CHAPTER - II

INAMS UNDER COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION
After the assumption of administration in India, the British began to exercise their direct authority on lands including Inams. The attitude of the East India Company towards Inam and other tenures in Madras Presidency can be said as utilitarian. Decisions to regulate and control the Inams were made many times, which ultimately evolved into a clear policy in the latter half of nineteenth century.

Despite the similarities between the native rulers' and English attitude towards Inams there were some basic contrasts in their approaches. First, In the case of Inam, the shift from a pre-colonial cultural and religious context to a British colonial environment was relatively swift and direct. The attitude of the Government towards Inams was so practical that the decisions made concerning them moved around the economic advantage to the Government. The religious sanctity accorded to the grant, as in the pre-colonial period, was no more a custom under the British rule.¹ It was disregarded by the British during their rule, for their own political and economic ends. In addition to that, the medieval South Indian King possessed all the powers, legislative, administrative and judicial, who as a unifying authority dealt with the Inams. However, the structure of colonial institutions and their ideology regarding Inams provided a dichotomy that expressed in the form of administrative and judicial arms of the state. Second, Inam was at no time, a fundamental base

¹ The religious sanctity accorded to the Inam grant in the pre-colonial period was recognized by Blair, the Inam Commissioner, in his report. Tracing the origin of Inam to the remote antiquity, he stated that "the gift of land is enjoyed by the Hindu Shastras as the most meritorious of charities and every Hindu sovereign was therefore ambitious of distinguishing his reign by the extent and value of the lands he alienated in Inam to the religious classes of the community." Blair Report in CPRIS, p. 311, para 3.
for the establishment or expansion of British authority in South India. The exchange of Privileges—status, honours and emblems—between the grantor and the grantee as a basis for political authority largely ceased to exist. The British did not interact in any systematic way with the traditional privileged class. Rather, they depended on the intermediaries (in Zamindari settlements) and individual ryots (in Ryotwari settlements) for raising the revenues to their economic and political ends, and these classes thus became pivotal in the Colonial economy. Later, this burden was shifted to the expanding bureaucratic apparatus of the Government. Third, there was a Government control over the authority of granting Inams by the intermediaries, which in the pre-colonial period was absent. The intermediaries were free from any control of the king to grant Inam in the areas which were under their authority. Because, the grant of Inam, apart from extending the authority of the ruler, would provide an incentive for the effective development of agrarian economy. Inam, as one of the tenurial system had caused the growth of the economy in pre-colonial period. But the British ignored the role Inam played prior to their rule and brought changes in all the then existing systems of settlements after 1801.

Tenurial systems of the British:

As the annexation by the British did not at once bring with it effective control of the rural areas, so also was the collection of revenue for many years a haphazard process. The new rulers, in the early years of their rule, did not possess the detailed knowledge of the system of settlements. The British administrative staff was also not enough to assess and collect the revenue in an orderly manner. Such uncertain hold over the land further
enforced upon them policies of short term expediency. As a result, the first two decades of the British rule in Madras Presidency were an era of experimentation, at times of almost disastrous trial and error, in the collection of the land revenue.²

In many of the districts, the British carried with them the system of settlement derived from their nearly a decade's experience of Bengal. They set out to find Zamindars of the sort they were accustomed to, and formed a settlement with these men in which the award of proprietary rights was followed by a perpetual assessment of the land revenue.³ Whatever the actual proprietors declined to enter engagements for their lands or where there were no proprietors, a village settlement was to be made in those areas, giving preference to the Mirassidars or other head inhabitants.⁴ However, the pattern of landholding in Madras Presidency differed markedly from Bengal or the other areas of East India Company. There were large areas of land that was held revenue free in the pre-colonial period. All these privileged tenures did not exist exclusive of Zamindari or Ryotwari tenures. Most of the Inam grants were the part of Zamindari areas where the Zamindar had superior control over them.


⁴ Board’s Consultations, 11 July, 1808, p.4.
Similarly, many ryots also held the Inam land, simultaneously with the ryotwari lands. Thus Inams, in many cases, co-existed with other tenures in Madras Presidency. Such privileged tenures which sustained most of the agrarian classes at once attracted the attention of the British. They considered them as an escape mechanism of revenue payment to the Government. The Government did not abolish such tenures, but affected changes in the system of settlements. These changes affected the honours, titles and emblems enjoyed by the Inamdars. In short, the privileged tenures were set to change by the Colonial Government.

Inams constituted one-third part of all systems of land holdings in the Madras Presidency and formed the part of the settlement that began in 1802.\(^5\) The cause for the settlement was that the Government considered the existence of such a large number of Inams as loss to the revenue that would accrues, since "its most urgent need was for land revenue."\(^6\) This made them to consider the existence of most of the Inams as "illegitimate" and were usurped by the "natives" through illegal means during the chaotic and decadent period.

\(^5\) The regular data of the cultivated land in Madras Presidency was collected only after 1886. By this year, the land under Ryotwari settlement consisted of 59 million acres, of which 30 million was either not fully assessed under ryotwari regulation or as estates bore privileged rate of rent. The land under Zamindari areas consisted of approximately 31 million acres of which 7 million acres were not fully assessed. The above calculations show the proportion of privileged land as one-third of the total cultivated acres of land. The Inam Commission's statistical data presented in 1869 did not have complete list of all Inam lands in Madras Presidency. Hence it is difficult to calculate actual proportion of privileged land based on this report. For details of the proportion of land under different systems of settlements refer Burton Stein, "Privileged Landholding, The Concept stretched to cover the case", in R.E. Frykenberg, ed., Land Tenure and Peasant in South Asia, New Delhi, 1977, p.68.

prior to their rule. Even Thomas Munro wrote in 1807 that

the frequent changes of government and the loss or rather concealment of accounts have during a long course of years, facilitated the fraudulent extension of the enaums, at the expense of circar.

The increase in the number of Inams was peculiar to its socio-political conditions prior to the British rule. The colonial government did not understand the Indian society and its institutions that played a significant role in the pre-colonial period. Inams, the privileged land grants, were only understood by the British in relation to the land revenue and their understanding did not go beyond that.

The British never wanted to assume all the Inams at once. Such actions, the Government thought, would bring large scale protests from many parts of the presidency, and this was experienced by the British in many places in the process of the assumption of the administrative charges of South India, e.g., Southern Palems, and from other chiefs. It was also not the policy of colonial Government to upset the social and economic relations in the rural areas, immediately after gaining the political control. The expediency and necessity to determine the number of acceptable Inams had prevented them to take the extreme and sweeping changes. But the process of change was initiated in 1802 and the first step towards it was taken with the passage of permanent settlement regulation.

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7 CPRIS, Madras, 1948, p.311.
9 The preamble to this Regulation referred to the practice of the native Governments under whom the public assessment of land revenue had never been fixed and had fluctuated without any definite principles for the determination
Permanent Settlement and the Inams:

In 1802, the Government adopted the land tenure policy which was earlier introduced in Bengal a decade ago. The Permanent Settlement, as it was known, was the foundation on which was to be built in the subsequent years, a lasting structure of revenue administration for the entire region. According to the regulation, the East India Company divided the whole lands of the Presidency into three categories, viz., (1) the permanently settled estates, (2) Ryotwari lands and (3) Inams.

The Permanent Settlement vested supreme powers in the Government with regard to the "ownership" rights in land. It had the right to reserve to itself the entire exercise of its description in continuing or abolishing temporarily or permanently, the

of landholders, the preamble indicated that they were deprived of their powers and "thereby reserving to the ruling power the implied right and the actual exercise of the proprietary possession of all lands whatever." This act of the native rulers, according to the Government, injured the property rights of the landholders and thereby the British resolved "to grant to Zamindars and other landholders, their heirs and successors a permanent property in their land in all time to come, and to fix forever a moderate assessment of public revenue on such lands, the amount of which shall never be liable to be increased under any circumstances." P.K.G. Mudaliyar Op.Cit., p.157, para 38. It was discussed in the previous chapter that, in pre-colonial period, property rights were enjoyed by all landlords without interference from the ruling power with regard to land. The individuals were given absolute liberties and there was growth in the economy which was established in various studies. In nineteenth century, Contrary to the expectations of the British, it was the permanent settlement which brought injuries to the landholders under their rule. For details refer, R.C.Dutt, The Economic History of India: Under Early British Rule, New Delhi, 1989, Vol. I and The Economic History of India: in the Victorian Age, 1837-1900, New Delhi, 1989, Vol. II. Bipan Chandra, "Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Indian Economic History" in B. Chandra, ed. Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India, New Delhi, 1984, Pp.38-81. Irfan Habib, ed. Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception, New Delhi, 1995, Pp.296-335.

articles of revenue included, according to the custom of the country, under the several heads of salt and salt-peter.

