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Nicholas B. Drinks

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Engraving of Raja Ramachandra Tondaiman by F. C. Lewis 1853
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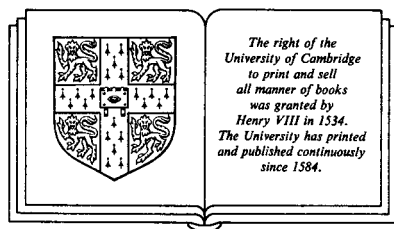
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THE HOLLOW CROWN

*Ethnohistory of an
Indian kingdom*

NICHOLAS B. DIRKS



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE

NEW YORK NEW ROCHELLE

MELBOURNE SYDNEY

Cambridge University Press

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521326049

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First published 1987

This digitally printed version 2008

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Dirks, Nicholas B., 1950–

The hollow crown.

(Cambridge South Asian Studies)

Bibliography.

Includes index.

1. Pudukkottai (Princely State) – History.
2. Ethnology – India – Pudukkottai (Princely State)
I. Title. II. Series.

DS485.P83D57 1987 954'.82 86–24431

ISBN 978-0-521-32604-9 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-05372-3 paperback

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For God's sake let us sit upon the ground
 And tell sad stories of the death of kings:
 How some have been deposed, some slain in war,
 Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed,
 Some poisoned by their wives, some sleeping killed,
 All murdered – for within the hollow crown
 That rounds the mortal temples of a king
 Keeps Death his court, and there the antic sits,
 Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,
 Allowing him a breath, a little scene,
 To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
 Infusing him with self and vain conceit,
 As if this flesh which walls about our life
 Were brass impregnable; and, humoured thus,
 Comes at the last, and with a little pin
 Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king!

Shakespeare, *Richard II*

The heavens shower rain; the earth bears grain; why should I pay for my land?
 Do you collect tax to command the elements? Does rain shower at your
 command?

Tamil Folk Ballad, words spoken by Kattapomman to
 British Collector shortly before Kattapomman's defeat and death

If one tries to erect a theory of power one will always be obliged to view it as
 emerging at a given place and time and hence to deduce it, to reconstruct its
 genesis. But if power is in reality an open, more or less coordinated (in the event,
 no doubt, ill-coordinated) cluster of relations then the only problem is to provide
 oneself with a grid of analysis which makes possible an analytic of relations of
 power.

Michel Foucault

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Preface

During my fieldwork in Pudukkottai, one of my principal teachers, informants, consultants, and friends was a Brahman who was the retired head clerk of the Settlement Office. Known by his acronym PMS, he was the descendant of a family of *srotriya* or learned Brahmans who had been settled on fertile lands in Pudukkottai state in the late eighteenth century by the Tondaiman Raja of the time. But PMS himself was a *laukika* or secular Brahman, educated in Shakespeare and British history at St Joseph's College, Trichy. He was initially employed by the Darbar of the Pudukkottai state, where for a long time his immediate boss was a mythic hero of late colonial times, a former ICS man named Alexander Tottenham who spent his retirement as head administrator of a state that until 1944 was ruled by a minor. After independence, or merger as it is called in Pudukkottai, PMS guided the completion of the Inam Settlement until his retirement from Government service in 1957. An honest bureaucrat and a true scholar, he was later helpful to academics and others who would come through Pudukkottai and stay for a time as guests of the royal family. He had helped me during my initial stay in the place years earlier, and he agreed to work with me again when I returned in 1981 for intensive fieldwork. But when I first arrived he was hard to track down; despite his poverty he refused to enter into any contractual arrangement, and aside from allowing me to pick up the tab for coffee, dosai, and bus trips, refused all payment. In the first few weeks he told me that he could not accept payment because he could not countenance being paid for simply sharing what he knew about the history, land system, and ethnology of Pudukkottai: after all, this was the love of his life, and to sell his knowledge would be to prostitute his most valued treasure. He secured my dependence on him, however, dragging me around as if I were a new and even more valued treasure to visit all of his relatives and friends, and resisting my attempts to find other learned citizens who might help me with old records and texts, even though his own eyes were failing and he was increasingly unable to read the eighteenth-century palm leaves I was myself often incapable of deciphering. He also disappeared periodically, making the point whenever I seemed to take him for granted that he was, still, a free agent.

