CONCLUSIONS
The intense struggles generated by the institution of Inam in South India measure the significance of it in the social structure. In these disputes, individuals and families fought for their respective privileges and altered their prospects. The discussion on role that the Inam played in the pre-colonial and during the colonial administration is made the subject of study in different chapters. The existence of Inam during the period of study indicates that Inam as one of the social institution continued symbolically. It was considered by the British as privileged for their own reasons. The Government compared this symbolic existence to that of pre-colonial period. The collection of rent on these lands did not make a drastic change. Its central significance was maintained by the British. As a social institution that constituted privileges, Inam lost its importance to its social context because of change during the colonial rule. However, Inam was an essential social institution that played a major role in the political, social and economic activities in the pre-colonial period.

For the British, the pace of social change in pre-colonial period seemed to be very slow. They understood the political system as simply the degeneration of once despotic rule. But the actual situation was different. The two centuries before the heyday of British dominance in the mid-nineteenth century was a period of rapid change. The region witnessed the creation of new types of states and the emergence of new social classes which participated in the political as well as economic expansion of the state. The process of
development was possible due to the accommodative policies pursued by these social classes and the rulers. The center of these policies was the grant of Inam through which various sections of the society were involved in the obligation of service.

This study has challenged some of the prevailing opinions in the modern social and economic history of Madras Presidency. It has shown the limitations of the earlier studies, particularly concerning the land tenurial structures, by bringing out the hitherto neglected important area which represent the agrarian social structure of the Presidency. This study on Madras Presidency provide a basis for the comprehensive analysis of the land tenurial structures and for comparison with the other forms of land holdings. But most importantly, the study has exposed the bankruptcy of the colonial revenue administration as the framework which is useful to examine Madras Presidency's agrarian economy and society. The Presidency has to be seen within a context which takes account of the all aspects of economy on colonial lines and its relationship with the outside world economy. The focus has been on the impact of the colonial policy on Inam during 1801 and 1871 in particular and the agrarian economy and society of the region in general. It has probed the differential impact of the Government policy on the Inam tenurial structures and the implications it had on the changing Inamdar as well as peasant position under the British rule.

The studies so far made did not take into account the vast extent of Inam land for the comprehensive analysis of the colonial rule. The figures in the chapters point out that in the middle of the nineteenth century one-third of the cultivated land was occupied by these tenures. Under such circumstances
any study which neglected Inam as a part of the analysis of the colonial policies would give a partial and incoherent picture of the impact of the British rule.

The Madras Presidency has a long recorded history, which did not give the impression of a static traditional society as represented in the colonial sociology. This larger province as represented during the British rule, was rarely united under the native rulers. The history of this region presents a rapid economic change, social evolution and political experiment. There are many new writings which supported the view that, at least, the late medieval period witnessed a rapid development in all aspects. These changes were most conveniently viewed through two interlinked processes. One was the gradual interpenetration of different economic and social systems within the region and the other was that of complex history of the state formation. Except for a short period during the Vijayanagara rule, the Madras Presidency was at no time unified in any political or economic sense prior to the colonial rule. It was divided into different kingdoms. In the late medieval period, Arcot, Madurai, Tanjavur acted as the centers of political activities. The cercar region was under the control of the Nizam of Hyderabad whereas the ceded districts changed the ruling hands from Mysore to Hyderabad. The economy of the wet zone of the presidency depended on irrigation and this area had comparatively a dense population. There were many migrations from the northern parts to the wet regions of the Madras province. The society of this region was marked by a strict division between those who controlled the land and those who worked it, which was supported by religion and the state. The agrarian society had been
influenced by the gradual expansion of the urban culture centered in the ritual and political capitals. The polity in the late medieval period was divided into many principalities which guaranteed the rights of the agrarian elites. It contributed to the continued prosperity by patronizing irrigation and extending foreign trade and defended regional civilization against foreign incursions. The economy of the dry zone was based on the long history of cultural contact, diplomatic alliances and the colonization from the wet zones. The social structure of the dry zone represented a fusion of the quasi-tribal customs of the early inhabitants with the military organization of local chiefs, i.e., Palegars and the migrants. The result was a complex hierarchical system based on units of lineage and clan at the bottom but was changed at the top by different influences particularly from the wet zone.

