and the climate was hot. Kongode had a low and moist ground but that was often cultivated and productive. Likewise, as regards the crop concentration, adherence to various crops like paddy (Dhānya), cotton, oil-seeds and betel leaf, can be gleaned from the epigraphs of the period. Paddy finds mention in Bhauma-Kara and Ganga inscriptions<sup>18</sup> and in Mānsollāsa.<sup>19</sup> It has been said that during Bhauma-Kara rule price of "six Adhaka" of husked rice was four panas or cowries.<sup>20</sup> Reference to weavers in our land grants and the description of Sālmeli vrikshah silk cotton

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18. Hindol plate of subhakarā deva in JBORS XI, p.38, also a grant of land recording one-hundred measures of paddy finds mention in the inscription of Ananta-varman, in Rajaguru S.N., XO, II, part I, pp.163-64.
19. Manasollasa, III, p. 134-7 referred to in Yadav, B. N.S., Society and Culture in Northern India; in the Twelfth century, (1973, Allahabad), p. 258.
20. Misra, B., op.cit., p. 92.

tree,<sup>21</sup> testifies cotton cultivation. Grant of three puttis of land for the supply of castor oil to a god,<sup>22</sup> perpetual burning of lamps in the temple provides evidence for oil-seeds production. The daily offering of tambula in Krittivāsa temple<sup>23</sup> corroborates its production by a section of people. An inscription slightly later in time<sup>24</sup> refers to a plot of land covered with Yava (barley) go-dhuma (wheat) and iksu (sugar-cane). In modern Orissa also we find rice cultivation in coastal regions and river valleys, pulses in <sup>the</sup> Mahānadi and <sup>the</sup> Brāhmani deltas, oil-seeds in Nayagarh (Puri District), on the eastern side of the Brāhmani river, sugar-cane in southern of ~~the~~ Baikarani, Sonepur and Dhenkanal plains, cotton in <sup>the</sup> Brāhmani valley and betel-leaf in Sakshigopal (Puri District) region.<sup>25</sup> These exclude, of course the crops which were introduced

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21. EL, XXVI, p. 54. Also Rajaguru, S.N., in IO I, p. 71.
22. JAHRS, VII, part IV, p. 232.
23. OHRJ, I, No. 4, p. 302.
24. "The Nagari plates of Anangabhima deva III" (c1231 AD) in EL, XXVIII, pp. 235-258.
25. Sinha, B.N., Geography of Orissa, (New Delhi, 1981) pp. 45-47.



after sixteenth century in India, viz., maize, potato, tobacco, groundnut, chilli and tomato.<sup>26</sup>

As far as the growing of fruits is concerned, the epigraphs mention mango,<sup>27</sup> coconut,<sup>28</sup> palm,<sup>29</sup> banyan,<sup>30</sup> bel(vilva)<sup>31</sup> and tamarind.<sup>32</sup>

Of the system of agricultural production we have unluckily very little information. Any description of tools for agricultural production is not available in the sources. Surprisingly either ploughshares or hoes or spades have not so far been reported from any archaeological site.<sup>33</sup> The old Bengali literature reveals that,

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26. Habib, Irfan, "Agrarian Economy: c1200-1500 in et. al. ed. The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol. I (c1200-1750), 1984, New Delhi, p.50.
27. EL, VIII, p. 141. Also, XII, p. 241.
28. JAHRS, VIII, p. 41.
29. EL, XII, p. 241.
30. IO, II, part I, p. 114.
31. ibid. , p. 135.
32. ibid., p. 114.
33. Sahu, Bharibi Prasad, "Some Aspects of Early Orissan Economy and Society", Proceedings of the Bombay Session of the History Congress, 1980, pp.122 ff.

plough, cleaver, sickle, frame ladder sticks, husking peddal etc. were the common agricultural implements.<sup>34</sup> There are no grounds for supposing that they were in any essential particulars different from those employed in early medieval Orissa. The actual agricultural observations were handed down among the peasantry from generation to generation in the form of maxims and pithy sayings.<sup>35</sup>

Epigraphs of the period speak of the existence of tanks (tatakas) adjacent to the fields of donees.<sup>36</sup> Probably those were the major source of artificial irrigation in most areas. We begin to hear about canal from the time of the Chedi ruler Khāravela. His Hātigumpha inscription<sup>37</sup> informs us about the existence of a

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34. Dasgupta, T.C., Aspects of Bengali Society, pp. 229-30.

35. The Dakṛ Vācāna and the sayings of Khana have been assigned to the 10th century AD, Sen, D.C., Bengali Language and literature, p. 25. Also these sayings are still prevalent in the interior parts of Orissa.

36. IO, II, Part I, pp. 27, 85, 104, 154, 205, 295, 309, 319.

37. Barua, op.cit., p. 288 ff.

tivasasata year old canal in Kalinga Nagari. He had it re-dug and extended it to his capital. The large area of waste-land, including fallow and forest, means that there was little shortage of pasturage for cattle. Perhaps cattle-dung was used as manure. Although the ancient Indians were fully acquainted with the rotation of crops,<sup>38</sup> the evidence of this practice for preserving the productivity of the soil in Orissa during our period is lacking.

Agricultural strategies might have varied from one natural region to the other. In contrast to the plain areas of the coastal region, the important management decisions for agriculture were totally different in uplands and the hilly areas.

The territorial units of Orissa show outside influence. During the early centuries AD Orissa gained strong impulses towards state formation through its contact with the Empires of Harsa and Sasanka from the Northern side and with the Calukyas in the South. Even in later times, the Palas of Bengal, the Colas of the

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38. Yadav, B.N.S., op.cit., p. 257.

South and the Kalacuris in the West had a constant interest in the affairs of this region.<sup>39</sup> All these influences showed the strategic importance of the land on the one hand and the attempt to pump out its rich resources on the other. But nevertheless, 'the politics of plunder'<sup>40</sup> helped in the establishment of intra-regional and inter-regional contacts.<sup>41</sup> It can be postulated that the exchange network through outside influence led to the diversification and the expansion of the resource bases of the various geographical localities.

Similarly, the influence of the littoral region, to which a brisk maritime activity has been ascribed in the early centuries of the Christian era<sup>42</sup> and in late medieval period,<sup>43</sup> is uncertain in early medieval times.

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39. Panigrahi, K.C., op.cit., pp. 177b.

40. The idea has been elaborated by Spencer, G.W., in "The Politics of Plunder; The Colas in 11th century Cylon", Journal of Asian Studies (JAS), 1976, pp. 405-19.

41. Stein, B., Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India, 1980, pp. 35-42.

42. The early ports were Tamralipti (Tamluk-Midnapore Dist. of West Bengal), Cheli-ta-lo (Puri), Poloura-Dentapura (Palur of Ganjam) and Pithunda (Near Kalinga pattanam), Behara, K.S., "Maritime trade in Ancient Orissa", in Side Lights ... pp. 115 ff.

43. By 17th century ports like Hijli (in Balasore), Balasore, Kanika (in Balasore), Raipur, Harishpur (in Cuttack), were on the coast of Orissa. Referred to Habib, I., An Atlas of the Moghul Empire, 12B (for Orissa).

Sculptural representations showing boats carrying elephants collected from the Brahmsevera temple, Konārka temple and Jagannatha temple, indicate trade in elephants, for which the title of 'Gajapati' (the lord of the elephants) assumed by the medieval Orissan kings was befitting. Even the discovery of Roman bulls at Sisupalgarh and Roman coins in Mayurbhanj region shows its early contact with outside world.<sup>44</sup> From the Chinese writer Wang Ta-yuan (14th century), we learn that because of the cheapness of living in Orissa, nine out of ten persons going there for trade did not like to return home. Rice, which was the staple food of the people was sold at the unbelievable low price of 46 baskets for one cawrie. China used to receive precious stones, ivory, pepper, betel-nuts, drugs and fine textile fabrics for which Kalinga was famous.<sup>45</sup> The continuation of non-agricultural products along with agricultural ones have some indirect corroboration in epigraphic sources of our period.<sup>46</sup> The non-agriculture products might have boosted the production of agricultural goods.

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44. Behar, K.S., op.cit., p. 117.

45. Ibid.

46. Sah, A.P., op.cit., pp. 97-105.

Topographical and climatological elements certainly shaped the potentialities of inter-action among the people of different geographical units. The littoral border of the coastal plain might have served as a route-zone, connecting Bengal with the coromandal plain. Each of the streams of Orissa, besides providing focuss of significant population clusters, has served to connect the uplands with other more densely settled tracts. Political factors too, seem to have played some part in determining the alignment of some of the routes. The unification of Orissan geographical tracts under the Somavamsis presumably increased the contact between western Orissa and the people of the coastal region. The physical condition regulates both the agricultural production and the distribution of population in a country until the arrival of an advanced stage of industrialisation. Even today 23.11% of the total population of Orissa are tribals.<sup>47</sup> These tribals concentrate in areas of high relief and high slope, in hills and forests. The fertile coastal tract accounts only 15.29% of the total area, it accommodates 35.01% of its total population.<sup>48</sup> If there was any variation in early

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47. According to the 1971 census.

48. Sinha, B.N., The Geography ..., p. 81.

medieval Orissa, from the present state of relative density of population, it might have been owing to the fact that some very large tracts in the zone of medium or heavy rainfall were under the dense forest and so were lightly populated, in spite of the rich harvests attained in the clearings. Another possibility is that the capitals or the centres of the small Kingdoms of our period had more population than other areas. Places such as Virajā (Jajpur in Cuttack), Dhrtipura (some Purbud region), Mankara on the bank of <sup>the</sup> river Manḍākinī, Kodālake (Koalu in Dhenkanal), Khinjinga Kota (Khiching, Mayurbhanj), Jayapura (Jayapura in Dhenkanal), Suvarnapur, Murisimā, Vinitapur (Sonepur, Binika area of Bolangir) and Yayāti Nagar may be considered for that purpose.<sup>49</sup>

These centres also acted as the nerve centres of communication in the respective small Kingdoms. We find the construction of large structural temples, such as, Mukteśvara Rājarāni, Brahmeśvara and Lingerāja temples at Bhubaneswar and Kōśaleswara and Someśvara temples at Bolangir (near Sonepur and Patnagarh) etc., during our

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49. Ganguly, op.cit., pp. 40-77.

period.<sup>50</sup> Apart from serving as nodal points of communication, these temples also regulated the agricultural production. For, the offerings of food along with the other things, such as incences, flowers and lamps, was a normal feature necessary for ritual performances. The extent of the use of non-agricultural products is not clear. Possibly the role of Orissa temples was not as important as in the economic sphere was that of the Cola temples of the time in Tamilnad.<sup>51</sup> We also do not know whether all the temple sites served as places of pilgrimage. Bhubaneswar is mentioned as Ekārma<sup>52</sup> in the puranas, but there is no clear reference to Śrīksetra (Puri<sup>53</sup>) before the Gangas. The pilgrimage centres might have had the distinction of being the centres for transection of

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50. Sircar, D.C., "A note on the Geneology of the Somavamsis" in Indian Historical Quarterly (IHQ), XI, 1, 1944, pp. 76-82; and in "The later Somavamsis". OHRJ, I, 4 (1952), pp. 289-300.
51. Stein, B., Peasant State ..., op.cit., pp. 169 ff.
52. Ensink, J., "Problems of the study of pilgrimage in India" in Indologica Tourinensia, Vol.II (1974), pp. 57-79.
53. Kulke, H.; Eschmann, Tripathy (Ed.), The cult of Jagannatha and the regional tradition of Orissa, Delhi, 1978, pp. 12 ff.



agricultural and non-agricultural goods. But whether they served as in-land-trade centres too, needs more information, and our sources for this supposition are inadequate. Here comes the role of geography in early state formations. Although, large state structure of the early medieval period thrived in the revenue-potent areas like the Gāngas Basin, Kāveri Basin, Krishnā-Godāvari Doab and Raichur Doab, other places such as Warangal, the base of Kakatiya State and Anahilapataka of Calukyas of Gujrat did not have the characteristic of a nuclear region.<sup>54</sup> It has been said that the topography of the small Kingdoms which sprang up in early medieval Orissa and their spatial distribution remained almost unchanged from the 6th to the 11th and the 12th centuries.<sup>55</sup> But the growth of small Kingdoms was facilitated by the mountainous character of the region, not because of their agricultural potency. Archaeological remains from different sites of early Christian era

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54. Chattopadhyaya, B.D., "Political Process and Structure of Polity in Early Medieval India: Problems of Perspective", Presidential Address, Ancient India Section, Burdwan Session of Indian History Congress, 1983, pp. 14-15.

55. Kulke, "Early State ...", op.cit., p. 105.

suggest that the process of cultural development was simultaneous, both in the littoral districts and the western rolling uplands.<sup>56</sup>

The importance of a region, however, is related to the convergence of historical factors and not merely to its resource potential. After Ashoka and Khāravēla, it was the Somavāṁśis who for a few generations, united their homeland in western Orissa with the fertile delta area of central Orissa. They had their base in a less fertile area in comparison to the coastal plains. Most probably this union occurs due to the super military mobilisation capacity of the said rulers. The small Kingdoms after Khāravēla were ruled mostly by petty chieftains having local roots and they came under the sway of stronger dynasties like that of the Somavāṁśis only because of their military power. The use of the geographical situations only as an explanation of early medieval state formations is quite inadequate.

The evidence that we have been able to use in this section is suggestive in many respects and seldom conclusive. New discoveries and perceptions are to be expected on this aspect which will doubtless considerably enlarge our present understanding.

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56. Sahu, B.P., op.cit., p. 122.

**CHAPTER II**

**"LAND RIGHTS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF LANDED PROPERTY"**

Any discussion on agrarian structure brings the landownership issue to the forefront. The various rulers of our period granted land to vassals, officials, temples and above all to the brahmanas, which led to fragmentation of land in Orissa.