The Inam land was part of the lands which were brought under the supreme control of the Government. Thus the Government excluded the Inams, major or minor, from the assets of the Zamindars, while fixing the revenue of the lands, at the time of settling them permanently. ¹²

Inams situated both in Palems and Zamindari estates were dealt according to the 1802 act. But when the Inams were resumed and passed to the Zamindar they were charged with an addition to the quit-rent at the rate of two-thirds of the full assessment. However, some estates such as Venkatagiri, Kalahasti, Karvetnagar etc. were exempted from the application of permanent settlement regulation. ¹³ The Government, in the initial years of its rule settled the Inams in accordance with the above rules and directed all the collectors to settle the lands on the same rules.

Thus Inams were settled separately in accordance with the rules prescribed in the Act. However, the government was not satisfied with these rules. To strengthen its control further, it brought one more regulation which investigated the validity of the title of Inamdar. Regulation XXXI of 1802 was intended for investigating into and to try the validity of titles of Inamdars or such other grants and determining the rate of revenue or quit-rent to be paid to the government. ¹⁴ The same regulation prescribed a conditional

¹² Ibid., Section 4, p.2.
¹³ A.N. Row, The Revenue Refresher, Madras, 1877, p.94.
¹⁴ MELAC, 1938, part I, p.198.
recognition to the Inams through fixing certain dates according to which all the Inams held prior to these dates were considered as valid. The different dates prescribed to all the districts in Madras Presidency, according to which Inams should be deemed as valid are given below.\textsuperscript{15}

1. In Northern Circars and the Jagir, prior to 20 February, 1768.
2. In the Carnatic Payinghat and Tanjore, prior to 12 July, 1792.
3. In the Baramahal, Salem and Dindigal, prior to 18 March, 1792.
4. In the Ceded districts, before 12 October, 1800.

However, the rule did not specify about the length of possession according to which the Inam title should be validated. Regulation XXXI of 1802 authorised the Collectors to demand general registration of Inams and institute suits in courts for the payment of quit-rent, if the Inamdar refused to pay it.\textsuperscript{16} If the title proved invalid according to the rules set by the government, it would resume such Inams.\textsuperscript{17} The quit-rent fixed on the Inams was based upon an exaggerated notion of the resources available to Government. These increased rates were a product in part of the ignorance of the new British collectors, who were confronted with revenue records of doubtful accuracy and a subordinate native staff who revealed nothing to their superior. At the same time, the British wished to make their new acquisition pay and they were anxious to raise the revenue rapidly to the sufficient level of its demand.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p.198..

\textsuperscript{16} Minute by Sir Charles Trevelyan on the Inam Lands of Madras Presidency, 13 May, 1859, para 5.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., para 5.
Grantor's privileges:

The Inam grantors, like Zamindars or Palegars and others in Madras Presidency were restrained from alienating the lands after the introduction of permanent settlement. Section 12 of Regulation XXV of 1802 stated that "the proprietors of estates permanently assessed," were restrained from alienating the land to "religious or charitable or to any other purposes by which it may be intended to exempt such lands from bearing their portion of the public tax." He was also restricted to resume lands or to fix a new assessment on lands which are allotted to the religious or charitable purpose at the time of permanent settlement. The Zamindar according to section 8 of Regulation XXV of 1802 can alienate land after the permanent settlement, subject to the condition that his amount of peshcush would not be reduced and he should pay the tax on the alienated portion also.

Effects of Permanent Settlement Regulation:

It has been evident through the regulation XXV and XXXI of 1802, that the colonial government crippled the powers of grantors (Zamindars or chiefs) to grant the Inams. The government recognized some of the Inams that were granted prior to the permanent settlement and this was governed by a set of rules.

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18 Regulation XXV of 1802, Sec., 12.
19 Ibid., Sec. 12.
20 Sec., 8, Regulation xxv of 1802.
passed by the Regulation XXXI of 1802. This remained in force until 1869 when the above Regulation was repealed. Some of the Inams granted after the permanent settlement were not recognized. If they were recognized, it was only for the life-time of the incumbent. The recognition was obtained from the courts whenever needed, because their attention had not been drawn to sections 4 and 12 of the permanent settlement Regulation. However these Inams were not valid according to the government rules, and hence not binding upon it. The successor to the Zamindar was also given a choice to give or withheld the recognition. Such Inams were resumed by the government when they came to their notice. Some more Inams which were granted by the Palegars and other chiefs were included in the assets and hence formed part of the permanently settled estates.

The significant result of the British control, in political terms, upon agrarian relations and institutions by 1801 was the suppression of the military chiefs (Palegars) of earlier period.\(^{21}\) The lands of these chiefs were resumed and assessed at full rate like other assessed lands in the presidency. The British viewed the "massive alienations" as a deliberate act of the military chiefs for reducing the amount of tribute that could be exacted from them. Their means of paying the tribute was

"much diminished by the alienation of a great part of their countries into the hands of military dependents, yet as they were always competent to resume such improvident transfers, this consideration affords no palliation of their failure.\(^{22}\)"

The alienation of land was seen by the British as only to escape the land tax.

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\(^{21}\) Burton Stein, in "Integration of Agrarian Systems in South India, in Frykenberg ed. Land Control and Social Structure in India, New Delhi, 1969, p.201.

They did not consider them as the basis of the military and political systems of Palegars and the rulers of the earlier period. Later the government argued that such system of alienations was peculiar to the pre-British period, but after the defeat of Palegars and their removal from the services, it was left to the government to resume them. But the question here is who removed them from their responsibilities. Why were the Palegars exterminated. It was the deliberate policy of the colonial Government to remove the military chiefs whenever possible and in some areas they were turned as mere landlords.

The colonial government did not understand the social and political relations of the rural areas. Neither it recognized the relations of grantors and the grantee in the society. There were some officers of the company who were afraid of the changes brought by the government without a proper understanding of the existing system. Munro who was one of the officers against such a change, wrote in 1824:

We must not too hastily declare any rights permanent lest we give to one class what belongs to another. We must proceed patiently and as our knowledge of the manners and customs of the people and the nature and resources of the country increases, frame gradually from existing institutions such a system as to advance the conditions of the people and also the country and be satisfactory to the people.  

Before affecting the existing system, it was necessary on the part of the colonial government to have a knowledge of the land settlements and the relations in the tenurial structures.

24 Initial settlements were some what disruptive in its effects because the British were yet unaware of the traditions, values and social attitudes of the Indians. But once they realized the disturbing consequences of their actions and were better informed about the existing social order, remedial measures were introduced. These steps were taken only in the second half of the
In the early period of their rule, the colonial government did not formulate specific policy that governed the Inams. It was only from 1862, that there was gradual development made in the policy towards the settlements of Inams in Madras Presidency.

The early policy of the land settlements was described as "a very extensive and melancholy revolution" in the property rights. The changes brought by this policy precipitated into a controversy within the government and led to the introduction of Ryotwari settlement in other areas in the Presidency. But the Inams were not settled yet. They still had to undergo some more controversies before finally settled by the Commission. However, the immediate reaction of the early changes in the policies of the Government could be seen from the Palems.

Inams in the Palems:

The officers of the Company, in the early period of their rule, began to resume the Inams granted by the Palegars prior to 1801, without any specific policy formulated with regard to it. They have shown one pretext or the other nineteenth century. By then, great damage has been done to the institution of Inam which reflected in many ways.

