2. RURAL STRUCTURES AND REVENUE SYSTEMS

Any attempt to explore the dimensions and depth of an agrarian population remains incomplete without a proper understanding of the revenue policies and administration of the region. Particularly since the base of the rural structure and the nature of it which was influenced by the revenue policies and also its working depended on the broad contours of revenue administration. Any regional economy thus, influenced the rural structure and was in turn influenced by the working of the agrarian structure. This was true of Masulipatnam district also.

Northern Circars as a whole and Masulipatnam which incidentally was the first commercial centre of the English East India Company in the region were the main concern of the British since 1611. Masulipatnam being a port city played a crucial role in the Company's commercial ventures and was an important trading centre of the Company. The Company's initial commercial interests slowly shifted to establishing political hegemony over the region. The existing political anarchy and the weakness of the successive rulers of the Nizam combined with the growing powers of the regional Zamindars made the task of the Company easy.

But when the Company took possession of the Circars, they found them in an unruly situation. The Zamindars in the Circars
were mostly very turbulent and refractory and had acquired increasing powers taking advantage of the existing political anarchy at the centre in the transition period.

Thus the Company in the initial stages of its rule was confronted with a strange political economy in the region. The Company officials were not acquainted with the customs and traditions of the region which played a significant role in almost all aspects of administration and policy making, and they also lacked sufficient economic and human resources to introduce an efficient administrative setup in their new possessions. So the Company administrators thought of continuing the old structure itself without many changes. So it can be conjectured that till 1802 when the government introduced the Permanent Settlement in the region, the old revenue systems had continued.

However it is necessary to study briefly the pre colonial mode of revenue settlement and the method of revenue collection to see whether there were any changes in the agrarian structure of the region in the initial stages of Company's administration and also after the Permanent Settlement. The view that the British policies especially the land revenue ones had altered the agrarian structure drastically in India could be well analyzed in such a study of a micro region and the impact of the colonial policies on a locality could be well perceived.
Revenue Systems under Pre colonial Regimes:

The prevailing notion that under the pre colonial regimes, there was generally a headman in each village to collect the revenue and an accountant to record the items was no doubt true. But it was never so simple an organization and had a very complicated setup with a chain of functionaries for almost all aspects of revenue administration right from the Vijayanagara days. Under almost all pre colonial regimes there was a very distinct and compact revenue administrative setup and a systematic and scientific calculation of revenue assessments.

Under Vijayanagara rulers as the land tax formed the most important and substantial item of revenue assessment, distinction was made between the assessment of wet and dry lands. Taxes were not levied arbitrarily. Factors such as nature of the village, tenures under which the lands were held by the cultivators, nature of the soil and the kinds of crops raised were taken into consideration before levying a tax on the wet lands.

Even in the case of dry lands the assessment varied between the dry crops raised on dry lands and dry crops raised on wet lands. As the revenue assessment was based on the fertility of the land and the location of the lands in the village, rates of revenue varied widely within different parts of the empire. In
the wet lands the sowing capacity of a unit of land was the basis for assessment whereas in the dry lands the number of ploughs required for tilling a unit of land was taken as the basis.

The traditional shares of the state in the produce from a unit of land were 1/6 to the Brahmin, 1/20 to the Temple and 1/30 to others each payable in kind or in cash. Of the remaining three quarters, one was retained by the cultivator as his share. While the balance went towards the expenses of cultivation on the wet lands. The tax was collected mostly in kind on the wet lands whereas on the dry lands it was generally done in cash.

Even in the collection of revenue different methods were adopted depending on the tenure of the land -

1. where the government appointed its own servants to collect the revenue,
2. where the government farmed out revenues to individual bidders,
3. where the government dealt with a group of persons in a village who were responsible for the revenue from that village,
4. where the government had granted Jagirs, there the payment was a fixed tribute to the state.

Under the rulers of Golconda the collection of land tax in cash became more regular. However they did superimpose their own pattern of territorial subdivisions over the existing units.
instance, larger administrative divisions called parganas were their introduction. In some areas the government retained its control whereas in some others the nobles had retained the ruling power. However, in both the cases, tax farming through an elaborate series of levies and sub levies was the usual practice in revenue collection.

In the Andhra region the government sub let the land tax collection in their districts to small entrepreneurs by means of annual bidding. This seemed to have continued even in the early years of Company's administration in the region. The regional aristocracy was drawn from four major castes of Razus, Velamas, Kammans and Kapus. By their grip on land and on the surplus agricultural production, these cultivating groups wielded immense political and economic power in the countryside. By tradition these castes also performed various kinds of military service, and therefore could be termed warrior cultivators.

For each of the new parganas established, the Qutbshahis appointed a member of the dominant cultivating group to act as the head man or Deshmukh. The primary task of the Deshmukh was to maintain an armed body of retainers and assist in the collection of the land tax. In return, the king assured the Deshmukh a fixed percentage of the land tax collected, full control of a certain number of tax free villages and hereditary lands within the Pargana. Next to him, for each of these Parganas there was a
Deshpande who maintained records of the taxes paid and lands cultivated on a yearly basis for each village. Again within the village there was a head man who mostly belonged to the dominant agricultural caste of the village and a village accountant who was usually a Brahmin. The pay and perquisites of these village officers usually came from the treasuring and common lands of the village.

Thus under all the pre colonial regimes there was an elaborate and extensive revenue administrative system and the literary sources of the period also have references to cultivating practices and cultivators shares in the region.

It is evident from the literary sources that under the pre colonial rulers lands were not given to the cultivators on Pattah basis. For a term of years the lands were leased to the cultivators of a village and collectively they were responsible for the entire revenue demand of the village. From this, it can be conjectured that there was a system similar to communal land holding in this period. After the expenses of the cultivation and customary shares to different groups in the village were deducted, the produce was shared between the cultivators and the government.

About the shares between the government and the cultivators there seems to be slight difference of opinion. Some accounts
suggest that the government collected 1/6 of the produce as their share and other evidence reveals that the produce of the country was divided equally between the government and the cultivators, the cultivators bearing the expenses of the revenue servants. However the proportion of the tax out of the gross produce was arrived at by valuation of the crops conducted in the presence of the government servants and the cultivators.

Under the pre colonial rule which immediately preceded the Company the revenue systems and modes of revenue collection seemed to have been based on more systematic and scientific principles. Lands were categorized into several groups based on their fertility and the revenue demand was based both on this classification and irrigation facilities. For instance, where the crops solely depended on the rainfall the state took one half of the produce as its share and where agriculture especially garden cultivation depended on well irrigation the share of the government was one fourth.

It clearly shows that the traditional view, that under the pre colonial rule the revenue policies were not systematic and elaborate no longer was true. The variations in taxation system, under different modes of assessment in fact must have required an elaborate administrative machinery and efficient planning.

Perhaps the lapse and decay in such a revenue structure must have occurred during the transition period between the Nizam's
authority and that of the Company. The landed elites and other revenue Collectors taking advantage of the chaotic political situation assumed authority in the region and farmed large estates for themselves depending on their military strength. As these people did not have any interest in the administration and as their sole interest in the lands was purely monetary they came to depend more and more on the intermediaries at various levels and practically left the administration of the estates in the hands of a few chosen subordinates. This coupled with several other reasons must have led to a highly exploitative revenue structure in the early years of Company administration.

**Company and the Pre Permanent Revenue Settlements:**

The principal Zamindaris in Masulipatnam district were Nuzividu, Devarakota, Korukonda, Zammulavayi, Medurgutta, Nandigama, Mylavaram and Bezwada. The Zamindaris of Nuzividu, Nandigama and Mylavaram had an ancient origin when compared to others. Besides these, there were Zamindaris who were self created territorial proprietors who came into existence during the turbulent times that followed the break up of regional kingdoms.

The Haveli lands in the district of Masulipatnam were under the direct management of the ruling authority under pre colonial period. The principal Haveli estates in the district were
Eluru, Kondapalli, Vullursamut, Duvah, Tanduru, Bondara, Six Islands of Divi, Nizampatnam, Narsapur, Gudur. The Haveli lands were very fertile and were mostly strategically well situated in places around the principal towns. They were distinct from Zamindari lands in their revenue systems and modes of revenue collection. Map 1 illustrates the spatial distribution of Zamindaris and Haveli lands in the pre-Permanent Settlement period of the Masulipatnam district.

However, a clear distinction could not be made between the Zamindari lands and Haveli lands throughout because in course of time many Zamindari estates also formed part of government lands, some on account of rebellion, some due to failure of revenue payments regularly and some due to lack of heirs and some were managed by the Company through the Court of Wards.

The Company in the initial stages of its rule was busy consolidating its political power and grasping the various facets of the local economy. As it was coming to terms with a strange political economy of the region it did not in the initial years of its rule experiment with new revenue structures and the Company hardly did anything to alter the existing agrarian arrangements.
Apart from the necessity of quickly creating a class of loyal supporters to the new political structure, the Company was under stronger compulsions, it would seem, in this region to forge alliances with the Zamindars. So in the initial period the Company followed a very cautious policy of knowing the position of the Zamindars and other revenue officials. The Zamindars were so turbulent and independent, the Company first wanted to take steps towards pacifying them by minimizing their strength economically, politically, and militarily and consolidate their own position in the region.

The first settlement made by the Company after the acquisition of the Northern Circars was for three years with Hussein Ally Khan. From 1769-1778 annual settlements were concluded with the several Zamindars by the Chief and Council. The order of the Court of Directors in 1775 directing the Committee of Circuit at the expiration of the then existing settlement to proceed to let the lands upon permanent lease in 1778 the Zamindars were summoned to the presidency by General Rambold who formed a settlement for five years with the Zamindars of Masulipatnam adding 12 1/2 percent to their Jumma for the preceding year in consideration of the extended period of the lease, but the payment of this additional amount was not then enforced. On the contrary the Zamindars were permitted to withhold it upon granting obligations to discharge the amount in the event of the Committee of Circuit declaring after due enquiry that their Zamindaris were able to
bear it. The next settlement concluded was for three and eventually for five years commencing from 1789 and the Zamindars with a few exceptions were assessed on the principle of 2/3 of their gross collections taken chiefly from the Karanams accounts.

To ensure a better control Provincial Councils were formed in 1769 after the model of Bengal to supervise the revenue arrangements. Renters were employed by the Company's officers to collect the revenue of the lands not immediately under the management of the Zamindars. A whole circar being sometimes let to one renter. The persons thus employed were usually strangers to the country, hangers on of the chiefs or members of the Provincial Councils three of which were stationed at Ganjam. Visakhapatnam and Masulipatnam were vested with the superintendence of the affairs of the Circars.

Each district was divided into divisions one of which was the Huzur where the Collector of the district had his headquarters and the others were presided over by an Assistant or Deputy Collector. Each of the divisions included two to five taluks. The taluk with its Casbah or headquarters station was in the charge of a Tahsildar. In large taluks there was a Deputy Tahsildar of a section of the taluk.

At the head of the whole district was the Collector. There were Sub Collectors or Assistant Collectors and Deputy Collectors subordinate to him. The latter were usually in charge of treas-
uries or were Deputy Collectors on general duty. These officers were all revenue officers with magisterial powers, as in other provinces. The Collectors were competent on their own authority to appoint, suspend and dismiss officials below the grade of Deputy Tahsildars.

In the Zamindari estates the existing land revenue systems were Asara, Visabadi and renting system. These revenue systems seems to be prevalent in particular lands only. For instance, the most common system in the wet lands was Asara while Visabadi was largely followed in the dry lands.