It is not possible to provide a statistical account of the villages granted to the different donees because we have no information regarding the total number of endowments made over to them (See Appendix- A). What has made the study of land-rights more difficult is that, guided by recent practice, modern scholars always think in terms of absolute rights in Land and ignore the possibility of varying rights of various parties, based more on custom than any well-established law.<sup>1</sup>

It has been said that the King's power to grant villages alongwith various rights suggests that he was the ultimate owner of land. But we come across rights of different parties over the same piece of land in our period. Legal texts of the time also recognise this.

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1. Sharma, R.S., Indian Feudalism, Calcutta, 1965, p. 136.

Medieval India jurists conceived of property as subdivisible. Thus we find mention of the svatva of the King, the svatva of the land-owner, the svatva of the tenant farmer, and even the svatva of the mortgagee in possession, thus giving rise to various categories of ownership.<sup>2</sup>

The king may have acquired rights over the soil as the representative of the community, but he was never conscious of it in early medieval times.<sup>3</sup> The kings who made grants in all parts of their kingdoms, always did so with the avowed object of securing religious merit for themselves and for their parents, they did not do so for the spiritual benefit of the community or the kingdom. Hence it is obvious that land was being granted by them in their individual capacity as private land-owners. In an age in which the rulers were viewed and also functioned to a considerable extent as private persons, royal ownership of land could not have been conterminous with state ownership.<sup>4</sup>

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2. Derrett in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Vol. 2, 1956, p. 484.

3. Sharma, R.S., op.cit., p. 144.

4. Yadav, B.N.S., op.cit., p. 253.

Significant in this context are a number of epigraphs which reveal that, the donees were endowed with the rights, generally extending, not only over land, but also over water and everything that existed on land.<sup>5</sup> Their authority over the people (Prakrti) was also mentioned in some cases.<sup>6</sup> The endowments were gifted to the grantees generally on a permanent basis and the future rulers also were requested not to alter these terms. This shows that practically the ownership of land was conferred upon the grantees. It may be noted that Mitaksara postulates the transfer of proprietary right also in connection with the landgrants.

The rulers and their close relatives, held some landed property under their direct jurisdiction. The rājñis (queens) probably had their personal estates particularly under the Bhauma-Karas who could boast of

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5. JBORS, II, p. 404 (1916).

6. ibid., pp. 426-27.

7. Mitaksara on Yaj, I, p. 318, quoted by Yadav, B.N.S., op.cit., p. 252.

8. EI, III, p. 47, plate F., II, pp. 33-34.

six women rulers. This seems also to be true of the rāja putras one of whom was given as dowry a taxfree village by a high officer of Vajrahasta.<sup>9</sup>

Sometimes the queens and the mother of the king granted land for religious purposes.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps they gave away the lands from their private estates.

Earlier texts expatiate on the merits of grants of villages for religious purposes, but do not recommend large scale grants for secular purposes, which is unequivocally done by the Mansollāsa, a work of the 12th century.<sup>11</sup> Of the land assignments mentioned herein, we may note the gift of desyam presumably exempt from taxes, karajam, a similar gift with the obligation to pay taxes and grāmajam, the gift of a village, with or without taxes.

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9. Ibid., 31, 11, pp. 9-15.

10. OHRJ-I, No.4 (1952), p. 269.  
EI, XI, pp. 100 ff.

11. Quoted by Sharma, R.S., op.cit., p.203.

Orissa in early medieval times, has more copperplate land grants than Bengal and Bihar.<sup>12</sup> In this region, ministers, astrologers, rānakas and Sāmantas, etc., were granted land on auspicious occasions, apparently for services rendered to their overlord.

The Sonavansi ruler Mahābhavagupta I (935-70 AD) granted<sup>13</sup> four villages in Kosala by three landcharters to his brāhmana chief minister Sadharana. The Nanda King Devananda III<sup>14</sup> (899 AD) granted a village in the Cuttack district to Yasodatta, his Kayastha minister of peace and war. A copperplate of the Bhanja ruler Yasabhanja deva of Khinjali refers to his allotment of a village with all the usual rights to an astrologer (Jyotisi) Jagadhara Sarma. Jayabhanja, the younger brother of the above mentioned Bhanja King also granted another village to the same astrologer.<sup>15</sup> Both charters are dated in the second half of the 12th century AD. The

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12. Ibid., p.

13. BI, III, p. 345.

14. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (JASB), XL, (1944) 3, pp. 166-8.

15. BI, XVIII, 29, 11, pp. 19-29.  
Ibid., XIX, 43 and fn. 1.



astrologer may have earned assignments from the Bhanjas for his services in making calanders. However, widespread belief in astrology was a feature of the early medieval times, so the rulers also engaged astrologers for predicting the future for them.

The bhūpālas,<sup>16</sup> literally the protectors of the earth were notified in some land grants under the Bhanjas of khijjina towards the end of the tenth century.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps they were feudatories as the designation looks like a feudatory rank.

The terms bhogī occur frequently in the Bhaumakera and Bhañja charters.<sup>18</sup> The literal meaning of the term suggests that the bhogī did not have to pay any revenues for the land held by him. Under a Somavansi ruler<sup>19</sup> the bhogīs formed a group known as bhogī jana.

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16. Indian Antiquity (IA), XVIII, pp. 173-74.

17. JBORS, IV, p. 176 (1918).

18. EI, II, 57, I, p. 16.

19. IHQ, XXIV, 2 (1959).

A village headman appears as brhad-bhogi in Bhaumakara grants.<sup>20</sup> He probably enjoyed more villages than a bhogi.

The ranakas were another group of landholders. The Somavamsi ruler Mahabhaya gupta II (1000-15) granted a village to ranaka Racco, the grandson of a bhatta brahmana who had emigrated from Sravasti mandala.<sup>21</sup>

Some ranakas were assigned more than one village as can be inferred from a charter through which a ranaka under Vajrahasta<sup>22</sup> (1038-70) regranted a village.

One mahasamanta Vatta<sup>23</sup> son of Samanta Mundi<sup>24</sup> finds mention in Bhanja records, to whom, the two successive Bhanja rulers of Khijjinga allotted villages. Although we have no epigraphic records to show that the Samantas were endowed with land, their later position

20. Ibid., XII, p. 221, II, pp. 27-40 (1945).

21. EI, III, 47, Pl.F. II, pp. 28-42.

22. EI, III, 31, p. 222.

23. JASB, XL, 3, pp. 166-8.

24. Ibid., p. 168.

as important land-owning elements in Orissa seems to have developed out of their enjoyment of service grants in early medieval period.

Sometimes the ranakas were influential enough to prevail upon their overlords to grant lands. Sivakara III, a Bhauma-kara King<sup>25</sup> (885 AD), donated a village for the worship of Budha-Bhattaraka at the request of ranaka Vinita tunga. Similarly a certain Pulinda raja, probably a tribal chieftain,<sup>26</sup> requested another Bhauma-kara king Subhakara II to grant a village for the god Vidyanaatha Bhattaraka. The bhupala, bhogi, brhad-bhogi, Samanta, Mahasamanta and ranaka, all appear to be different categories of vassals in Orissa.

The service grants of the Ganga rulers seem to have been made to Nayakas. According to a charter<sup>27</sup> issued in the year 526 of the Ganga era under Madhukamarnava three villages were formed into a Veisya-

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25. Misra, B., op.cit., pp. 40-50.

26. JBORS, XVI, pp. 69-83 (1930).

27. Madras Report on Epigraphy (MRE), 1918-19, Appendix A, p. 5.

agrahara and granted to certain Erapa, Nāyak of the Vaiśya caste.<sup>27</sup> Nāyak, literally the Chief, seems to be a military functionary as was the case in later times under the Kings of Vijayanagara.<sup>28</sup> But the significance of the Vaiśya-agrahāra is not indicated in the epigraphs. Perhaps Nāyaka mentioned here was the chief of the Vaisyas. But no definite conclusion can be made due to lack of information.

The brahmana donees far outnumbered the secular assignees in our period. Rulers of all dynasties such as the Bhauma-karas, Tungas, the Bhanjas, the Somavamsis and the Gangas, granted land to the brahmanas.

Generally individual brāhmanas were granted land but sometimes the number of beneficiaries ranged from two to two-hundred. A Bhauma-kara king of 8th century AD<sup>29</sup> granted two villages, after combining these into one unit, to two-hundred brāhmanas. The Tunga ruler

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28. Stein, B., op.cit., pp. 399-402.

29. Neulpur grant of Subhakaradeva, Misra, B., op.cit., p. 4.

Gayada Tunga gifted away the productive land of a village to eleven brāhmanas in one case<sup>30</sup> and in another he distributed a village among three brāhmanas.<sup>31</sup> As the villages are identified in the present Dhenkanal District of Orissa,<sup>32</sup> they were probably granted in the tribal areas, excepting the last mentioned which seems to have been in the settled area.<sup>33</sup>

The Ganga rulers granted the largest number of villages to the brāhmanas. It was quite natural in view of the large extent of the Ganga State and its long duration in Orissa. However, we see that one 'Sāmanta Varman',<sup>34</sup> granted a village to four brāhmanas in the District of Dagh pancali. Similarly Ganga king Indravarman donated a village to the brāhmana residents of Andorakagrahara.<sup>35</sup>

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30. JASB (NS), V, pp. 347-50 (1909).

31. EI, XIX, p. 42.

32. Although the places are not definitely identified, they were in the Dhenkanal Dist. as the findings spot is Talcher. U. Subudhi, op.cit., pp. 86 ff.

33. Ibid.

34. IO, II part I, pp. 10-11, EI, XXVII, p. 216.

35. EI, XXVII, pp. 39-40, XIX, part I, pp. 37-42.

Again records of Devendravarman<sup>36</sup> refer to the grant of a village to three brāhmanas.

The instances quoted above show that brāhmana beneficiaries were far greater in number than the secular-ones in Orissa.

Epigraphic records of landgrants to temples are also not inconsiderable. Lodhia plates of the Somavamsi king Mahāsivagupta Rājadeva<sup>37</sup> mentions the gift of the village Vaidyapradraka for the worship of god 'Siva Isanesvara with music, dance and feeding of devotees. An inscription<sup>38</sup> of Ganga ruler Vajrahasta (936 AD) states that certain lands, alongwith twenty four she-buffaloes were granted to the Vatesvara and Viresvara gods. Anantavarman Codagangadeva gave away villages for the worship of goddess Bhagavati<sup>39</sup> and for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the shrine of Krittivāsa.<sup>40</sup>

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36. Ibid., pp. 214-16, JAHRS, II, Part II, pp. 146-77.  
 37. Ibid., Part VII, pp. 323-24.  
 38. JAHRS, VI, Nos. 3-4, p. 202.  
 39. Ibid., VII, No. 2, p. 26.  
 40. OHRJ, I, No. 2, p. 7 (1952).

In some cases, the queens and king's mother gifted land for religious purposes. Mahadevi Vijaya, the queen of Ranabhanj<sup>41</sup> gave away lands for the worship of Vijayesvara Siva. The queens of Nettabhanja deva<sup>42</sup> donated a village to 14 brahmanas. The mother of the Somavamsi king Mahasivagupta constructed a separate temple of Hari at Sripura and donated a number of villages to vedic brahmanas engaged in the worship of the deity.<sup>43</sup> Many such instances of donations to the temples may be furnished.

Although entire villages or groups of villages were often donated, it was no less usual to allot areas of a much smaller extent, such as parts of a village, or plots of land. The Bhanja ruler Nettabhanja gave away a piece of land (Khanda Ksetra) in Khinjali Visaya<sup>44</sup> to a brahmana.

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41. EI, XX, pp. 100 ff.

42. OHRJ, I, No. 4, p. 269.

43. EI, XVII, Part VII, p. 321.

44. JBORS, XX, p. 100 (1934).

The Narasimhapalli grants of Ganga king Hartivarman state the assignment of only six halas of land to god Nārāyana.<sup>45</sup>

So we have seen that land was given away to vassals, officials, temples and the brāhmanas. Apart from the donated villages, there must have been other villages, where the land owners were to furnish a part of the produce as the royal share. In those ones, it may be assumed that peasants held land-holdings tilling them directly or indirectly, paying-off revenues to the ruler.

In order to know the pattern of land distribution, it is essential to discuss various rights of donees, the system of land tenure and land-measurement and the procedures which were followed in land denotions.

To begin with, the donees exercised various rights on the basis of land charters granted to them. They were generally endowed with tax-free villages without any restraint (Sakala-badha-virodha-ādi-rahita).

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45. IO, II, Part I, p. 15.



The dues granted to the donee along with land included fines, taxes, nidhi-upanidhi, etc.

A Somavamsi record of the 10th century AD<sup>46</sup> mentions the grant of a village with dasaparādha, which means rights to the proceeds of the fines imposed for the commission of offences, together with all revenues such as bhoga, bhaga, kara, hiranya, upari-kara, nidhi, upanidhi, etc. We find that rights generally extended not only over land but also everything that existed on it. The Dhenkanal plate of the Sulki ruler Kulastambha deva<sup>47</sup> refers to the grant of a village together with land, water, forest etc. within its boundaries. Yasobhanjadeva of Khinjali<sup>48</sup> granted a tax-free village called Patikomayana, with its trees, creepers, thickets and forest (aranya).

Some fiscal rights, appropriate to forest areas find mention in Somavamsi charters. Somavamsi ruler Mahā-sivagupta IV who ruled over Western Orissa in the beginning

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46. IHQ, XX, p. 242 (1944).

47. JBORS, II, p. 404 (1916).

48. EI, XVIII, No. 29, pp. 298-99.

of 11th century AD,<sup>49</sup> conferred villages along with the right of killing snakes (abidand) and elephants (hasti-danda). The present grant carried rights to all future taxes (bhavisyata kara).<sup>50</sup> In a like manner, the later Somavamsi king Somesvaradeva assigned plots of land (Khanda Ksetra), belonging to two villages, with the rights of enjoyment of ivory (hasti-danta), tiger-skin (Vgaghra-Carma) various animals (nanā-vana-cara) as well as different trees such as tamarind and palmyra along-with forests.<sup>51</sup>

One of the striking features of landgrants made by donors in settled areas was the transfer of not only village with various kinds of dues but also with weavers (tantuvāya), brewers (Saundika), cow-herds (go-kuta) and other subjects (Prakrtikah), as the Dhenkanal grant of Tribhuvana mahadevi indicates.<sup>52</sup> Possibly the various other categories of artisans and peasants are covered by the term Prakrti, which stands for the general inhabitants of the village.<sup>53</sup>

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49. JBORS, XVII, pp. 17-18, pp. 29-49.

