
UNIT 10 LAND AND SMALL HOLDINGS

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10.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit would enable you to understand:

- Problems and poor economic conditions of small farmers, tenants, and agricultural labourers in the colonial period;
- Land taxation and land holding during the colonial period;
- Ambedkar's philosophy on agriculture taxation; land reforms and land holding;
- Influence of Ambedkar's philosophy on land reform introduced by various state governments in post colonial period; and
- Relevance of Ambedkar's philosophy to agriculture taxation, land reform and land holdings in current scenario.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Ambedkar was a multi-faceted personality. He addressed complex issues like suppression of the poor, Dalits and farmers in the colonial India through his writings and speeches. Ambedkar studied the contribution of farming and rural life to Indian economy. His research highlighted day-to-day economic problems of small and tenant farmers and suggested remedies to overcome the poor state of Indian agriculture. Ambedkar extensively surveyed rural areas and was associated with various farmers' movements. He received direct feedback from small farmers. His exposure to Indian rural economy is reflected in his writings in which he criticized well-established reports on Indian agriculture. He challenged renowned experts for their incompetency in addressing problems of farmers due

to lack of understanding of inherent land system, agriculture practices and day-to-day affair of rural life.

He not only criticized these reports but also suggested remedies for problems of farmers. It is important to read thoughts of Ambedkar on agriculture economy and land holdings to have a better understanding of Indian agriculture system and the issue of small land holdings.

10.2 IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE IN INDIAN ECONOMY

India is ranked second in the world in agriculture production. Agriculture and allied areas contributed to 16.5% of the Indian GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2016. India is among top three nations producing many crops like cotton, wheat, tea, rice, sugarcane, pulses, peanuts, fruits and vegetables. Agriculture is a basic source of income and employment for most of the rural people in India. The agriculture sector engages over 50% of Indian workforce. About two-thirds rural population depends on agriculture. The contribution of agriculture to Indian economy has been consistently declining since independence, particularly in the last thirty years. Agriculture and rural development have been the most neglected areas in policy making of the government. The World Bank in its *India Country Overview 2008* report expressed concern over pathetic situation of farmers and agriculture in India:

Current agricultural practices are neither economical nor environmentally sustainable and India's yield for many agricultural commodities are low.

It is surprising that findings of this report is an echo of findings made by Ambedkar in his research paper, *Small Holdings in India and their Remedies*, published 91 years before the World Bank report came out in 2008. Hence Ambedkar had a deep understanding of agricultural output and taxation. He knew about the poor economy of agricultural sector and the pathetic situation of farmers due to small land holdings.

10.3 SUPPRESSION OF FARMERS IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

India's economy during the colonial period was primarily based on export of agriculture products and revenue from agriculture land. The East India Company brought various regulations in the taxation system to get maximum revenue from agriculture. The land revenue system during the British rule, introduced by Warren Hastings, was based on the principle that all land belongs to the Crown. Due its poor administrative system, the company was unable to directly collect revenue from farmers but depended on local intermediaries. The government introduced three major intermediary systems for revenue collection from farmers:

- Zamindari in Bengal;
- Ryotwari in Madras and Bombay; and
- Mahalwari in North-Western Provinces.

The entire agriculture land was under the state's ownership; mediators (*zamindar* under *zamindari* and *lambardar* under *mahalwari*) collected revenue on behalf

of the government. The British followed the time-bonded contract of revenue collection and assigned contract of revenue collection to the highest bidder. The bidding process suffered from over stipulation of revenue; ultimately farmers were forced to cultivate cash crops to meet the target set in the bid. *Zamindars* were allowed to sub-contract the land under their control; thus the British introduced an agrarian hierarchy. People who were not directly involved in cultivation at the upper layers of this hierarchy were privileged and enjoyed big land holding but farmers, who were the real producers of crops, become landless bonded laborers or tenant farmers.

The British policy hurt the autonomy of village *panchayats*. The Mughal rule empowered village panchayats to resolve local land disputes; and the role of middlemen in the Mughal period was confined to collecting taxes. Thus middlemen could not use muscle power to collect taxes and force farmers to cultivate a specific crop. In the initial phase, when the British introduced the exploitative revenue system through *zamindars* and *numbardars*, the government faced opposition from local *panchayats*, which were dominated by farmers. Mediators could not succeed in overcharging land tax and force farming of crops which would earn maximum profit for the British.