Under the Asara system the government claimed half of the gross produce as its share and the cultivators enjoying the other half. The share of the government was generally determined at the threshing floor itself and was mostly collected in kind. However, in all these transactions custom played an important role in determining the agrarian policies. For instance, in cases where the cultivator was a Brahmin or any elite caste person then they were allowed a little more than the usual in consideration of they being obliged to employ labourers in agricultural operations.

Under the Visabadi tenures the village lands were distributed among the chief ryots by visums or shares periodically interchanged among the cultivators. Each co sharer was responsible
for the assessment on his own portion and all for each other. Though settlement was with individual cultivators joint responsibility was also implied. In Eluru and Nuzividu Zamindaris the Visabadi system prevailed. It was a sist upon a village, the lands of which were divided between the head ryots, each becoming responsible for his visum share, each head ryots or such arrangements as he considered most advantageous to himself. In 1801 the Board of Revenue abolished the Visabadi system in the region and in their place Aumani settlement was introduced because of the disadvantages in the Visabadi system.

This system to some extent seemed to answer the general question whether there was joint or communal land holding in South India. Though literary sources in the early period have certain evidences of communal land holding in the region the Visabadi system also to some extent confirms the fact that there was communal land holding in the region. Though the ryot was individually responsible for his own share the joint responsibility of the village and the revenue demand being fixed for the whole of the village together suggest this.

The Company followed a policy of annual settlements with the Zamindars of the region in the initial stages. The main reason being that the Company did not want to give the already powerful Zamindars too much of independence. The annual leases meant the Zamindars had to pay revenue regularly for the continuance of the Zamindari right. Not only that, this gave the Company an appar-
tunity to deal with the unruly and inefficient Zamindars directly and could take away their Zamindari right if their performance was not to the satisfaction of the Company. This gave at least in theory certain powers to the Company in controlling the Zamindars.

The general practice was that the Zamindars collected revenue on condition of paying a fixed amount to the government. But only few Zamindars paid their rents punctually on account of prevailing anarchy in the estates. The way the Zamindari estates were geographically and spatially distributed in the region often led to constant rivalries among the Zamindars. The boundary disputes and the burning of villages between the Zamindaris was a common and unavoidable feature during this period. The Company could not alter the situation initially. So for the time being it acknowledged the position of the Zamindars who occupied a dominant position in the agrarian structure.

Elsewhere in the Northern Circars the British were successful in curbing the powers of the unruly Zamindars, but in Masulipatnam district the Company could not implement the same measures so effectively. The law and order problem in these estates was so bad that at the time of the harvest the Zamindar's peons used to carry away the produce of the neighbouring villages which were under the jurisdiction of other Zamindars who were weak. Because of this, the villages were usually deserted by the culti-
vators for lack of security and thus lands were left uncultivated. This was a common feature in the region. For example, we find that in the case of the Zamindars of Nuzividu the Collector constantly wrote to the higher officials complaining against the increasing power of Apparao, the Zamindar of Nuzividu and the Zamindar's unruly activities.

The term Haveli land had a different connotation in different regions. Though the state lands or the circar lands existed in other regions also they were known by different names. For instance, in the Nizam territories the state lands were called Diwani, and the personal lands of the ruler were known as Sarfekhas. In Bengal the personal lands of the Zamindars or the ruling authorities were known as Havelis. As mentioned earlier the Haveli lands had different revenue systems and practices distinct from those of Zamindari estates. In the Haveli lands, the Company followed the Aumani system and farming out system by which lands were farmed out on a stipulated rent.

Under the Aumani the government received the land revenue in kind. But to grant leases and supervise the cultivation and final agricultural operations many officers like Amils, Fouj-dars, and Anchanadars were deputed by the Company at various points of time.

However, this meant that the system involved an extensive establishment which increased the charges of collection. So the
Company later on thought of changing this mode of revenue system. Under this system as the government demand could be payable in kind and as the cultivators had long got accustomed to the system there was stiff resistance by the ryots for any change. This was clear from the Collector's report to the Board asking to continue the same system.

For instance, in the estates of Divi, Devarakota, Vinukota and Gudivada the cultivators were so strong that if there was any change in the system they refused to cultivate the lands. The cultivators resorted to such methods by pitching a kadi in the ground. This was a common signal in the villages of abandoning the cultivation. The cultivators who dared to defy such collective decisions had to face the wrath of others. These punishments sometimes were so severe that their produce, livestock and even the houses were burnt. Such severe punishments must have acted as a sort of barrier for any one not to violate the decisions.

But the failure of the annual settlements compelled the Company to replace them with triennial leases with the Zamindars. The Zamindars under this contract were allowed two thirds of the gross collection from their estates. These figures were based on the estimates of the Circuit Committee appointed to enquire into the real resources and financial positions of both the Zamindars and Haveli lands. But the realization of this settlement was
greatly affected by the famines. These Cowls were extended to the Zamindars on same conditions as under previous settlement at regular intervals till the Permanent Settlement was concluded in the region in 1802.

Whatever the method of collection was both in Zamindari and Haveli lands the revenues could not be collected without the aid of troops. Often revenue renters and Zamindars revolted against the Company. One such instance, was that of Apparao the Zamindar of Nuzividu.

Meka Venkayya, the first of the family came from Carnatic in 1652 and rented five to six villages. It was only in 1664 that the whole pargana of Nuzividu was leased to his successor Vijia who assumed the title of Apparao. But his successor Venkatadri Apparao was expelled under Rustum Khan, the Nizam's Foujdar and the country continued under Tahsildars for fifteen years. Under the Company the brothers Venkatadri Apparao and Narayya Apparao divided the estate between them.

Under Narasimha Apparao revenue management of the estate was bad and he fell into arrears to the Company. In 1775 a military force was sent from Masulipatnam to take possession of the estate. So the Zamindar borrowed money from Company's officials and met the Company's demand. As the Company officials White Hall and John Hodges had lent money to Narsimha Apparao, a bill was introduced in the Parliament in 1785 against them. Apparao also laid
his case before the government. As there were no signs of redress the Zamindar showed signs of defying the Company's authority. The Zamindar collected an armed force and placed his fort in a state of defense. After initial resistance he however escaped from the fort and crossed into Nizam's territories from where he continued to ravage Nuzividu by frequent incursions.

In 1785 the Company expelled Narayya Apparao as a rebel and the whole estate was forfeited. But in 1784 the government conferred the estate to his son Venkata Narsimha Apparao by a Sanad. The senior Apparao from his refuse in the jungles near Bhadrachalam raided the estate, burnt villages and plundered the produce and killed those who resisted. The Company wearied by these disturbances came to a compromise with the senior Apparao by allowing him to stay in Nuzividu.

This arrangement did not work and the senior Apparao was creating problems in the estate as he was very influential. However later on under the management of Apparao brothers the constant family feuds resulted in the mismanagement of the estate. The disorder became so great that a military force was sent under Captain Oldham to restore order in the Zamindari. The peace which prevailed for some years was again disturbed in 1792 after the death of the senior Zamindar. His son Ramachandra Apparao in alliance with Venkatraya a dissatisfied member of the Kamadana family from Charmahal rose against the Company.
Under the mismanagement of the estates sometimes even the substantial cultivators left their villages. For instance, in the case of Charmahal Zamindari the cultivators returned only after the Collector's assurance that he would enquire into the past management of the estate. The government advanced 6000 MPs. under taccavi loans towards temporary repairs to irrigation sources, purchase of seed grain, implements of husbandry.

The renters frequently made an assessment from the ryots which was called Nazar or free gift to enable them to repair pagodas, choultries and build their houses or purchase houses. Though this was actually an extortion, the ryots being too much in their power had no option but to pay.

It was in these troubled times that the Collector emerged as a more effective instrument of Company's power. The existing Provincial Chief in Council was replaced with the three Collectorate of Rajahmundry, Masulipatnam and Guntur in Northern Cirears.

Thus the initial years of Company's rule in the Masulipatnam district was marked by inefficient and refractory rule of the Zamindars. Who were these Zamindars?. What were the powers of the Zamindars? How did the British perceive the Zamindars and the Zamindaris in the early years of its rule?
Rural Groups and their role in the Economy:

The Zamindars were not feudal lords but only agents of the state who were allowed to possess estates at the pleasure of the government. The duty of the Zamindar was to superintend the portion of land placed under his charge, furnish necessary advances to peasants, render justice, and collect rent from them. For the discharge of these duties a Zamindar was allowed to enjoy certain amount of land as rent free Saveram and certain fee commissions called Rusums.

Zamindar in the literal sense of the term means a land lord. The generally accepted view seems to be that the Zamindar in Mughal times meant a vassal chief and were not found in the directly administered territories of the empire. The purpose of Zamindari right was generally to provide its possessor with an income since it was a right primarily associated with land. It gave the Zamindars a share in the lands produce. Generally the Zamindars paid the government a fixed sum for the revenue of village and then made revenue collections from individual villages on cultivators at the rates usually fixed by the custom of the region. Then his income in profit was the difference between his collections and the amount he paid to the government. This was where the cultivators were left at the mercy of the Zamindars since the amount the cultivators had to pay to the Zamindar was not mentioned or fixed by the government. The Company had left it to the Zamindars to decide. There was a lot of exploitation of
the cultivators by the chain of revenue officials employed by the Zamindars in the collection of revenue.

Thus there existed almost throughout the region a fiscal claim of the Zamindars upon land lying within his Zamindari. This claim was realized either through a separate rate on peasants or mostly through the holdings of a portion of the land revenue free or enjoying certain amount of land as rent free Jagir.

In Masulipatnam district the Zamindaris were not necessarily contiguous estates and a Zamindar's possessions were scattered through out the district and Zamindars often held lands outside their district. As some of the Zamindaris were large and scattered, the Zamindaris were not managed effectively and there were also constant inter estate rivalries.

Though the Zamindari had an important position in the rural structure. it was the village which was still an important and basic unit of production and administration and occupied a pivotal position around which the activities and interests of rural groups revolved. Karl Marx stated that :

under this simple form of municipal government, the inhabitants of the country have lived from time immemorial. The boundaries of the villages have been but seldom altered and though the villages themselves have been sometimes injured and even desolated by war, famine and disease. The same name the same limits the same interests and even the same families have continued for ages. The inhabitants give
themselves no trouble about the breaking up and division of
kingdoms while the villages remain entire they care not to
what power it is transferred or to what sovereign it de-
volved, its internal economy remains unchanged. The Patel
is still the head inhabitant and still acts as the petty
judge and magistrate and Collector on return of the
village.

The villages varied a great deal in size and consisted of
people living with varying practices. Not all the villages were
predominantly agriculture based, though each village definitely
had a cultivating population. For instance, in the taluks of
Pedanah and Pedapatnam the number of ryots in each village varied
widely. In Pedanah there were 96 ploughs having 99 cultivators.
Whereas Husseinpolam in Pedanah taluk and Singarayapalem in
Pedapatnam taluk had 16 ryots having 6 ploughs and 4 ploughs with
4 ryots. Perhaps the number of ryots depended on the land under
cultivation in each village. In the villages where the wet
cultivation was more or considerable there were more cultivators.
In most of the villages like Husseinpolam, Pullalapalem, Munagap-
udi, Singarayapalem, Kakarlapudi wet cultivations was totally
absent. Besides them there were weavers and other artisanal
groups. Some villages were famous for weaving. Some of the weav-
ing villages in Masulipatnam were Eluru which was famous for
carpets, Pedanah and IMizampatnam famous for Chay goods and Masu-
lipatnam for Chintz production.