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But as time went on and he became a more regular, though I might add difficult and now virtually blind, companion, I was troubled by my growing sense of “debt” and so persisted in my attempt to work out an acceptable form of remuneration.

One day when we were stranded in my leaky Standard Herald on the side of the Tanjavur road during a particularly virulent outburst of the northeast monsoon, I handed him an envelope full of wads of rupees and told him this was a gift, a dana. He took it and told me the following story. Some years before the Maharaja (who ever since the amalgamation of the state has lived outside its former borders in the family’s mock gothic palace in the Trichy cantonment, tinkering in a large machine shop with old engines) called PMS to attend upon him. There was a problem with some of the lands belonging to the royal family, and PMS was asked to find the relevant records and prepare a brief for the family lawyer, who was himself unable to use the old land records of the state. PMS happily did what he was asked, and when he had completed his services the Raja called him over and asked him to take a 100 rupee note. PMS refused to accept it, saying “O Maharaja, how can I accept payment from you when you are my king?” The Tondaiman prince, puzzled to see an obviously poor man refuse the money, asked him why he stood on ceremony since he himself was no longer a Maharaja and these were no longer the days of rajadharmā. PMS replied first by quoting Shakespeare, “Not all the waters of the rough rude sea can wash away the balm from an anointed king” (thereby sanctioning in an indirect sense my taking the title of this book from *Richard II*) and then by telling the king what he meant to tell me by the recitation of the story: for services that involve my knowledge, I accept no payment. But of course this was not wholly true, for PMS had spent his life accepting payment for the exercise of his knowledge, and much of his earning life had been under the rajiyam of pre-colonial Pudukkottai. And, indeed, PMS ultimately accepted a gift of money from the king, as he accepted gifts of money from me. Labelled dana rather than campalam, or salary, gifts – whether in kind or cash – were okay. But I believe that it was in fact both more exalting and more difficult for PMS to accept gifts from the puzzled monarch than from me, and in turn more difficult to accept from me than from lawyers and local citizens when he helped them trace their land records as he often did. I was subsequently annoyed on more than one occasion to observe this, as for example when he held up the receipt from the BBC for 500 rupees which he had signed after spending three weeks doing all the work for a camera crew trying to film the construction and consecration of a clay horse made by local potters for

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the protection deity, Aiyandar. I might add that I was particularly annoyed because the AIIS refused to reimburse research expenses under the category of gift precisely because there were no signed receipts. To quote Rabelais, such is the nature of the gratuitous.

PMS would accept dana from the king rather than campalam because a dana is “freely given,” without expectation of a return. It is not that he did not want to give a return – he offered it to begin with – but rather that he felt that the transaction of salary demeaned his offering, rendering it, too, less than freely given. PMS also meant to say that even a king could not control him by contract, and that in any case as a loyal subject he had no need to be controlled, thus recapitulating the conundrum of the Brahman’s relation with the king. From this chance remark, indeed from my long relationship with PMS, I learned a great deal about the complexities of the gift in Indian society. But I also learned something about the debts that I have accumulated over what is now slightly more than a decade of work on this project. I will never be able to repay all those who have helped me. Some worked for nominal pay, some because of their institutional duties, some because it brought status to be associated with a foreign scholar who was clearly an honored guest of the Maharaja. But most have helped for no recompense at all. As for the many debts I have to academics around the world, I can invoke the old anthropological chestnut of generalized exchange to excuse the seeming asymmetry of the many gifts to me, and offer my book in return. But no length or eloquence of acknowledgement will in fact make a sufficient return to the many people and institutions who have been a part of this book. My only comfort is that while one of the lessons I have learned over the last decade has been precisely how laden all “knowledge” is with power, interest, and strategies of control, appropriation, and domination, I have in fact received many gifts that were freely given. No one can ask for more.

This project began as a dissertation based on research conducted in England and India between 1975 and 1977. The project was funded in that incarnation by the Social Science Research Council, the Fulbright-Hays Program, and the Danforth Foundation. A subsequent year’s fieldwork in 1981–82 was supported by the American Institute of Indian Studies. The Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences at the California Institute of Technology provided me with time and resources for writing and delivering initial drafts as papers in a number of conferences. The staffs of the India Office Library, the Tamil Nadu Archives, the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library in Madras, and the Pudukkottai District Record Office all assisted me at various

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points in my research. The Universities of Madras and Madurai provided me with research affiliation, and the International Institute of Tamil Studies in Madras with Tamil language instruction.