50. Ibid., 11, pp. 37-49.

51. EI, XXVIII, Part VII, p. 327, 11, pp. 3-8.

52. JBORS, 11, pp. 426-27.

53. Sharma, R.S., op.cit., p. 234.

This practice was followed not only by the Bhaumakara rulers, but also by their feudatories, the Bhanjas<sup>54</sup> and the Tungas.<sup>55</sup> A similar provision occurs in some twelfth century candella inscriptions which transfer artisans, peasants and traders to the donees.<sup>56</sup> But in Orissa this practice prevailed on a far wider scale and for a longer period of time.

By the beginning of the 11th century when the Agni-purana was finally compiled, the system of transferring peasants along with the land, received the sanction of the compiler of this purana. It recommends that villages with agricultural peasants (Khetuka) should be transferred to the brahmanas. It also advises that temples and mathas should be provided with land and slaves and given facilities for dance and music.<sup>57</sup>

So we notice the various instances which state that the dances enjoyed not only fiscal rights, but also

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54. JBORS, XVI, pp. 81-83 (1930), EI, XXIX, pp. 85-86. IHQ, XXI, p. 221 (1945).

55. EI, XXV, No. 14, PL. 11, pp. 12-20.

56. Ibid., XI, No. 14, B. Plates, 1.19.

57. Vide Sharma, R.S., op.cit., p. 231.

customary communal rights in land, such as rights over trees, forests, animals, etc. This development however was not typical of Orissa, the transfer of all agrarian rights enjoyed by the villagers was a usual feature in the medieval grants of Northern India.<sup>58</sup>

Although our knowledge of the system of land tenure during early medieval Orissa is vague and incomplete, we can throw some light on this subject from the scattered references in our epigraphs. Certain forms of land-tenure such as nivi-dharma aksaya-nivi-dharma and bhumicidra pidhananyaya, prevailed in case of religious grants.

The Hindol plates of Subhakaradeva state that a village named Noddilo was granted in accordance with the maxim of nivi.<sup>59</sup> Scholars differ on the interpretation of the term nivi-dharma. Whereas K.P. Jayaswal<sup>60</sup> opines that the nivi of the epigraphs should be translated as a despatch, or record and aksaya-nivi as a permanent

58. Ibid., p. 235.

59. JBORS, XVI, p. 81.

60. IA, 1918, p. 51.

document, others like Basak<sup>61</sup> explain it as the fixed capital, 'muladravya' or 'muladhana', taking the use of the word nivi from Amarakosa<sup>62</sup> and from Abhidhāna Cintāmani of Hemachandra.<sup>63</sup> The latter view seems to be more acceptable than the former one. Hence, to grant land according to nividharma, is to give it as a perpetual endowment. The donee can only enjoy the endowment, without transferring it to any body.<sup>64</sup>

Aksaya nivi-dharma can better be taken as an extension of the form nivi-dharma, adding more emphasis to the permanency of the endowment by the word aksaya before it. The lands, gifted according to this principle of aksaya-nivi was in no circumstances to be destroyed or diminished.<sup>65</sup> Perhaps the endowments<sup>66</sup> made according to the above type of land tenures carry with them only usufructuary rights and not proprietary rights.

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61. Ibid.

62. Amara. 9, 80, p. 218.

63. Hema, III, 533 and 337.

64. Meity, S.K., Economic Life in Northern India in the Gupta period, AD 300-500, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 38-39.

65. Ibid., p. 39.

66. BI, XIVIII, Part VII, p. 331.

The term bhūmī-cchidrāpīdhava-nyāya appears as a typical word in Orissa during our period. It occurs in the epigraphs of the Bhauma-karas and the Gangas.

The inscriptions of other regions mentions the term bhūmicchidra-nyāya which indicated a custom according to which a person who brought a piece of fallow or jungle land under cultivation for the first time was allowed to enjoy it as a rent-free holding.<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps bhūmī-cchidrā-pīdhāna-nyāya is same as the bhūmī-cchidra-nyāya as D.C. Sircar opines.<sup>68</sup> As regards its applications, the maxim clearly indicates permanent land tenureship and the property endowed under this rule is freely handed over from generation to generation. When preceded by the expression alekhani-prave-sataya<sup>69</sup> (no employment of pen), this principle of land-tenure seems to have further stipulated that the land

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67. D.C. Sircar in BI, XLIX, Part IV, p. 89, 1.32.

68. Ibid., p. 86.

69. Ibid., p. 86.

possessed under this maxim can not be entered into the register, which means that the donees were entitled to enjoy only the income from the gifted land but had no power to sell it.<sup>70</sup> So it also confers usufructuary rights on the donee. We have seen that various types of land tenures discussed above only indicated usufructuary rights of ownership for the donee.

Orissa developed an elaborate system of land measurement. We find various kinds of land-measurement mentioned in the records of different dynasties of our period. We have no information regarding the total land area under cultivation in early medieval Orissa. An impression gathered from the land survey supposed to have been undertaken by the Ganga king Anangabhima deva II towards the end of 12th century AD<sup>71</sup> provides that 47, 48,000 vāṭis of land were under cultivation

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70. Sircar, D.C. (ed) Land System and Feudalism in ancient India, Calcutta (1966), p. 18.

71. Madalā Pañjī (ed), A.B. Mohanty, 1969, p. 31.

during his time.<sup>72</sup> Although the correctness of this estimate is doubtful, the cultivated land area was less than the above mentioned area in early medieval times before the conquest of imperial Ganges. The imperial Ganges had a vast empire in comparison to their predecessors of early medieval times.<sup>73</sup>

In the Bhauma-kera and Tunga inscriptions māla is mentioned as a unit of measurement. The Anagul copper plate<sup>74</sup> of Dharmamahādevi records the donation of ten mālas of land. The land charter of Gayadatunga-deva.<sup>75</sup> (11th century AD), mentions the distribution of the donated village situated in the Yamagartta mandala in the following way:

- (i) 1/6th māla to Dālo
- (ii) 1/6th māla to Trivikrama and Purusottama
- (iii) 1/6th māla to Nārāyana

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72. Panda, S.K., "The pattern of land and agriculture in medieval Orissa AD 1000-1600", PIHC, 1980, p. 271.

73. Panigrahi, K.C., op.cit., pp. 155-56.

74. JAS, XVII, No. 3, p. 246.

75. JASB (NS), 1909, p. 348.



- (iv) 1/18th māla to five brothers
- (v) 1/18th māla to visnu
- (vi) 1/18th māla to Ghallo
- (vii) 1/18th māla to Trilocana
- (viii) 1/12th māla to three brothers
- (ix) 1/12th māla to Manorava and Devasarmā
- (x) 1/12th māla to Sadhovana
- (xi) 1/36th māla to Baladeva

It is not possible to conclude whether the term māla denote the same measure as mā, which is 1/20th of a veli.<sup>76</sup> Presumably this unit of land measurement was applied to the areas of high land, non-arable in nature.<sup>77</sup> The land measuring unit hala was current in the Ganga Kingdom. The plough-measure is technically called hala. The use of the hala in land-grants means as much of land as could be easily cultivated with one plough in a day.<sup>78</sup> This type of measurement was in use in different parts of Northern India. In the works of Panini and Patanjali,

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76. Et, VII, No. 20, p. 143.

77. māla still denotes high land area in Oriya language. The Yamagratta mandala, Supra, Chap.I, was an area abounded with mainly forests.

78. Shah, A.P., op.cit., p. 86.

hala is found used in the sense of a land measure. The use of hala as a land measuring unit shows the prevalence of plough cultivation and points to the fact that the land donated for the purpose was either cultivable land or cultivated land.<sup>79</sup> Depending upon the land and the oxen, perhaps one hala of land was equal to one acre as is the case even nowadays in Orissa, the extent of land supposed to be cultivated by a plough in one day.

Vāti was another measure of land during the Ganga rule. According to Wilson's Glossary of Judicial and Revenue terms, a vāti of land in Orissa is equal to twenty mānas.<sup>80</sup> A māna seems to be equal to a bighā and is said to be equal to 25 gunthes at Cuttack.<sup>81</sup> D.C. Sircar opines that vāti is sometimes regarded as equal to 12½ acres of land.<sup>82</sup> Even the vāti varies in areas

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79. Sharma, R.S., op.cit., p. 36.

80. BI, XXVIII, Part VI, p. 244.

81. Ibid.

82. Shah, A.P., op.cit., p. 87.

in different parts of Orissa today. Putti as a land measuring unit appears in the epigraph of Ganga king Vajra hasta III (AD 1058).<sup>83</sup> More likely, putti was the extent of land sown by one putti (basket type) full of seed. The extent of land covered by one putti varies from five to eight acres.

The term muraja or muraja which occurs in Gautami plates of Indravarman<sup>84</sup> seems to be a land measurement. But the extent of land indicated by this term is not known. As in the inscriptions of Bengal,<sup>85</sup> drona-vāpa was used as a term for land measurement in early medieval Orissa.

The expression drona-vāpa is used as a term of land measure denoting the area of land, possessed of the capacity of bearing one drona of seed. A drona-vāpa of land is known to be equal to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 acres.<sup>86</sup>

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83. JAHRS, VI, Parts 3-4, p. 208.

84. IO, 11, Part I, p. 294, I, 29.

85. EI, XIV, pp. 156 ff.

86. Maity, S.K., op.cit., p. 59.

We find different land measuring units were in currency in Orissa of our period. There was no uniform method of land-measurement. The Gāngas used many land measuring units, then the other kings of early medieval Orissa. Perhaps in other kingdoms land was not so well demarcated as in the Gāngas kingdom, when it was given away to the beneficiaries. Exhibitory in this respect might have been used to their advantage by the donees.

We meet with references of land-sale in our epigraphs. The Madras museum plates of Narendradhavalā assigned to the 10th century AD<sup>87</sup> records that a person Sedā purchased a village from Silabhaṅgadeva as a Kraya-sāsana (deeds of purchase) paying some rupyaka or money.

Some years later, the village was sold by Sama Sedā to three persons on receipt of an amount of rupayakas, specified as 10 palas, 2 moshas and 4 gunjas. Without having any information of this kind from other parts of Orissa, it is hard to believe that land sale was a widespread practice in our period.

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87. BI, XXVIII, Part II, pp. 49-50.

On the eve of the land donation certain procedures were followed. The declarations of the grant was made known to villagers (Kutumbin), village headman, officials, feudatories and brahmanas etc.<sup>88</sup> Finally, the gift ceremony was completed with pouring of water. The intention behind these procedures was probably to bring the land-grants to everybody's knowledge within that village so that little chance would be there to infringe the donation.

The distribution of landed property to numerous donees through landgrants, with various rights and with deeds of permanent land-tenure, was accomplished in our period. We have also examined the various claims of ownership over land. From our discussion it becomes clear that land was in the possession of the rulers as private land owners. We have no evidence to show communal ownership of land. The possibility of independent farmers cultivating their field was also there.

The agrarian relationships which the land-endowments generated will be discussed in the following chapter.

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88. EI, XIX, p. 137 and III, pp. 44-45  
JBORS, 11, pp. 426-27.

CHAPTER - III

'AGRARIAN RELATIONS AND LAND REVENUE'

It is not possible to draw a clear picture of the system of agrarian relations in our period. The evidence is so fragmentary. We can only present such evidence as we have for the various aspects of the system and attempt on its basis a tentative reconstruction.

It is best to begin with an examination of the nature and magnitude of the land revenue. Different fiscal terms occur in the records of the different ruling houses of our period. In the epigraphs of the Somavamsis and the Gaṅgas, we find the mention of the expression bhoga-bhoga-Kara. This term seems to be identical with the expression bhōga-bhoga-Kara which finds reference in the records of the Rastrakutas, the Cālukyas, the Kāla-curis, the Gahada vālas and others.<sup>1</sup> Scholars differ on the meaning of the term. Whereas Fleet suggested<sup>2</sup> bhōga-bhoga, as one word indicating enjoyment of taxes, others like R.S. Tripathi<sup>3</sup> opined

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1. Yadav, B.N.S., op.cit., p. 288.
  2. Fleet, CII, p. 120 and p. 254.
  3. Tripathi, R.S., History of Kanauj, p. 348.

that the expression bhaga-bhoga-kara signified three different taxes, such as bhāga (share of the produce), bhoga (enjoyment of certain rights by the landlord when the land lies fallow) and kara (rent proper payable in cash or kind). D.C. Sircar<sup>4</sup> also interprets bhāga as the King's share of the produce and bhoga as the periodical supplies of fruits, firewood, flowers, etc. which the villagers had to furnish to the King. This seems to be more plausible. For Bana mentions how villagers presented curds, molasses, candied sugar and flowers in baskets, to the King and his soldiers on the way when they passed through their villages.<sup>5</sup>

A Cahamana inscription<sup>6</sup> and a draft in the Lekha paddhati<sup>7</sup> reveal that cereals also formed part of bhoga.

Kara, another form of revenue known from the Ganga records<sup>8</sup> has been interpreted variously by the Scholars.

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4. JAS, XVIII, No. 2, 1952, p. 79, Select ins., I, p. 372, fn. 7.
5. Bana, Harsa carita, p. 208.
6. BI, XI, p. 47.
7. LP, p. 9 quoted by B.N.S. Yadav, op.cit., p. 289.
8. IO, II, Part I, p. 25, 1, p. 30.



It has been viewed as a periodical tax over and above the King's customary grain share, as an emergency tax and as a tax upon merchants profits.<sup>9</sup> But our inscriptions indicate that Kara was a general tax. The term such as akari kritya<sup>10</sup> (making free from taxes), Sarvakara<sup>11</sup> (all taxes) which finds mention in our inscriptions corroborate the above view-point.