Perhaps in the villages where cultivation was not very
attractive the inhabitants depended on other activities like
weaving, cattle breeding, and dairy farming. The villages were built by a group of people belonging to a particular group or a caste. Sometimes they were also named after the persons who built them. The Bandar Kaifyat shows that in Masulipatnam district there were many villages under the above mentioned categories. For instance, Ingireju Palem was built in 1695 by certain English merchants. Like wise Velama gudem was built in 1718 and Chakirevupalem was built in 1718 by those castes. Villages bearing persons names were built by those after whose names they were called. For example, Rustumbad peta, Robertson peta and Fakru-labad. Bacchupeta was built in 1648 by a Brahmin Peradragada Bacchu, Ramanaidu Peta was built in 1783 by a Balija Malapaka Rama Naidu, Desai Peta was built in 1648 by a Brahmin Konukollu Venku.

Each village had the entire machinery of local administration in an establishment of twelve hereditary servants called bara baluta - Headman, Accountant being powerful posts there were others like money lender, Nirganti, Talari. Apart from them there existed cultivators of different ranks.

Thus the village social structure was not a simple organization but presented a highly complex picture. In the region there were cultivators of several descriptions - Kadeem cultivators and payakari cultivators. The payakari cultivators were again divided into Ulcudi Payakaris and Paracudi Payakaris.
Cultivators and Customary Practices:

The right similar to Mirasi seemed to have been vested in the ancient land holders called the Kadeems. They were descendants of the original settlers of the village.\(^{64}\) The mirasi right enjoyed by Kadeems was generally expressed in three kinds of villages – Eka bhogam, Pala bhogam and Samudayam villages. In the Ekabhogam villages the land was let to one person. In the Palabhogam villages the principle of joint responsibility was expressed. In the Samudayam villages Visabadi system existed.\(^{65}\)

Under the Kadeem cultivators there existed the group of Payakararis of two descriptions – the Ulcudis or the resident cultivators and the Paracudis or the non resident cultivators.

The Ulcudi cultivators were superior to those of the Paracudis, who were tenants at will. When the same family of Ulcudis held lands in a village for a certain term of years they acquired a quasi-proprietary right in the fields and could not be dispossessed as long as they paid the land rent and the customary dues regularly. They were also supposed to be the descendants of the first settlers of the village. The village Karanams in some villages were the Kadeem ryots and sometimes the resident ryots. The share of the produce enjoyed by these tenants was always 5 percent less than that of the non resident ryots. Perhaps this was because they had a quasi proprietary right in the soil and slightly better position in the village when compared to the non resident cultivators.\(^{67}\)
The Paracudis or the non resident cultivators were allowed to cultivate the lands that remained unoccupied or uncultivated. They received 50 percent of the produce as their share. The Paracudis could leave the village for another on their own. They usually belonged to other villages and came temporarily to cultivate the lands they leased. So they had no right in the lands and held them only on contractual terms. As an inducement they always received a higher share of the produce than the resident cultivators. But the special commission which was appointed to execute the Permanent Settlement in the region recommended that the practice of allowing high shares to payakari strangers should be abolished. The commission felt that this practice induced the resident ryots to enter their names as temporary cultivators in the neighbouring villages.

But the presence of non resident cultivators was not a peculiar feature of this region alone. They seemed to have existed even in other areas. For instance, in Bengal they were known by the name of Pahikasht ryots and their role was no different from those of the Paracudis of the South. The probable reason might be that they were a specialized class of cultivators and had some special techniques and skills in producing particular crops. The higher rate they received also suggests that must have received this share as an inducement given by the dominant ryots to bring the waste land into cultivation as it involved an extra effort.
The fact that Masulipatnam district was inhabited by Rache-wars and Velamwars suggest that the agrarian community of Ka-deems, the resident and the non resident ryots probably belonged to Rachewar and Velamwar castes.

An examination of land revenue assessment and shares allowed to different groups of cultivators and methods of collection would further help in understanding the complex and stratified structure of the agrarian society and also the distributive pattern of the village economy.

In Nuzividu estate it was not customary to grant cowls but when a Parakudi cultivator or a Pariah cultivator applied to cultivate either arable or waste land he was permitted to hold it at twelve tooms per putti and in the case of an Ulcudi ryots were interested in taking up the waste and cultivate he held the land in the first year at twelve tooms, the second year at 11 tooms and the third and fourth at ten tooms.

However generally there was no written agreement between the Zamindars and the cultivators, though occasionally they were made. The contract between the cultivators and the Zamindars was of a verbal nature. the faith upon which they were given was not always strictly observed at the period of harvest.

Perhaps in this way also the cultivators were at a loss. In case the Zamindars went back on their word and in case the culti-
vators wanted to seek legal redress the absence of formal deeds between the Zamindars and the cultivators acted as a hurdle.

In the district where the land revenue was permanently settled and where the collections from the ryots were made by the Zamindars the cultivator was protected from enhanced demands by an appeal to the Collector under the provisions of Regulation 50 of 1802 and Regulation 5 of 1822. However on the Collectors decision also the Zamindars could further appeal by formal process to the Courts of Law.

Perhaps this long process also deterred the ryots from complaining and also the lengthy procedures involved were out of reach and the cultivators could not afford most of the times to attend the courts leaving their work.

Company’s Experiments with Revenue Systems:

With the failure of the Permanent Settlement in the region and also according to the change of policy at the centre the Company was trying out an alternative revenue system in the region. The Board in 1817 sent a circular to the Collectors of the districts where the Ryotwari system was not established to report what were obstacles introduced Ryotwari system. In Masulipatnam district the only Aumani lands were two villages and a resumed Jagir village rented on lease. Since there were
not many government lands in the region the Company in 1820 issued orders that in cases where the estates of disqualified proprietors might come under the charge of Court of Wards or where such estates were already under the charge of the court Ryotwari mode of assessing and collecting revenues should be tried. Tables A 1 and A 2 shows the village statistics of Devarakota, Viziarayi, and Gollapalli parganas which were selected for the trial of Ryotwari Revenue system. The Board also disapproved the system of farming out the lands for a term of years. However, it did make an exception to the villages which were situated in jungles and unsuitable situations. In all such cases the lands were to be farmed to the Velamvars or to such persons who qualified to hold the lands.

But the Collectors opined that Ryotwari system could not be carried out successfully in the region because the villages were thinly populated and the non resident ryots could not be brought to cultivate the waste. The Collector opined that it would result in loss of revenue to government. Earlier also the Company had experimented Ryotwari system in Talaprolu village in 1819. Survey was done in field assessment. In the settlement of the village of Talaprolu the Collector had regulated the assessment in such a manner as to exempt the ryots from various extra collections and other illegal vexatious demands to which they were earlier liable. The Collector fixed the
assessment with reference to the quantity of grain that had been produced.

Average produce of past seven years preceding the settlement was taken for calculation. After the customary fee deductions the residue was divided into two equal portions. The circar share was converted into money at rates established on an average of seven years selling prices and the amount was distributed on different ryots with reference to the situation, quality, and former produce of the lands. For instance, in Talaprolu village the land assessment on dry land was Rs.1-0-9. the wet land was charged Rs.5-4-0 per acre, whereas garden land was charged at Rs.5-3-1 per

However in 1821 when the Board called for statistics in Masulipatnam region the Collectors made a detailed list of the villages in different Zamindari estates where the experiment could be tried out, though they were apprehensive about the results of the settlement. The only Aumani lands in Masulipatnam district in 1817 were the two resumed Mokasa villages of Kapavaram and Lingagudem which were annually rented out and another resumed Jagir village of Kytapalli which had been rented out on a lease.

In the series of experiments with the revenue systems that were carried on by the Company, in 1848 the Company contemplated to introduce Joint Village Rents in Divi. The Company had
decided to leave the whole of the internal arrangements to the villagers themselves except when from any particular circumstances, all the ryots of a village might themselves desire to have their liabilities defined in pattahs, the Collector was allowed to grant them.

In Batavolu and Penuganchiprolu villages which were situated on the district borders the resident ryots were few in number and for the success of full cultivation they had to depend on the non resident cultivators. In the villages where a large portion of wet lands were under cultivation and where wet lands exclusively depended on periodical rains the cultivators were very apprehensive to undertake leases for the fear of loss in case of monsoon failures. In all such cases the best settlement followed was to resort into an arrangement after the cultivation had been completed.

The government decided that the duration of rents generally should be one year but in particular cases where the resources of the villages were deduced or where there was much arable land it could be extended to two or three years.

In 1843, in Divi the dry lands were settled under quinquennial leases. The average revenue from the dry lands for the past twenty years were ascertained. Proposals were invited from the
head inhabitants and ryots for a lease for five years and a cowl 8A
was issued in the names of the head inhabitants.

The existence of a different settlement of the wet and dry lands in the same village was not uncommon in Masulipatnam district. It was a usual practice for the wet lands to be held under Ausara and the dry lands on a Mucta settlement.

In Talaprolu experiments were carried out to introduce Ryotwari system. As a preliminary measure in the cultivable land was categorized into three groups like the high land, the low land, and the garden land. Again the high and low lands were divided into four divisions based on the fertility of the soil and its location in the village.

As noticed in table 2.1 the assessment on the wet lands included the amount collected on account of tank repairs. All the low land under cultivation paid 1/2 a rupee and the others paid proportionally less. The garden lands were grouped under ten categories, as shown in table 2.2, based on the type of crops produced.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Land</th>
<th>High land</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rs - A - P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Sort</td>
<td>1 - 4 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Sort</td>
<td>1 - 2 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third Sort</td>
<td>0 - 2 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth Sort</td>
<td>0 -15 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Sort</td>
<td>7 - 0 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Sort</td>
<td>5 -13 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third Sort</td>
<td>4 -10 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth Sort</td>
<td>3 - 8 - 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 18.4.1819, MDR, v.821, p.3313.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Land</th>
<th>Rate of Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garden land</td>
<td>Rs - A - P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>12 - 12 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>10 - 10 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>8 - 8 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>4 - 4 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>3 - 8 - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>2 - 13 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>2 - 2 - 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>1 - 6 - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>0 - 11 - 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both in the Zamindari and Haveli lands the rate of assessment or the share of the cultivators depended on the wet and dry crops. In the case of wet lands rate depended on the facility of irrigation. The usual practice was to divide the revenue into four kists. The first installment was paid in June, second in September, third in December and the last in February.

Some times the sists were fixed at very high rates and leased to the head inhabitants. For instance, the Devarakota Zamindar fixed a high sist and made the lands over to the head Kapus who were solely responsible to the Zamindar. The head Kapus took the government share and paid the sist upon its sale leaving the Kudivaram or the ryots share to the cultivators.

Generally the principal parts of revenue came from government share of the produce. In Eluru and Mustaphanagar Circars the gross produce was divided between the circar and the cultivators after the usual deductions for charity and towards village expenses were made.

In the Haveli lands when the grain was measured the privileges allowed to the inhabitants and other village officials were deducted and then the residue was divided between the circar and different sections of the cultivators. The usual nominal shares allowed to the cultivators of paddy were 8, 10, and 12 tooms in twenty.
The resident cultivators got 8 tooms
The strangers (non resident cultivators) 12 tooms
Brahmins and Rachewars 10 tooms

Dry grains were equally divided between the Zamindar and the ryots. But in actual practice the shares of the cultivators seldom exceeded 1/4 to 1/5 of the produce. Always Zamindari lands were better cultivated than the lands of the Company. Generally the lands producing dry grains (except Jonnalu) were generally let by Bilmucta. Under this system the land was held at a very low rent.