Bernard Cohn not only advised me on my thesis but encouraged me at every stage of this study to pursue the special combination of history and anthropology that has made this book what it is. Ronald Inden encouraged me to extend my interest in modern Indian history as far back into history as epigraphical records would permit. The University of Chicago provided an ideal environment for graduate study. I was fortunate that while in Chicago I was free to study both history and anthropology, and was given the opportunity to meet and work with a number of people who have made the study of India an especially rewarding experience. In addition to my formal supervisors, Arjun Appadurai, Carol Breckenridge, Val Daniel, Mike Fisher, Jim Lindholm, Frank Presler, Kathy Rose, Lee Schlesinger, and Burton Stein all became friends and colleagues during this time. Burt Stein showed himself then, as he has continued to be since, an inspiration for those of us who study southern India, and as generous a teacher and colleague as any academic could hope to know. At Caltech Peter Fay and Robert Rosenstone worked hard to give me a secure academic base, and they and many others provided a true intellectual home. Milind Purohit wrote the graphics program I used to make the distribution maps. James Lee has been a valuable source of advice and encouragement. Linda Benjamin cheerfully typed and retyped many versions of the manuscript.

In Pudukkottai I was the guest of the royal family. The entire family did their best to make us feel at home and did all they could to facilitate my research. In particular, Rajkumari Rema Devi was a friend and support throughout my stay. P.M. Subramanian Iyer was but one of many people in Pudukkottai who gave unstintingly of their time and knowledge. I had a number of research assistants, but was aided far beyond the call of duty by Shyamala Venkataraman, Rama Raman, and P. Asai Thambi. Mrs Uma Iyer of Bombay and Professor Tirunavakkarasu of Madras were particularly helpful. And Ananda Wood was a constant support.

This book has been read in part and in whole by a great many people who deserve far more than the usual academic remark that they gave what is good and not what is bad. In particular I am grateful to Arjun Appadurai, Carol Breckenridge, Barney Cohn, Val Daniel, Peter Fay, Chris Fuller, Tony Good, Will Jones, Steve Lansing, Karen Leonard, David Ludden, Dennis McGilvray, Jerry McGann, Michael Moffatt,

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Preface

Robert Rosenstone, Lee Schlesinger, Ted Scudder, Burton Stein, Mary Terrall, and David Washbrook.

Leela Wood has not only been through every word in this book, she has lived every word as well. I dedicate the book to her and to Sandhya, who spent the first eight years of her life with a father preoccupied by mounting piles of paper on which she was told not to draw.

Glossary of terms

- āgama: texts prescribing proper forms of worship.
- agrahāram: Brahman settlement or hamlet.
- ajnāpti: executor of grants in Pallava inscriptions.
- Akampaṭṭiyār: caste group, third member along with Kallars and Maravars of the group of three families, or mukkulattar.
- alaṅkāram: adornment of deity.
- āl jīvitam: tax-free land given of sufficient amount to support one man (al) or family.
- Āḷvār: Tamil Vaisnavite saints.
- Amāni: share, often refers to a type of revenue collection calculated on the basis of shares of the harvest.
- Amarakārar: soldiers and retainers, each given a land grant sufficient to support their family, divided into those who served Cervaikarars and those who were attached directly to the king.
- Amaranāyaṅkāra: military/territorial chief under Vijayanagara.
- ampalam: local big man, usually headman of caste, subcaste, lineage, and/or village.
- ampaṭṭan: barber.
- Ampu Nāṭu: the royal subcaste, and the territory in which they lived.
- aṅṅan: elder brother.
- antastu: royal status/privilege/honor.
- apicēkam (Skt abhiṣēka): unction/bath/anointment.
- aracu añcu: the group of five lineages, including the royal lineage, that made up the elite corps of the royal subcaste.
- araiyar: chieftain or king.
- arājika: lack of royal authority.
- aśvamēdha: Vedic royal horse sacrifice, performed to confer kingship, to establish the area of dominion, and on occasion to declare universal sovereignty.
- atikāram: authority.
- aṭimai: serf, those low castes whose “rights” consisted of serving patron families.
- aṭṭavaṅnai: category of inam lands usually given for subsistence to chiefs or other great men.

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ayan: non-inam, lands that were fully assessed.