The frequent use of the term bhoga-bhaga indicates that it was one of the regular taxes in Orissa during our period. Bhaga, seems to have been the principal tax on land. Brhaspati, like Gautama, prescribes that the lowest rate of land revenue (bhaga) is one-tenth. Cultivators shall pay to the King one-tenth or one-eighth on crops grown in rainy season, i.e., wheat and barley.<sup>12</sup> One-sixth of the produce seems to be the normal rate of

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9. Ghosal, U.N., Contributions to the history of the Hindu Revenue System, Calcutta, 1929, p. 293.
10. IO, II, Part I, p. 25.
11. Ibid., I, Part II, p. 25.
12. Quoted by B.P. Majumdar, "Land revenue in early medieval North India" in R.S. Sharma (ed) Land Revenue in India, 1971, Delhi, p. 20.

taxation in 9th century Pala kingdom.<sup>13</sup> In Orissa it appears to be one-sixth of the produce normally in our period. It might have differed according to the nature and yield of the soil. But there is nothing explicitly indicated in the epigraphs to substantiate this view.

The term hiranya finds mention in Somavamsi records.<sup>14</sup> It has been rendered differently as 'gold', as 'tax in money' or as 'King's share of certain crops paid in cash.'<sup>15</sup> N.C. Bandyopadhyaya suggests that it was a tax on the hoard or a tax on the capital of the annual income.<sup>16</sup> That, it was royal share of certain crops paid in cash, seems to be more applicable to early medieval Orissa. We get instances in two epigraphs, as to the assessment in cash. In one instance the revenue of the whole village granted to a brahmana was estimated as forty-four rupakas<sup>17</sup> and as forty-two in another.<sup>18</sup>

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13. EI, IV, Part VI, pp. 243-77.

14. JBORS, II, p. 53, IHQ, XI, p. 242.

15. Ghosal, U.N., op.cit., p. 60, fn. 5.

16. Jha, D.M., Revenue System in Post Mauryan and Gupta times, Calcutta, 1967, p. 49.

17. EI, XII, No. 20, II, pp. 27-28.

18. JASB (NS), XII, p. 295, II, pp. 22-36.

Money estimates first appeared in 11th century land-grants of the Senas. There is no other evidence to substantiate that actual collections were made in cash either in Bengal or Orissa, during early medieval times.

Similarly, another revenue term uparikara, has been rendered "as a tax levied from cultivators who had no proprietary rights in the soil,"<sup>19</sup> or as a tax imposed upon the temporary tenants.<sup>20</sup> This term figures along with the expression bhāga-bhoga-kara in the Meranjumura charter of the Somavāsi king Mahāsivagupta.<sup>21</sup> So it appears as an additional tax apart from bhāga, bhoga or kara. Literally it means an extra cess. It may have included the taxes which the cultivators had to pay to the King. That it is a tax in kind which traders and artisans paid<sup>22</sup> is not plausible. For, there is no

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19. Fleet, CII, III, No. 14, I, p. 17.

20. Ghosal, U.N., op.cit., p. 210.

21. JBORS, II, p. 53.

22. V.V. Mirashi, EII, IV, p.

evidence of a brisk trading activity in early medieval Orissa, which may warrant taxation upon traders and artisans.

Ksetra-kara, a term found in a Ganga<sup>23</sup> inscription, may be taken as a tax imposed upon a special kind of land capable of producing all kinds of crops in consonance with the definition of Ksetra in Amara kosa.<sup>24</sup> But this term finds mention only in one epigraph. Possibly it was a tax imposed upon the kingdom of Vajrahasta III.<sup>25</sup> Apart from Kalinga, there is no evidence regarding the prevalence of this tax in other parts of Orissa.

Similarly pravanikara, a tax imposed upon some merchants,<sup>26</sup> interpreted as a kind of tax imposed on pravani (small or retail dealers) in the locality concerned,<sup>27</sup> can not be taken to be widely prevalent,

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23. BI, II, p. 151, II, pp. 62-63.

24. Amara Kosa, I, 5, p. 70 quoted by A.P. Shah, op.cit., p. 64.

25. Narasa patam grant of Vajrahasta III  
BI, XI, pp. 147-58.

26. Ghosal, U.N., op.cit., p. 263.

27. Niyogi Pampa, Contributions to the Economic history of Northern India, Calcutta, 1962, p. 207.

as this only figured along with ksetra-kara in an inscription of the above mentioned Ganga King. May be, it was a tax on the retail dealers in the locality concerned. But nothing can be said definitely for evidence of this type of tax is not found elsewhere in Orissa. One can only say that it was not a land tax.

The nidhi (treasure trove) and upanidhi (deposits), sources of royal income have been also transferred to the donees, alongwith other rights.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps in the areas which were not given away to the beneficiaries, the persons were required to submit these to the King. Yajñavalkya (11, 35, 36) holds that the King was entitled to one-sixth of the nidhi if a person other than a brahmana found it. Vijnanesvara provides a more detailed pattern of distribution regarding the treasure trove between the owner and the King, saying that if there is nobody to claim, the King has the right to appropriate three-fourth of the property leaving one-fourth to the

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28. SI, VIII, p. 141; XXIV, Part II, p. 64.  
IHQ, XI, p. 242.

man who first found it. Yajnevalkya (11,65), Narada (V.8) and Katyayana also made laws to distribute upanidhi (deposits).<sup>29</sup>

Hence the above discussion suggests that bhāga-bhoga, hiranya, uparikara and Ksetra-kara were land-taxes in our period. We have mentioned earlier some dues covering common agricultural resources, rights over animals, and forests in Bhanja and Somavamsi grants.<sup>30</sup> Certain fiscal terms such as Cittola, andharua, pratyandharua, adatta, rintakavaddi, vasavaki and visayali, are quite obscure and it is difficult to throw any light on their meaning. Nevertheless these are the dues occurring in the Ratnagiri plates of Somavamsi Karna.<sup>31</sup> Other terms such as padatijivya, vandāpanā, Vijaya vandāpanā and varabalivardda of the same inscription were most probably tributes. The first was for the maintenance of the foot-soldiers when they passed through the countryside.<sup>32</sup>

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29. Quoted by A.P. Shah, op.cit., pp. 64-65.

30. Supra, Chapter-II.

31. JBORS, II, p. 409.

32. Debal Mitra in BI, LXXIII, part VI, p. 267.

The second and third terms represent the usual presentations to the King after his victory<sup>33</sup> and on the occasion of his visits.<sup>34</sup> Varabali vardda is taken to mean supply of bulls, etc., for the conveyance of royal agents.<sup>35</sup> No information is available in regard to the irrigation levy in our sources. Perhaps irrigation facilities were to a certain extent the concern of the individuals rather than the State. With limited State initiative in the sphere of irrigation in our period, there remained perhaps no justification for any regular irrigational levy.

We come across two types of Sasanas or royal charters during our period. They are dāna-Sāsana, recording gifts and kara-Sāsana, recording revenue-paying grants. While the former are more in number, we have only five charters in the latter category, i.e., the three charters

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33. Ibid.

34. B. Misra in JBORS, XVII, Part I, pp. 17-18.

35. A.P. Shah, op.cit., p. 66.

of Janamejaya I,<sup>36</sup> the newly discovered Kamalpur plates of Karnadeva's time,<sup>37</sup> and Talcher copper plate of Gayadatunga.<sup>38</sup>

While the annual rent of the village granted to brahmanas was fixed at five palas of rupya and four palas of rupya respectively in case of the first, second and fifth charter, the exact fixation is not known about the remaining two charters as the portion of epigraphs mentioning the conditions are not legible.

The practice that religious beneficiaries are required to pay some dues to the donors did not prevail in northern India and seems to be typical of Orissa. G.P. Feffer<sup>39</sup> draws our attention to a kind of payment

36. IO, IV, Nos. 18-19.  
Deoan plates of Janameyaya I is mentioned in No. 12 of B.K. Rath's list of epigraphs at the end of his book, Cultural History of Orissa.
37. K.C. Panigrahi, in JOH, I, No. 1, p. 2.
38. JASB (NS), XII, pp. 292-94.
39. G.P. Feffer, 'Puri's vedic brahmanas: Continuity and change in their traditional institutions', in Cult of Jagannath, p. 428-29.



(tanki), by the Puri Sāsana brāhmanas to the King as a token of obligation. The payment was 11 to 13 kahans or cowries. An individual brāhmana paid this amount to the principal receiver of the landgrant, and he gave the amount to the King. The King in turn used the amount of the tanki collection for the expenses of the Lord Jagannatha.<sup>40</sup> But we do not know what the King did precisely with the amount collected from the kara-Sāsanas, in early medieval Orissa. We have seen that the donees were granted a village, or a number of villages or even in some cases plots of land. All this may imply that land revenue was normally charged on individual holdings. But collective assessment was not unknown. Perhaps in the latter case, after the fixation of the revenue on the whole village, it was the duty of the village headman or principal receiver of the village<sup>41</sup> to collect it from the individuals of the village as per their respective land holdings.

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40. A Kahan was equated with a rupee approximately by British officials, Ibid.

41. As in the case, cited by G.P. Feffer, Ibid.

How far individual land holdings were assessed on the basis of their measurement is a question, which can not be satisfactorily answered. Since the land-measuring units varied in different parts of early medieval Orissa, local fixation of land revenue in relation to land-measurement can be counted upon.

Equally pertinent and no less controversial is the question whether land-tax was levied on the gross income or the surplus of the cultivator. Nowhere we come across any indication that land-tax was assessed on agriculturalist's surplus or profit.

It is however not improbable that there may have existed a broad recognition of the fact that taxes should fall on the profit and not on the capital, though how far this principle was observed especially in relation to land-tax is largely a matter of speculation.

We have seen that all types of land was taxable excepting the bhumicidra lands.<sup>42</sup> The donees were granted

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42. Supra, Chapter-II.

revenue-free holdings. Thus one can fairly assume that the burden of land-revenue rested principally on the cultivators. In case of donated areas, they paid various revenues to the donees and in case of other areas which seems to be much less in comparison to the former they paid the revenue to the King.

The charters grant such concessions as to render the beneficiary the de facto owner of the village land. This increased the burden of the peasants. The beneficiary is entitled to collect taxes, all kinds of income and this 'all', (sarva)<sup>43</sup> is never specified. Similarly he is entitled to collect all future taxes (bhavisyat kara).<sup>44</sup> It is not clear whether 'future taxes' were meant to be collected from the increasing production or it was left to the discretion of the donees.<sup>45</sup> But in case of increasing production also the

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43. IO, II, Part I, p. 25.

44. JBORS, XVII, pp. 17-18, II, pp. 29-49.

45. Sharma, R.S., 'How feudal was Indian Feudalism' in Social Scientist, Vol.XII, No. 2, 1984, p. 20.

the donees interfered.<sup>46</sup> The latter interpretation would imply an extra-ordinary right by virtue of which the donees could reduce the actual cultivators to a complete servile position.

The land charters give away the village alongwith low land, fertile land, water reservoirs, all kinds of trees and bushes, pasture grounds, forests, forest products, along with right over various animals (nānā-vanā-cara). Such provisions connect the agrarian production directly with the beneficiary and more importantly, transfer almost all communal agrarian resources to him. If a peasant does not have free access to various agrarian resources, his autonomy in production was substantially crippled. Only a free exercise of agrarian rights mentioned above can make his unit effective in production. Later survivals indicate that in earlier times the villagers had free access to all these agrarian resources, although they were not conscious of their common ownership. But once there were specifically made

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46. They would be first to notice the rise in productivity and thereby to demand a greater share.

over to the donees, the latter would not allow their use by the villagers without charge. Such a practice survived till the 19th century in Uttar Pradesh,<sup>47</sup> where we find local chiefs levying an axe-tax for felling trees. On the other hand, as the families of the beneficiaries would multiply, there would be a natural tendency to appropriate the fallow land for their use, thus depriving the peasants their natural rights to expand into the waste-land. In the areas which were not given away, this communal ownership of common agricultural resources seems to have remained in tact.

An important factor which gave the beneficiaries general control over the means of production was the conferment of seigniorial rights on them. This charters authorised the beneficiaries to punish people guilty of ten offences (dasāparādha).<sup>48</sup> The ten offences consisted of three specified sins of the body, three of the mind

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47. Baden-Powell, Land system in British India, Vol. I, pp. 128-29.

48. JBORS, II, p. 53; EI, XXXV, Part II, p. 64.

and four of the speech.<sup>49</sup> But Jolly<sup>50</sup> connects dasā-parādha with a list of ten chief crimes mentioned by Narada, which comprised transgression of royal commands, killing of a female, mixture of castes, adultery, robbery, pregnancy caused by another man than the husband, abuse, insulting language as well as procuring abortion. Thus going by the latter interpretation, the right to punish offenders, seems to be a significant judicial right.

It is plausible to assume that the donee decides in this regard by convening village meeting, where he would be the final authority, in lieu of this right.

Further royal officers, i.e., cātas and bhātas were not allowed to enter into the donated areas<sup>51</sup> and to cause obstruction in the functioning of the donees. All these throw the peasant at the mercy of the beneficiary.

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49. Fleet, CII, III, p. 189.

50. Jolly, Hindu Law and Custom, p. 270, quoted by A.P. Shah, op.cit., p. 37.

51. IHQ, IXX, p. 242; IO, II, Part I, p. 158.

The mining rights, i.e., the enjoy nidhi and upanidhi, give the donee exclusive control over iron alongwith other mines, in their areas. By this right, they could control the supply of agricultural implements to the peasants. Although the peasants had control over their agricultural implements more or less,<sup>52</sup> the above right might have reduced their privilege to a considerable extent.<sup>53</sup>

The successors of the King and the people were asked to observe the terms of the grants, and the enemies of the landgrant were invested with all kinds of curses and most heinous sins.<sup>54</sup> Although it shows that there remained an avowed fear on the part of the donor that the future kings might resume his gift,<sup>55</sup> the above ideas were there as a moral restraint. Common masses were morally indoctrinated by those ideas. They would not ordinarily think of acting against the terms of the landgrants.