The British considered many of the Inam grants as "illegitimate." These Inams included, the village service Inams, the Pallekattu Inams (i.e. grants made for building a village or hamlet), the boorooz (for building a village tower of defence) and some of dasabandam Inams. The other Inams which formed above category were the Bhattavarthy, Kattubadi, Kaval Inams, Palegar Inams etc. The Government, at the time of the disposal of these Inams, considered the grant from two aspects. The first was that whether the grants were supported by "native custom" permanently or for stipulated term. The British saw "many of the existing Inams, whether they have the semblance of authentic
for the resumptions. According to the British, such a system was followed even prior to them by the "native rulers" and quoted Tipu Sultan who, according to the British followed a rigorous extractive revenue policy in Baramahal.\textsuperscript{27} The government also wanted to resettle the lands at full assessment rate. However, the government failed to understand Tipu’s policy towards Palegars. He only extracted the revenue which was due to the government. If he resumed Inams at one place, he granted them liberally at another place.\textsuperscript{28} Such type of resumptions were not reported in other parts of Madras Presidency. The existence of large number of Inams in Madras Presidency indicate the significance of the privileged system in the pre-colonial period. There was no indiscriminate resumption of Inams in the pre-colonial period, and such Inams never were discontinued by the successive rulers.\textsuperscript{29}

The British government did not consider the grant of Inams by the Palegars as legitimate. In the early period of their rule, the British did not consider even the Palegars as the proper chiefs, but this opinion has changed and created them as the Zamindars under permanent settlement because of the large following they commanded.\textsuperscript{30} Thus the British settled some Inams granted for origin, were given by parties who had no right at all to alienate revenue in perpetuity, such as renters, petty Zamindars, Palegars etc.” Since the Palegars and others were not considered as legitimate rulers, the grants made by them were regarded as illegitimate. Though the religious Inams and few personal Inams were settled by the British, some of the Palams and Kattubadi Inams were resumed, because the Government considered them as a threat to their political order. Order No. 66, 19 June, 1857, in CPRIS, Pp. 21-22, para 26.


\textsuperscript{28} CPRIS, p.243, para, 17.

\textsuperscript{29} Refer Inscription of an Inam grant, in Le Fanu, Salem District Manual, Madras, 1883 p.349.

\textsuperscript{30} Lushington held the opinion that the Palegars were originated only from the time of Vijayanagar rule. According to him, the term Palegar literally meant "the chief of a camp" and not 'the proprietor of a country. He stated that many of the Palegars were created by Tirumala Nayak and permitted to keep up a
military service which were considered as the basis for Palegari system and burdened the Palegars.  

All the Inams granted for the upkeep of military were not recognized by the Company administration. Some of them repudiated and the justification given for it was that the military service so far rendered by the Palegars was no more required and it was the responsibility of the government to provide protection and to maintain order in the society. The police and revenue powers of Palegars took away by the British from them and the enhancement of the rate of land revenue to be paid by them, made the Palegars to revolt against the colonial government. The Chittoor Palegar revolt was one such example.

Chittoor Palegar's revolt, 1804:

The Chittoor Palegars who formed part of North Arcot District were altogether ten in number. They were: Bangaru, Yedaragunta, Naragunti, Gudipatti, Pakala, Mogarala, Pullur, Kallur, Pulicherla and Tumba. They were managed by different Palegars who owed allegiance to the Nawab of Arcot.

certain number of followers for protection of a particular area or locality. These military leaders were assigned some villages for the maintenance of themselves and families which became hereditary in the course of time. The grants made to the Palegars were not very ancient but usurped by them in the recent times and hence were not called as proprietors of their possessions. Lushington further stated that until the time of Tirumala Nayaka, the Palegars did not usurp their possessions. Refer Lushington, Op.Cit., p.2. However, this opinion was changed by the British and considered it crucial to settle the Palegari Inams. This was not followed in all cases wherever the Palegars existed.


After the assumption of charge of Arcot Nawabi, the Company administration settled the affairs of the Palems with its respective Palegars. Stratton, the then Collector of North Arcot District fixed the tribute at two-fifth of the produce of the lands under them. The Peshcush was increased from Pagodas 16,828-14-50 to Pagodas 35,775 from the year 1801.\textsuperscript{33} The higher rate of assessment threw the Palegars in arrears and made them to evade the payment of tribute to the government. Also, the British curtailed the police and judicial powers of Palegars. These causes made the Palegars to revolt against the government. The government came down heavily on the Palegars. It wanted the Collector to resume all Palems, except Gudipatti, whose Palegar remained faithful to the company rule. The Palegars were defeated in the war and their Palems were resumed by the Government. Four of the ten palems viz., Pakala, Mogarala, Pullur and Yadagarunta were declared forfeited and their surviving chiefs were shifted to Madras.\textsuperscript{34} The other Palegars were granted an allowance of eighteen percent upon the revenues of their Palems until the government issued a permanent sanad on them.\textsuperscript{35} However, when the Palegars refused to the terms of the government, all the Palems, except Gudipatti, were assumed by the government.

The increase of peshcush was made even before the assumption of the administrative charges in 1801. The first step towards the imposition of increased tax was felt in 1792 when the East India Company made a treaty with the Nawab in which the latter gave up rights to revenue collection to the

\textsuperscript{33} Board's Consultations, 16 November, 1815, p.13593.

\textsuperscript{34} A.F. Cox. \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.81.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, p.81.
British. After dismembering the armies of Palegars, the government thought it was a step towards not only for establishing peace, collection of tax, but also for the development of agriculture as the “military peons” who were dislodged from them “unprofitable profession” and who could be used for other “profitable pursuits”. The Palegars, according to the government, were released from the burden of expenses on military services. The arguments supported the increase in peshcush imposed on the Palegars.

The British considered the displacement of Palegars not as a serious threat to their rule because their privileges were discontinued and their hold over the localities was weakened after the new policies adopted by the Government. Consequently, these Palegars would loose the claims to their authority. Thus, the Inams enjoyed by the Palegars were brought into the full assessment in the course of time. Yet most of the Inams were unsettled in the presidency. The whole Inam tenures in Madras Presidency occupied a large tract of land and consisted of the value of an "upward of a million sterling of annual revenue". The government observed that "even this represents only the value ostensibly held, and keeps altogether out of sight the additional extent of land obtained and held by encroachment in excess of that professedly claimed." The alienation of such a large extent of land resulted in the "loss" of revenue to the Government. This feeling of loss forced the Government to discontinue the granting of land as Inam.

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Replacement of land grants with money pensions:

During the early period of their rule, the British Government, following the custom prevailed in South India, rewarded the meritorious services by the grants of Jagirs. These grants were made for a stated number of years or in perpetuity. However, this practice was discontinued after the despatches from the Court of Directors in 1822 and 1829 in which the Directors expressed their opinion of superiority of money pensions which, according to them, should be replaced the grants of land on all ordinary occasions. The Directors also stated that if it was necessary for them to grant the land, then the government would consider such cases and the grants should be restricted to those special cases only.

It was a deliberate policy of the Government which marked diversion from the policy of the earlier rulers of South India. The locally powerful individuals or elites who exercised an uninterrupted control over their areas were converted into dependents on the "money pensions" flowing from the Government. These "money pensions" expropriated the local economic privileges of the Inamdars. Although the British saw their payments to the Inamdars as an extension of the indigenous model of royal patronage, these "money pensions",

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40 Blair's Report in CPRIS, p.3 para 7. The British took the step of discontinuation of Inams because the regular grants would create such a problem that the state was unable to draw the revenue from the land. The permanent character of the grants made prior their rule, if continued even during their period, would very soon, deplete the resources of the country, thereby deprived the Government of its right to collect the revenues. This made the colonial Government to give up the idea of granting the Inams. Refer CPRIS, Pp. 252-253, para 9.

41 Ibid., para 7.
In fact, consisted of a series of compensations for appropriation of local revenue sources. Thus, although previous royal endowments to Inamdars were functionally speaking, attempts to redistribute resources using the local economic autonomy of Inamdars. British patronage precisely attempted to compensate for the appropriate acts of a centralized revenue apparatus that had already radically reduced the economic autonomy of the Inamdars. 42

The Inamdar was replaced by the collector who became the effective instrument of revenue exaction for the British. The arrangement of this kind reflects the tension in the economic relations of early British domination between the urge to maximize the revenue and the urge to maximize stability and order in economic relations. This contradiction i.e., necessary conflict between two objectives of a system, was expressed in numerous major policy conflicts in the early nineteenth century. 43

In the meantime, there was an attempt made by the company government to investigate the titles of Inams of all kinds. A special establishment was sanctioned for that purpose in Bellary. However, all the measures became dead

42 The dismantling of privileges began with the Act XXV of 1802. Later the colonial Government passed many acts which reduced the Inamdars to mere landholders. Though there were acts that separately dealt with the Inamdars, ultimately, all these were subordinated to the broader colonial framework.