Āyudha (Ta. āyuta) pūjā: ninth day of Dasara, the day all weapons, and implements, are worshipped.

batta: military “wages.”

bhakti: devotional Hinduism.

bhandāravāṭa: crown land, term used in Vijayanagara inscriptions.

brahmadēya (brahmadēyam): royally instituted Brahman land grants.

Brihatampāl: tutelary goddess of the Tondaiman family.

cakti: the goddess, female power.

cāmaram: fly whisk, royal emblem.

camastāṇam: royal court, or kingdom.

cāmiyāṭi: one who is possessed by a deity.

campantam: marriage alliance.

camutāyam: sect, social group.

cantaṇam: sandalwood paste.

capā (Ta. Capai, Skt sabha): assembly.

carittiram: history.

cariyiruppu: rights to equal seating.

Carkar/Cirkar/Sarkar (Ta. Carkkar): the state, or Government.

carvamāṇiyam: tax-free lands given on extremely favorable terms to Brahmans.

cattiram: chatram, choultry; resting and/or feeding house for itinerant pilgrims, usually Brahmans.

cavari: chowry.

ceṅkōl: royal sceptre.

Cēra: one of three Cankam period Tamil dynasties, located in southwestern Tamil Nadu and parts of modern-day Kerala.

cēri: untouchable hamlet.

cērvai: diminutive form of Cervaikarar, referring to those Kallars who were settled with some lands throughout the state to keep watch on other groups and regions.

Cērvaikārar: The nobles of the Pudukkottai state, mostly affinal relatives of the royal family, all given large estates and numerous retainers (amarakarars) to serve and fight under them.

Ceṭṭiyār: a merchant caste, whose homeland was in the southern part of the Pudukkottai state.

Cētupati: the title of the line of Maravar kings who became known under the British as the Rajas of Ramnad (Ramanatapuram).

cēvakam: service.

cīmai: country.

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[More information](#)*Glossary of terms***cippanti ijāra:** inams granted on various kinds of military tenures.**Cōla (Cōṛa):** the great tenth to twelfth-century dynasty based in Tanjavur.**curōttiriyam (Skt śrōtriya):** lands granted to Brahmins.**curuṭṭi:** scroll with seal.**cuvēntiram:** share, as in share of village harvest.**dakṣiṇā:** ritual dues.**dāna:** gift.**Dasarā:** the festival otherwise known as Mahanavami, celebrated on the first nine nights and ten days of the month Asvina, first by the Vijayanaragar kings. Also known as Durgotsava, Navaratra, and Durgapuja.**desha cawel (Ta. tēcakkāval):** rights to protect the countryside.**dēvadāna (Ta. tēvatāna):** land grant for the support of temples.**dēvadāyam (Ta. tēvatāyam):** lands that have been granted for the support of temples.**dēvasthanam:** temple establishment.**dharmā:** the rightful order of things.**dharmadāyam:** lands granted for feeding houses, i.e. for charitable (dharma) purposes.**Diwan (dewan):** prime minister.**Diwan Peishkar:** first assistant to Diwan, usually in charge of the treasury.**eccil:** saliva.**Hāriyakārar:** ritual preceptor of the king.**hiranyagarbha:** one of mahadana rituals, depicting the birth from a golden embryo.**inām:** tax-free lands given by kings as benefices.**inam:** patrilineal relation.**ināmdār (Ta. ināmtār):** holder of inam.**inavarī:** that subdivision of amarakarars attached to Cervaikarars.**Iṭaiyar:** sheep herding caste.**jāgīr:** estate, domain.**Jāgirdār:** a Persian/Mughal term, meaning noble or chief, used in Pudukkottai to apply to the two most important collaterals of the royal family.

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jajmāni: a village system of customary payments, usually distributed at the time of harvest.

jīvitam: term meaning livelihood, used as a measure of land calculated to be sufficient to support a single family; often used in conjunction with term for person, al, as in *aljivitam*.

kālāñci: temple honors.

Kaḷḷar: The royal, and dominant, caste in Pudukkottai; they had a reputation as a warrior caste and were settled in parts of Madurai, Ramanataparam, Tanjavur, Tiruccirappalli, and Pudukkottai.

kalveṭṭu: stone inscription.

Kampaḷattār: a Telegu-speaking caste, settled mostly in eastern Tirunelveli district.