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52. Mukhia, H., 'Was there Feudalism in Indian History?' PIHC, 1980, p. 250.

53. R.S. Sherma, Social Scientist, p. 25.

54. JABS (NS), V, pp. 347-77.

55. Sircar, D.C., Land system and feudalism in ancient India, Calcutta, 1966, p. 15.

It is therefore obvious that the political and judicial rights which were non-economic rights, helped the beneficiary to carry out the economic exploitation of the peasants in an effective manner. The beneficiary started with the State sanctioned title to various types of dues delivered by the peasants to the State, but in course of time his claims were made so comprehensive that because of his local presence and delegated administrative power he could convert his title into possession and could treat the donated village as his estate. It is clear that the peasants had to reckon with the control of the donees over the village resources.

Of course, the beneficiaries did not enjoy specific control over every plot of land that the peasant cultivated.<sup>56</sup> But there was nothing to question their control over those plots of land which were donated directly to them by the King.

Donated fields, many of them very large in area were without doubt under the direct and complete control

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56. Beneficiaries were allotted with tax-free villages generally.



of the beneficiaries. If a landlord possessed too many plots, tenanting and sharecropping might be more convenient than getting the land cultivated through the deployment of forced labour.

So in Orissa share-cropping or tenanting seems to have been widely practised although specific references in this regard are absent in epigraphs.

Peasants and artisans in some cases were attached to the village and given away to donees. In Bhauma-kara,<sup>57</sup> Bhanja<sup>58</sup> and Tunga<sup>59</sup> kingdoms, this practice was in vogue. In a charter, the weavers (tantuvāya) the brewers (Saundika), cow-herds (go-kuta) and other people (Prakrtikah) were transferred to the donees alongwith various other rights.<sup>60</sup> The Devibhagavata Purana<sup>61</sup> which was most probably compiled

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57. JBORS, II, pp. 426-27.

58. Ibid., XVI, pp. 81-83; EI, XXIX, pp. 85-86.

59. EI, XXV, No. 14, Part II, pp. 12-20.

60. JBORS, II, pp. 426-27.  
Dhenkanal plates of Tribhuvanmaha devi.

61. Quoted by Yadav, B.N.S., Presidential Address Ancient India Section, FIHC, 41st Session, Bombay, 1980, p. 26.

in Bengal in the eleventh or twelfth century gives us the opinion that the grant of the village conferring only the right over land was considered to be less meritorious than that of the village alongwith the people. That seems to be also the idea of the donors in early medieval Orissa. This right carried with it a special authority over inhabitants of the village, empowering the donee to use them to his own advantage.

In the more or less self-sufficient units of agrarian economy the gain of land alongwith men to work on it must naturally have been the most coveted thing.

The specific mention of the transfer of all the common-people or men of certain professions alongwith that of the village in which they resided, does not appear to have been the only means of granting authority, involving the relationship of domination, over the peasants, artisans and other humble folk. The view<sup>62</sup> that to grant villages together with their

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62. Sircar, D.C., 'Controversy on certain problems of Early Indian history', JAIH, VIII, 1976, p. 209.

inhabitants was a question of style, may be true.<sup>63</sup>  
But this is also evident at the same time that it was  
not without significance.

The specific mention of the people transferred  
along with land was thus a means of noting alienation of  
rights over them, which appears to have been of more  
than one grade, corresponding to the status of the people  
over whom they were to be exercised. The alienation  
of rights would have been as a matter of course, yet it  
was all the better for being specified.<sup>64</sup> The purpose  
of it was to ensure that the people concerned would  
stick to the localities and remain attached to the  
donees for rendering dues and servile to them.

However, it should not be lost sight of that the  
degree of dependence in respect to all categories of  
people was not the same. The pieces of evidence noticed  
above indicate that it was mainly the lower peasantry,

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63. Yadav, B.N.S., PIHC, p. 27.

64. Ibid.

village servants, artisans etc. who were involved in the relations of somewhat service dependence.

Thus with the burden of taxation falling on them and without any traditional rights to the common agricultural resources of the village, the peasants were totally under the control of the beneficiaries.

It would have been useful in this context to determine the extent of peasant population working in landgrant areas and the same working in the non-landgrant areas in our period. Unfortunately we have no information to this effect in our sources.

Many indications of unequal distribution of land in the village are available which lead us to believe in the existence of differentiation within the peasantry itself. We hear not only of brahmanas, but also maha-mahattara<sup>65</sup> (great village headmen), ksetra-kara, Kutumbin, etc. in a village.

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65. BI, XXIX, Part IV, p. 85.  
R. Subba Rao holds it means great village elder, JAHRS, VI, II, p. 81.

The mahamahatta or the headman was the man of highest stratum among the peasants. Although there is no evidence to substantiate that these headmen were exempted from paying any taxes as was the case in the reign of Sultans before Ala'u'din Khalji,<sup>66</sup> it is plausible that they acted as intermediaries between the donees and the actual cultivators of the village land. Perhaps they collected the revenue from the peasants in the village and deposited it with the donee. These headmen, who were primarily peasants, acted in a more free manner in the non-granted villages. It may be correct also to hold that they held more plots of land in comparison to others.

The ksetra-karas seem to be rich peasants having a great stretch of land (ksetra) under their disposal.<sup>67</sup>

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66. Before Ala'u'din Khalji, the headman khots and miqaddams claimed exemption from land revenue, house-tax and cattle-tax. I. Habib, 'Agrarian economy' in CEH, pp. 54-55.

67. R.K. Mukherji and S.K. Maiti, Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions bearing on the history and civilization of Bengal, 1967, No. 18.

On the other hand the kutumbins were the peasants who invested their family labour in their farms.<sup>68</sup> Below the peasants, lay the class of agricultural labourers. But all of them starting from the headman to the agricultural labourer were under the beneficiary. As we have mentioned earlier, the donees were in some cases officials, but in most others, they were brāhmanas or religious institutions. Here one may raise the interesting question of the importance of grants to brāhmanas, most of which seem to have been imported from outside Orissa. Either the areas in which these grants were made did not have any brāhmana population or it was not so numerous to deserve special mention in the grants.<sup>69</sup> The lists of donees show that they were invited to Orissa mainly from Madhyadesa, Tirabhukti, Rādha, Vanga and Varendra. Madhyadesa may be middle gangetic valley or a place between Bengal and Orissa, at any rate there is nothing to suggest that it formed part of Orissa.

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68. R.S. Sharma, Social Scientist, p. 22.

69. Sharma, R.S., Indian Feudalism, IF, p. 231.

C.V. Vaidya<sup>70</sup> says that the Késari kings of Orissa, who were orthodox worshippers of Siva, invited thousands of saivite brāhmanas of Oudh and settled them at Jaipur, where they are still to be found in the enjoyment of lands given to them in free more than a thousand years back. Orthodox brāhmanas still claim Kanyakubja or Kanauj in Uttar Pradesh as their original homeland. A tradition of Orissa has it that Yayāti Késari had brought 10,000 brāhmanas from Kanyakubja for the performance of Dasēsvamedha sacrifice (ten-fold-horse sacrifice) at Jaipur.<sup>71</sup> At a later date (perhaps with the shifting of the capital), some of these brāhmanas moved south of the river Brahmani and formed a separate endogamous group.<sup>72</sup>

In order to understand the relationship of these brahmanas with the local peasants and with the temporal power it is significant to analyse the basic reasons of

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70. Vaidya, C.V., History of Hindu Civilization, Vol.I, p. 325.

71. B. Rath, op.cit., pp. 113-77.

72. G.P. Feffer, op.cit., pp. 428-77.

their immigration. It has been stated by R.N. Nandi<sup>73</sup> that these brāhmanas migrated from their initial place of residence to other areas primarily because they faced the acute crisis of the shortage of a clientele class, following the disintegration of the central empires of northern India. As they were in search of a clientele class, the rise of new kingdoms in Orissa and elsewhere provided a solution to their crisis. The significance of land grants to brāhmanas in this context is not difficult to appreciate. The grantees brought new knowledge which improved cultivation and inculcated in the aborigines a sense of loyalty to the established order upheld by the rulers. They had a tremendous influence upon the 'inner colonization' of the areas of their settlement and in the maintenance of (Hindu) law and (royal) order.<sup>74</sup>

The purpose of land-grants to brāhmanas was also to provide a reliable source of support to them for the

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73. Nandi, R., 'Client, Ritual and conflict in early brahmanical order' in IHR, 1979, pp. 82-91.

74. Kulke, H., (Cult of Jagannath), pp. 126-27.



pursuit of their sacral responsibilities; and the gift of arable land, part of the proceeds from which constituted a stream of income to the learned brahmanas, was one of the major sources of merit to pious Hindus. Although there is the absence of any sort of contracted element<sup>75</sup> in providing land-grants, the brahmanas were obliged to render religious services, which might secure the spiritual welfare of donors or their ancestors.

The charters imply that the right of these brahmana beneficiaries over their respective gift-lands varied in both kind and degree. The five categories of donees such as, tax-free-land-owning donees,<sup>76</sup> tax-free-land-owning trustees,<sup>77</sup> donees enjoying the revenue of tax-free holdings,<sup>78</sup> trustees-enjoying the revenue of tax-free holdings<sup>79</sup> and tax-paying-donees,<sup>80</sup> had varying

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75. B.DC Chattopadhyaya, op.cit., p. 5.

76. EI, III, pp. 127-30, XXIII, pp. 267-69, XVIII, pp. 307-11,

77. Ibid., XXIII, pp. 62-67,  
Ibid., XXII, pp. 229 ff, XXIX, pp. 38-43 etc.

78. IO, I, 2, pp. 136-37; EI, IX, pp. 271-77 etc.

79. EI, XXI, pp. 153-57, XXVIII, p. 331 and 336 etc.

80. EI, III, p. 342, JASB (NS), XII, pp. 291-93 etc.

relationship with the peasants of their respective lands. In case of brahmana beneficiaries, who used the land as a tax-free holding, the relationship between them and the non-brahman peasants was probably more amicable. In such cases, they might have sought the help of the peasants to cultivate the said plot, for their personal enjoyment. In some other cases where the brahmanas held the tax-free grant on behalf of the deity as a trustee of the religious establishment he only exercised his authority in the name of the deity and not by his own right.<sup>81</sup>

Where the brahmanas were entitled to appropriate the revenue of the donated area they acted like the feudatories, and the secular assignees. In case where one brahmana or a group of brahmanas act as the trustee of a religious establishment with the right to appropriate the revenue for the upkeep of the religious establishment, the relationship seems to be less severe than in the cases where he used the revenue for his benefits only.

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81. Ganguly, D.K., "Different categories of donees", in PIHC, 1980, pp. 187-92.

It is possible that in cases of village donations to brahmanas or other secular assignees, they held their own plots of land. In a fifth century book Sāmanta pasadika<sup>82</sup> it is stated that in case of village grants, the entire arable land was measured, the area under the occupation of the tenant farmers was demarcated and the landlord conducted direct farming on the remaining portion. This seems to be also the practice in early medieval Orissa.

Thus in these areas there may have been scope for the use of forced labour by the landlords. But the area under the direct cultivation of the landlord does not appear to have been so large as we find in medieval Europe, so as to generate the trend of serfdom.<sup>83</sup>

As the number of land-owning brahmanas went on increasing, some of them gradually shed their priestly

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82. Sāmanta Pasadika vol.II, p. 688 quoted by B.N.S. Yadav, FIHC, 1980, p. 41.

83. Ibid., p. 43.

functions and turned their chief attention to the management of land, in their cases, secular functions become more important than religious functions.

The secular donees acted as landlords who enjoyed the land with revenues and with various other administrative and judicial rights. In case of landgrants to ministers or military officials<sup>84</sup> they had to render some sort of services to their lord, the king. It was also true in case of the astrologer who received a landgrant during the reign of a Bhanja ruler.<sup>85</sup>

The landgrants to temples were probably managed by the officials of the temple. But we have no detailed account of the management of agrarian resources by the temples. The early medieval Orissa saw the rise of big temples. Perhaps in our period, the temples were not so active in the sphere of agricultural activities, as

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84. Military officials may include rānakas, Samenta, Mahāsamanta and Nayak etc.

85. JASB (NS), XVIII, p. 299.

was the case with the South Indian temples in the time of Coles.<sup>86</sup>

We do not know the relative status and rank of the various land-owning elements, hence it is difficult to work out the details of their relationship with the peasantry. But the net result of landgrants was to create conditions in which superior land-holders were imposed upon ordinary cultivators.

This new socio-economic formation that emerged as a result of a class of landlords and a subject peasantry had its own limitations. The peasants were accustomed to give certain taxes and services to the state and if the beneficiaries demand was confined to these claims, in normal times and routine payment could continue. But the unspecified nature of the terms of certain donations<sup>87</sup> show that the demands of the beneficiary very probably increased.

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86. Stein, B., op.cit., p. 90 ff.

87. Supra, p. 9.

Although we have no direct reference to any sort of constant friction, tensions and struggles between the landed beneficiary and the cultivators, we can not rule out any possibility of that kind. It is thought that peasant's independent control over his process of production prevented acute social tensions.<sup>88</sup> But as shown earlier, this control was more dependent than independent. To a good degree the seeming stability was prompted by other factors which were closely linked with the system of production, especially with production relations.<sup>89</sup>

The brahmanas, who controlled many lands, played a crucial ideological role in penetrating the consciousness of the peasantry and making them behave as they liked them to do. Classes with conflicting interests were kept together through performance of Puja, Japa, Vratas, tirthas, Sanskāras prayascittas, etc., and through prospects of heaven and hell.<sup>90</sup>

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88. Mukhia, H., op.cit., pp. 258-59.

89. Sharma, R.S., Social Scientist, p. 34.

90. Ibid.

Though originating in an earlier period, the temple grew to be the major instrumental locus in integrating men in early medieval Orissa. The all-pervasive influence of astrology also kept the people reconciled to their lot. All these factors brought the people of opposite interests together.