The local panchayat system defended interests of farmers. In case of disputes, forcible cultivation or evacuation of farmers due to non-payment of advance taxes, local panchayats favoured farmers and provided relief to them. The British saw the panchayat system as being prejudiced and based on orthodox practices of Hinduism. The government snatched away the autonomy of panchayat system and empowered mediators to use force or evacuate farmers from land in case they failed to pay land taxes.

The land revenue system introduced by the British resulted in accumulation of land with a few mediators. The mediators, holding most of the land, were non-cultivators; while the actual cultivators were reduced to tenants or agricultural labourers. Agriculture no longer provided food to people but became a source of raw material to industry. Farmers raised their voice against exploitation by *zamindars* and the British government. Initially these upspring were local and unorganised. Later political parties, realizing the political strength of farmers, joined their cause. Uprisings were organised and spread to large areas. The news of the exploitation of Indian farmers by British spread far and wide.

Although farmers movements during the British rule could not succeed in achieving their most pressing needs, the government was compelled to relax land tax and dilute the autocracy of zamindar. These movements also helped in overcoming the communal divide between Hindu and Muslim. Farmers of both communities joined hand to eradicate repressive practices of the British.

10.4 AMBEDKAR PHILOSOPHY ON LAND TAXATION AND LAND REFORMS

Research literature on agriculture economy of developing countries in early 20th century usually failed to reflect real ground situation because experts lacked a basic understanding of the ground situation of farmers and hereditary possession of land. They relied on published literature for drafting bills and implementing land reforms. The literature they relied on was extensively based on the agriculture

system based on big land holdings prevailing in the US, Europe and the Soviet Union. Land reforms and revenue system introduced by the colonial British government were influenced by a capitalistic form of agriculture. These reforms failed to address the most pressing needs of Indian farmers.

Ambedkar did an extensive survey to understand land holdings and problems of farmers. He noticed that land reforms suggested by the colonial government were influenced by the land holding system prevailed in Europe. He criticized these reforms for failing to address issues of farmers with small holdings. It may, therefore, be in order to present Ambedkar's thought on agro economy in his own words published under the Clause 4 of 'State and Minority' (1947) :

- 1) *That industries which are not key industries but which are basic industries shall be owned by the State and shall be run by the State or by Corporations established by the State.*
- 2) *That agriculture shall be the State Industry.*
- 3) *That the State shall acquire the subsisting rights in such industries, insurance and agricultural land held by private individuals, whether as owners, tenants or mortgages and pay them compensation in the form of debenture equal to the value of his or her right in the land. Provided that in reckoning the value of land, plant or security no account shall be taken of any rise therein due to emergency, of any potential or unearned value or any value for compulsory acquisition.*
- 4) *Agricultural industry shall be organised on the following basis;*
 - a) *The State shall divide the land acquired into farm of standard size and let out the farms for cultivation to residents of the village as tenants (made up of group of families) to cultivate on the following conditions:-*
 - i) *The farm shall be cultivated as a collective farm;*
 - ii) *The farm shall be cultivated in accordance with rules and directions issued by Government;*
 - iii) *The tenants shall share among themselves in the manner prescribed the produce of the farm left after the payment of charges properly leviable on the farm;*
 - b) *The land shall be let out to villagers without distinction of caste or creed and in such manner that there will be no landlord, no tenant and no landless labourers;*
 - c) *It shall be the obligation of the State to finance the cultivation of the collective farms by the supply of water, draft animals, implements, manure, seeds, etc;*
 - d) *The State will be entitled to:*
 - i) *To levy the following charges on the produce of the farm;*
 - a) *A portion for land revenue;*
 - b) *A portion to pay the debenture-holders; and*
 - c) *A portion to pay for the use of capital goods supplied; and*

ii) *To prescribe penalties against tenants who break the conditions of tenancy or willfully neglect to make the best use of the means of cultivation offered by the State or otherwise act prejudicially to the scheme of collective farming;*

5) *The scheme shall be brought into operation as early as possible but in no case shall the period extend beyond the tenth years from the date of the Constitution coming into operation.*

Ambedkar dealt with agrarian reforms on many occasions. His views on agrarian reform can be classified into the following facets:

- a) Landless Labourers
- b) Land Revenue
- c) Land Reform
- d) Co operative Farming
- e) Nationalization of Land

a) Landless Labourers

Agricultural labourers are the backbone of Indian agriculture. Most of them are living below poverty line due to lack of purchasing power. The prevailing wage rate is hardly sufficient for them to meet their basic needs. They are at the mercy of landlords in villages. Ambedkar demanded the enforcement of a minimum standard wages for agricultural labourers. Ambedkar advocated that urgent problem of landless labourers must be solved by taking over the uncultivated lands for cultivation and giving them to landless labourers. In the case of landless labourers, land-hunger was dominant. His desire was that landless labourers should be treated on par with the other labourers. According to him, similar conditions of work, provident funds, employer's liability, workmen's compensation, health insurance and pension should be open to all sort of labour whether it is industrial or agricultural labour.

b) Land Revenue

Ambedkar supported tax on agriculture and insisted that every farmer, whatever may be his income, should be brought under the levy of the land tax. The rate of land revenue must not be fixed, but should be kept elastic and subject to variation as in the case of income tax applicable to the salaried class, merchants and industries. These classes were given relaxation in income tax in case of drop of income below income tax limit fixed by the government.

Such a taxation system did not exist for land revenue in India in Colonial Period. There was no rationale in collecting proportional land tax from all the farmers irrespective of the size of their holdings. Land revenue rates were same whether a farmer owned less than one acre land, or a jagirdar or an inamdar owned a thousand acres land. The poor agriculturist was forced to pay revenue even when his crops failed. Considering the poor state of small farmers Dr. Ambedkar advocated that:

- land revenue should be levied on the recognized principle of ability to pay;
- land revenue should be progressive; and

- tax should be graded with those with large agricultural incomes paying higher revenue.

He insisted that those farmers whose incomes were below a certain level must be exempted from payment of land tax. He further argued that the ultimate object of taxation system on agriculture is to cease taxing on uneconomic holdings. Most of Indian farmers at that time were either landless labour and owning small agricultural land. Dr. Ambedkar also made demand for remittance of all arrears of rent as the revenue arrears were remitted.

c) Land Reform

Through expropriation of actual cultivators, a considerable portion of lands had passed into the hands of non-cultivating, rent-receiving, absentee landlords. Ambedkar advocated treating agriculture as industry. According to him land reforms were necessary to increase agricultural production. He emphasized input-output relations as a new idea in land reforms. To increase agricultural output, land reforms act as a method to create economic holdings. Ambedkar laid a great stress on the modernization and industrialization of rural economy as a step towards securing redeployment of the labour force so as to reduce the pressure of supporting family entirely on agriculture. He stressed that prosperity of India lies in synchronized development of agriculture and industry in the rural India. The surplus land available because of land ceiling implementation should be distributed amongst the weaker sections of society.

d) Co-operative Farming

To avoid the evils of small holdings, Ambedkar demanded co-operative farming in India. He said:

The better method is to introduce co-operative agriculture for standard areas and to compel owners of small strips included therein to joint in cultivation without destroying private ownership (pp. 131, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 2.)

He further said, “*Separate provision for consolidation would be unnecessary. A co-operative farm would be both a large and a consolidated holding.*” (pp. 134, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 2.) As a social reformer, Ambedkar visualized that the co-operative system would be the best system in India in which there would be no landlord, no tenant and no landless labourers.

e) Nationalisation of Land

As far as the land ownership was concerned, Dr. Ambedkar was of the opinion that the state should own the land but not the individual. The nationalization of land would be able to resolve most of evils due to small holding and landless labour. Ambedkar thought that India can achieve impressive growth in agriculture sector through industrialization of agricultural sector which is possible only with nationalization of land.

While referring to nationalization of land system; Dr. Ambedkar expressed likeness for land system prevailed in Soviet.

10.5 AMBEDKAR'S PHILOSOPHY ON SMALL HOLDINGS

Owing land is considered a status symbol in India. Agricultural holdings in India are dominated by small holdings. Land distribution patterns show that there is an unequal distribution of land holdings and a vast area of land is in the hands of upper caste Hindus and other higher castes in India. Various land reform legislations have been conceived and implemented by state governments to achieve a fair and rationalized distribution of land holdings. But these legislations have not altered the agrarian structure sufficiently.