43 During the nineteenth century, the British Government followed contradictory policies. Their major concern in India was revenue maximization and stability which necessitated them to formulate different policies. These contradictions reflected in many aspects. First, there was no definite policy regarding land revenue settlements. Several experiments were conducted in order to arrive at a suitable principle that would guide their extractive policy. Various regions had different type of policies. Second, in law, between the inclination to shrink executive and judiciary functions of the Collector to maximize efficient extraction and the leaning to separate these two functions, to make the revenue officialdom judicially accountable and thus to "protect" the rights of the individual. Third, there was a contradiction in the policy towards bureaucratic apparatus. On the one hand the Government attempted to maximize the vertical accountability (with central power at the top) and on the other, there was a desire of forming the local self-sufficiency.
letters with no consequences at all. The attempt of the colonial government to find the details of the number of existed Inams has failed. Such failures necessitated the Government to strengthen its authority further by restricting the courts to recognize the titles of Inams.

Removal of the Jurisdiction of Courts:

It is clear by now that the British attempt to extend the control over Inams were expressed in the form of various regulations brought out in different times. The Government also made efforts to stop the judiciary from recognizing the titles of the Inamdars contrary to the earlier decisions. There were many cases contested in the courts against the colonial policies that refused to recognize the claims of Inamdars. One of the earliest attempts was expressed in Regulation XXXI of 1802, wherein the Government stated that:

Where doubts may arise with respect either the competence of public officer to issue grants for exempted lands, or with regard to the authority of the public officer to resume and assess exempted lands, in cases to be tried under this regulation, the same shall be determined by the decision of the Governor in council only, and the said decision produced in the courts shall regulate the judgement of such courts.

Obviously, by this section the government established its authority over the courts. While this Regulation was in force, another Regulation IV of 1831 was passed declaring that the courts of adalat were "prohibited from taking cognizance of any claim to hereditary or personal grants of money or of land

44 Ibid., para 10.

45 Section 3, Regulation XXXI of 1802.
revenue", whether conferred by the British government or by the Zamindars or Palegars. The power to decide such cases was also transferred to Governor in council "after due investigation by such persons and in such manner as he may deem fit". The series of acts that crippled the authority of the courts to try the cases did not end here. Further the Government enacted the Regulation VI of 1831 which empowered it to remove the jurisdiction of courts on all claims to the:

possession of or succession to, the hereditary officers in the Revenue or Police department, on the enjoyment of the emoluments annexed there to.

These regulations were later supported by the acts of XXXI of 1836 and XXXIII of 1838.

The above Regulations precluded the civil courts from taking cognizance of any matter that referred in them and it was only the government that could dispose off all such matters. The government stated that these regulations

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46 Clause 1, Sec., 2, of Regulation IV of 1831. in MELAC, part. I, p.200.
47 Ibid., Clause 2.
48 Regulation VI of 1831.
49 To the colonial officials the law constituted the most significant basis of legitimacy. The process of definition and codification of the law was the process of legitimization of colonial rule. The appropriation of revenues and strengthening the power of the Government was not seen by the British, as arbitrary unjustified actions but as the legal rights of the modern state. Codification of the law was the necessary basis for the modernization of a oriental society like India. Hence, the British considered that all the traditional institutions and individuals should be submitted to the control of the British authority. The urge to gain the superior control was so much that the Government did not give chance to the Inamdar to complaint against its authority in the Court of law. In the process, the Government withdrew the judicial remedies granted to the Inamdar. In other words, the concern of the Government was not equity and social justice but legitimation of their authority. For details refer, Neeladri Bhattacharya, "Colonial State and Agrarian Society" in Burton Stein, ed. The Making of Agrarian Policy in British India, 1770-1900, Delhi, 1992, Pp. 137-149.
were formulated only to prevent the diversion of Inams for the purpose for which they were granted. However, the British did not follow the earlier Government’s policy of non-interference in such matters with regard to Inam grants. The predecessors of the British invested the grantees with privileges and allowed them to exercise authority over their areas. This liberty was misunderstood by the British. The grantee was very much attached to the privileged land and fulfilled the service conditions for which the grant was bestowed on him. The Inams were continued even after the death of its incumbents to one or the other person. It was the nature of the Colonial Government that wherever such lapses occurred it tried to resume those Inams and brought them under full rates. It did not appreciate the custom of the natives where, if lapses occurred, it would be passed to some other descendants. But, after 1800 A.D., the Company Government kept the reversionary rights to themselves. These rights were not utilized to its full extent by the Company officers until 1845, when the government issued orders strictly prohibiting local officers from continuing the Inams on the occurrence of lapses.  

The assessment of resumed Inam lands at full rate and the grant made to the person who was ready to buy them was justified by the British as follows:

The institution of private property lies at the foundation of human society and the progress of improvement is generally commensurate with the respect in which the rights of property held by the Government and the Community. In this instance, an enormous mass of property, situated in every part of British India, has been kept for a long period in a state of unsettlement. Its precariousness, under the various and uncertain conditions of resumption, has been so much, that for

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51 Minute by Sir Charles Trevelyan, para 7.
many years it has had the character of property only in the
lowest and most qualified sense.

The property in the earlier period, according to the British, was under the
"various and uncertain conditions of resumption" which it wanted to make
conditional on the payment of revenue. The non-existence of title-deeds to the
Inams, according to the British, was considered an illegal occupation. The
Government ignored the procedures of the earlier period. In the pre-colonial
period the grants were recognized only after the local customs and the village
community takes cognizance of those grants, the Inams were able to continue
for many years. Moreover the population in India depended on landed property.
The privileged lands enabled them to pay the exorbitant rent of other tenurial
lands, since many Inamdars also held other type of lands. The government
without showing a suitable alternative resumed the land granted for police and
revenue personnel in rural areas. It was the duty of the government, under the
modern system of rule, to provide other means to those whose lands were
resumed. It is well known that it was only in the latter half of the nineteenth
century that the Government was able to give encouragement for the development
of industry in India. In the pre-colonial period Karkhanas in urban areas,
ruling chiefs, Darbars (courts), etc., provided employment to the landless
people. All these were replaced by the modern government with one council,
which did not give employment to the landless artisans and other Inamdars.

52 Minute by Charles Trevelyan, para 14.
53 C.J. Baker, An Indian Rural Economy, 1880-1955, The Tamilnad Countryside,
Delhi, 1984, Pp. 393-414.
54 The Courts in Pre-colonial India provided employment to many. Its
disappearance after 1801, threw many people without any livelihood. During the
British period"the existence of a court, even though a titular one, exerted a
considerable influence upon the population of the town in which it was held, as
it attracted a number of people. There can be little doubt that it(Tanjore)
has declined since the death of the last Rajah in 1855. When the British
established its control the Courts were enabled to provide livelihood to the
Thus the minor Inamdars have lost other opportunities through which they could live if their rights were disturbed by any chief in the pre-colonial India.

The British were aware of the conditions of India and also the systems of Tenurial holdings. There were many protests when it tried to bring the changes in the existing systems of land holdings. The officers who went to investigate the affairs of Inams did not get proper response to their efforts. The presence of Inams in every village indicate that the system was deeply attached to the culture of the natives. Under such situation it was not a wonder that the British efforts to gather information was met with failure. The Inamdars did not respond to the attempts of the Government when it tried to change the rights to the property.

The fact that these Inams are found in every village, and always owned in great part by the office-bears and other most influential members of the community affords the means of forming some idea of the very powerful body leagued together to prevent or baffle investigation.

Hence the British retreated from its efforts of finding the existence of total number of Inams in Madras Presidency. If the investigations continued, the Government thought, that it could lead to the formation of the league of powerful Inamdars and thus would bring revolt against its rule. Such political expediency necessitated the Government to deliberately leave many Inams under former holders and made them loyal, which Frykenberg termed as “silent settlements”.  

The recognition of the title of some Inams did not by any means make all the Inamdars loyal to the British. Throughout the early nineteenth century,

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the policy towards Inams vacillated between continuation and removal of the Inamdars. There were many Inams resumed by the Government. At this time the Government enforced a policy that affected the rights of Inamdars.

The increased quit-rent, the repudiation of the privileges of the local village officials drove the Inamdars to rise against the colonial Government. The revolt of palegar Narasimha Reddy was one such example.