If the uncultivated land was brought under plough by the cultivators, to encourage such performances and also for the extra labour they had put in, the cultivators received shares higher than in the cultivated areas. For instance, in Bezwada Zamindari if jungle land was brought under cultivation, in the first year ryots were given 13 tooms / twenty, in the second year they were given 12 tooms/ twenty, and in the third year they received 11 tooms / twenty. From the fourth year the cultivators received ten tooms which was usual.

Moreover the cultivators were harassed and constantly disturbed by the Company servants. The cultivators generally had to perform the duties of coolies whenever the Company's troops marched through the area. This practice which was common in the
pre colonial times seemed to have continued even under the Company's regime.

When detachments of Mughal sepoys marched through the country they dragged the peasants from their fields and compelled them to carry their burdens without permanent or sometimes for small amounts cultivation suffered as the ryots were kept forcibly in confinement as long as military required their services. For instance, if one commanding officer required thirty or forty coolies to convey their baggage from Eluru to Masulipatnam the coolies had to be absent from their agricultural activities at least for six days.

The Company's troops had the wrong notion that according to the custom of the country it was the duty of the villages to supply them coolies without payment upon the supposition that the coolie charges were deducted from the village rents. The peasants on hearing the approach of the troops used to run away from their fields till the detachment left their villages. In 1794-95 the Board of Revenue abolished this practice and advised the troops to inform in advance to the village Kotwal who had to arrange coolies for the troops.
Agricultural Labourers:

As to the nature of the agricultural labourers, they were at the bottom of the agrarian structure and belonged mostly to the untouchable castes like Mala and Madiga whose presence in agricultural operations was a must.

The agricultural laborers were a necessary force to the cultivation of all lands both the alienated lands and other lands. In case of alienated lands of all types, Inam lands and Maniam lands assigned to the support of large and small temples, Mosques and other institutions the agricultural labourers were paid by a share of produce or a fixed rent.

The two groups of labourers who were responsible for the cultivation were the farm servants and field labourers. The farm servants were engaged for the whole year to some land holder who had the exclusive rights to their servants and they were called the Palekapu or Paleru. They were attached hereditarily to the lands and were maintained by the cultivators during the year. As the hereditary agricultural labourers attached to fields they were in a more advantageous position than the other categories of farm labourers. They were always paid in kind and were also given a small quantity of straw and unthrashed paddy, new clothes and some tobacco. They also get advances of their wages free of interest.
Of the shares receivable by the Palerus Yadlapalu was one. If the Palerus having their own bullocks and ploughs cultivate at the expense of the ryots they were entitled to four tooms per candy from the inhabitants share whether the land be ryots or the cultivators. If the land belonged to the Palerus then they had to defray only that portion of the Grama karchu which was apportioned to the soil, the remaining charge divisible on the produce was to be defrayed by the master.

Another similar allowance was chaipalu. If the Paleru possessing neither bullocks nor ploughs cultivate at the ryots expense and with his cattle in such a case he was entitled only to receive from the inhabitants share at the rate of two maunds per kyled candy. A Paleru whose contract with the land owner was only for a year was entitled to five maunds of grains and clothes. But after the expiration of three or four years, if the Palerus were desirous of placing himself and his family forever under the protection of the ryots then they were entitled to the following allowances. If the Palerus had served from generation to generation then they were entitled to one seer of jonnalu per day and a country blanket annually. If they were employed in the cultivation or in any other business of the ryots, during any special occasions like marriages in the palerus households, the Palerus were entitled to demand from his master MPs. 1 1/4 to defray cost of the Mangalasutram and other expenses. When a male child was born the Paleru was to receive one rupee from the
master for defraying the birth expenses, whereas when a female child was born only half a rupee was given. The boy eventually became the servant of the ryot. If a Paleru died while he was still attached to the owner's farm then his son received two rupees from the ryots to defray his father's funeral expenses.

However, both the Palerus, the one classed under Yadlapalu and the other grouped under Chaipalu were equally entitled to receive the allowances of Vinayakudu, Kallam thiru and Rasiadugu. If the ryot lent his bullocks to the Paleru for cultivation purposes then the circar tax was defrayed by the Paleru himself. In the event of a pariah Paleru deserting the master and taking refuge with another ryot then the master had a right to demand the restoration of the Paleru and his sons to him. If a Paleru was convicted of embezzling the produce, the master was rendered answerable for the payment of the circar fine provided it was ascertained that the Paleru was unable to discharge the same.

The palekapu who usually was given a service contract for a year was given food twice daily in the house and was furnished with a pair of panchalu, one kambali and a pair of chappals besides an annual payment of four or five rupees in cash. But the condition of the daily wage labourers depended on the type of work involved. When the grain was cheap a man was usually paid at two or one and half measures of grain per day, whereas a woman coolie got one and half to one and a quarter measure of
grain per day. The coolies or the field labourers were employed seasonally especially during the harvesting and sowing seasons and were paid money wages of two to four annas a day. Women labourers got half of these rates.

The custom of giving allowances and their long standing practices had not changed but the rate of shares had changed with reference to the higher and lower prices of grain. These shares differed depending on the type of land also. In the dry lands after deducting grain allowances from the total quantity of produce a share of three or four tooms of grain per candy was paid to the husbands men besides the allowance of a toom of grain per candy under the denomination of Rasi adagu, Vinayakudu or Palakunda whereas in the wet lands five tooms per candy was paid.

At the time of sowing Jonna seed hire to each coolie was paid at one measure of grain per day, whereas for cotton gatherers who worked from morning to evening $1/6$ of the cotton gathered was given as their share.

Thus at the bottom of the agrarian hierarchy was the agricultural labourers who had no right to land. In the villages among the hereditary officials or the bara baluta were included these labourers who belonged to untouchable castes.
Cultivators Allowances and Customary Deductions:

In the district of Masulipatnam many grain allowances were given to the cultivators after harvesting the produce. The number of allowances varied from place to place. One of the many such allowances was Kallam thiru. There was a practice of rendering the threshing floors soft and muddy by watering. Certain quantity of seed was trodden into the ground by the threshing cattle. This was deemed to be the property of the ryot. In time this was calculated as a share of the gross produce. This allowance for instance, in the Kondapalli circar was made at twenty seers per candy. In Gundur, Akulamannadu, Inuguduru, Pedanah, Vullursamut and Kondapalli parganas under the head of Kallamthiru the palerus were entitled to receive twenty seers per candy. In Divi and Six Islands they were paid ten seers per candy.

Another was Kada Kallam thiru. The gleaning of the ears of grain which in threshing fell off the floor and was scattered around was taken by the cultivators. Rasi adugu was another of the kind. After the measurement of every heap of grain it was customary to leave the grain within two inches of the floor for the benefit of the ryot. Towards Rasiadugu in the Nizampatnam circar one three fourths seer per candy was given whereas in Gundur and Akulamannadu the cultivators received four seers per candy.
In Vinayakudu, the practice was, in stacking the grain in heaps a piece of clay was placed on the eastern side, consecrated to the God Vinayaka. What ever grain remained on this in measuring the grain was the ryot's prerequisite. This generally amounted to two seers per candy in the district. Under the head of Vinayakudu in Gundur, Akulamannadu, Inuguduru, and Pedanah the palerus received four seers per candy. In Vullursamut, Divi and Six Islands they got one seer per candy, whereas in Kondapalli Haveli it was two seers per candy and in Nizampatnam circar it was one seer per candy.

Palakadava or Palakunda was another of the grain allowances. At the commencement of the measuring of the heaps of grain the owner of each heap bathed the God Vinayaka with milk brought in an earthen pot which he was permitted to fill with grain. These allowances were so arbitrarily fixed that the cultivators bringing big earthen pots could take a larger amount of the grain perhaps. Generally this deduction also amounted to two seers per candy. Laubham dosili included three hands full of grain taken from each heap by the measurers at the beginning and was given to the ryot repeating a word laubham meaning profit. Another allowance was Chupudu Salaga which was made at the rate of four seers per candy.

The various allowances in a broad way reinforced the jajmani relations and also in a way practiced to emphasize the benevo-
lence of the Zamindars. By allotting a fixed share of allowance to the cultivators under various heads the cultivators were made to believe that they received extra allowances apart from their traditional shares. Though on the whole all the allowances put together did not amount to much still this reinforced the idea that the Zamindar was giving an extra share or allowance out of his portion of the produce. As the privileged sections of the rural society enjoyed various privileges in the cultivating shares, the cultivators were also made to believe through these allowances that along with the upper strata of the rural structure they were also given similar privileges. Though the Zamindars in collusion with various revenue servants appropriated much more from the cultivators that exploitation was given a legal sanction through these various customary allowances.

The very liberal allowances made by the circar were abundantly sufficient for the cultivators if justice was followed in their distribution. Unfortunately, a larger share was appropriated by the middlemen.

Besides, what the cultivators received from the circar they had to pay also certain amount towards various deductions to different groups in the village. These customary allowances varied from place to place.
The Darbari Karchulu of Mylavaram, Nandigama, Charmahal were the same in effect as the Sadarwari of Nunestalum and Kondapalli and Dora chaduvu of Bezwada. However, the method of assessment differed from place to place. The first two consist of a specific tax calculated on the net produce of the land while the later was realized by delivering the circar share of the crop to the ryot at a higher price than the selling rate.

In Nuzividu Zamindari, after paying the Zamindar's share of the gross produce, from the remaining proportion the cultivators paid the Darbari charges which ranged from 5 to 9 1/4 percent on the jumma. Likewise the cultivators paid at the harvest three seers per putti to the Karanam, and batta of Rs. 1/4 each per diem to Gumasthas from the Mazumdar, Deshpande and Zamindars, besides batta to the circar peons with them. Nazars of two pagodas from every large village and one for each small one to each Deshpande and Mazumdar, also to the Mutadars two rupees from a large village and one from a small one. The cultivators had to pay Nazars to the Zamindar's, Brahmins and sometimes to other persons in power, pay a certain sum for the repairs of tanks. When the Zamindar was distressed for money cultivators were compelled to pay again. For instance, when Baharzalli was made over to Tirupati Rao of Mugulturu, on his becoming answerable for certain kists and arrears of Apparao that he took on his own account a nazar of about two percent above the usual payments these various exactions combined with the expenses of labourers.

82
reduced the cultivators time proportion of the crop to barely one fifth.¹⁰⁷

On the whole these collections took from the ryots about 16 5/4 percent of their original share of the crop. But further charges were collected from them under the head of Nazarmuctah and fee to the circar servants reduce their share to 3 percent more. The payments to Anchanadars, Mahamuldars and Kyledars absorbed a further sum of 16 percent and the surplus that remained to the cultivators after defraying all the charges of cultivation was minimum.¹⁰⁸

Revenue Collecting Agency:

The cultivators were not left free even during their agricultural operations. As soon as the season started, both in the Zamindari and Haveli lands the villages were visited by a chain of revenue officers who were deputed from time to time to supervise the cultivating operations. In order to keep a watch over the ryots so that they did not remove the grain before measuring or hide it, during harvesting season the Zamindars appointed extra peons whose salaries were paid from the ryots share of the crop. This practice in course of time became very vicious. The number of these peons increased at the will and fancy of the Zamindars. As the entire establishment had to be supported by
the ryots it became a matter of oppression to the ryots and also increased the number of intermediaries between the Zamindars and the cultivators. They also acted as arbitrators in the villages to settle the disputes that may arise among the inhabitants regarding the land or right to water or to correspond directly with the Tahsildars regarding the affairs of the division under his charge. The Zamindars interference started as soon as the crops reach the harvesting stage and from there on, at every remaining stage they were superintended by the Zamindari servants.