Ambedkar studied the problems of small holdings in India and suggested remedies which are quite relevant even today. His views on land holding were published in paper titled "Small Holdings in India and their Remedies" published in September 1918 by Journal of the Indian Economic Society, Vol. 1. In the said paper he pointed out that the average size of holdings varies from 25.9 acres in the Bombay Presidency to an acre or two in Pimpla Saudagar, near Pune. Again these small holdings were greatly fragmented, For instance,

- In Ratnagiri district, a holding of 20 gunthas was fragmented into three plots (40 guntas=1 acre);
- in Thane district, a holding of one acre and nine gunthas consisted of six plots;
- in Surat district, a holding of an acre consisted as many as 14 plots.

Ambedkar conclusively proved with sufficient data that Indian agriculture suffers from small holdings, each holding being highly fragmented. He also proved that small and scattered holdings were mainly responsible for low agricultural productivity. Evils due to small holdings are many. The cause for small holdings was excessive subdivision and fragmentation which according to him has to be curbed by consolidation of holdings for raising productivities in agriculture. The fragmentation of holdings renders farming considerably inefficient. Consolidation of holdings has been designed to reverse fragmentation of land holdings. According to Ambedkar:

Voluntary exchanges can hardly be relied upon for much. But a restricted sale of right of occupancy may be expected to go a good deal. For, under it, when survey numbers are put to auction on account of their being relinquished by the holders or taken in attachment for arrears of assessments, only those maybe allowed to bid in the auction for the sale of right of occupancy whose lands are contiguous to the land hammered out. (pp. 459, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 1)

According to him, compulsory restriping has to be done on two principles:

- economic unit
- original ownership.

He wanted consolidation of scattered parcels of land. He does not agree that the small farms are uneconomic. Economic and uneconomic does not necessarily depend upon the size of farm. It depends on other factors of production as well. It varies with labour and also varies with capital. He also said:

It must be borne in mind that consolidation may obviate the evils of scattered holdings, but it will not obviate the evils of small holdings unless the consolidated holding is an economic, i.e. an enlarged holding. (pp 464, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 1)

He further added:

I am inclined to think that under the present circumstances it is better to further reduce the farms..... I do not therefore understand what is the use of enlarging the farms if, for instance, farmer has not got the wherewithal to cultivate the land. (pp 130, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 2)

He wanted to consolidate the scattered parcels in the holdings but at the same time the landless also should get land to eke out their livelihood. Ambedkar viewed agriculture as industry and attempted to analyse the impact of small holdings on agriculture. To him “*the existences of holdings are uneconomic, not however, in the sense that they are too small but that they are too large.*” (pp. 472, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 1). It is important to note that a study conducted by Thangaraj M titled “Land use Pattern in Tamil Nadu,” (MIDS Working Paper No. 107, 1992) by size of holdings shows that the large farmers leave proportionately more land uncultivated than the small holdings. This indicates that there is a need for reduction of ceiling on land holdings.

Dr. Ambedkar linked consolidation of land holding with economy, agriculture productivity and well-being of farmers. Consequently the remedy for the ills of agriculture in India did not lie primarily in the matter of enlarging holdings, but in the matter of increasing capital and capital goods. He attacked the generally accepted concept of an economic holding which states that a holding can be economical only when it allows a man a chance of producing sufficient to keep himself and his family in reasonable comfort after paying his necessary expenses. According to Ambedkar the concept of economic holding should be understood not only from the consumption point of view but also from the production point of view.

This is the correct view and applies even today to the situation in India because to increase production, money and real capital in capital goods are essential. His further view was that if agriculture is to be treated as economic enterprise, size has not much significance. A holding be small or large depending upon the availability and use of other factors at his disposal. Size holdings is neutral in economic sense and hence the view that a large holding is economic and a small holding is uneconomic is not correct because the right or wrong proportion of other factors of production used along with land makes the latter as economic or uneconomic holding.