The British never counted the troubles they faced, while enfranchising the Inams, as serious. The 1846 Cuddapah revolt, according to them, was purely because of the order they passed that the Inams should be registered. The report on this revolt concluded that the cause of it was "feudal" based on the residual regard held by the people for their local chiefs rather than anything connected with the Inams themselves. The British never considered the repudiation of the privileges, the status, honour and the perquisites attached to the Inams and linked to the prestige of Inamdar, would pose a serious threat to them.

Palegar Narasimha Reddy revolt:

The revolt of Narasimha Reddy in the erstwhile Cuddapah district was essentially traditional in character. It was one of the prominent rebellions in the country against the British rule before the mutiny of 1857. Though this revolt has been much underplayed by the company administration, it can be said that it was mostly due to the indiscriminate Inam policies adopted by the British. Most of the people participated in this revolt were connected to the palems where the revolt took place. The dominant landed elites that took the lead in revolt were the Kattubadi Inamdars, but the Bhattavarthy, Khairathi Inamdars and peasants also participated in the movement. The causes for this
revolt were traced to the effects upon the Inamdars of British legal and economic institutional innovations. The order issued by the Government had resulted in the resumption of land and the displacement of much of the Inam property by the assessment of them on par with other tenures.\(^{57}\)

Narasimha Reddy was a palegar who held the palems of Uyyalawada and Nossum which were part of the then Cuddapah district. The former was inherited from his grandfather in the male line and the latter from his grandfather in the female line.\(^{58}\) These two palems were served by 300 Kattubadidars - Uyyalawada Palem consisted of 76 Kattubadidars and the Nossum Palem that of 224 Kattubadidars.\(^{59}\) In the beginning of their rule, the government sanctioned a pension of Rs.11/- per month which was hardly sufficient for the Palegar to maintain the family.\(^{60}\) The Palegar also received a regular customary contribution from the Kattubadidars of both the Palems. Yet, the amount was barely sufficient for him to sustain his family.

\(^{57}\) The resumption of Inam lands was not a new phenomenon. It was there from the beginning of the colonial rule. In 1801 Sir Thomas Munro instructed Mr. Thackeray that only grants possessed for forty long years and were granted by Amildars or other revenue officers should be continued. These resumptions, was a source of dissatisfaction to the Inamdars. The British themselves admitted that "if the resumption would militate against the feeling and habits of the people, such act should be condemned, although its performance might be conformable to European notions of equitable dealing. In such a case there would be arrayed against us not only the hostility of the persons actually deprived and of their dependent cultivators, who will continue to look upon them (as has been the case in many parts of India) as their legitimate landlords, but also the sympathies of those belonging to the same condition of life apprehensive of similar treatment." Yet, the Government pursued the policy of resumption continuously. Revenue Department, G.O. No., 20 May, 1859, in CPRIS, Pp.50-51.

\(^{58}\) "Official Report of a Revolt by Palegar Narasimha Reddy in Kolilkuntla Taluk (which found part of Cuddapah District) in 1846", in A Selection of papers from the old records of Cuddapah District, vol.1, p.19, para 11.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., para 12.

\(^{60}\) Ibid., para 5.
The company government, in 1845, issued an order which said:

that Bhattavarty Inams were of the nature of the charitable allowances mentioned in clause (2), regulation IV of 1831, and then objected the "jurisdiction of the courts over these Inams to prohibit any transfer of them by gift or sale and report all cases of deaths of present incumbent for the specific order of government.  

In addition to that, an order also was issued stating that all the Kattubadi Inams would be resumed after they lapse. This caused discontentment among the 1,557 Kattubadis of the district, whose emoluments were, by the measures proposed, rendered liable to resumption. It was natural that the holders of the Inams who were enjoying hereditarily, considered that their rights and privileges were infringed. On the one hand the Inamdars accused the government for breach of faith in the promises made by them with regard to the continuance of Inams and on the other, they never questioned the political authority of the

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62 Ibid., vol. I, p.18, para 7. The Kattubadidars, under the British were reduced to such a deplorable condition that they were criticized by them as "corrupt" and "dishonest." They were also termed as inefficient. The Government which wanted to preserve the traditional village institutions could not provide continuous support in terms of new land grants to this village officers. The existed Inams were partitioned and subdivided among the relatives and co-sharers. The Inam lands of these Kattubadidars were generally assessed at high rates as to exceed in many instances the survey assessments on lands of the same quality held by the circar ryots. In many cases the remuneration was so inadequate that the average of it was Rs 12/- per annum, per man. The Government through its various policies denied the Kattubadidars adequate emoluments that could afford them a honest livelihood. It was this "grevious evil" committed by the Government which according to the official report made the Kattubadidars to plunder the villagers. However the view of the Government was different as the revolt received larger support of the peasantry in and around the district as was mentioned in the reports. Official Report Pp.26-27, para 42,44,45 and 46. Also refer M. Pattabhi Rami Reddy, "1846, Nati Rayalaseema Raitanga Thirugubatu" (Peasant Rebellion of Rayalaseema, 1846), published in Kadalika, (a monthly journal from Anantapur), September, 1985. Panyam Narasa Ramayya, Swathantra Veerudu: Ooyalawada Narasimha Reddy Charitra (padakavyam), Koilakunta, 1984.
Government. There was also no proof of "misconduct" against them.

The order issued for the resumption of Inams on 28 May, 1846, was responsible for the outbreak of revolt led by Narasimha Reddy. The attack began when the rebels seized the Cutcheries of Mittapally and Koilakunta. Initially the movement started with few rebels. When the news of outbreak spread in and around Cuddapah district many people joined the revolt. Palegar Narasimha Reddy received support from the Nawab of Banaganapally, the Zamindar of Wanaparthy and others. Gradually, the revolt gathered large support from different classes of people. Narasimha Reddy was able to meet success in the beginning of the revolt. The local police were unable to contain the revolt. The situation alarmed the Government and made the district administration to request the help of the army. The provincial administration provided army from Kurnool, Bellary, Cumbum and Secunderabad. Brig. Anderson supervised the army operations against the rebels. The pressures of army operations made the rebels to hide in Nallamalai forests for sometime. They launched an attack on Government offices at Giddalur. But the attack was repulsed.

Once the revolt spread to different parts of the district and outside it, the Government adopted oppressive measures to put it down. The Government announced a cash prize of Rs. 1000/- to those who captured Palegar Narasimha Reddy and later the amount was doubled. All the relatives and friends of Narasimha Reddy were kept on strict surveillance.  

As the army surrounded the rebels from all corners, it was difficult for them to prolong the revolt. Before the rebels were caught by the army, they

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63 In 1846, the government issued a notification and urged the officers that adoption involving the inheritance to Inam lands should not be recognized unless it was reported six months before the death of the actual incumbent.

were taking shelter in Yerramalai forests. This area was kept under the charge of captain Nott, Captain Young Husband and Lieutenant Newlyn. They together fought a final battle with the rebels and captured them along with Narasimha Reddy. He was hanged and his head was kept in a cage and left hanging for many years for public viewing. A special commission was appointed by the government to investigate into the causes of the revolt. It reported that the means proposed regarding the Kattubadi Inams were responsible for the outbreak of revolt.\(^{65}\)

However, the Collector, Mr. Cochrane disagreed with the views of the special commissioner as to the causes of the disturbances. He admitted that the order might spread discontentment among the holders of the Inams, but it was a general rule applicable to all parts of Madras Presidency.\(^{66}\) This revolt, the Collector said, was confined to a particular locality. The cause of the revolt, according to him was the discontentment of Narasimha Reddy with the treatment he received from the government with regard to the palems. The Collector further said that he compared his low status with that of his earlier family members and wanted to improve his position. The Collector also stated

\(^{65}\) CPRIS, p.23, para 30. However, in 1852, the Government recorded their views in the extract minutes of consultations, 4 June, which discarded the notion that the outbreak originated because of its policy regarding Inams. It noticed certain circumstances which disproved such belief. First, it stated that the revolt was not because of the measures which the Government has taken in 1846 and earlier. Second, the 300 Kattubadidars who took part in the outbreak belonged to the 19 villages which formerly constituted the Palem of the family of Narasimha Reddy. Among these Kattubadidars, only 60 were affected by the contemplated changes, while 79 were, according to the Government, directly benefitted by the measures proposed. The other peasants of the district, who numbered 11,756, actually, did not participate in the revolt. Thus the Government viewed that the policy measures of 1846 did not commonly affect the Kattubadidars but it was the regard held by these military chiefs to their traditional family leaders which made them to join the revolt. \textit{Ibid.}, para 32.