These intermediaries were Naikwadis, Mahasuldars, Pygasties, Anchanadars, Maddatgars, Kyledars, Tahsildars, Tajabdars, and peons. The salaries of these people and also batta to them and their peons was included in the Grama Karchu accounts.

The Naikwadis were Talaris or village watchers. They received two seers of grain from each heap as their fixed allowance as village servants and an additional sum in grain and money daily during their attendance at the period of harvest. For instance, in Weyuru pargana this allowance included a batta of one dub and one and half seers of Jonnalu for three months and fifteen days. One dub and one seer of Jonnalu for four months and twenty days and four dubs in cash for four months and thirty days making the total allowance of each Naikwadi to 2½ rupees. In the pargana there were forty one Naikwadis and the total amounted to Rs. 1,052.
Mahsuldars were extra watchers employed during harvesting season. They were in attendance from four to six months but received pay and batta for four months only at the rate of five dubs and one seer of Jonnalu per diem making the total allowance of the period to 15 1/4 rupees each. They were one hundred and sixty four Mahsuldars and the amount spent on them was Rs. 2,198.

The Pygasties were watching peons, in superintendence of the Naikwadis and Mahasuldars whose duties were confined to their particular villages to see that they were present and vigilant in their duties. Their pay and allowances were nine dubs and one and half seers of Jonnalu each per diem for 4 months equal to Rs. 49 approximately. There were fourteen of them in Weyuru pargana. Mashatdars were the measurers of the land employed at the period of the harvest for ascertaining actual extent of land cultivated and they received ten dubs and one and a quarter seer of rice per diem while employed amounting to Rs. 12.

The duty of the Anchanadars was to estimate the produce of the crop when ready for cutting and they received ten dubs and one and a quarter seers of rice each day on which they might be employed. This depended upon the quantity of land measured out by the Mashatdars. The total pay per head amounted to Rs. 12. Kyleddars were employed in measuring the grain when threshed and placed in heaps. The period of their engagement was uncertain but
their pay and allowances were seven annas and three dubs and one and a quarter seers of rice per diem.

Kyledars were deputed to guard against any fraud in the measurement of the produce. The number of men employed for these duties was not fixed and their number varied depending on the wishes of the Zamindar. Their number was supposed to be proportionate to the extent of the crops. But the remuneration to these people was paid by the villagers and not by the Zamindars and often the establishment was larger than necessary. Thus making the intermediaries between the cultivator and the Zamindars too many and also leaving scope to various illegal exactions from the peasants under various heads.

The Samutdars were the circar servants on a fixed pay employed under the Ameens of the Zamindars. They had unjustly created a demand upon the ryot for batta amounting to four rupees monthly. Tahsildars were extra peons employed by the Ameen. They received one fanam and thirty cash per diem when employed. The number was not restricted and generally depended on the wishes of the Ameen. Talabdars were extra peons also employed by the Ameen in collection of balances. They received allowances similar to Tahsildars.

Other duties were like Colagarum or measuring duty. The measurers were allowed two seers per candy and this was included in the kyle mamools. One moiety was paid to the measurer and the
other was received by the circar. Other allowances were the ones made to Tanadar and Brahmins at the rate of one and three fourths of a seer and one seer per candy respectively. Another tax was Darbari charges. Under this head, different strata of the rural economy were charged differently. For instance, Kadeems and old inhabitants were taxed at $12/16$ MPs per candy, Velamvars were taxed at $1/16$ MPs/candy, and Brahmins and head inhabitants were taxed at $13/16$ MPs/candy. All these suggest that the relation among different groups and the rates were determined according to the local usage and customs.

Rural Economy: Roll of Various groups in the village:

The village, as already noted was a crucial unit of production, and was also the centre of rural administrative set up. Each village had the entire machinery of local administration in an establishment of hereditary village servants. This catered to the local administrative needs and helped in the smooth running of village administration and also coordinated with higher levels of administration acting as an agent between the state and the rural structures. The local administrative set up more or less was the same throughout the region, but in exceptional cases, had one or two village officials more depending on the needs of the villages. However, though the village administrative system was maintained even under the Company government, it did differ from those of the pre-colonial regimes both in the nature and
structure of the setup. What depended on the customary traditions, in the pre colonial period were now governed by contract. The Company abolished certain offices and strengthened some to suit its needs.

The functioning of the rural economy in any region was influenced to a large extent by the structure of the rural society because the way in which the different groups were structurally organized partially determined the nature of the economy and accordingly the administrative setup at the level of the locality. Such groups need not be only those who were directly involved in agricultural production.

Each village generally had an establishment of village servants called Bara Baluta or twelve kinds of hereditary village servants. But the components of this Bara baluta differed in each account. It consisted of Patel, Karanam, Shroff, Talari, Thoti, Nirganti, Astrologer, Smith, Carpenter, Washerman, Barber, and Silversmith. In some accounts potters and dancing girls were also included and in other accounts the village establishment included eighteen officials. However the offices of the Headmen and the Karanam were the top most and of crucial importance in the villages. The office of the village functionaries was an hereditary one and their pay was made in the form of Inams and also in kind out of the produce of the villages and the shares of these groups were determined based on the customary
A village in India does not apply to what is commonly called a village in this country, a collection of houses, a village is a certain portion of country, generally from two to four square miles, the boundary of which are unalterable. Whatever cessions or transfers of country are made in the course of war from one power to another, the boundaries of the village remain permanent, the ryot considers the village as his country, he does not look to the province or to the country at large, he considers the village as the little republic in which he resides and lives are often lost in struggles among neighbouring villages for a quarter of an acre of land which never has been cultivated, nor even can be cultivated merely to include it within the boundary of one or the other village.

The relative powers of the village administrative officials and their status differed from tract to tract and perhaps from village to village. The village officers had become intermediaries between the government and the village, mediating the demands and desires of both the parties and levying some sort of fee on both parties for his service.

There was gradation of rank and caste even in performing the village duties. While the first two offices of Patel and Karanam were held by the dominant castes in the village, the menial duties were divided between the Mala and Madiga castes usually. The other duties were also mostly caste occupations and every one received shares in the agrarian surplus according to their duties. For instance, at the apex of the village administrative
setup was the head inhabitant known in various places by various names as Maniakkar, Potail, Peddakarar, Peddakapu, Peddaryot and Naidu. The village head generally belonged to the dominant caste of Vellalars in the region. He was the local representative and was also the villager's medium of contact with the central administration.

The village headmen helped in collecting the revenue which was paid through his hands. He was also a petty magistrate and civil judge. As a magistrate he dealt with petty crime, assaults and also decided suits for money and petty property disputes. They received payments sometimes by inam lands and sometimes by miras or fee from revenue. As a rule, no large salary was attached to this office, for the position was one of an honour. The head inhabitants with few exceptions enjoyed no emoluments in the district of Masulipatnam either in money or in land.

The Patel was generally a prosperous cultivator having a dominant economic and social status in the village as the names Peddaryot or Peddakapu themselves indicate. As cultivators and other inhabitants reposed their faith in them it enabled them to wield considerable influence in the village. To stress more, in the areas where successive governments and political change had done very little to dislodge the local prominence of the communities big land owners often controlled the village headship as part of a more general assertion of mirasi right.
The system of village administration with the headman at the apex supported by the Village Panchayat ensured the smooth functioning of the socio economic organization. The Panchayat was generally held in a public place called Chavadi where the village office was housed. The village Panchayat consisted of a group of village elders headed by the Patel. The Panchayat decided all the matters in the village, and settled disputes of various kinds. In fact, this practice was carried even into the Company's administration. For instance, the boundary disputes and irrigation disputes which were a common feature in village politics were often settled by the Collector assembling the Panchayats of the villages under dispute.

Thus the village headman played a dominant role even in the functioning of the agrarian world. Being a leading ryot in the village, in both Zamindari and Haveli lands the villages were let to the head inhabitants and it was they who redistributed them among the cultivators according to the long standing village practices. However this office was not uniform throughout the region. Where the office of Patel or single headman was unknown there were several headmen or head ryots known as Pettandars or Peddakapus who performed duties like land revenue collection and controlled the affairs of the village.

The official next in importance was the Karanam or Patwari the keeper of the village accounts. In the region the Karanams
were mostly Brahmins though there were persons of other castes also who held this position. Even among the Brahmins it was the Niyogis who dominated these offices. Because their skill in accounting and book work was exacting and because it was sacred and secret to his family the Karanam or the accountant held a position which was both durable and influential.

Tracing the origins of Karanams, R.E. Frykenberg points out that, Brahmins were brought down from Benares to be the village accountants. They under the pre colonial regimes gradually displaced Aravas and Jains as Karanams. Successive waves of other groups, such as the Hoysalas, Kanakapillais, Lingayats, Patrulu, Badagals and Nandavarikas as well as the Linga Balijas, Gajula balijas and Kayasthas came or were brought into the region in the chain of succeeding political regimes.

The Karanams had formerly acted as the Ijrardars that is as mediators between the Zamindars and the cultivators. The head inhabitant in some villages held the position of Karanam also. But there was no fixed rule about the number of Karanams in each village. For instance, in the Kondapalli Paragana their number varied widely. In villages there were sometimes more than one Karanam and this number sometimes extended up to 13. In Eluru three to four Karanams were there instead of one. This practice was an oppression upon the people, because each of them demand the usual fees from the cultivators. Though the original Inam to the office remains the same they in collaboration with the head
inhabitants frequently cultivated more than their share of lands in the villages. The office of the Karanams as well as the headman's was hereditary as long as the duties appertaining to it were properly performed. The Karanam was supposed to be a rapacious and untrustworthy person. This nature of the Karanam was clearly accounted even in the existing literature and proverbs 'Karanamtho kantupadithe kadi kadaladu', (plough does not move if one goes against the Karanams). Explaining the nexus between the village head and the Karanam it was said "Karanalu kaapulu eka-maithe kakulu kuda eguravu", (even crows will not fly if Karanams and Kapus jointly work) and "Karanam saadhuvu kaadu. kaaki telupu kaadu" (neither a Karanam plain nor a crow white).

The Karanams were required to keep complete registers of the extent and description of lands in each village and true accounts of the gross produce of the lands and to enter in their registers where the produce might be shared between the proprietors and the cultivators, also the quantity of grain so divided as well as the rates of division. In cases where the lands might be liable to pay money rents they had to record the rates and the amount of the money rents.

The Karanams also entered in their registers the rates and amount of all fees and marahs appropriated to village servants and servants, specifying whether such fees and marahs were pay-
able from the gross produce of the entire lands, from the proprietors share, or from the ryots share. They were to keep registers of the quit rent and ready money payments collected in each village, monthly registers of the prices of all kinds of grain, registers of strangers, accounts exhibiting the actual revenue and charges of the village. They were to produce the registers and accounts whenever required by the proprietor, by the Collector or by the Adawlut of the Zillah.

The Collectors however were prohibited from demanding from Karanams their registers and accounts for any other purpose than that of asserting the public revenue upon the portions of estates which it might be necessary to subdivide or of administering the revenue of lands escheated to government or attached for arrears of revenue. Thus the Karanams were to keep the registers of rents payable by the ryots to the proprietors. The Collectors had no authority over the Karanams. They could call for information from them only for a limited purpose unconnected with the relation between the proprietors and their ryots and had no power to ensure that the Karanam duly kept the prescribed registers with correct accounts. Perhaps this detailed accounting of village settlements and also Karanams role in it led to the proverb 'kaapula jaathakalu karanaala keruka' (Karanams know the biography of the Kapus). The strengthening of the office of the Karanam in the village under the Company and the power that was vested in its office and their independent status enabled the
Karanams to wield authority over the rural structure in the countryside.