During the late medieval period, there was much activity in the political, social and economic spheres, however, they were often localized and incoherent. Many of the changes, which the scholars so far accorded to the nineteenth century have actually occurred prior to the British rule. To analyze the changes in the society one can depend on the type of polity witnessed in the pre-colonial period. The decentralization of Vijayanagara empire could not be seen as either the degeneration of the power structure or as a cause for making the society chaotic. Instead, it should be analyzed in terms of the actual development brought by these numerous principalities and smaller states. These powers developed closer links with rural society and favoured regional elites by granting privileged lands. All these smaller states and other principalities adopted the pattern of Vijayanagara administrative structure and continued to operate within a system of honours and titles.
The decentralization of political authority encouraged the growing economic vitality of local areas. Inamdars and other landed elites employed by the regional states developed better irrigation systems and settled colonies of cultivators around them. While the old imperial cities declined, the new towns were developed on the same lines in which different occupational groups were settled with the support of Inam grants. The grants to temples, masjids, etc., continued to flourish as the rulers and other dominant elites displayed their faith in religious patronage. Zones of high farming and commercial enterprise existed around the courts of nobles and other political elites. The Palegar founded many fort centers which drew in petty local entrepreneurs who ushered the commercial activity in the late medieval period.

The privileged land grant was critical in the relationship between the grantor and grantee. Inam was the source of the legitimacy for both the persons who were involved in the gift activity. The superiority of the grantor could be known through his elaborate gift activity and his mediation of conflict which emerged in the fight for the possession of Inam. Since the Inam inherently carries privileges it was effectively used for building the transactional relations between various structures. Inam also represent the systematic allocation of material resources and services. In this sense, honours transacted to a variety of grantees and involved them to stand in an asymmetrical, dependent and subordinate relationship to their grantors. The various hierarchical structures were made to participate in the political and economic development of the state. These transactional relations, from the top of the privileged structure to the bottom, neither remained static nor endlessly flexible. They were susceptible to the outside influences and
reacted as much as they did. The pre-colonial economy, in this sense, responded to the needs of the times. Trade and commerce were developed to such an extent that they were catering to the needs of the different nations. At this time, the regional culture did not receive heavy shocks which thoroughly changed the existing social system. The outside contacts did not make the society so much flexible that it's regional caste system, religious ideas etc., could have changed thoroughly. Inam brought a delicate balance between the indigenous political, social and economic structures and the extraneous influences during the pre-colonial period. While asserting the individual attitude of it, Inam accommodated the necessary elements for sustaining the overall development. Inam provided a way for the accommodation of local chiefs, the village servants and other important individuals as well as groups in the authority of the grantor and later to maintain the transactional relations with them. Thus the central meaning of the Inam rested on the coherent and shared ideology.

When Inam was granted, it was not simply the right to land that was granted but it also included the privileges like, honours, emblems and status, which symbolically linked with the sovereignty of the grantor and involved the grantee into an obligation of reciprocation. The obligation to reciprocate was valued, apart from other things, morally in which the central importance was given to the development of relations with the grantor. Thus the involvement of the grantee was made total and it was bounded by moral and religious sanctity, apart from the service condition, to reciprocate. In such activities individual liberties and freedom were not overpowered, but respected by the grantor.
Thus the extensive prevalence of Inams in pre-colonial period implied a continuous mutual obligations of the grantor and grantee. It was not the dependence of the grantor on the grantee and neither it was a weak central authority, as considered by W.T.Blair and other British officials, that exacerbated the grant of Inams. The fact that the royal orders and judgments over the Inams were not legislative but administrative could not be understood as the inability of the grantor. Although these measures addressed directly to the specific groups or individuals, they were not made as the fixed law or even strictly serve as an illustration before the arrival of the British. These laws were never applied generally, but subjected to alteration or repeal according to the need of the situation. The administrative actions of the grantor in respect to the Inam of any area were depended on the context of particular case and was bounded by it only. Hence, there was no centralized, permanent, bureaucratic organization as appeared in the nineteenth century. Instead, the local groups were involved in the decision making process of anything that related to the Inam, on behalf of King.