Kanāṭu: the land of forest, referring to an area of land in Pudukkottai for the most part south of the river Vellar.

kāṇi: heritable entitlement.

kāṇiyāṭci: the possession of kani, the right of heritable entitlement.

kāṇiyāṭcikkārar: holder of kaniyatci.

karai: lineage, usually used in context of ranking.

karaikārar: head of lineage.

kāriyakārar: representative or agent.

kāriyam: an action performed for/on behalf of someone else, usually a superior.

Karttakkāl: title, meaning lord, and agent, used by the Nayakas of Madurai.

kaṭṭalai: endowment to a temple.

kaṭṭuppāṭu: code for conduct.

kāval: protection.

kāvalkārar: local person/chief who is empowered with rights of protection such as patikkaval.

kāval teyvam: protection deity.

kiḷai: branch, often used for lineage, as for example among certain groups of Maravars.

kirāmam: village.

kirāma teyvam: village deity.

kirāmavari: that subdivision of amarakarars who were attached directly to the state, i.e. not to Cervaikarars.

kist: tax.

Kollaṅ: blacksmith.

kolu: assembly, court of the king, darbar.

Kōṅar: cow herding caste.

Kōnāṭu: the land of the king, referring to an area of land in Pudukkottai

Glossary of terms

for the most part north of the river Vellar.

koṭi: flag, banner.

kōvil: temple.

kṣatra: lordly power, such as that held and exercised by kings in the exercise of territorial rule.

kuḷi: land measure, variably equal from 144 to 576 square feet.

kumāra: son.

kumāravarkkam: the special group of “adopted sons” attached to the Nayaka of Madurai: the elite corps of southern palaiyakkarars.

kuṅkum: vermilion.

kuppam: territorial subdivision within royal subcaste.

Kuṛikārar: lesser Kallar chiefs, given lands but only rarely retainers.

Kuṛumpar: caste group, considered to be aboriginal inhabitants of Karnataka, located in Pudukkottai and other areas of the Tamil country.

kuṭi: place of residence, residents of a place.

kuṭimakkal: people of the village, the group of castes considered ideally to be necessary for the proper functioning of any village as a whole.

kuṭi umpaḷam: village service.

kūṭtam: assembly.

lāvaṇam: list, often used for units of land as they were listed in registers.

mahādāna: great gift, particular rituals that were performed by kings from the eighth century on, involving massive gifting by kings, usually to Brahmans. The two most important of these “mahadanans” were the tulapurusedana or tulabhara, and the hiranyagarbha.

Mahāmaṅṭalēśvara: great chief, often kinsman of the royal family, used in Deccan regimes from Satavahanas and Rastrakutas up through Vijayanagara period.

Mahānāvami: the festival otherwise known as Dasara, celebrated on the first nine nights and ten days of the month Asvina, roughly the period from mid-September to mid-October.

māmaṅ: maternal uncle.

māmaṅ-maccanaṅ: lineage with whom women are exchanged as marriage partners.

māmūl (mamool): tradition, custom.

māṇiyakārar: holders of maniyam right or land, root for the anglicized term monigar referring to local headman.

māṇiyam: honor, often referring specifically to a grant of tax-free land and other associated privileges; derives from Sanskrit term manya, which means honor and privilege.