\(^{66}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p.23, para 31.
that Narasimha Reddy was cherishing the idea of revolt for a long time, since the Uyyalawada Jagir, which yielded Rs.30,480- 8-5 annual revenue was resumed owing to the "misconduct" of his father. Consequently the palegar lost the rank, influence and power in his locality. This, according to the Collector made him to revolt. After the revolt was put down, the British had an opportunity to reformulate their policy. Their first move was to issue an order regarding long possessed Inam in Madras Presidency. This was done through the despatch of the Court of Directors to the government, dated 13 October, 1847, which declared that:

long undisturbed possession both afforded an evidence of right and also constituted a motive to government not to interfere.

The impact of the revolt was such that the government had, in 1848, issued a series of instructions with regard to the Inams and asked the Collectors to recognize the Inams. The order stated:

grants of Inams at the date of the British assumption, and held by the same family at the time of passing of regulation XXXI of 1803, should be continued to the next heir on the same terms.

The Inams held without grant were left to the judgement of the Collectors to decide whether it was held for a long time or through the succession. However, the immediate attachment of Inams on the occurrence of lapses was prohibited.

The Government at the moment allowed these Inamdars to enjoy their privileged

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70 Blair,s report in CPRIS., para 17.
lands.

The various policy measures pursued for so long affected large number of Inams in Madras Presidency. The inability of the revenue authorities to dispose the cases immediately resulted in the discontentment of Inamdars which resulted in the numerous petitions filed in Courts. The revenue authorities before clearing the cases had to enquire about the lapses an impossible task to attend as quickly as the case came before them. These conditions pushed the Government in confusion and it began resuming Inams indiscriminately. The value of the resumed Inams is given in the following table.

**TABLE: II-1. VALUE OF RESUMPTIONS FROM 1849 to 1853**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Annual amount of the land tax</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inams of 3 acres and less</td>
<td>Inams above 3 acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rs.</td>
<td>Rs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Salem</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. North Arcot</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tanjore</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Trichinapally</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tinnevelly</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Madura</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. South Arcot</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Madras</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Coimbatore</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Chingleput</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ganjam</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Rajahmundry</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Masulipatnam</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Guntur</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>14,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Nellore</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Bellary</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>2,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Kurnool</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Cuddapah</td>
<td>2,519</td>
<td>2,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Canna</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Malabar</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>602</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,005</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Minute of Sir Charles Trevelyan, para 8.
The above table shows that the years after the revolt marked an increase in the number of Inams resumed. However, according to Trevelyan, all the resumed Inams were not listed in the table. Some of the Inams resumed were not registered in the official reports.

The British argued that the resumption of Inams would relieve the burden of high rate of incidence of other tenures, because the enfranchisement of Inam would increase the rate of rent to be paid to the government. Such measures, in consequence, would relieve the other landholders, whether Zamindar or Ryotwar. If the Government, in contrary to these measures, continued the existence of large number of Inams then it would diminish the power of the government to execute those public works, and make those administrative improvements, in which all are interested.

The changed role of Inam:

The allegation made by the British with regard to the raising of less tax on the Inams had one more dimension. The company wanted to dissolve the ancient ties of the Palegars and other village headmen as well as the Mirassidars and Inamdars. Because such measures would bring all the privileged lands under full rate of assessment. This was made explicit in the actions of the Government when it:

ignorantly denied and by their denial abolishing private property in the land, resuming what belonged to a public body (the gramamaniem) and conferring in lieu of it a stipend in money on one individual.

The denial of a long standing village institution was a disaster for the government as it could not find an alternative institution which would effectively function the role of village officials. In the later times it was difficult for the Government to receive the full information about the village and also to maintain the rural areas in order. The "ayagar" system in pre-colonial period was well suited for the village and everything was done among the villagers themselves. Without changing the structure of administration thoroughly the British bestowed the power on modern classes who were unable to perform effectively. Munro admitted that, "the old institutions are better to administer local areas." He endeavored to continue the village communities of India as living and organic institutions, as they had been in the past. But all these endeavours failed when the government took away the power from these "old institutions."

The Palegars, the Jagirdars, the Inamdars etc. were not only the landholders but preserved a peace and order in their estates during the pre-colonial period. They spent the rent they received from the people, through various channels such as, building the Irrigation works and had fructified their trades, manufactures and industries.

It was true that the earlier governments often resumed the Inams and the military and civil officers were, liable to frequent removals, but they were replaced by others,

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75 Ibid., p.86.
76 Ibid., p.86.
and as new Jagirs and Inams were granted to new claimants, these changes had the effect of continually throwing into the country a supply of men whose wealth enabled them to encourage its cultivation and manufactures. These advantages have almost entirely ceased under our government. All the civil and military office of any importance are now held by Europeans, whose savings go to their own country.

The British brought all the natives who held different tenures, under one broad category of revenue, repudiating all the earlier privileges. Munro said that:

one of the greatest disadvantages of our Government in India is its tendency to lower or destroy the higher ranks of society, to bring them all to one level, and by depriving them of their former weight and influence, to render them less useful instruments in the internal administration of the country.

The Religious grants:

The Religious grants, though continued, there was a change in the attitude of the British even towards these grants. Their policy concerning religious grants was pragmatic, especially when it involved the economic advantage or related in any way with the public order. The British did not transact the affairs of temple and other religious grants with the local leaders or groups as done during the pre-colonial period. The Government rather depended increasingly on the intermediaries who were actively involved in the colonial set up. Later, the British depended on its own expanding bureaucratic apparatus to manage the religious grants as well as the affairs connected to it. The colonial Government almost reversed the role the temple played and took over the activities of it with regard to the investments in irrigation,

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trade and the role of usury etc. Gradually the British subjugated the
different social institutions that were actively involved in the state's
economic and other allied matters, prior to their rule, for its overall
development. At the same time the British were reluctant to interfere in the
ritual activities of the temple. These contradictions of the traditional
institution created tensions and necessitated the Government to bring changes
in its relations with the religious grants. The departures of the Government
policy appeared from the initial years of their rule.

The Government in the beginning of their rule, as a continuation of the
earlier norms, confirmed the existed grants and directed that the proprietors
of the land should not:

appropriate any part of a landed estate permanently assessed
to religious or charitable, or to any other purposes by which
it may be intended to exempt such lands from bearing their
portion of the public tax.

Such confirmation was viewed as necessary by the Government in the beginning of
their rule. It was a minimum regulative task of the British which accommodated
some of the native elements without involving the Government too much on their
part.

The Government though involved in the arbitration of the temple disputes,
it was dissociated itself from the ritual aspect of the temple. At this time,
it did not interfere on the matters related to the Inam grants made to the
temple. The colonial Government even did not let the proprietors of land to
disturb the traditional support extended to the temples. It directed the
landlords who granted the Inam lands to the temple, not to

resume lands, or to fix a new arrangement on lands which may be allotted to religious or to charitable purposes under the denomination of Devasthan or Devadayam, of Brahmadayam or Agraharam, Maddad-i-mash or Peeran or Fakiran etc.

But the proprietors were allowed to resume them if they obtained a prior permission from the Government.

The control of religious grants began as early as in 1817, through a regulation which allowed the Government to superintend the Inam grants. It also empowered itself to repair and preserve the religious institutions and also could appoint the trustees or managers. The idea was based on the traditional role of the king who was as a dharmic ruler obliged to protect temples. Such control continued until 1863 when the Government brought a legislation through an Act of XX by which it divested from interfering in all the affairs mentioned in regulation of 1817. It left the control of the religious grants to the independent trustees or to District committees. Though the control of religious Inams were left to the natives, the temple Inams were controlled by the Government in an indirect way. The Government allowed the trustees or District committees to supervise the activities of the temple, but these committees ultimately had to operate within the broad

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81 The preamble to the Regulation says that the Government through this regulation was assuming the control "for the due appropriation of the rents and produce of lands granted for the support of mosques, Hindu temples..." Refer The Madras Revenue Code, Madras, 1952, Vol.1, p. 43.
82 Ibid., para 3.
Governmental control. It did not interfere directly as perhaps it was afraid of the widespread protest from the people. The Government had two kinds of relationship with regard to the religious grants. On the one hand it exercised an indirect control over the Inam lands and on the other, it resumed many religious grants. The policy of Government was that the religious grants were to be confirmed on their existing tenures and to be resumable only when the object for which they were held had ceased to exist.