The nature of the grant of Inam differed according to the specificity of service rendered. The political and other service grants followed a different logic. However, all the Inams played a key role according to the condition of grant in the ritual hierarchy. This indicated that the distinction between the ritual and non-ritual was obscure.

The intimate relationship between the grantor and the grantee was changed in different respects with the introduction of British rule. Inam was not essential base of the authority of the colonial Government in Madras Presidency. Consequently, the exchange of gifts and honours between the
grantor and grantee largely ceased to exist. However, the Government continued
the existence of Inams but did not maintain a transactional relationship with
the Inamdars in systematic way. These Inamdars were made subjugated to the
colonial economy through various legislations. The day to day involvement in
the affairs of the Inams was not left to the local leaders but were taken over
by the British through the gradual expansion of their bureaucracy which was
reluctant to resolve the succession and other disputes related to Inams. The
institutional separation under the British rule, of executive from judiciary
created ambiguities in the arbitration of Inam disputes. Such ambiguities did
not exist in the pre-colonial period as both the powers were unified in the
king. The contrast between the context specificity nature of the royal orders
to deal with the disputes of the Inams and general tendency of the law of the
British provoked many new conflicts between the British rulers and their native
chiefs and this had serious consequences on the role of Inam in the nineteenth
and twentieth centuries.

In the pre-colonial period, Inams were widespread and the possession of it
was meant the privilege in the locality. But the British dismantled the
privileges of the Inam which it was once consisted of and such attempts of the
British were resisted by the Inamdars. The Chittoor Palegars' revolt and the
Cuddapah Narasimha Reddy revolt prove this. During the period of study, this
privileged land grant lost its honour and status, and was rendered to the level
of ordinary land grant, though the Government collected a nominal rent on them.

The emphasis of the British on revenue was so much that the alienation of
land was seen by the British as only to escape the land tax. It did not
understand the social and political relations of the rural areas of the region.
The urge on revenue was so much that it has given importance to the control of land rather than men, the latter was the basic feature of the earlier regimes. The Government, to extract as much revenue as possible, discontinued the grant of Inam in 1829.

The Inamdars aided the British rule and participated in moulding the form of colonial society. The Government was able to establish this relations because they could recruit into this system many Inamdars, specially of those who formed the lower grade of the erstwhile rulers. They provided the British with skills to penetrate the rural areas. However, the loyalty of Inamdars was not total as some of them revolted against the social and economic policies of the colonial Government. These links between the Government, intermediate classes and the peasants suggest new arenas for South Indian history. A widespread growth in the pace of agriculture production in the later half of the nineteenth century may be related to the growing pressures of population on land. As for the study is concerned, it has been argued that for the Inamdars, the first half, particularly the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century represented the first major break with indigenous forms.

The disruption of the economic activity in the early part of the nineteenth century was sometimes argued as the result of development of capitalism in Europe rather than the British Government in India. The early Nineteenth century was influenced by the external forces. They were partly reflected by the British policies in England. The relentless drive for higher revenue demands by the Government Officials and their retreat to the Laissez-faire policies also reflected the influences of classical political economy. The administrative structure utilized by the British in the nineteenth century
mostly for the redistribution of resources was in many ways similar to the indigenous institutions but where they failed was to offer services and expenditures in return for high revenue demand, like the earlier regimes.

During the period between 1801 and 1871 the financial needs of the Government became the dominant theme of the policies. By 1871 the right of the Government to manage the affairs of Inam as a supreme power was clearly and legally established. The report of the Inam Commissioner accorded a major role to the Government in the affairs of the Inam. The report of Blair thoroughly changed the character of Inam and this was continued till the end of the colonial rule.

The colonial period witnessed a competition between the state and the Inamdar to have a legitimate case for monopolistic and mutually exclusive control of Inam property. On the side of the Government, there was a protective coverage to the Inam, as existed in the pre-colonial period, in the form of nominal rent. However, the introduction of centralization and the pan-regional legislation overridden many local factors that has played a significant role prior to the British rule. The structure and continuance of Inam reveal a complex accretion of features from the past i.e., a mixture of pre-colonial character and the British policy measures. This reflects that there was both a continuity and change in the policy of the British regarding Inam during the period of study.