10.6 CONTRIBUTION OF AMBEDKAR IN INTRODUCING LAND REFORM

Ambedkar, through this speeches and writings, made the world aware of the exploitation and suffering of Indian farmers. Ambedkar was the first legislator of the first popular provincial assembly to introduce a Bill for the abolition of agricultural tenants and securing occupancy rights to the tenants, who were the

real cultivators. Ambedkar insisted on the abolition of landlordism, as it was economically wasteful and socially tyrannous. He said:

I too agree that after abolishing landlordism, the state must be the owner of the land and not the proprietor or the peasant. The natural consequences of the abolition of landlordism must be collective farming or cooperative farming. But, we are too much individualists. The cooperative farming, though useful and improving in production, is regarded by the peasant as an aggression on our system. This is due to the individualist tendencies of our farmers. Though we abolished landlordism we would not be able to build our economy on sound basis by such methods. The whole outlook of our peasants must be changed, then and then only we would be able to reap the fruits of our revolutionary attempt to throw off the yoke of landlords. (quoted in Ishita Aditya Ray, Sarbapriya Ray (2011). B R Ambedkar and his philosophy of land reform: An evaluation. Afro Asia Journal of Social Science, Vol 2(1).)

Under the present circumstances, landlordism could be eliminated only through a substantial reduction of the ceiling on land holdings. The bill also made provision for payment of reasonable compensation to *khots* for the loss of their ownership rights to minimize resistance from landlords against transfers of ownership of land. Let us understand the *khoti* system. In the Konkan region of Maharashtra, the *khoti* system governed collection of taxes and resolution of owner-tenant issue in agriculture sector. *Khotis* collected tax on behalf of the government.

Abolition of Watan System

Mahars of Maharashtra were the inferior holders of the *watan*. According to the Watan Act, the holders of watan were government servants. They were required to work day and night for all departments. For their hard work, they were given a piece of land as watan. As a result of this practice, the Mahars lost self-respect. Ambedkar raised his voice against the watan system under which the Mahars were to do trifling menial jobs and sundry works. He wanted the holders of watan posts to be given watan lands with land revenue assessment and they should be relieved from doing menial jobs. He vehemently said:

I can assure the house that the Mahar people are absolutely determined to have the bill, and I may tell my honourable friends that if the government refuse to liberate these people on grounds of finance, on grounds of convenience, or on any other grounds, that it will be a war between the revenue department and the Mahars. If this bill does not pass, I, for myself, am not going to be in the council, I am going to spend the rest of my time in seeing that the Mahars organise a general strike, and bring the honourable the revenue members to feel that the principles of this bill are absolutely essential for the welfare of the Mahar people. (pp. 87, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar writings and speeches, Vol. 2).

10.7 LAND REFORM IN INDEPENDENT INDIA AND IMPACT OF AMBEDKAR'S PHILOSOPHY ON POLICY FORMULATION AT THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE

Over 80% of Indian population at the time of independence was engaged in agriculture and allied areas; most farmers were poor and illiterate, they were

either tenant or labour in most of the states due to the pro-landlord policy of the colonial government. The government's top priorities after the independence were:

- introduction of land reform,
- rationalization of land holding and
- abolition of land fragmentation.

Land reform in Independent India was introduced in the first Five-Year Plan; in step-by- step method starting with abolition of intermediaries engaged in collection of tax and *zamindars*. The Indian government introduced land ceiling to rationalize distribution of land among cultivators of land; surplus land available due to land ceiling implementation was distributed amongst the weaker sections of society; which was emphasized by Ambedkar and adopted by the Government of India. This strategy also helps in creating more employment in rural areas to the dalits and deprived sections. The Government of India emphasized on implementation of land reform based on the principle of Ambedkar in each Five-Year Plan of the nation. His views on landlordism, fragmentation and sub- division of land holdings, mode of farming and the system of village Panchayat are of far- reaching importance.

Various state governments introduced numerous land reforms measure in the last 70 years. The reforms have been successful in removing irregularities in land ownership. Farmers and agriculture labourers directly engaged in cultivation of crops become land- owners of the excess land holding of their owner. The government introduced relief for land tenants and agriculture labourers by transferring ownership of land cultivated by them. Tenants have freedom to cultivate crops of their choice. The Government also fixed the limit of land rent; it could not exceed 1/4 of 1/5 of total agriculture products.

The Government introduced ceiling on land owned by individuals. Land was primarily divided into two classes i.e. (a) land cultivated by tenants and (b) land under direct cultivation control of landlord.

The land under direct cultivation control by owner was further classified into two categories:

- Land which on break-up will lead to fall in production
- Land owned by landlord.