Thus the above discussion leads us to conclude that the agrarian relations in early medieval Orissa gave rise to some typical features which did not arise on the ruins of a centralised empire, but out of a tribal aboriginal background in which the aborigines could be assimilated to the Hindu way of life by creating brahmana-settlements in their midst.

CHAPTER IV

" THE STATE AND THE AGRARIAN SYSTEM "



It is difficult to isolate the discussion on the nature of political organisation from the Study of the Agrarian System as the economic activities of a State, regulates its political structure, in many ways.

The growth of small kingdoms in early medieval Orissa continued upto the early 11th century, the time 'Somavamsis occupied the coastal region. With the unification of different parts of Orissa i.e., Southern, Central, Northern and Western parts, by the Imperial Gangas in 13th century AD, the early sub-regional State formation<sup>1</sup> came to an end.

This process of state formation was perpetuated through a class of feudatories. They helped the kings of the various dynasties to stabilize their positions in alien surroundings. Feudatories were created either, by-placing some relative of the slain king in the vanquished country or acknowledging the defeated rajas, the chieftains, whose territory was taken over.

We find that though Virevara kesari was outsted by Anantavarman Codagangadeva yet his relatives Karna

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1. Kulke, H., Royal Temple Policy ... in CJRTO  
p. 111.

kesari and Rana kesari were allowed to rule over Orissa as feudatories.<sup>2</sup> That Bhan̄jas and Tungas served as feudatories under the Bhaumakeras initially and after that under the 'Somavamsis, shows that the rulers of these small kingdoms got their recognition from their sovereigns to rule in their respective areas. But we do not know specifically whether they were defeated rajas or chieftains. As they issued land-grants<sup>3</sup> independent of their overlords without mentioning their names, they might be one of the above categories.

Feudatories were also created by allotting territories to the brothers and relatives of the king. The 'Somavamsi king Udoyota kesari Mahasivagupta made Abhimanyu a sub-king of the western part of his kingdom.<sup>4</sup> It appears that this was a late practice as no evidence of territorial allotment is seen before the cited illustration. The Somavamsis had a vast kingdom

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2. OHRJ, Vol. I, (1952), p. 297.

3. EI, XXXIV, Part II, p. 91 ff.  
JBORS, VI, pp. 236-40, IRQ, XIII, pp. 527-29.  
IBid, VI, pp. 274-79.

4. OHRJ, Vol. I, 1952, p. 229.

compared to their predecessors or contemporaries. The need for effective administration of the western part of their kingdom most probably led to this practice. Although rājñī, rājaputra, rāja-vallabha or rājyanaka and ranaka are presumed to be the members of royal kinship network, they were not shown in the epigraphs to administer any part of the kingdom.

The different categories of land holders such as bhūpāla, mandalika, mahāmandalika, sāmanta, mahāsāmanta, etc., served the rulers in different capacities. The sāmantas and mahāsāmantas supplied military aid to the king.<sup>5</sup> The bhogis served differently, as chief accountants,<sup>6</sup> and as drafters of the land charters.<sup>7</sup> The ranakas acted as executors of the charters,<sup>8</sup> chief accountants<sup>9</sup> and ministers of peace and war.<sup>10</sup>

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5. Sharma, R.S., Indian Feudalism, p. 228.

6. Misra, B., op.cit., pp. 102-3.

7. EI, XV, No. I, II, pp. 33-34.  
JBORS, II, pp. 426-27, II, pp. 40-42.

8. Misra, B., op.cit., pp. 102-3, Ins. No. 12.

9. Ibid., p. 17, Ins. No. 10.

10. Ibid., pp. 66-67, EI, XI, No. 8, p. 98.

The mandalikas and mahamandalikas were entrusted with the administration of a mandala<sup>11</sup> (province) or a bigger province.<sup>12</sup> Apart from the different administrative and military functions the feudatories performed several obligations towards the paramount ruler. The feudatory had to attend the imperial court not only on ceremonial occasions but also at periodical intervals. The feudatories assembled at the time of land grants, and were addressed by the kings.<sup>13</sup>

We have longer lists of officials, and taxes in small kingdoms than the larger ones. In some cases the number of enumerated taxes increases as the extent of territory becomes smaller. For example, in the 12th century, while a 'Somevamsi king Udyotakesari levied twelve types of taxes,<sup>14</sup> Karna kesari another king of

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11. IO, II, Part.I, p. 222.

12. Ibid.

13. Vishmagiri plates of Indravarmadeva EI, XIX, p. 137. Dhenkanal plates of Tribhuvan mahadeva JBORS, II, pp. 426-27 and in EI, III, pp. 44-45.

14. Nerasinghpur charter of Udyota kesari, OHRJ, XIII, pp. 72-73.

the same dynasty of a later date levied as many as nineteen.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps this development was the result of weak kings' <sup>16</sup> attempt to appease the influential feudatories and the court circle. In the context of political economy an emerging state organization has to convince its citizens of its legitimacy in course of time. This process seems to involve in general the establishment of patterns of social distance. Authority validation, consolidation of power and socialization, is effected by the state political sphere in order to establish a state economy, the basis for state survival.<sup>17</sup>

As early medieval Orissa was passing through the process of state formation, legitimation of authority was achieved through numerous land donations to brahmanas and temples.<sup>18</sup> In exchange for the recognition which the human agents of spiritual authority provided to the rulers,

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15. Ratnagiri charter of Karna EI, XXXIII, pp. 265-77.
16. In comparison to his predecessors, Karnadeva was a weak king.
17. Claessen, H.J.M. and Skalnik, P. (ed.) The study of the State, (1981), p. 475.
18. Supra, Chapt. II.

the former gradually became landlords as beneficiaries from the land donations. Although overall emphasis on legitimation alone diverts attention from the secular bases of the state power, nevertheless as a political process it clarifies the ideological dimensions of the state.<sup>19</sup> Absence of large scale trading activities in early medieval Orissa is seen as one of the reasons which left no alternative to the rulers of this period, than to allot land to priests and officials in lieu of their functions.<sup>20</sup> In Indian context this phenomenon is noted after the middle of the first millenium A.D. leading to the rise of feudalism.<sup>21</sup> However, it is difficult to attach too much importance to foreign trade as a factor both for the rise of feudalism and for its dissolvement.<sup>22</sup> In spite of the growing trade

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19. Chattopadhyaya, B.D., op.cit., p. 7.

20. Sharma, R.S., Indian Feudalism, op.cit., pp. 235-36.

21. Ibid., pp.4, 77.

22. Yadav, B.N.S., IHR, III, p. 44. Also in Society and Culture ..., pp. 175-180.

22. Jha, D.N., 'Early Indian Feudalism, a historiographical critique', PIHC, 40th session, Waltair, 1979, p. 20.

feudalism continued to exist in most parts of the country upto 18th century.<sup>23</sup> Due to economic development in some parts of the country after 11th century, the samanta system did not show any significant decline.<sup>24</sup> So in our view lack of evidence of long-distance trade in early medieval Orissa cannot be taken as the sole cause of the emergence of the feudal set-up of that period. Some scholars have expressed the opinion that the sharp class antagonisms as revealed in the discussions of Kali Age,<sup>25</sup> could be resolved to some extent by assigning the land revenue directly to the priests, military and other employees, as this practice provided a new mechanism of surplus extraction.

However, the crisis of the Kali Age as mentioned in the epic-puranic tradition applies to fully brahmanised areas, outlying areas such as, Orissa, where brahmanical influence was yet to make a full impact,<sup>26</sup> had nothing to

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23. Ibid., p. 30.

24. Yadav, B.N.S., Society and Culture ..., p. 288.

25. Yadav, B.N.S., IHR, I, 1974, pp.187-

26. Otherwise it does not seems plausible on the part of the kings to invite large number of brahmanas from outside of their territory to settle in different parts of Orissa.

do with the social crisis, reflected in the ideas of Kali-yuga.<sup>27</sup> There may have already been considerable pressure on land in fully brahmanical areas on account of agrarian advance. The practice of issuing land grants thus started in areas where land was plenty for distribution.<sup>28</sup>

The whole nexus of relationships, revolved round the need to cultivate the patronage of tribal chieftains by the kings in their respective kingdoms for the following two reasons. Firstly for the security of the internal communications and the borders of their kingdoms and secondly to get sufficient surplus in agricultural production through gradual extension of peasant agriculture by absorbing the land of the tribal chieftains. These compulsions were crucial from the point of state formation which was otherwise difficult to sustain in a tribal surrounding.

It has been argued that royal patronage to pilgrimage centres, the systematic and large scale settlement of brahmanas and the construction of temples, all

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27. Jha, D.N., PIHC, p. 22.

28. Ibid.



these measures were taken by the ruling dynasties to "counterbalance the dangerous feudal forces by ritual means".<sup>29</sup> We may point out that whereas all the above measures consolidated the royal power by strengthening the process of legitimation, they also helped in strengthening the feudal forces. The brahmanas emerged as landlords and so also was the case with the temples. They behaved very much like other feudatories and collected and appropriated the land revenue in an equally ruthless manner through the sanction of land charters.<sup>30</sup> The establishment of a class society where primary producer was sub-ordinated by a group of secular and religious beneficiaries was a development which took place especially after the impact of the "metropolitan states"<sup>31</sup> on these areas and when the process of state formation gathered greater momentum.

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29. Kulke, H., op.cit., p. 132.

30. The terms and conditions in the case of land-grants to brahmanas and the in case of ministers or ranakas, do not differ. compare EI, XXVI, p. 26, 11, pp. 19-38, and EI, III, 47, pl. F 11 28-42 with JASB, V, pp. 347 ff.

31. Thapar, Romila, "The State as Empire" in The study of the State, pp. 410-413.

Orissa, had its contacts with Mauryan state and other outside states in the early centuries of the Christian era. Those contacts helped to strengthen the forces of state formation.

Judging from the points discussed above it would appear that the growth of feudalism in early medieval Orissa was essentially "a process from below", and not "a" process from above,<sup>32</sup> as here the rulers reconciled themselves to the needs of the surroundings, rather imposing a structure upon it. March Bloch<sup>33</sup> while discussing feudalism in Europe underlined features like, subject peasantry, use of service tenements instead of salary, the supremacy of the warrior class, ties of vassalage, fragmentation of authority etc. We have seen that in the Orissa the peasantry was totally subjected to the mercy of the landlords. The donees to a great extent controlled the means of production.

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32. D.D. Kousambi discussed these two processes of feudalism in detail in An introduction to the study of Indian history, Bombay, 1956, pp. 274 ff.

33. Bloch, March, Feudal Society, tr.

Although we do not find large number of service tenements or fiefs of European nature, assignment of land perpetually with various rights created the same atmosphere.

The extent of the supremacy of the warriors can not be measured due to scanty information in this regard, but the fact that the śamantas figured prominently in Bhanja and Tunga grants,<sup>34</sup> bhogis in Bhanja as well as Somavamsi charters,<sup>35</sup> and rānakas as a varga (class) under the Bhanjas,<sup>36</sup> shows the importance of feudatories most of whom appear to be military vassals in our period. Although it is not easy to say that rānakas śamantas and mahāśamantas acted as an assembly as K.K. Gopal<sup>37</sup> suggested for parts of northern India, one can observe the growing importance of the feudatories, seeing their

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34. JASB (NS) XII, (1916), p. 291 ff and Ibid., XL, pp. 166-8.

35. BI, IX, 37 ff 11, pp. 16-17 and IHC, XXXV, 2, p. 36.

36. BI, XVIII, 29, 11, pp. 17-18.

37. Gopal, K.K., The Assembly of the Śamantas in early medieval India, Journal of Indian History (JIH), Vol. 42, 1964, pp. 245-50.

specific mention in land grants, probably they came to be consulted in important issues of the kingdom.

Maurice Dobb equates<sup>38</sup> feudalism with Serfdom. Serfdom may be very effective as a method of exploitation of the peasants but other forms of servitude imposed on the peasantry did not prove inoperative and unproductive.<sup>39</sup> If the peasant obeyed the landlord due to the customary exercise of different rights by the letter, the peasant remained equally subjected, without being a serf.

It has been argued that in India, forced labour was rarely used for purposes of agricultural production as conditions of production did not require it and it is an incidental feature, a rare manifestation of ruling class's political and administrative power.<sup>40</sup> In the context of Orissa where beneficiaries were allotted a

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38. Dobb, Maurice, Studies in the development of capitalism, London, 1972, pp. 35-37.
39. Sharma, R.S., Social Scientist, p. 28.
40. Mukhia, H., PIHC, 1979, pp. 271-72.

number of villages, it is not far-fetched to assume that the peasants worked without getting any returns in the personal holdings of the beneficiary. But on the whole deployment of serfs was not a practice. In any case, surplus produce was extracted more through the general control exercised by the landed intermediaries, than through the employment of serfs. Preferences in epigraphs<sup>41</sup> to the attachment of peasants and artisans to the soil nevertheless indicate that there was scope for the use of forced labour by the landlords.

We have come across different categories of officials in different kingdoms of early medieval Orissa. Mahāksapatalādhī Kṛita, Mahāksapatalika<sup>42</sup> (accountants), Mahāksapatalādhīkeranādhī Kṛita<sup>43</sup> (accountant of higher order), Rāja Satka (royal physician),<sup>44</sup> Sthānantarika<sup>45</sup>

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41. JBORS, III, pp. 426-27, XVI, pp. 81-83.  
 EI, XXIV, part VI, p. 189, IHQ, XXI, p. 221.  
 Ibid., XXV, No. 14, p. 11, pp. 12-20.