In the disputes over the rate of rent on the Inam land, the Inamdar gained greater than the tenant and other peasants. However, with the fall in prices between late 1820s and 1850 and the absence of credit, many small Inamdar were
in doldrums and it took long time to recover from it. Big Inamda rs maintained a comparatively better position during this slump period. The strengthening of ties of dependency in Inam tenures precluded the possibility of any sustained or widespread challenge to Inamdar’s right, though there were sporadic incidents of the plight of the tenants and labourers particularly in dry zones. Moreover, there was little scope for unified political action between the tenants and peasants. Political agitations involving the tenants and landless peasants occurred only where there was total unity against Inamdars. However, the agitations occurred on specific issues of rent enhancement and right in land but from Inamdars and rarely by tenants. The Government provided the Kudivaram right in land to the Inamdar but subjected few limitations which came out at the time of succession to the property. In many cases, the Inams were resumed on one or the other pretext. In other words, the Inamdars were under precarious position during the period of study as they faced different types of policy threats from the Government. This threat could be gleaned in the increased number of legal cases that continued to accumulate in the nineteenth century. Many of the Inamdars who occupied important place in the pre-colonial period became agricultural workers. The disruption of the regional elites affected the performance of agriculture.

The succession disputes of Inam and the fight for the control of the property, was equally complex. The disputes appeal to the ancient usages and customs could be revealed from the cases cited in the study. The various cases make it clear that in the fight over the possession of Inam property, the disputants had to oblige the Government policy and it was the British which ultimately emerged victorious as the attempts to control Inam resulted in the
gaining of overall control of the property by the colonial Government. The irony was that the only real protection afforded to the Inamdars for the smooth succession to the Inam property by Inam rules has acted as a check to the control of Inam by the Inamdars. In this case, what was required to the Inamdars was the protection against the Government itself. Why did the Inamdars fail to resist the attempts of the Government for the control of Inam. The answer lies in the crippling powers of the judiciary which was supposed to exercise a free and fair judgement in the disputes which had come before them. Instead, judiciary has acted according to the wishes of the Government to extend its control over the Inam. Further, the legal procedures helped to dismantle the privileges of the Inam in nineteenth century. Continued disputes among the Inamdars, between the Zamindar and Inamdar, Government and Inamdar etc., were at least partly traceable to the divisive codifying tendencies of the rules by the Inam Commission. Given this fragmented attitude of the Government, it was not surprising that only some of the Inamdars were actively involved in the disputes against Government policies. Other Inamdars were either indifferent or rendering services to the Government in various aspects.

The consequences of the disputes over the Inam property during the period of study was the divisions among the Inamdars. They could not become one group to fight collectively against the Government policies at the provincial level. This also explains why there was no armed rebellion on large scale as witnessed in North India in 1857. Various Inams were settled on different conditions by the colonial Government. Such differences helped the British to segregate the Inamdars from one another. This deliberate attempt by the provincial Government checked the unity among the Inamdars, which, if formed could be a
threat to the political sovereignty of the British. The sporadic incidents that took place in the first half of the nineteenth century indicate that the Inamdars enjoyed a lot of support and commanded loyalty from the people. If such loyalty of the people in all parts of Madras Presidency was unified then it would be a serious threat to the political sovereignty of the British. The colonial Government had to face such threat occasionally from the Inamdars, but it was confined to particular locality of the Inamdar and the influence of them was eroded by the British gradually by different policy measures.

At one level the results of this study serve as an example and expand upon, from the point of view of one type of land settlement, the larger process of change in the social and economic history of the region. How did the Inam support the argument about the change in the alliance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When one considers why Inam was continued under the British, it was argued that it had a role to play in local politics. Since they occupied in various aspects of life the British thought that if controlled, it could bring loyalty to the Government and thus balance the political and social order. The other explanation of the British regarding the continued existence of Inams was their usefulness for resource distribution with the view that they would bring economic change in the presidency.