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- maṅṭakappaṭi: right to celebrate one day of the festival.
 maṅṭakappaṭitār: holder of the mantakappati right.
 maṅṭalam: country, as in Colamantalam, the central core region of the Cola empire.
 māppiḷḷai: brother-in-law.
 Maravar: a caste group found in Ramanataputam, Tirunelveli, Madurai, and Pudukkottai; often grouped with Kallars because of their warrior reputation, and because the two castes, along with the Akampatiyars, together make up what is called the mukulattar, the group of three families.
 mariyātai: honor, often used for honors secured in temple worship.
 maṭam: monastery.
 Mēlakkārar: piper caste.
 mēlvāram: the top or first cut or share of the crop, usually allocated to the crown.
 mirāci: a general term originally signifying inheritance, from the late eighteenth century referring to rights of local landholding and, often, government service.
 mirācidār (Ta. mirācitār): holder of miraci right, local big man, sometimes used interchangeably for the local ampalam(s), sometimes used specifically to designate a revenue agent appointed by the state.
 Mukkulattār: the group of three families, or castes, specifically referring to Kallars, Maravars, and Akampatiyars.
 Mutaliyār: a high peasant-agricultural caste of the Tamil country.
 mūtātāyar: ancestor.
- nagara (Ta. nakaram): city.
 nagarattār (Ta. nakarattār): inhabitant of a city; specifically refers to merchants, and, in Pudukkottai, to Cettiyars.
 nāṭaḷvān: ruler of a natu.
 nāṭṭampalam: headman of a natu.
 Nattampaṭi Kavunṭār: agricultural caste living in the extreme western portion of Pudukkottai State.
 nāṭṭānmaikkārar: headman of a natu.
 nāṭṭār: lord or head of locality (natu).
 nāṭṭuppāṭal: folk ballad.
 nāṭṭu teyvam: subcaste/territory deity.
 nāṭu: locality, or peasant micro region, also meaning subcaste among Pudukkottai Kallars, as well as locality assembly (as for example is found in Cola inscriptions).
 Navarāttiri: festival of the nine nights, same as Dasara.
 Nāyaka: general term meaning lord, or general; adopted by the ruling

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“viceroys” of the Vijayanagara empire who constituted the principal foci of political power in late medieval south India.

Nāyaṅār: Tamil Saivite saints.

nazr: Persian term for occasional presents given by an inferior to a superior.

nivētaṅam (Skt naivedya): offerings to deity.

oṟunku: order.

ottācai: military service, more properly translated as help such as that rendered to a kinsman.

pālai: wilderness, one of the five landscapes of classical Tamil poetic convention.

pālaiyakkārar: little king, or chief, corrupted by the British into poligar and polegar.

pālaiyam: literally armed camps, the domains over which the palaiyakkārars ruled.

pālaiyappaṭṭu: the title or right to a palaiyam.

Paḷḷar: one of the two major untouchable castes in the Tamil country.

Pallava: sixth- to tenth-century dynasty based in Tontaimantalam, the northern Tamil country, with Kancipuram as the center.

paṇi: to perform service, be humble, submissive, to worship.

paṅkāḷi: shareholder: refers to someone who holds a share of land or of other rights; the term also refers to those who are members of (have shares of membership in) a lineage.

paṅku: share.

paṅṅaiyāḷ: agricultural laborers hired on a year to year basis.

Pāṅṅiya: name of dynasty that ruled out of Madurai, both in Cankam period and later during the centuries before, during, and after Cola hegemony.

pantuttuvam: affinal tie.

pantuvam: affinal relative.

Paraiyar: one of the two major untouchable castes in the Tamil country.

parakuṭi: from outside, non-local, often referring to agricultural laborers from outside the village.

paramparai: family, generation.

parivaṭṭam: a temple honor consisting of the tying of the deity’s vestment around the head of the worshipper.

paṭaiparu: military hamlet.

pāṭikkāval: protection over a place, usually a right conferred on a chief in return for certain shares of local produce.

paṭṭadār (Ta. paṭṭatār): landholder.

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paṭṭam: lease, deed, contract, receipt, land title.

paṭṭapeyar: lineage, used among Kallars, literally meaning the name of a title.

paṭṭāpicēkam (Skt paṭṭābhiṣēkam): coronation, installation of king's title.

paṭṭavan: ancestor deity.

pattayam: copper plate inscription.

paṭṭi: hamlet.

paṭṭu: right, title.

periyānāṭṭār: headman, lord, of periyānatu.

periyānāṭṭu: supra-local assemblies (collections of natu-s) characteristic of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in areas of Cola rule.

Periyapurāṇam: the twelfth-century Tamil Puranic epic that tells the stories of the sixty-three Saivite Nayanar bhakti saints.

peshkash: tribute, tax.

piratāṇi: minister, emissary.

pirutu/virutu (Skt birudha): emblem, title, honor.

piṭimāṇ: handful of soil.

poṅkal: sweet rice prepared as offering to deity on special festival occasions.

pracātam (Ta. piracātam, Skt prasāda): transvalued substance, the leavings of the deity, what is returned in puja.

praśaṣṭi: the prefatory panegyric found in many inscriptions.

puḷukkar: lower group of lineages, a term used by Maravars in Tirunelveli.

puṇyam: merit.

pūjā (Ta. pūcai): worship.

pūjāri (Ta. pūcāri): priest.

purāṇa: texts that post-date the Vedas and often consist of narratives of the exploits of gods and goddesses. The term applies both to a specific canon of texts and to a large body of texts that are modelled in some way or another on this canon.

purōhita (Ta. purōhitam): ritual preceptor.

pūti pattu: lower group of ten lineages in the royal kuppam.

rājadharmā: the royal duty of protecting and maintaining the rightful order of things.

rājapantu: royal relations.

rājasūya: Vedic royal sacrifice, performed to confer kingship on the sacrificer.

rājiyam: kingship.