42. Misra, B., op.cit., p.98.

43. It is referred in one ins., EI, XV, No. 1, p. 5.

44. EI, XXIX, part IV, p. 88.

45. Misra, B., op.cit., p. 97.

(man in charge of criminal Deptt.), Mahamahattara<sup>46</sup> (great village headman), Pustakapala<sup>47</sup> (record-keeper), Kuta Kolasa<sup>48</sup> (garrison force), Sadhyadhikarana<sup>49</sup> (commander of the cavalry), all these officers were under the Bhauma-Karas. Under Bhanjas we see new designations like Mahapratihara<sup>50</sup> (officer-in-charge of royal household), Khandapala<sup>51</sup> (officer-in-charge of Khanda), Vargulika<sup>52</sup> (messenger), Durgadeva<sup>53</sup> (commander of fort). Similarly under Somavamsis, officers such as, Mahasandhi-vigrahi<sup>54</sup>, Sandhi Vigrahi<sup>55</sup> (minister of war and peace,

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46. Shah, A.P., op.cit., p. 57.  
 47. EI, XXVIII, part V, p. 214.  
 48. Misra, B., op.cit., p. 98.  
 49. Ibid.  
 50. JIH, XXXIII, p. 373.  
 51. Shah, A.P., op.cit., p. 53.  
 52. EI, XVIII, p. 285.  
 53. Ibid.  
 54. EI, II, pp. 94-95.  
 55. EI, III, pp. 355-59.

in order) Kumaradhirāja<sup>56</sup> (Prince), Mahaksapatālika<sup>57</sup> (Chief Officer for accounts and records, writers of charters), Mahaksapatāladhyakṣa<sup>58</sup> (Chief superintending officer of accounts), Rājaguru<sup>59</sup> (royal preceptor), Dutaka<sup>60</sup> (messenger to local officials), Samāhartr<sup>61</sup> (collector of revenue), Sannidhartr<sup>62</sup> (treasurer), Niyuktaka, Ahikerika,<sup>63</sup> Dandapeśika<sup>64</sup> (police officer), cetas and Bhātes (regular and irregular troops)<sup>65</sup>, Pisuna-Vetrika<sup>66</sup> (police functionary), Avarodha-jana<sup>67</sup>

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56. EI, XLVIII, p. 321-77.  
 57. IO, IV, No. 22, 26, 29.  
 58. OHRJ, XII, p. 70.  
 59. Ibid.  
 60. Ibid.  
 61. IHQ, XI, p. 239.  
 62. Ibid.  
 63. Rath, B., op.cit., p. 110.  
 64. IHQ, XI, p. 246.  
 65. EI, XLVIII, part VII, p. 329.  
 66. JBORS, XVII, p. 17.  
 67. IHQ, XI, p. 239.

(ladies of higher officials and gendotarien), figured in the epigraphs. We also come across officers like Mandalapati, Visayapati, Khandapati and Nayaka in Somavamsi charters.<sup>68</sup>

Apart from the different categories of officials we also have the evidence that some times ministers acted in the capacity of feudal chiefs. The Kelibhena grant of Mahabhavagupta I shows that his foreign minister Dharadatta was a semanta.<sup>69</sup> Charudatta, the foreign minister of Mahasivagupta was a ranaka.<sup>70</sup> The Mahāsāndhi vighāhika mentioned in the Badakhimedi plates of Gangeking Jayavarman was also a semanta.<sup>71</sup> But we can not say anything definite regarding the manner in which the ministers hold the above feudatory ranks.

Some important feudatory chiefs were entitled to the use of five musical instruments (Panca mahāsabda)

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68. BI, XIII, p. 238.

69. IHQ, XI, p. 250.

70. BI, XI, p. 96.

71. IO, 11, part I, p. 251.



Rānaka Punja under 'Somavamsi King Bhimaratha Mahā-sivegupta II,<sup>72</sup> and Mahāsāmanta Purnadeva under Ganga King Jayavarman<sup>73</sup> enjoyed this privilege.

So from the designation of the officials discussed above, we may visualise a hierarchical system of political organisation. They are addressed in the land-grants in the order of their importance.<sup>74</sup>

As monetisation of economy is not fully evident from our sources, these graded relationship, perhaps were regulated by the extent of land allotment.

Another matter which needs to be discussed here is the issue of self sufficiency of the villages and its relationship with the feudal political structure and the

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72. OHRJ, I, p. 292.

73. IO, 11, part I, p. 251.

74. EI, XIX, p. 137, JBORS, 11, pp. 426-27.

75. This order differs from kingdom to kingdom. While Sāmata and bhogi are addressed in Bhanja grants OHRJ, I, p. 198 ff. and Rajyanaka, Rajaputra in Funga epigraphs OHRJ VII, 1958, p. 66 ff. Bhaumakaras and Somavamsis furnished the list of many officials while addressing the landgrants.

agrarian system. We see that long-distance trading activity is not evident in our period. As the beneficiaries based themselves in villages becoming landlords, the village had to fulfil their requirements. On the other hand the villages which were granted for the maintenance of the temples<sup>76</sup> also supplied different types of agricultural products and other things such as oil, potteries, clothes, etc., for consumption in the day-to-day affairs of the temples and their staff.

The attachment of peasants and artisans to the donated villages also helped in the rise of self-sufficient economy in villages. Thus feudalisation of the state apparatus helped in the growth of self-sufficiency of the villages, which in turn became a feature of feudalism.<sup>77</sup> Probably it was in this period that there developed the jajmani system as the artisans did not have

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76. BI, XIVII, part VII, pp. 323-24,  
JAHRS, VI, Nos. 3-4, p. 202,  
IBIA., VII, No. 2, p. 26,  
OHEJ, 1, No. 2, p. 7.

77. P. Henri, Economic and social history of medieval Europe, tr. I.E. Clegg, London, 1958, pp. 7-12.

scope to sell their products in the absence of market economy, they remain tied to the villages and catered to the needs of the peasants who paid them at harvest time in kind.<sup>78</sup> But no evidence is there in the epigraphs to substantiate this assumption.

The brahmanas and their patrons in course of time came to identify themselves with the localities where they settled and helped to foster local cultures,<sup>79</sup> thus laying the basis for the rise of Oriya language and Oriya nationality.

So the organization of production and distribution of power in early medieval Orissa assumed feudal proportions. These conditions which perpetuated socio-economic inequality lingered upto the end of moghul period in Orissa.<sup>80</sup>

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78. Nandi, R.N., IHR, 1979, pp. 64-71.

79. Yadav, B.N.S., IHR, op.cit., p. 23.

80. Das, B.S., Studies in the economic history of Orissa, Calcutta, 1978, p. 50 ff.

### CONCLUSION

The different geographical units located in the region now known as Orissa went through a process of unification first under the Bhauma-karas in the coastal region and then under the Somavamsis who united the coastal parts with its western region. These territorial units got further impetus for state formation as a result of their conquest by various Kings, starting from Asoka in the 2nd century B.C., down to Rajendra Cola in the 10th century A.D.

By the early medieval period the policy of donating land to Brahmanas came into vogue. By the turn of the 11th century A.D. the beneficiaries, who were given land, ranged from brahmanas and officials, to the temples. Gifts of villages and land was made not only by the Kings or the sovereign authority but also by feudatories.

Earlier, the peasants used to enjoy their independent holdings or had communal holdings, cultivating the land independently. They had the access to forests, grazing fields and other common agrarian resources. Although trade was thriving upto the 3rd century A.D., it could not have much impact upon the different sections of the Society.

It was limited in nature and affected only the trading section of the people.

However, the earlier set-up changed in the early medieval period. We have hardly any evidence of trade and the practice of land donations became firmly established. As a consequence the Orissan economy and political structure assume feudal proportions. The legal texts of this period sanction the donation of villages. Various claims were established on the same piece of land. The beneficiaries with landgrants to their side, not only extracted various revenues from the poor peasants but virtually subjected them in every possible manner. The ruler alienated to the donees important fiscal, administrative and judicial rights.

Distribution of landed property was such, that a whole range of landed intermediaries arose between the ruler and the peasant. Probably all payments were now rendered by land assignments to different officials. The donees transformed the donated villages virtually into their own estates. The non-economic rights conferred upon them by the not-so-clear language of the land donations the beneficiaries were able to reduce the peasant to a servile lot.

This rise of feudal land tenure led to the growth of self-sufficient village units and the jajmani system. Thus feudal order was there in early medieval Orissa which grew further ramifications in the medieval period.

APPENDIX

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IMPORTANT LAND GRANTS OF EARLY MEDIEVAL ORISSA

Sl. No.	Name of the copper plate grant	Donor and year	Details of the Donee	Place of Issue	Donated village/land	Object of Donation	Identification of place names	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1.	Vakratentali grant	Mahābhavagupta I Janamejaya I 3rd R.Y.	Bhattaputra Jatarupa	Suvarnapur	Vakratentali	-	Banatsutely 20° 53' N in Bolangir 85° 54' E	
2.	Kalibhana plates	-do- 6th R.Y.	Bhattaputra Govinda	Murisima pattana	Jamva	-	Jamagoan Bolangir	
3.	Patna plates	-do- 6th R.Y.	i. Bhattaputra Dāmaka ii. Son of Narapa- gonda iii. Bhattaputra Vāsudeva iv. Son of Rāma Sarma	Murisima	Vakabedda		Vankavira 20° 53' N 85° 50' E Bolangir	
4.	Patna Museum plates	-do- 6th R.Y.	Bhattaputra Kesava and Ayya	-do-	Pāsitāla		Pointāla 2 miles E. of Bolangir	
5.	Nagpur Museum plates	-do- 8th R.Y.	Bhattaputra Sānthakara	-do-	Satallama		Satlama in Bargarh of Sambalpur Dist.	
6.	Gaintala plates	Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya I 17th R.Y.	Bhattaputra Tikū	Ārāma vijaya Kāṭaka	Reigrāma		Not identified	
7.	Sonepur plates	-do-	In favour of Deities Sri Kesava and Sri Aditya bhattākara, to Sri Kamalavarna vanaka Sthāna of Suvarnapura	Arāma	Gottaikela		Gottārkela 3 miles from Sonepur	
8.	Caudwar plates	-do- 31st R.Y.	Bhatta Sri Mahāttamā Sādhārāna	Arāma Kāṭaka	Alānda		Alānda, 3 miles east of Bolangir	
9.	Caudwar plates	-do-	-do-	-do-	Tulēnda		Jilūnda Bolangir 21° 54' N 85° 52' E	
10.	Caudwar plates	-do-	-do-	-do-	Am kigrāma		Harigoan 21° 6' N 85° 6' E Bolangir	
11.	Kalibhana plates	-do- 34th R.Y.	Bhattaputra Devā	Suvarnapur	Konnapiṭṭā		Not identified	
12.	Degaon plates	Mūgghagondala deva of Rāstra- kūta family during Janamejaya I's reign	Bhuvanāga	Sukara Kāṭaka	Kiran-kolā		-do-	
13.	Orissa Museum plates	Mahāsivagupta I Yayāti I 4th R.Y.	Sri Kākos	Vinitapura	Kuḍukulo Khanda- Kāetra		-do-	
14.	Patna Museum plates	-do- 8th R.Y.	Kāmaḍeva	-do-	Tājakajjā		Talagajja 20° 39' N 85° 38' E 10 miles S.E. of Bolangir	
15.	Cuttack plates	-do- 9th R.Y.	Sankhapānī	-do-	Candagrāma		Candagan 20° 11' N 86° 8' E 32 miles SE of Cuttack	
16.	Nibina Charter	-do- 15th R.Y.	Pundarika Sarmā Diksita	-do-	Resident of Maramandā		Not identified	



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	Patna plates	-do- 24th R.Y.	Bhatta Mahodadhi	Yayati nagara	Belkdeli	Dehli 20° 22'N 83° 21' E-Bolangir
18.	Patna plates	-do- 28th R.Y.	-do-	-do-	Luturuma	Letar 20° N, 82° 50' E in Kalahandi 14 miles north of Tel.
19.	Outtaok plates	Mahābhavagupta II Bhimaratha 3rd R.Y.	<u>Rānak</u> Sri Rācco	-do-	Gandho- sininili	Gondama 21° 15' N Baragarh 85° 40' E Sambalpur
20.	Mahakosala Historical Society plates	Mahābhavagupta Rājadeva 11th R.Y.	Son of Calradhera	Kisara Kella	Pātilinjira grāma	Injira village in Baranga garh
21.	Kudopali plates	Rāna-Ka Sri Punja during the reign of Mahābhavagupta Rājadeva 13th R.Y.	Narāyana	Sāmāna pāti	Loisara grāma	Saranga in Baragarh of Sambalpur
22.	Khandapara plates	Mahāsivagupta II Dharmaratha 11th R.Y.	<u>Rānaka</u> Sri Abhimanyu	Yayati nagar	Bhilli grāma	Not identified
23.	Banpur plates	Indraratha 6th R.Y.	For the offer- ing and worship of the Deity Sri Khadirava- rnni bhāṭṭārikā	-do-	Lupukhambā grāma	-do-
24.	Maranjanara charter	Mahāsiva- gupta III Yayati II 3rd R.Y.	Svaradoyi Sri Yasakara	Suvarna pura	Maranja mura	-do-
25.	Narasimhapur charter	Mahābhava- gupta IV Udyota Kesari 4th R.Y.	Sankara Sarman and his brother Balabhadra Sarman	Yayati nagara	Kontalanda  Lovakarada	Kantilo 22° 22' N Puri 85° 14' E Dist. Karaḍā 20° 28' N 85° 14' E Baramba, Cuttack
26.	Sankhameri grant	-do- 4th R.Y.	Govinda Kara	-do-	Agarabādamula grāma	Not identified
27.	Single plate from Mahada	Udyota Kesari	Bhattaputra Dharmapala	-do-	Comunḍa	Not identified
28.	Sonepur plates	Kumara Somsvara deva 1st R.Y.	Udaya Kara	Suvarna pura	Attenda Varavuda	Achenda, 7 miles from Kelga in Bolangir Dist.
29.	Single Kelge plates	-	Abhāvakara, Son of Udaya Kara	-	Varavuda	Not identified
30.	Ratnagiri charter	Karnarāja deva 6th R.Y.	Rāni Karpura Sri	Yayati nagara	Sankonta	Anikene, 3 miles from Ratnagiri in Cuttack
31.	Kamelpur plates	Rānaka Jayarnava during the reign of Karnnadeva 7th R.Y.	Parama Kara	-do-	Vādakela	Near Kolada of Ganjam
32.	Kumarang plate	Dendi Mahādevi year 187	Sir Brahmanas of different Gotras	-	Kamtsara nagari	Kamsaru in Dhenkunal