The attitude of the British towards Inam was not without serious flaws. It overlooked the link between the status, honours and the Inam and the way the grantees connected to their patrons. The Government explained that the political situation necessitated the differential treatment of Inam. In the pre-colonial period, Inam acted as a base for the expansion of the political as well as the economic realm of the king. Whereas the colonial Government did
not require to depend on such political means for the expansion of their authority. Interestingly, Inam was a significant institution even under the British rule and this could be measured by the intensive disputes it generated among the different individuals, though there was new arenas for the accumulation and disposal of resources. The reason being that Inam during the period of study, continued to be privileged land as the rent collected on them was nominal. The colonial economy offered many new opportunities for the landed elites but provided no corresponding opportunities which were comparable to Inam. The dismantle of honours did not end the fight for possession of such privileged land grants. Those who possessed the Inam gained both the opportunities of less land rent and the source of investment in other arenas. However, this illusion did not last for a long time. Gradually, the Government took over the privileged land grants and in many cases converted them into fully assessed land tenures. In the course of time, the extent of Inam lands shrunked as the authority of the colonial Government penetrated into the interiors of the Madras Presidency.

The central question concerned in this study is the way in which the new arrangements of economic and political power affected the indigenous institutions. The present study is a contribution to the question above posed. The findings should be compared to the pre-British economic, social and political structures for the answers. The colonial conditions did not accord the cultural importance to the Inam as the earlier regimes did. This lag, which was the outcome of both deliberate and inadvertent colonial policies, of planned and unplanned interactions of the rulers with the ruled resulted in the diminishing importance of Inam.
The colonial Government after its initial land tenurial settlements were completed, has done much to change the provincial political and economic system to the one which its found in 1801. It had established a new level of state authority all over the Madras Presidency and dismantled the earlier local regional levels of power. Even where the Inamaders had not been removed but transformed into mere landholder with nominal rent to be paid to the Government, the right to utilize his privileges, was steadily albeit slowly, undermined. The Inamaders’ privileges to interfere in the regional political and economic affairs was replaced by the centralized bureaucratic machinery. The British considered that they had brought a strong civil Government, a rule of law, private property, the economic growth and social development within the framework of a new, larger and more unified state.

The study reveals that by 1871 the British brought only few changes. By liquidating many Inams, they had removed the old social institutions upon which political society were organized. The new institutions that were developed in nineteenth century were developed very much on the volume and intensity of the political relationships which they could establish with the social elements freed by the dismantlement of the old institutions. The Government in nineteenth century developed a revenue administration which could not be compared to the earlier regimes. But the extraction of revenue only was not the meter to measure the capabilities of the British, but it was the redistribution and redeployment which actually analyses the activities of the Government. Here, the British Government particularly failed to show much concern of it when compared to the earlier Governments which spent all the revenue on the developmental activities. This redistribution and redeployment
was made through the relationships of the higher authorities with that of the lower, that included Inamdars. These connections were snapped under the colonial rule.

The changes which began in 1801 by the British Government culminated in 1871 and laid the foundations for the settlements of Inam in Madras Presidency. The old ways of dealing with the Inam was slowly dying, honour as a part of Inam was disappearing. Instead the Inam tenure, was beginning to gain a similar treatment as that of the other tenures. The enfranchisement of Inam and the resumption of it attested to these profound changes. The study is sought to explain the detail discussion of the British policy towards Inam and the social context in which it arose. Ideas similar to those of enfranchisement and resumption of Inam could be found in the beginning of the British rule, but it was taken a concrete shape only in the latter half of nineteenth century. But what was so crucial about this activity in the latter period was not the ideas alone but the way in which those ideas set to move according to the tunes of commercial policy as well as the new emerging economic relations of the rulers with the ruled. The enfranchisement and resumption of Inam were the first manifestations of the gradual disappearance of Inam under the colonial rule. Such measure was a conscious attempt of the provincial Government, of centralized bureaucracy, of new land systems, the financial urges, of discontinuance of the grant of Inam. The role of Inam was thoroughly undermined by the Government by 1947. Independent India inherited such a legacy from the British that it had to oblige to work for the abolishment of Inam. The way in which this abolition was accomplished can as well become the subject matter for a separate study by itself.