As for the enjoyment of privileges and emoluments were concerned Karanams had an advantageous position compared to others in the villages. For the duties performed they received Rusums, Chupudu Salagalu and Badu Salagalu. However more than these it was the customary privileges they enjoyed from all sections in the society that amounted to large fees. Their collection in the villages became so vicious that under the Company the Collectors abolished the claims advanced by the Karanams to exorbitant Rusums on each choda kunta, on the jareeb produce on looms, on Banias and other inhabitants in their marriages and also on the grain purchased by Banias.

The cultivators in the village were obliged to perform many services for him. Moreover at the time of marriages or some other social function in the village the Karanams received certain amount from the villagers. Apart from it some sheaves of grain was given to the Karanam by each cultivator at the time of reaping. But there was no fixed rule about these payments. It depended on different kinds of grain. After the Company took possession of the Circars it abolished certain fees which previously Karanams had collected on Betel. Tobacco, Opium and Arrack.
In spite of all these, it was this office to the exclusion of others that was strengthened by the Company under the 1802 settlement. Under the new settlement the duties and powers of the Karanam were clearly laid down and the offices of the Karanam emerged as the only powerful setup in the village administration.

The 1802 Regulation imposed an obligation on the Zamindars to appoint and support the regular and established number of Karanams who were to obey all legal orders issued by the Zamindars but were not liable to be removed except by a court of judicature on a suit instituted by the Zamindar. The rights of the Zamindars in their dealings with Karanams were also defined and restricted while they were to be maintained by the Zamindars the latter had no power to remove them or appoint any one over-riding the hereditary line.

But under the Permanent Settlement the Collector abolished the claims advanced by the Karanams to exorbitant rusums on each choda kunta of the jareeb produce, on looms, on Banias and inhabitants and others, in their marriages, as well as on the grain purchased by Banias.

An evil practice which was prevalent and which was exercised by the village heads and Karanams in the region to the harassment of the rural communities was Grama karchu or the village charges.
under this head the cultivators had to contribute customarily and
the shares received by these village servants were specified and
collected without fail. Table 2.3 shows the village charges that
were collected in Nizampatnam circar of Masulipatnam district:
### Table: 2.5

**Grama Karchu in Nizampatnam Circar in 1778:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Name of Villages</th>
<th>Fasli 1209 Collections</th>
<th>Disbursements made by the inhabitants of different villages under account of Grama Karchu</th>
<th>MPs-F-C</th>
<th>MPs-F-C</th>
<th>MPs-F-C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nizampatnam</td>
<td>22-29-65</td>
<td>34-18-0</td>
<td>34-53-60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yalatapolam</td>
<td>50-9-4</td>
<td>57-12-52</td>
<td>40-8-18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ganapavaram</td>
<td>58-51-29</td>
<td>75-24-54</td>
<td>58-4-74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Komaravolu</td>
<td>22-10-55</td>
<td>15-51-62</td>
<td>16-8-58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Edupalli</td>
<td>52-6-55</td>
<td>87-19-55</td>
<td>70-51-62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chinamutlapudi</td>
<td>36-23-26</td>
<td>54-12-64</td>
<td>72-7-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Aluru</td>
<td>140-8-58</td>
<td>62-27-67</td>
<td>55-22-62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Adavala Divi</td>
<td>65-29-9</td>
<td>70-5-59</td>
<td>44-24-55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kavuru</td>
<td>68-12-55</td>
<td>52-1-16</td>
<td>70-9-67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Amudalapalli</td>
<td>47-18-22</td>
<td>45-12-75</td>
<td>59-0-11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Etaru</td>
<td>41-52-15</td>
<td>22-12-75</td>
<td>22-16-14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pragam</td>
<td>17-19-0</td>
<td>19-22-40</td>
<td>19-22-40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Nagaram</td>
<td>21-26-58</td>
<td>57-50-52</td>
<td>52-52-27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Potumerka</td>
<td>49-55-1</td>
<td>55-25-14</td>
<td>46-17-46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Pudivada</td>
<td>79-21-64</td>
<td>81-5-64</td>
<td>54-14-61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Rajavolu</td>
<td>88-20-42</td>
<td>55-52-61</td>
<td>57-4-29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kuchinapudi</td>
<td>76-0-11</td>
<td>80-10-20</td>
<td>75-11-9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Pullaputla</td>
<td>27-2-20</td>
<td>50-15-69</td>
<td>50-11-20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Allaparru</td>
<td>52-28-77</td>
<td>70-9-22</td>
<td>99-26-55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Paralli</td>
<td>26-18-45</td>
<td>24-12-52</td>
<td>20-22-62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Kuripudi</td>
<td>57-5-5</td>
<td>27-10-10</td>
<td>21-1-10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Pedamutlapudi</td>
<td>58-2-20</td>
<td>45-16-25</td>
<td>55-61-29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Balasulapalam</td>
<td>41-18-0</td>
<td>52-52-72</td>
<td>50-16-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Mundrada</td>
<td>70-11-10</td>
<td>75-29-54</td>
<td>48-51-40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Gokarneswaram</td>
<td>16-52-5</td>
<td>18-5-75</td>
<td>15-15-26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Amartaluru</td>
<td>159-55-17</td>
<td>209-28-10</td>
<td>164-15-62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Cherukumallli</td>
<td>81-55-57</td>
<td>45-22-6</td>
<td>44-8-55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Chandavolu</td>
<td>74-25-14</td>
<td>185-54-2</td>
<td>154-26-55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Kadavakudru</td>
<td>45-4-40</td>
<td>94-2-54</td>
<td>79-51-29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Parala</td>
<td>81-5-52</td>
<td>221-24-60</td>
<td>201-0-11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Anumalli</td>
<td>92-4-40</td>
<td>55-12-64</td>
<td>40-5-50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Vellapolam</td>
<td>79-26-1</td>
<td>49-55-24</td>
<td>42-50-64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Pedaganjam</td>
<td>45-26-12</td>
<td>45-55-69</td>
<td>55-9-45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Peddapalli</td>
<td>52-4-17</td>
<td>29-2-42</td>
<td>41-19-66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Patamangalagiri</td>
<td>254-15-79</td>
<td>208-24-60</td>
<td>196-22-40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total MPS.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2420-20-19</td>
<td>2555-27-41</td>
<td>2859-19-59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In theory, the amounts were collected by the revenue officials to meet the expenses for religious festivals, temple maintenance, fairs, charities, gifts to dignitaries, propitiation to village deities, and office equipment. But the amount thus collected was generally shared by the village revenue officials, taluk and Huzur servants. Another tax of similar nature was Saderwari. For instance, in the district of Masulipatnam in some parganas it was as shown in the table 2.4.

Table 2.4

Saderwari in Some taluks of Masulipatnam district:

| Source: Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 11.10.1800, MDR. v.2998, p.6. |
|---|---|---|
| Dowle for 1798 | Grama Karchu |
| MP | F | C | MP | F | C |
| 1. Kondapalli | 5968 | 22 | 40 | 1045 | 33 | 36 |
| 2. Vallursamut | 6698 | 6 | 44 | 1517 | 10 | 61 |
| 3. Gundur | 9519 | 11 | 42 | 694 | 3 | 15 |
| 4. Akulamannad | 645 | 2 | 64 | 64 | 5 | 59 |
| 5. Inuguduru | 1523 | 7 | 63 | 244 | 13 | 40 |
| 6. Pedanah | 3233 | 11 | 29 | 195 | 33 | 69 |

Realizing the exactions, the Company immediately after its acquisition of the region, tried to restrict the collections by framing certain rules. For instance, for a village yielding the revenue from 50 - 250 MPs./year taffrick was fixed at 20 percent and a taffrick of 8 percent on villages yielding revenue from thousand and above. The Company also stated that the Payakaris
should be assessed at one half of the rates payable by the Karanams.

However these taxes were so arbitrarily fixed that the poor classes were robbed of all their limited surpluses. For these reasons under the 1802 settlement the Company introduced a clause in the sale itself that no part of the gramakarchu would be payable to the proprietors. Such contributions being intended for the general benefit of the village would be borne by each inhabitant in proportion according to the extent and value of his cultivation in the village.

The other important village officials were Deshpandes, Mazumdar, Serishtadars of the circar. Tanadars who were in charge of revenue collection at the taluk and district level. However they worked in coordination with the Karanams. Generally there were one or two Deshpandes in each taluk. They received the accounts of the villages from the Karanam and submitted them to the circar. The Mazumdars kept the accounts of the Jumma from the taluks. For these services they enjoyed Saverams and Rusums. But under the 1802 Regulation the offices of Mazumdar, Deshpande, and Serishtadar were abolished while strengthening Karanams position in the village.

The Deshpandes of Tamedi had taken to themselves the duties of the village Karanams, while those of Pedanah cultivated nearly
half the soil on their own account with exclusive advantages and in Kondapalli estate the Oeshpande and Mazumdari offices were held by one family.

In Gudur and Akulamannadu parganas the Oeshpande was supported by an allowance of ten seers per putti from the gross produce. Mazumdars were supported by fees upon land customs without Inams or Mirasi.

While some of the havelis had many Deshpandes and Mazumdars, some were without these offices. In some other parganas the duties of Deshpandes and Karanams were combined. Generally the Deshpandes and Karanams cultivated nearly half and the best arable land on their own account.

Likewise the office of Mazumdar was abolished in Rudravaram village in Inuguduru pargana and Malkacherla in Pedanah pargana was conferred on the Mazumdar Ebarasi Chandra Sekhar for life at the annual quit rent of five star pagodas to be paid to the Zamindar of Inuguduru and twenty star pagodas to the proprietor of Pedanah respectively.

But in some instances pensions were given to the former Deshpandes also. For example, to the Deshpande of Divi Boggala Rama Reddy and Buggada Veeranna an annual pensions of 44 Star pagodas and 52 4/5 Star pagodas were given respectively for life.
In Munagala the office of the Deshmukh was abolished and Munagala was conferred in Zamindari tenure on Keesara Venkata Narasimha Rao.

In Gundur pargana the office of Deshpande was held by the Karanams who performed the duties of both the offices, though the office of Deshpande was established to be a check on the Karanams offices. The Deshpandes and Mazumdars had Inam lands from the Circar and Rusums or fees from the cultivators for their immediate subsistence amounting to about three percent on the revenue. Likewise certain mirasi villages were allotted for payment and support of the cutcherry of Deshpandes and Mazumdars and other servants.

At the recommendation of the Special Commission appointed to introduce Permanent Settlement the government abolished the office of Deshpande in Masulipatnam district. However in Vullur Samut, the Deshpandes Govinda Raju, Ramappa, and Govindaraju Buchchi were allowed to enjoy the rent free Inam land for life.

The other official, Nirganti, was the one who looked after irrigation needs of the village. This office was not universal. It depended on the existence of the wet lands in the village and the numbers of servants varied with the extent of wet lands.
The Talari was required to watch the grain heaps on the common threshing floor before the division of the produce. He was required to obtain information regarding all breaches of law in the villages and also to escort and protect persons travelling from one village to another. All these officials were remunerated by the usual inam lands called Kattubadi lands. The other regular servant was the boundary man or the thoti.