Rāyar: Telegu form of raja, meaning king.

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rokkakuttikai: category of inam lands usually given to military persons.
ryotwari: the property settlement with individual cultivators that was first introduced in Madras Presidency.

Sardār (Ta. Cartār): Persian title for general that came to be used interchangeably with Cervaikarar.

Sirkele: Diwan, or prime minister; used in Pudukkottai until the late nineteenth century.

śrōtriya: learned, scholarly, referring to those Brahmans engaged in Vedic study and practice.

stānikar: temple manager.

taccan: carpenter.

tahsildar: local level revenue officer.

talaivar: head, headman.

taḷavāy: prime minister, or head official.

taluk: administrative subdivision of a district.

tampi: younger brother.

taricanam (Skt darśan): sight, vision.

teru: street, often used as a term for a subdivision of lineages.

Tēvar: title meaning godly, or godlike, often used by Maravars.

Tirukōkkarnam: the tutelary temple of the royal family, situated just to the northwest of Pudukkottai town.

tirupātam: the rite of worshipping the feet of the deity.

tiruppaṇi: the giving of gifts to and renovation of a temple.

tiruviṛā: festival.

ṭōpi: washerman (dhobi).

toṇil: service, particularly that of a menial description.

toṇilāḷi: village servants who perform menial tasks.

tulāpuruṣadāna: a mahadana, the gift to a Brahman of his weight in gold; same as tulabhara.

umpaḷam: tax-free land.

upacāram (Skt upacāra): rites of adoration to deity.

ūr: village.

ūraṇi: irrigational works.

uravumuṛai: affinal relations.

urimai: right.

urimai peṇ: the preferred female marriage partner.

Ūṇiyakārar: palace guards, all members of a special subcaste (named uriyakarar) of the akampatiyar caste.

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ūrīyam: service, particular kind of obligation to perform temple service in Pudukkottai.

vakuppu: class or group, and when used to modify Cervaikarar implied the small group of great chiefs who had vast numbers of retainers under them.

Valaiyar: caste group on the low end of the scale extensively settled in the more forested regions of Pudukkottai.

Vallampar: locally dominant caste settled in the southeastern part of Pudukkottai state.

vamcam: family.

vamcāvaḷi: family history.

vaṇam: forest.

varicai: order, group.

vaṛipparikkam: highway robbery.

Vaṭuka: northerner, usually referring to a Telegu.

Vēdavirtti: teaching the Veda.

Vellāḷar: the usually dominant peasant-agricultural caste of the Tamil country.

veṭṭiyan: town crier, servant of village headman, usually from “untouchable” castes.

Vijayadaśami: the tenth day of the Dasara festival.

vipūti (Skt vibhuti): sacred ash.

virtti (Skt vritti): service, livelihood.

virutu (also pirutu; Skt birudha): emblem or title.

vīṭṭucāmi: household deity.

viṭuti: village, settlement.

yajamāna (Ta. ecamāṇ): patron, originally patron of Vedic sacrifice.

zamīndār: landlord.

Note on transliteration scheme

Like dictionaries and grammars, transliteration schemes tend to systematize languages in ways that misrepresent actual linguistic practice. I find transliteration schemes for Tamil problematic for two reasons. First, Tamil pronunciation and spelling vary greatly, particularly in spoken dialects and in the colloquial forms employed in eighteenth-century records and texts. Second, anglicized and/or sanskritized forms of words are often used and more readily recognized than accurate Tamil transcriptions. For example, few readers would recognize the