Gradually, the traditional institutions were made subordinate to the colonial Government.

Inams in the Irrigated tracts:

The government obviously felt that to exempt one class of persons (Inamdars) from taxation would increase the burden upon the other classes, and diminished the power of it "to execute those public works and make those administrative improvements, in which all interested." But, in pre-colonial period, it was these classes who were responsible for most of the development of tank and well irrigation which were built in many places "through local investment of local wealth". This was possible because of the control of agricultural sources within the village or locality by the Amaranayakas and the Palegars. The privileged classes appointed the local persons for the

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87 Arun Bandopadhyay, The Agrarian Economy of Tamil Nadu, 1820-1855, Calcutta,
execution and maintenance of irrigation and granted them Dasabandam Inams. 88 The system of patronage was extended even to the community labour for the upkeep and for repairing the tank through the grants of Kudimaramat Inams. 89

As a consequence of change in the tenurial policies, these privileged classes were unable to finance the irrigation works as their power of granting Inams were taken away by the British. The company administration saw irrigation only as a means to land revenue. Even after matters of public welfare entered official thinking, "quasi-commercial accounts remained the soul of their decisions on irrigation outlays." 90 Consequently, many of the irrigation works were thrown under repair. Even the development of new sources was slow during the British rule. At about the middle of the century, the government turned its attention to the major irrigation works at the cost of minor projects. The number of minor works that were in existence during the first half of 19 century are given in the following table.

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88 Sundararaja Iyengar, _Land Tenures in the Madras Presidency, with an appendix and a glossary_, Madras, 1916, pp.143-144.
TABLE: II-2. SHOWING THE NUMBER OF TANKS, CHANNELS, WELLS IN REPAIR IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY DURING THE FIRST HALF OF NINETEENTH CENTURY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tanks</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Channels</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Wells</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chingleput</td>
<td>1846-50</td>
<td>2770</td>
<td>99.11</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>6,280</td>
<td>102.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Arcot</td>
<td>1849-50</td>
<td>3101</td>
<td>94.62</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>43,196</td>
<td>226.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Arcot</td>
<td>1845-49</td>
<td>2561</td>
<td>113.56</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>123.12</td>
<td>17,813</td>
<td>192.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>1849-52</td>
<td>3244</td>
<td>100.43</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>37,644</td>
<td>103.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coimbatore</td>
<td>1850-51</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>32,913</td>
<td>107.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madurai (division)</td>
<td>1838-41</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>77.25</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>2,805</td>
<td>181.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madurai (Dindigul region)</td>
<td>1883-41</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>112.48</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>6,042</td>
<td>99.08</td>
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Source: Arun Bandopadhyay, The Agrarian Economy of Tamil Nadu, 1820-1855, Pp. 44-49.

For the first half of the nineteenth century, Madras Presidency enjoyed a fairly sufficient form of government. Colonial rule amounted to raising enough revenue to support the army and the company's central administration to send a slender bureaucratic and judicial presence into the districts and to provide a small surplus for public works.

The company rule has been characterized as the rule of "mercantalist state" as its influence of Anglo-Indian law was more in maintaining the liquidity of capital than over the relations of production on the land. Though there was a continuation of the pre-colonial institutions, there was change in the powers they held during the British rule. The British took care to
preserve few social institutions. The Courts during the company rule upheld the Anglo-Indian law favouring the role of government in most of the cases. The law enacted in such a way as present an illusion of continuity of the old institutions which acted as the political security to the government. No sooner had they fought the Palegars into submission than they set about resurrecting them as the agents of colonial government in the rural areas. The idea was that Palegars would act as a combination of estate owners and revenue farmers and would thus provide government with a flow of revenue without the need for itself to interfere too deeply in the affairs of rural society. Their authority over the power to grant Inams which was used to raise troops were repudiated by the colonial government. Thus the rights of the privileged classes restricted with the enactment of laws from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the end of company rule. This facilitated the extractive operations of the company administration wherever it was possible. The significant impact of Company rule was that it precluded the operation of principles of open market in the agrarian society. The benefits of development was marred by the sinister designs of the colonial government. The Company rule, in Madras Presidency was in retreat because, involvement of government

91 Christopher Baker, Op.Cit., p.59. In order to perpetuate their rule, the colonial Government had to adopt these traditional institutions. They were integrated and accommodated in the colonial power structure. The specific local influences moulded the British policies. Consciously or unconsciously the Government succumbed to the influences of traditional institutions. For more details see, Nilamani Mukherji and Frykenberg, "The Ryotwari System and Social Organization in the Madras Presidency" in R.E. Frykenberg, ed. Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History, New Delhi, 1984,Pp. 237-246. However, Nilamani Mukherji is less emphatic about the continuity of traditional institutions. He states that "the people experienced the strain of life in transition. The old economic and social institutions were being uprooted and new ones of a different pattern were taking their place." Nilamani Mukherji, Op.Cit., p.314.

was withdrawn in many development activities.\textsuperscript{93} It cannot adopt its laws to the circumstances of the people, unless it received accurate information upon the subject from active and intelligent local officers. Their duty was to investigate carefully the conditions and opinions of the inhabitants and to report upon them.\textsuperscript{94} The ancient institution in rural areas, the Revenue and Police personnel of the village, were no more there to pass such accurate information to the government.

Towards Inam settlements:

By 1840s, the ideological strength of the Colonial Government had been firmly established in Madras Presidency by more than forty years of hard bargaining that fought state demands and English expectations against the power, interests, and convictions of Inamdars. The officials of Company involved in corruption and oppression, has increased during the 1840s.\textsuperscript{95} The time for Company’s charter renewal approached. The working of company statecraft was exposed to the forward-looking minds and it offended them. At the same time, we find many contending claims and conflicts over the terms of Inam settlements.

It was pointed out by the government that the number of resumptions made by it under the operation of the rules enacted in 1848 gives no idea of the extent

\textsuperscript{95} CPRIS, p.8.
of Inam property that has been unsettled and held in abeyance.96 The result was that large number of cases were piled up in the government offices and at the same time the Government felt that many cases were not reported to it. 97 As the reports of district Collectors with regard to Inams have not reached the Government, it felt unhappy over it. Similarly, the Inamdars were also not happy as their cases were not disposed since long time. At this time it was contemplated by the government to adopt the rules of Act XI of 1852 but itself retreated because of the inadequacy of these rules in Madras Presidency as the prevailing circumstances were different.98 The government intended to propose that all Inams which were not emanated from the sovereign rulers should be "resumed immediately with a view to the final extinction of these tenures, the existence of which considered injurious to the payers of revenue generally."99

The company administration felt that there were many irregularities which occurred in the granting of Inams and there was a need for a general survey and revision of the assessment throughout the Madras Presidency. It concluded that "the general survey will be fit time for investigating the tenures of rent free land."100 Accordingly a general survey was ordered in all parts of Madras Presidency. In view of the problems concerning Inams, the Government also felt of investigating into the titles of Inams and therefore a commission was constituted in November 1858. This commission probed the problems of Inam

97 CPRIS, p.16, para 9.
98 Ibid., p.19, para 20.
titles for more than a decade and submitted a report in 1869. The constitution of Commission and its work forms part of the chapter III of this study.

Changes in the Policies:

As mentioned earlier, the opinion of the Government on the question of settlements of Inams began to change with the discovery of the "mistakes" and "injustices" of the earlier decisions. The British Government, within a few years of the formation of Inam Commission realized that it had to make a final settlement of the Inams in Madras Presidency. The process of correcting the earlier mistakes began immediately after the formulation of Inam Commission. However, such corrections were made keeping in view of the political and economic necessities of the colonial Government. This was explicitly expressed in the rules framed by the Commission.