Besides the above mentioned ones every description of the village referred also to the Priest, Astrologer, Smith, Carpenter, Barber and the Leather worker. In some villages there was the Physician, Dhobi, Musician and the Dancing girl. However not all the people were present in each village. Benedicte Hjejie opined that the core of the village establishment consisted of a Karanam, a Black smith, a Carpenter, a Barber and a Washerman.

To sum up, a contemporary British account stated the administrative setup thus:

When the Muhammadans took this part of the country in the sixteenth century they appear to have made little change in the existing Hindu system. They occupied certain posts with military garrisons under Muhammadan officers and sometimes a tract of country might be granted to a Muhammadan officer as a Jagir but for the most part the revenues were collected and accounted for to the central authority by Hindu officials. These Hindu officials were the district accountant or Despondi, the district Collector or the Desmukh and a third official who had charge of the Police and seems to have exercised some supervision over the two others bearing the name of Muzumdars or Mannavar. As is usual in India these offices became hereditary and when the Muhammadan power became lax the Hindu hereditary officials began to call themselves Zamindars and to act as if they were independent princes but through all these changes the villages remained unaltered.
Thus the role of these officers was not only the revenue collections and organization of agricultural production but also to supervise the overall activities in the village. In the Cowls that were issued to the Zamindars the Company stated clearly that the Company had rights to appoint Anchanadars for the purpose of estimating the value of the crops and likewise to appoint Mazumdars, Deshpandes and other officers for the purpose of examining into and keeping the Zamindars should render all assistance to such officers.

In the village economy besides the agrarian groups there were many other social groups of various castes. The strength of the agrarian economy as well as the village depended on the organization of these various elements and how well the nexus was created between the agrarian groups and various others. Some of such groups were Banias. Weavers, Toddy drawers, Goldsmiths, Basket makers. Cow keepers, Oil mongers. Boat men. Fishermen.

A certain amount of tax was collected on each of these groups in the region. In Divi, Pariah looms were taxed under moturfa. However all pariah looms were not taxed at the same rate. For instance,

27 looms were taxed at 5/8 MPs / loom
8 looms were taxed at 1/4 MPs / loom
2 looms were taxed at 7/16 MPs / loom
1 loom was taxed 4 fanams and 40 cash.

Besides, seventeen Bania's houses were taxed at MPs. 7-55-60. The assessment was regulated by the number of shops the Banias had. The Fishermen in Nagayalanka paid a tax of MPs. 5-2-20, 45 Cow keepers houses paid mamool fee MPs. 48-22-40.

Table 2.5 shows the quit rent or moturpha paid by different occupational groups in the village of Mandamarru in Gundur pargana:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>No.of Houses</th>
<th>Bilmucta Tax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Brahmins</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>57-15-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Oil makers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0-31-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pallanqueen bearers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1-21-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Gold smiths</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1-21-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Soap sellers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0-10-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Weavers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2-2-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Vadde (sellers of salt fish)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4-26-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Toddy drawers</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Cow keepers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0-21-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Aura or cloth stainers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1-18-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Cow keepers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Oubber makers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0-10-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Painters</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10-0-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Collector Read, Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 10.11.1800, MDR, 2998, p.56.
Of these non agricultural groups in the village, weavers constituted the most important occupation next to agriculture. Like the agrarian setup the weaving world was complex and played an important role in the working of the agrarian economy.

**Weavers and the Agrarian World:**

In Masulipatnam district during the late eighteenth century, the weaving centres were spatially concentrated in the Zamindaris of the region namely in Repalli Zamindari, Rachur Zamindari, Chilakaluripadu Zamindari and Sattenapalli Zamindari. From the weaving villages of these Zamindaris chay goods of different varieties like Gingams red and blue, Sastracandles and Romals of different assortments travelled a long distance and reached distant markets of Europe and Africa. Further in these villages, various types of cloth meant for regional as well as internal consumption were also produced.

In the Haveli tracts of the Company, the weaving centres were in Eluru, Pedanah, Gundur, and Nizampatnam circar areas. Punjum cloth of different sorts. Gingham and Cambalies were main cloth varieties produced in these Haveli lands. Chay goods industry of the Northern Coromandel was mostly concentrated in Masulipatnam and Guntur districts, even though a few centres from Godavari district also specialized in chay goods production.
Masulipatnam was known for its contribution to the painted and printed multihued fabrics called Chintz, locally known as Kalamkari. Chintz production was concentrated in places like Masulipatam, Palakollu and Jagganadhapuram.\textsuperscript{158}

While the traditional weaving communities predominated in the weaving world of the Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts, in Masulipatnam and Guntur districts, the weavers did not necessarily belong to the traditional weaving castes. For instance, although there were Sale caste weavers, primarily Padma sales, there were also Pariah weavers, Jandra caste weavers, Togata weavers and even a few looms set up by barbers.\textsuperscript{159}

A significant correlation between the caste and the production of specific varieties of cloth could also be discerned in the district. The evidence from the Guntur and Masulipatnam districts displays that the non-traditional weavers specialized in producing ordinary cloth meant for local consumption.\textsuperscript{160} Even the popular forms of expressions like proverbs of the region indicate the specialization on of the weaving carried on by the pariah weavers. If the cloth was not woven perfectly, a common form of expression was "Sagamu Sale Neta, Sagam Mala Neta', meaning half the weaving was done by Sales, the other half by Malas.\textsuperscript{162} Generally speaking, the finer varieties of cloth were produced by the castes higher in the social hierarchy like the Padma Sales who specialized in weaving super fine varieties.
In the district records, the term used to refer to them was ‘Mala Maggalavalluoo’ that is, Mala weavers. The Malas constituted the major weaving community in the village economy of Masulipatnam district and played an equally prominent part in the weaving economy, especially in Kondapalli Haveli, Vallursamut, and Inuguduru Parganas. While they almost monopolized the work in Vallursamut, no Pariah weaver existed in Gundur Pargana, Akulamannadu Parganas, and in Nizampatnam circar. It was specially mentioned that they were not employed by the Company.

One of the ways in which the weaving communities were tied to the agrarian economy and the rural structures was through a wide variety of formal and informal taxes reflected in the pattern of revenue systems. The contribution of the weavers formed a major component of the entire revenue system, next only to that of the agricultural groups. These contributions strengthened the Zamindans and other local institutions. In turn, these reinforced the Zamindars to increase their hold over the weavers. The changes brought by the Company through the Permanent Settlement affected the indigenous links and paved the way for the incorporation of the weavers, into the matrix of the colonial economy.
Tax Collection in the Textile Economy

By the end of the eighteenth century there was no uniformity in the existing revenue systems relating to the weaving world of the Masulipatnam region.

In the later half of the eighteenth century, as most of the weaving centres, and the weaving looms fell within the jurisdictional limits of the landed estates called Zamindaris, the Zamindaris depended to a considerable extent on the support of the weavers.

The weavers contributed both formal and informal taxes to various landed elites of the region. Unlike in Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts, in Masulipatnam and Guntur districts, the relation between weavers and Zamindars was blurred by factors like scattering of the weaving villages over a wide area, the presence of a clearly demarcated power structure in the administrative setup, and the large scale participation of the non traditional weavers in the textile economy.

The weaver in Masulipatnam district falling under the administrative units of 4th division of Masulipatnam circar, usually paid tax which they were liable as weavers. But in case the weavers had land, they received their share of the produce in common with other inhabitants. Here the relationship of the
weaver with the Zamindars and other village officials was less formal and less oppressive as the weavers' payments to them were customarily formalized, and the forcing of grain over the weavers was also a rare phenomenon in these districts.

Having belonged to an artisanal group the weavers in Masulipatnam were subjected to a variety of taxes like professional taxes, fees or Tahareer and sayer saderwareed. These institutionalized Munnavar and Rusums to the Mirasidars, and Karanam Rusums or fees were the extra exactions from the weavers of the Masulipatnam district.

In Masulipatnam, Zamindars were therefore, entitled mainly to the loom tax. because the local officials also had the privilege of collecting from the weavers. Such a formalized relationship between the Zamindar and weaver was affected owing to the presence of an effective revenue administrative machinery set up by the Nizam state much before the Company's political hegemony in the district.

The Company's attempts to minimize the loss at the investment and to secure a firm base in the textile economy of region led it to discount many of these existing local alliances. Moreover, to secure the work of the weavers to the English East Company in preference to other individuals and European companies the Company Government attempted to abolish the traditional
oppressive obligations of the weaver. First attempt in this
direction was the abolition of custom of imposing Gaddem from the
landed elites and other renters.

Equally significant measure that gave way to the disappear-
ance of the formal relationship of the weaver with the Zamindars
of the region was the Company's attempts to abolish loom tax over
a period of time. The weavers working for Company's investment
were exempted to pay loom tax. Initially in 1793 this privilege
was restricted to those weavers settled in Haveli lands. But
later on extended the same privileges whenever a Zamindari was
sequestered and brought under the control of the Company. Thus
by creating differences between the weavers residing in Haveli
lands and those in the Zamindari lands, the colonial state could
penetrate and control the weaver more directly.

By 1802, the Company through its Permanent revenue settlement
introduced in the Northern Circars, by taking away Zamindars
right to collect loom tax. It ordered the Zamindaris to
desist from collecting any quit rent from the Company's weavers,
for which they would be compensate by the Company. The Zamindars
were further requested to send these circulars to renters.

However an anomalous situation was created when the Company
balanced the removal of financial dependence by legitimizing
other kinds of subordination, again with the primary objective of
protection of its investment. Thus one of the clauses attached to the Permanent Muchalika of the Zamindars was one which fixed the permanent quit rent for the land occupied by the weavers for 21 years. The weaver in turn received a Cowl from the Zamindar. By this Cowl, the weaver was entitled to receive some ground with particular measurements. The weaver in turn agreed to certain amount including Rusums for a period of 21 years. For houses situated on this ground, it was the responsibility of the weaver to get the house repaired at his own expense. In return, the weaver agreed to pay by a stipulated date (1st October) certain rent and rusums. By this Muchalika, the weavers were prohibited from leaving the village or shifting houses without the consent of the Zamindar or his official. In case of such an act, the Zamindar had the right to rent that house to some other weaver and could receive the tax as per the rules.

The Company thus tried to ensure a firm base and stable for its investment operations, by restricting the mobility of the weavers even within the district, because on many occasions of economic depression and scarcity, weavers resorted to occasional migrations, a great concern for the Company, as it led to the fluctuations in supply conditions. Thus constraining the weaver both in time and space, the Company ultimately cornered the weaver completely.

The Permanent Settlement of 1802 also made the Zamindars responsible for providing the necessary facilities to the weav-
ers, such as constructing residential localities (Pettahs) without any cess being levied.

What was the realignment drafted between the Zamindars and the weavers after the withdrawal of the Company from the textile economy? Did the Company restore the formal relations between Zamindars and weavers, at least as far as the formal Moturpha tax was concerned?

When the Company abolished the chay goods trade in 1814, it decided to deconstruct the new revenue structures erected by it in 1790s. As the Company's object was to maximize revenue collections from all economic sectors, it saw no exception to grant any concession to the weaver. The Company, therefore, reverted to the policy of Moturpha loom tax collections even from those weavers who worked for Company's investment. The decision for such a change was based essentially on three grounds; first, if the exemption was continued, it would destroy the ultimate spirit of private trade activities; secondly, it would reduce the price of those Company's goods as against those sold by the weavers taxed by this Moturpha tax and thirdly, the Company had to forego a lot of revenue on account of its exemption. This would indeed explain the reason for an increasing loom tax collection in Masulipatnam district from first decade of the nineteenth century. (See Graph.3 in Chapter.9).
To what extent the loss of loom tax collection affected the Zamindaris? The decline and fall of the Zamindari system has often been attributed to mismanagement of estates, and dysfunctions of the agrarian economy. What has not been recognized, however, is that the artisan played as crucial a role in sustaining the Zamindar as the agriculturist. Quite often, ancient Zamindars depended on the revenues they collected through Moturpha taxes to pay off their annual revenue debts to the Company. Sometimes, they used their remission of loom tax which they got by the Permanent Settlement of 1802 for liquidating the debt balances that resulted from their inability to meet the revenue demand.