It was suggested that tenants should become owner of land cultivated by them. It was suggested that land owned by landlord should be taken over by the state government and distributed among socially-economical segments of society who have been struggling in managing their home with small land owned by them.

10.8 RELEVANCE OF AMBEDKAR'S PHILOSOPHY ON LAND TAXATION, LAND REFORMS AND LAND HOLDINGS

Land reform is a continuous process and reforms need to be introduced to meet the changing needs. The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, is the nodal unit to coordinate implementation of land reforms through state

governments, however States are given special privileges in introducing land reforms. Land reforms come under the purview of state governments. Each state introduced land reforms independently, resulting in wide variations in land reforms in various states. Implementation of land reforms have been lagging behind in few states as landlords has influence in administration and governance of states.

M. K. Gandhi believed that India can achieve meaningful independence only through gram swaraj when villages will be self governed through elected gram panchayats. Members of the first assembly were not elected mass leaders; most of them were bureaucrats, industrialist, and landlords, highly educated and leaders of Congress. These people had poor understanding of issues of farmers; but they were in a hurry to bring land reforms. They thought Ambedkar's ideas would eradicate farmer problems; however, Ambedkar's thoughts were subsequently sidelined under the pressure of industrialists and landlords who were funding political parties. For instance tenant farmers in Bengal had to give half of their share of crop to their landlords. At the time of independence, the Tebhaga movement started in which the farmers demanded that the landlord will get no more than one-third of the crop produced. The Indian government acknowledged the demand of farmers and drafted a bill to this effect. However, the lobby of landlords and money-lenders influenced the drafting committee and diluted the bill. This bill never saw the light of the day and the Tebhaga movement could not achieve its most pressing demand. The Communist Party of India in Bengal took up the farmers' demand through its kisan sabha. The farmers with small holdings in Bengal have been struggling for their rights till date.

Farmers of India are in pathetic situation despite of big claims of government about benefits of welfare schemes to farmers. Farmers are economically weak and are compelled to committee suicide. Problems of land less labour have been almost same as were in colonial period. Philosophy and thoughts of Ambedkar are still relevant to bring up struggling oppressed farmers. The government should treat agriculture sector as par with other industrial sector. The government should introduce taxation and insurance in agricultural sector as suggested by Ambedkar. Farmers should be given relaxation, rebates and other benefits in case of loss of crops as being given by the government to industries. A number of state governments have not addressed issue of small holding and failed to rationalize land distribution. This issue needs to be resolved on the principal and philosophy of Ambedkar on small holding and land ceiling.

10.9 LET US SUM UP

Ambedkar criticised the revenue system of the colonial British government for equality in tax regardless of the size of land holdings of farmers. This policy was unfair to small farmers and tenants. Ambedkar's felt that tax on agriculture should be progressive as in the case of salaried people and businessmen, that is, farmers having low income from crops must be taxed less and tax slab for farmers with large land holdings must be higher.

The underlying motive of his views on agrarian reform was to fight landlordism. The benefit of the land should be shared by all section of the society, irrespective of caste and creed. The tiller of the soil should be made the owner of the land and the land should not be transferred to non-agriculturists. Land reform is

complete only when the tiller is made the owner of the land. Occupied land should not lie uncultivated for several years. Such uncultivated land has to be taken away and given to the landless. While referring to the redistribution of agricultural land through land reform legislations, it is wrong to calculate the per capita land availability by taking into account total population; such calculation should exclude the people who do not depend on agriculture.

The problem of the landless and oppressed masses could be solved only through redistribution of land in an equitable manner. Thus, the foregoing analysis clearly indicates that Ambedkar was a socialist and an all-round social reformer. His views on agrarian reforms were oriented towards social justice and equality. He wanted to establish an egalitarian society and wanted this in the agrarian sector where the reforms are much needed, even today.

10.10 QUESTIONS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Write a short note on the land revenue system introduced in the colonial period.
- 2) What were Ambedkar's thoughts on land holdings?
- 3) What were the remedies suggested by Ambedkar to minimize fragmented small holding of agriculture land?
- 4) What was the impact of Ambedkar's thought on agriculture reform and land holdings on the measures taken by the Government in the post-colonial period?

SUGGESTED READINGS

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