According to the rules set by the Commission, the Inams were divided into the following heads:

1. Enfranchised,
2. Enfranchised but liable to jodi or quit-rent and
3. Enfranchised, rent-being commuted or redeemed.

The Government’s intention in the settlements of Inams was to dissolve the relationship between the landholding and the cultural values of these landholders i.e., Inamdars. In 1862, the Government enfranchised the Inams through the act IV. 101 Enfranchisement meant the giving up of the reversionary

101 The legal effect of enfranchisement by the charge of a quit-rent was to acquit the holders from all interference by Government, such as attachment, enquiries of lapse and resumption. Enfranchised Inams were transferable at the pleasure of the holders, while Inams not enfranchised were continued subject to
right of the Government regarding the Inam land on the condition of the Inamdar agreeing to pay an annual quit-rent. The British Government considered that the enfranchisement of Inams could benefit both the former Inamdars and the present pattadars. The general effect of this act was described in the preamble to the enfranchised Inams Act IV of 1862, which says "whereas, under the Inam rules sanctioned by the Government, under date 9 August, 1859, the reversionary rights of Government are surrendered to the Inamdars, in consideration of an equivalent annual quit-rent, and the Inam lands are thus enfranchised and placed in the same position as other descriptions of landed property, in regard to their future succession and transmission." The British believed that after this act, the Inam land became transferable and heritable as other description of land. This act adopted the earlier division of Inams made by the Commission. It also settled the issue of title-deeds in accordance with the Regulation XXXI of 1802 and enabled the government to decide the quit-rent to be paid to it for surrendering the reversionary rights.

The misconception with regard to the Inams of village officials was acknowledged in the later half of the nineteenth century. The Government

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104 But the Inamdars contended "that the sanads, the usual terms of which are 'from generation to generation so long as the Sun and Moon endure,' are permanent in their character, that the State thereby gave up its right to the revenue of the lands absolutely and forever, and the Inamdars have therefore the power to sell and transfer them at their pleasure: or in other words, that the Inams are already free holds which need no further enfranchisement and from which the Government can derive no rent at anytime." *CPRIS*, p.252, para 3.
restored the jurisdiction of the Court and the exclusive powers of the officials to deal with the village service Inams which were abandoned by the act IV of 1866. Section I of the act stated that,

all the hereditary village or other service Inams, falling hitherto exclusively under the cognizance of the officers of government in the Revenue Department, under the provisions of Regulation VI of 1831, which have been, shall be enfranchised from the condition of service by the Inam Commission, or other officer acting under the sanction of government shall be exempted from the operation of the aforesaid Regulation.

The correction of the earlier mistakes did not end with the restoration of Court's jurisdiction to try the cases pertaining to village service Inams. The rights of Inamdars over the Inam property was not clearly defined by the Government. It was alleged that through the earlier acts, the Inamdars gained more property rights in land than actually intended. By merging all rights, whether of property or of occupancy, in recognition of the Inamdar's permanent property in land, the British Government had neglected the rights of all the other classes. Some apprehensions also were expressed with regard to the rights of the grantors of Inams after the passage of the act of 1866. The government, in view of the confusion created by the earlier acts, considered it as an expedient to explain the true meaning of such words in the above two Acts. Hence it passed one more Act in 1869. Section I of this act stated that:

Nothing contained in any title-deed heretofore issued to any Inam holder shall be deemed to define, limit, infringe or destroy the rights of any description of holder or occupiers of the lands from which any Inam is derived or drawn, or affect the interest of any person other than the Inam holder named in the title-deed.

In view of these errors and injustices of the policies, it was realized that the Government had failed to protect the privileges and honours of the Inamdaars and to utilize their services, as performed in pre-colonial period. It had also created a difficult situation for itself because no attempt was made to ascertain, define, record and protect the rights of different classes in Inam tenurial structures, as it found them on the eve of the British rule. All the Inam acts passed by the Government only met the immediate demands of the situation. There was no systematic attempt for the codification of rules at once. Even the Commission has taken a long time to formulate rules that govern the role of Inams in the later times.

However, all these Acts would, as stated in the minutes of Charles Trevelyan, came into effect only when the Government ascertained the extent of Inams by actual survey.\(^{108}\) Consequently, the land-revenue of a village could not be fixed until the claims to the Inams and the title-deeds for them were adjudicated.\(^{109}\) Because of this reason the enquiry into the title-deeds of Inams was in many cases, preceded the survey and the reassessment of the land-revenue. The Inam Commissioner also began his work in those districts where the survey had begun.

The Government in the latter half of nineteenth century followed a compromise policy. When it settled Inams it compromised with the existing old institution of the pre-colonial period. At the same time it did not delegate any power to them as done by the "native government." On the other hand, it


took away whatever privileges they had along with the Inam lands. Some of the Inams were continued. Often, Inams pertaining to Revenue and Police departments were discontinued. However according to the report of Blair, Inam property was considered in every aspect preferable to other descriptions of real property, through the Act-IV of 1862 and Act-IV of 1866.\(^{110}\)

**Resumption of Inams:**

As soon as the British began exercising its control over Madras Presidency, it began to resume the Inams. At the same time, the British were aware of the permanence of the whole grants prior to their rule and admitted that;

> there can be little doubt that the whole of these grants, which appear to have been made by the Rajas of the country and their Ministers, for an endless variety of reasons, to institutions and individuals, were all intended by the grantors to be permanent.\(^{111}\)

The British found it difficult to establish that the resumption was common phenomenon in the pre-colonial period. The British considered that the king possessed the superior rights in land and hence he could resume the land whenever he felt to do so. When the Inams were granted by the king, generally he never interfered in the matter of rights over Inam land. Inam had distinct value as the king directed not only the land but the rights to the clients while granting them, and thus established the relationship with the clients and

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\(^{111}\) CPRIS, p.252, para 9.
also showed the sovereignty over them. Whenever the clients revolted against the king, he would begin his Digvijaya (Tour of Conquest) to suppress them, and replace the client with the other. The resumption of Inams from the client was described by Mauss as the cessation of gift.\footnote{Marcel Mauss, \textit{The Gift, the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies}, London, 1990, Pp- 47-64.} The invocation of theory that there was a historical precedent for the resumption and it sustained across generations was purely an expedient. The British admitted that there was no frequent resumption of Inam lands as they did prior to their rule. It was also argued that such frequent grants would exhaust the resources which was a fundamentals source of revenue to the Government. Confronted with these conflicting arguments, the British had to admit that the regulation with regard to the resumption of Inam lands were harmful to the traditional institution for its continuation.\footnote{On the appeal of Maharaja Moheshar Singh against the Government, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council pronounced the following judgement. “It may be well to observe that the Regulation respecting the resumption of lands, and the subjecting them to be assessed, are Regulations in themselves almost necessarily severe in their operation; and while we give to them the force and effect which we are bound to do, as the subsisting law upon this subject, we cannot, and ought not, to forget, that though it is manifestly, at first sight, the interest and duty of Government to bring under taxation as large an extent of land as possible.” Minute of Charles Trevelyan, \textit{Op.Cit.}, p.49, para 15.}

Inams during colonial rule lost all their privileges. The Inamdars were not allowed to share the sovereignty by the Government but made subject to it. Status and honour were not governing the social and political relations, but, were subjugated to the colonial Government and regulated for the sake of existing traditional elites. The British did not give the cultural value to the Inam grant. It never accorded religious sanctity while dealing with the Inams. Rather the Government based its relations on the economic necessities.
The value of Inam was determined not on the relations the grantee maintained with the grantor, but in the market. Because of the colonial policies, Inamdars could not make investments in the public works or in land, as they did in the pre-colonial period. Since the control on the local public works were not given to Inamdar, it was neither profitable nor according status or honour for him to invest in such public works. Moreover the colonial trade provided an alternative choice to these landed elites. Thus Inam was deprived of all its privileges.

Changes during the period 1801-1871 in the relationship between the Inam and colonial state were partly due to the change in the interactions of Inam with the broader policy framework and partly to the specific policy guidelines that interacted with Inams. The decisions of the East India Company to raise the revenues for its political, economic and other ends, as well as the withdrawal of the grant of land in 1829 reflected a readiness to end the illusions of continuity between pre-British and British sovereign attitudes to Inams. Given that the core of this indigenous relationship, predicated on honours, states transactions between the grantors and grantees, had never engaged British policy and ideology, it is not surprising that this was willingly discarded, especially as such they were unnecessary for the security of the colonial regime. The various regulations that were passed in the nineteenth century clearly established the ultimate authority of the British over the Inams. However, such authority could not be established with the mere passage of the regulations. The Inamdars had to provide with the title of their holding. For such provision, a systematic investigation of title deeds and the confirmation of the right of the holder made by the Inam commission for more than a decade had a major role to be discussed. The work of the Inam commission from 1859 to 1869 is the subject of the following chapter.