Another important section in the village social structure was the money lending community. These traders and bankers moved goods, grain and cash between the producers and the consumers and also provided necessary financial support for the economy. The references the these intermediate groups in the records indicate their role in the economy.

One line of thought held the view that an important class that rose out of the British colonial policies with regard to Indian agriculture was the class of the money lenders as an influential economic and political force in the countryside. No doubt even in pre British days they did play a role but under the colonial structure they acted in a different form.
The importance of money lenders grew because of the high revenue rates demanded and regular and rigid manner of its collection. The cultivators were compelled to borrow money to pay the taxes. Their chronic poverty forced them to take recourse to the money lenders. In Masulipatnam district the role of the money lenders was not very different from that of his counterparts elsewhere.

Lending cash and grain to meet the needs of the local farmers had long been an essential feature of agriculture everywhere. Well to do peasants acquired an interest in their neighbours produce through the loan of a few maunds of grain or a few rupees, mahajans lent out a portion of their stocks as a regular part of their trade and maliks used loans to tighten their control over the subordinates.

Peasants needed money to fulfill many social obligations. The timing of loans and their repayment also worked to the creditor's advantage. Cultivators borrowed grain for sowing or for household purposes in the thin months of the year. When the stocks were lowest and prices were consequently high. At the harvest season when his creditors demanded repayment, the situation was reverse. Most of the cultivators had to pay their dues as soon as their grain was threshed and local markets were therefore glutted with produce which automatically affected the prices. The result was the cultivators had to pay back three or
four times the amount they had originally borrowed from the creditors.

The petty Zamindars and prosperous cultivators sometimes combined these activities. Were the peasants not given any assistance during such periods? Did the government not give any loans? Assistance was given to the cultivators to some extent by the government in the form of taccavi loans. These loans included money, seed grain or assistance in some other form.

Elizabeth Whitcombe argued that there was no doubt a general idea that Zamindars were bound to help their tenants by liberal advances of these loans, but these advances were not popular among the cultivators. Many Zamindars made advances to the cultivators on the same terms as the money lenders. But peasants preferred money lenders to landlords because landlords had more immediate control over the peasants than the money lender.

The money lenders in their capacity as merchants, also acted as intermediaries in the vast network that linked the rural economy of the region with long distance trade. They also played an important role in intra regional trade from one district to the other.

The renters appropriated a great part of the grain belonging to the inhabitants for liquidation of their debts to him.
sahukars took bonds from the cultivators and advanced cash. This was a common custom in Divi. Some of the sahukars in Masulipatnam district were Raghunath Naik, Narsanna Naik, Venkatesa Naik. Birju Das, Kistaraju Naik, Chira ud doulah, Lakshmi Narasimha, Kotta Lakshmi Das, Vasudevacharlu, Emma Naik, Varadas Pratap, and Majeti Venkatrama Setti.

Sahukars seemed to have had another specialized role of carrying forward teeps to the Zamindars and others to enable them to furnish government with security to the payment of their rents. For a teep for one lakh pagodas Zamindars paid a premium of 1000 pagodas to the Sahukars and a village was delivered to the sahukar besides a batta of two pagodas a day was allowed to the sahukar's gumasthas which was paid by the inhabitants.

There were no special legal restrictions on money transactions in the region other than those contained in the provisions of Regulation 34 of 180Z. Under the Permanent Settlement the government issued a Regulation regarding the rate of interest on money. Twelve percent per annum was fixed by the government as the highest rate of interest. However where a lower rate of interest was stipulated between parties than the 12 percent per annum that rate should be paid. In case of mortgages of real property the usufruct would be allowed to the mortgage in lieu of interest agreeable to the custom of the country.
Thus the picture that emerges from the above analysis of the rural structure of the Masulipatnam district was that it was a hierarchically organized complex rural society. In this, the Zamindars retained the dominant position followed by several group of cultivators and others. The rural power was distributed in this complex, many layered structure through several mediatory devices including the ideological systems. Of these, one of the most important, was the surplus expropriating systems. The different taxes and customary deductions which circulated in the rural economy as described in this chapter, sustained the power of the rural elites. Alterations in the revenue systems would thus be not only prerequisite for maximizing surplus extraction but also would facilitate redistribution of power. During the initial period of its rule though the Company had experimented with several revenue systems the rural structure had not undergone any serious change and the Company continued the old existing systems as they were without many changes till 1802. In fact even the Permanent Settlement and the various other measures the Company experimented with did not radically alter the status and power of the Zamindar. To understand why the Zamindar remained such a powerful element in the countryside it is necessary to look closely at the Zamindar.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


(2) Lanka Sundaram, 'The Revenue Administration of Northern Circars 1769-1786', JAHRS, 13, 2. (1940), Rajahmundry, p. 79.


<6> Ibid, p. 45.

(7) Ibid, p. 49.

(8) Ibid, p. 77.


(14) Ibid. pp. 96-97.


(19). Northern Circars Extract from Fifth report of Parliamentary Committee of East India Company, 1813, quoted in Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar Memorandum on the progress of the Madras Presidency during the last forty years of British Administration, Madras. 1893, p.223.

(20). Collector Masulipatnam district, to the BOR, 10.6.1772, MDR, v. 2923, p.36.


(22). For a brief account of estates that were under the Company for several reasons see, table A 19.


(24). G.S. Mudaliyar, A Note on the Permanent Settlement in Madras, Madras. 1941. p.27.

(25). B.S. Baliga, Studies in Madras Administration, 2, Madras. 1960. p.82.


(31). Ibid.


(40). Ibid.

(41). Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, MDR. v.2891/a, p.195; Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 1783. MDR. v.2891. p.213.


(46). Ibid.


(50). Collector to the BOR. (no date). SRMG. Tamil Nadu State Archives, Madras, p.8.

(52). Ibid. p.301.


(58). Ibid.


(63). For a detailed account of various groups of cultivators see, A.Sarada Raju, Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency, Madras, 1940, p.16.

(64). Collector, GO from St. George, 22.5.1817, Madras, GoDR. V.974, pp.253-254.

(65). Ibid., p.32; H.H. Wilson, Glossary of Judicial and Revenue terms and of useful words occurring in Official Documents relating to the Administration of the British India, (rept. Delhi, 1968).

(66). Sarada Raju, Economic conditions in Madras Presidency.'
Madras, 1940. p.34.


(69). John Hodgson. Secretary to the Special Commission to the Collector Masulipatnam. 27.9.1802. SRMG. p.8.


(72). Ibid.


(74). Secretary, BOR, to the Chief Secretary to the government, 3.8.1840. RDC, v.501, p.3959.

(75). For a detailed discussion of the Permanent Settlement see, Chapter 7.

(76). For the details of the lands in which the Company tried out the Ryotwari Settlement see tables A1,A2,A3.

(77). Secretary, BOR, to the Chief Secretary to the government, 3.8.1840. RDC, v.501, p.3959.

(78). Ibid.


(80). Campbell Secretary BOR, to the Chief Secretary to the government. 29.5.1817, ‘Report on the Settlement of the different districts and preparations that have been made for the introduction of Ryotwari settlement’ PBOR, v.755. pp.6224-6225.


(82). Campbell Secretary BOR, to the Chief Secretary to the government, 29.5.1817, ‘Report on the Settlement of the different districts and preparations that have been made for the introduction of Ryotwari settlement’ PBOR. v.755. pp.6224-6225.

(83). R.J. Porter, Collector Masulipatnam to Pycroft, Secretary


(86). Ibid.

(87). Edward Saunders to Archibald Campbell. BOR. 15.2.1787, MDR. v.5009. p.110.


(89). Edward Saunders to Archibald Campbell, BOR, 15.2. 1787, MDR. v.3009, pp.111-112.

(90). Ibid.


(93). Memorial regarding the practice of pressing Coolies in Northern Circars. 1794. MDR, v.2944, pp.600-603.


(95). Collector Guntur district to the BOR, 11.11.1800, PBOR, v.519, p.3071.

(96). Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR. 11.11.1800, MDR. v.2998, p.136.


(100). Ibid.

(101). Collector Guntur district to the BOR. PBOR. v.519. p.3072.

(102). Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 1823. ‘Report on the Masulipatnam Estates’, SRMG, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Madras, p.20
(103). Ibid.


(107). Williams Member of the Circuit Committee to Alexander Davidson, President Governor in Council, 9.2.1786. 'Circuit Committee Report on the Zamindars of Nuzividu and Charmahal'. SRMG, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Madras. p.4.

(108). Ibid.


(111). Ibid.

(112). Ibid.


(116). Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 10.11.1800, MDR. v.2998. p.29.


(119). Col. Munro. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed for the purpose
of taking the examination of such witnesses as shall be ordered by the house to attend the committee of the whole house on the affairs of East India Company and report the minutes of such examination from time to time, 15.4.1813. Minutes of Evidence taken before the House of Commons, London, 1813, pp.279-280.


(121).Sarada Raju, Economic conditions in Madras Presidency, Madras. (1940), p.45.


(125).For a discussion of the settlement of the disputes by the Collectors resorting to traditional methods see chapter 8.


(132).Alexander Wynch, Collector Masulipatnam District to BOR, 8.4.1770 GORD, V.833, 1770-71, p.6.


<136>. Ibid.


(138) John Hodgson, Secretary to the Special Commission to the Collector, Masulipatnam district. 27.9.1802. SRMG, p.6.


<140>. Ibid.

<141>. Ibid.


<143>. Ibid, p.4.

<144>. Ibid, p.9.

(145). Ibid.


(147). Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 10.11.1800, MDR, v.2998, pp.53-54.


<151>. Ibid.

(152). Benedicte Hjeje, "Old Perspectives and New in the discussion about India’s Economic Development in the Nineteenth


(155). Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 10.11.1800, MDR, v.2998, p. 106.

(156). Read, Collector Masulipatnam district to the BOR, 10.11.1800, MDR, V.2990, p. 106.


(159). Collector Guntur to BOR, 24.5.1855, Guntur District Records, (hereafter GuDR) v.5409, pp.233-94.


(165). Ibid.


Para 8.

(169). Ibid., p.131


(172). Exemptions in favour of the company's weavers to be revoked was considered by the Government in 1814, as reflected in correspondence to the Chief Secretary, in Cons. 28.4.1814. From Mr. T.A. Oakes, 20th in Cons., 28.2.1814. For extracts of this Correspondence, General Report of Board of Revenue. Vols.10, 11 and 12. pp.237-238.

(173). The literature on the agrarian economy of the region attributes the primary causes, like the decline of the landed elites and economic crises responsible for the decline of the landed elites and the subsequent failure of the Permanent Settlement.


(177). Ibid.


(183). P.B. Smalleth Secretary BOR. Ft. St. George to the Chief Secretary to government, 25.1.1841, Revenue Department Consultations, v. 513, pp.779-780.

(184). A Regulation declaring the rate of interest on money in the British territories subject to the presidency of Ft. St. George, A.D. 1802, Regulation.34.