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
33.	Noulpur grant	Subhakara deva R.Y. 54	200 Brāhmanas	Guhadeva pātaka	Komparaka in Pāncāli Visaya and Daṇḍānki & Yoka in Vubhyūdaya Visaya		Kupari (Balasore) 20° 17' N, 86° 25' E. Baghuadi, 15 miles N.E. of Jaipur with Solanpura	
34.	Chaurasi plate	Sivakara deva II year 73	Jalubhaṭṭa	-do-	Vuvradā in Daksina Tosali		Buhuruda 19° 10' N, 85° 58' E 10 miles North-East of Puri	
35.	Dharakota plate	Subhakaradeva year 103	Bhaṭṭa Nārāyan and Bhaṭṭa Devakānta	-	Gundaja in Daksina Tosali		Gundrivadi 19° 13' N 84° 27' E 10 miles North-West of Dharakota, Ganjam	
36.	Hindal plate	Subhakara-deva year 103 granted at the request of Pulinda rāja	God Vaidya-nātha Bhaṭṭaraka	Guhadeva pataka	Nddilo		Nandelo in ex-Hindol state of Dhenkanal	
37.	Dhenkanal plate	Tribhuvana mahadevi year 110	Bhaṭṭa Jagad-dhara	-do-	Kantaspura		Kantapura 20° 8' N, 86° 4' E in Cuttack Dist.	
38.	Angul plate	Dharma Mahadevi	Sridhara bhatta	-do-				
39.	Ganjam grant	Dandī Mahā-devi year 180	Pratihāra Dhavala	Guhesvara pātaka	Purvakhanda in Varadu-Khanda Visaya			
40.	Ganjam plate	Dandī Mahādevi	Bhattaputra Purusottama who made over half of the village to Ravika		Rasambha		Rambha in Khalikat, Ganjam	
41.	Tekkali plates	Indra Varman G.E. 154	Kalinga Nagara	Skanda Sarman	A 'hala' of land is the village Tunganna		Tungm. Near Tekkali	A 'Hala' of land is the land cultivable by one plough-share
42.	Chicacole plates	Devendra Varman G.E. 183	-do-	To Six Brāhmanas	Pappangika		Poppangi in Srikakulam Dist. of A.P.	
43.	Tharmalingesvara plates	-do- G.E. 184	-do-	One half of the village to God Yogesvara Bhaṭṭaraka the other half to students of Sivāchārya	Haduvaka village		Adava in Parlakenedi of Ganjam	
44.	Tirlingi plates	-do- G.E. 192	-do-	Pillisarman and his son and daughter	Navatala village		Nuatala, Parlakemedi (Ganjam)	
45.	Siddhantam plates	-do- G.E. 195	-	Tampara sarman Di-Khit who shared it with his brother Yajna sarman	One 'hala' of land from the village Siddhā-rthaka			
46.	Dharma lingesvara plates	Anantavarman G.E. 204	Kalinga Nagara	Vishnu Somāchārya	Tolatthera		Gurandi Ganjam	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
47.	Santabom- mali plates	Nandavarman G.E. 221	-do-	Three Brahmanas	Cikkhali Gramas	-	Near Takkali	-
48.	The Vizag- patam plates	Devendra- varman G.E. 254	-	Bhattaraka Dharmesvara	Tudvamaina Pudita and Soliganu dula.	-	In Srikhalum Dist of A.P.	-
49.	Almanda plates	Ananta varman G.E. 304	-	Sridhdhara bhutta	Medaka with demarcated boundaries	-	Near Almanda in Vishakapatanam Dist.(A.P.)	-
50.	Salantri plates of Musunika grant	Devendra- varman	-	Vishnu Sarman and 1/3 to his brother Vanu Sarman	Muscunika, with demarcated boundaries	-	15 miles west of Srikakulam Dist.	-
51.	Bangalore plates	-do-	-	In favour of Guru Vinita- sasi for the worshipping rites of the lord	Siddhata	-	In Srikakulam Dist.	-
52.	Chicacole plates	-do-	-	One half to a Goddess, the other half to four brothers	Birinika	-	Near Tekkali	-
53.	Badakhimedi plates	-do- G.E. 308	-	Govindasarma	Purujevana	-	In Ganjam	-
54.	Tekkali plates	-do- G.E. 310	-	Donees name has been erased	Village name has been erased	-	-	-
55.	Pattali grant	Lokamahadevi Queen mother of Yuvaraja, Rajendravarman G.E. 313	-	Goddess Kanchipoti Bhattarikā	Patali, Arali and Krsasankara, the three villages	-	Near Tekkali	-
56.	Simhipura plates	Dharma Khedi, Jayantipura the ranaka in the time of Devendra- varman Ganga Kadmba vamsa Era 520	-	to 300 Brahmanas headed by Dudura valaka and Chnandaka	Dharmapura	-	In the South of Ganjam	-
57.	Chicacole plates	Devendra- varman G.E.(3)51	-	to 300 Brahmanas	Tamaracheuru	-	-	-
58.	-do-	Satyavarman G.E. 351	Kalinga Nagara	To Deity Munkavapose Svamin as a <u>Devāgrahara</u> in favour of Kamalāsana bhattaraka	Tarugrama	-	The land had the capacity of pro- ducing 1000, <u>Dhānya</u> .	-
59.	Mandasa plates	In the reign of Ananta varman Saka 913 Era R.E. 15, by a chief- tain, ranaka Dharmakhedi	-	Erukalayadeva	Patharakhandā village	-	In Ganjam	-
60.	Chicacole plates	Ananta- varman	Kalinga Nagara	Mahidhara	Burasi	-	The land was able to produce 100 Dhānya by Adhaka- pramāna-measure- ment.	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
61.	Tekkali plates	Ananta-varman G.E. 358	Kalinga Nagara	Vithubhatta	Sinicheruna - village	-		
62.	Parlakemati plates	Daraparaja, a subordinate King in the time of Vajra- hasta	-	Rajaputra Kamadi	Hossandi	-	The village was given on the occasion of the donee's marriage	
63.	Chioacole plates	In the time of Madhukamarnava, G.K.E. 526, a subordinate Chief Lakshma- narama deva	-	Sri Erapa Nayaka	Three villages such as, Fatu- grama, Hondara vada and Mora- khini		In Srikakulam Dist.	The villages were trans- formed into a <u>Valsvya-agra- hara</u>
64.	Ponduru plates	Vajrahasta deva	Dantipura	Uttana Bali Nayaka and a portion was for his son	Six villages such as Tand- misoka, Ponduru, Muttalika, Tala- cheruvu, Chirelusu, Gara, Jandirama, in two visayas		In Srikakulam Dist of A.P.	This grant was given in lieu of his heroic deed
65.	Chirupalli plates	Vajrahasta alias Ananta- varman G.E. 383	Kalinga Nagara	Narayana	Jadyala	-		
66.	Andhavarma plates	Vajrahasta	-	Madapa Rhima	Goshtha Vaja		Gotta in Srikakulam Dist.	
67.	Mirakarpur plates	Udayakhedi of the time of Devendra- varman	Kalinga Nagara	To 12 Brahmanas	Pagadakheda		In Ganjam Dist.	Shares of the Brahmanas are mentioned here in terms of <u>Vritti and Padas</u>
68.	Galavalli plates	Manjuendra varman G.E. 393	-do-	To a deity Gundisvara, Received by Samaveda Bhagevanta	Numkapataka grama, Badabansi grama and Chinta- cedu grama	-		
69.	Chidavalasa plates	Devendra varman G.E. 397	Kalinga Nagara	To three Brahmanas	Kandli vada		In Srikakulam Dist.	
70.	Nagita vataka grant	-do-	-	Narasimha- bhatta and madhava bhatta	Naipta- vataka,		Near Tekkali	
71.	Kamba Kaya plates	Udayaditya in the time of Devendra- varman Saka Era 1003	-	One-half to Revana Nayak, One-fourth each to Aitaya and Somaya	Reveniiji		In Srikakulam Dist.	
72.	Andhavarma plates	Anantavarman	Kalinga Nagara	To three Brahmanas	Kalamadumvi Sakuna		-do-	
73.	Boddapadu plates	Vajrahasta III Saka 982	-do-	God Jalasvara and the madar- manavarttika was given to Erayama	Avarenga		Avalingi in Srikakulam Dist.	
74.	Ganjam plates	Netta bhanja	-	Six Brahmanas	Ratang		Rottang in Ganjam	

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
75.	Ganjam plates	Neeta bhañja	-	One Brähmana	Mechchhāda - grāma		Machhagaon in in Cuttack Dist.	
76.	Ghoosar plates	-do-	Vanjūlvaka	Two Brähmanas	Machohhādra grāma		Machhagaon area in Cuttack Dist.	
77.	Vanjūlvaka grant	-do-	-do-	Bhañja Deuli	Sedagrāma and Rajagrāma		In Ganjam	
78.	The Bana tumva copper plate grant	-do- R.E. 26 on behalf of his three Queens	Varāda	14 Brähmanas	Vandū tunga gram		Banatumva village Bhañjanagar Ganjam	
79.	Dasapalla copper plate	-do-	Vanjūlvaka	Ivādatta the merchant	Part of the village Gunda-pātaka		Nayagarh area of Puri Dist.	
80.	Baudh grant	Ranabhañja	Dhritipura	One Brähmana	Kontintha		Kontuzni, 2 miles South of Baudh	
81.	Baudh grant	-do-	-do-	Two Brähmanas	Vallāsrīngā		Balasinga, Baudh	
82.	Patna Museum plates	-do-	-	One Brähmana	Vahivaravada		-	
83.	Kumurukela grant	Satrūbhañja Deva	-	One Brähmana	Jaintamura		In Sonepur, Bolangir	
84.	Jangalpada plates	-do- Samvat 14	-	Vishnu Svāmi and Marāyan Svāmi	Kontamullo		In the Ganjam Dist.	
85.	Sonepur copper plate	Satrūbhañja Deva	-	One Brähmana	-		-	
86.	The Dasapalla grant	Rānak Satrū- bhañja Deva Samvat 198	Vanjalvaka	Ajapala	Konkaira		Not Identified	The starting year of the Samvat has been taken as 736 AD
87.	The Ganjam copper plate	-do- issued by the order of Sri Prithvi mahādevi	-do-	Bhañjaputra Bāppi	Komvabada		In Ganjam Dist.	OHRJ, I, (1952-53) S.N. Rajaguru, pp. 208 ff.
88.	The Ganjam plates	Viśyādihara Bhañja	-do-	Bhañja Purāndara	Mula Machchhāda grām		Machha goan	
89.	Orissa copper plate grant	-do-	-do-	One Brahmana	Tundurava		Tundura, Aska Ganjam	
90.	Antarigrāma plate	Yababhañja R.E. 3	-do-	Jagadhara Sarmā	Komyana		Konomana in Ganjam	
91.	Antarigrāma plates	Ja-Yababhañja Deva R.E. 3	Kolada	-do-	Rengarada		Bhangarada in Gumusur of Ganjam	
92.	Baudh plates	Kanaka bhañja	-	Narivamsa	Bahula, Bendunki Jamarapura and Simhipura		In ex-Baudh State	
93.	Bamanajhati grant	Ranabhañja	Khijjīngā	Two Brähmanas	Timandira, Nankolada Jambupardaka		Bāmanghāti in Mayurbhanj	
94.	Khanda Deuli grant	-do-	-	One Brähmana	Bonula		In Mayurbhanj	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
95.	Tasa paikera plates	Ranabhañja	-	One Brāhmaṇa	Tasapaikerā -		In Binka, Bolangir	
96.	Orissa Museum plates	Ranabhañja Deva R.E. 9	Dhrtipura	Bhaṭṭa Varada	Varisamā -		Athmalik area of Dhenkanal	
97.	Orissa Museum plates	Silabhañja R.E. I	Vañjulvaka	Lumva Deva	Deuladda -		In Ganjam	
98.	Bamanaghata grant	Rāja bhañja Deva	Khijjiñga Deva	One Brāhmaṇa	Brāhmaṇa -		Brahmanavasa in Bamanagara of Mayurbhanj	
99.	Bonai copper plates	Vinita Tunga	-	Harsanala	Konjuary -		In Keonjhar	
100.	The Kharga prasad copper plate OHRJ, XI, 4, pp. 242 ff.	Vinita Tunga Samvat 161	-	Bhaṭṭa Isana	A plot of land in Labantayi -		Near Meramaundali Dhenkanal	
101.	The Talcher plates	Gayada Tunga	Jayapura Kotta	Bhaṭṭa Bhainadeva	Svalpa-Kompai -		In Talcher, Dhenkanal	
102.	The Talcher plates	-do-	-	Half of the share of the village goes to Bhattaputra Devasarman and one-fourth each to Bhattaputra Varudeva and Bhattaputra Rama deva	Vamaitalla -		Tonkura region of Pallahara Dhenkanal	
103.	The Asiatic Society plates	-do-	-	i. 1/6th to Bhattaputra Dādo ii. 1/6th to Bhattaputra Trivikarma and Purusottama iii. 1/18th to Bhattaputra Rāmadeva, alongwith his five brothers iv. 1/18th to Bhattaputra Ghālo v. 1/18th to Bhattaputra Vishnu vi. 1/6th to Bhattaputra Narayan vii. 1/12th to Bhattaputra Srighosha and his three brothers viii. 1/18th to Bhattaputra Trilochana ix. 1/36th to Bhattaputra Baladeva x. 1/12th to Bhattaputra Monoratha deva Sarman and his two brothers xi. 1/12th to Bhattaputra Sādhovana	Toro		Thorakota in Pallahara	

This grant was a Kara-sasana in favour of brahmanas and the Trin-odaka (nominal rent for annum) was fixed at 9 palas of Silver

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