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word *agraharam* behind the Tamil *akkirakaram*, or *brahmadeya* behind *piramatayam*. Thus I have altered spellings where I thought strict transcription would cause difficulties for the reader, sometimes substituting g for k, d for t, or b for p (often a standard procedure in any case because the use of these letters can indicate when consonants in Tamil are voiced), and other times dropping a vowel as when I use *pracatam* (more recognizable if one knows the Sanskrit form *prasada*) for *piracatam*. My transcription scheme uses a dash over the vowel to indicate its lengthened form, a dash under the consonant to indicate its alveolar form, and a dot under the consonant to indicate its retroflex form. My transliteration scheme is consistent with that used in the Madras University Tamil lexicon with the single exception of the retroflex r/l which I transliterate as ṛ instead of as ḷ in spite of the fact that I adhere to convention with terms such as Tamil (Tamir) and Cola (Cora) in order to facilitate general recognition. In the text I italicize and use diacritics for Indian terms only on their first occurrence; and I provide definitions for most terms both in the text and in the glossary. In the glossary I indicate whether terms are Tamil (Ta.) or Sanskrit (Skt) when I use both; the first entry is the form I use in the text itself. I do not use diacritics for proper and place names.

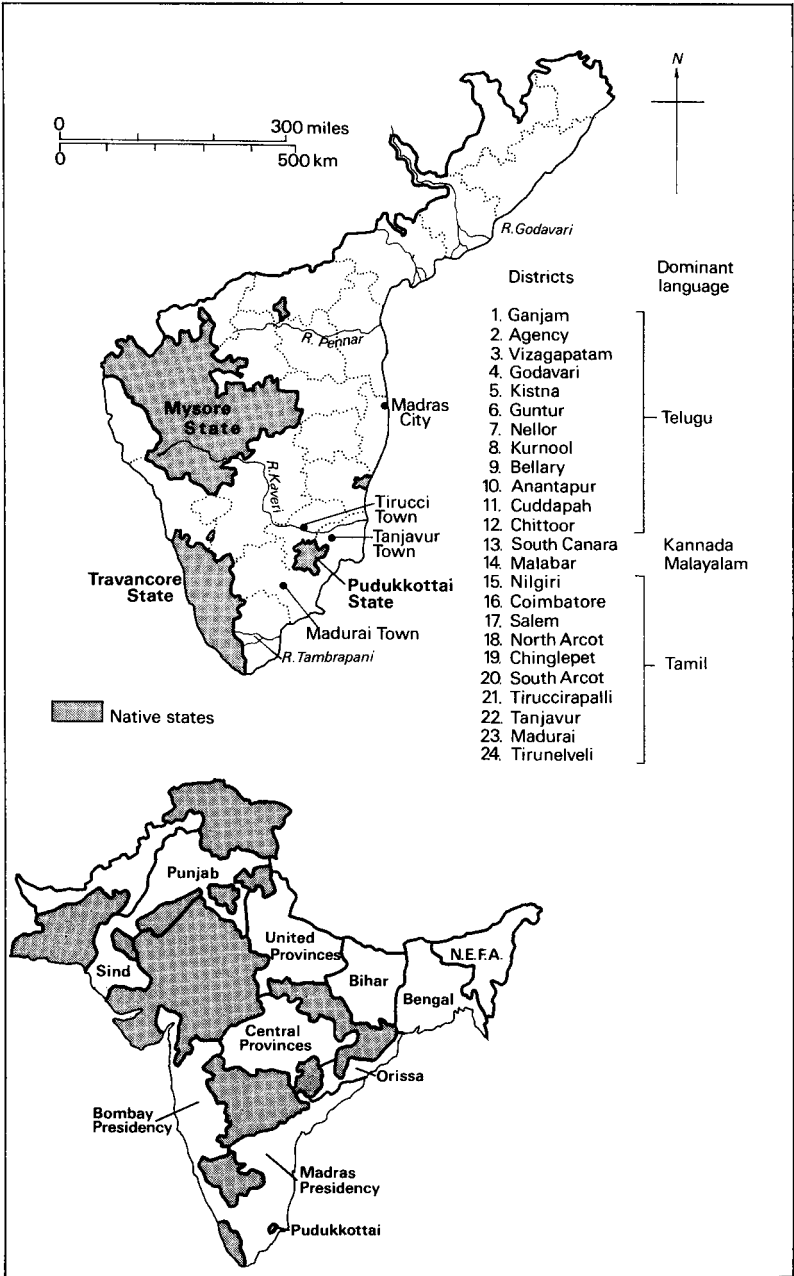
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Map 1 Madras Presidency, 1900

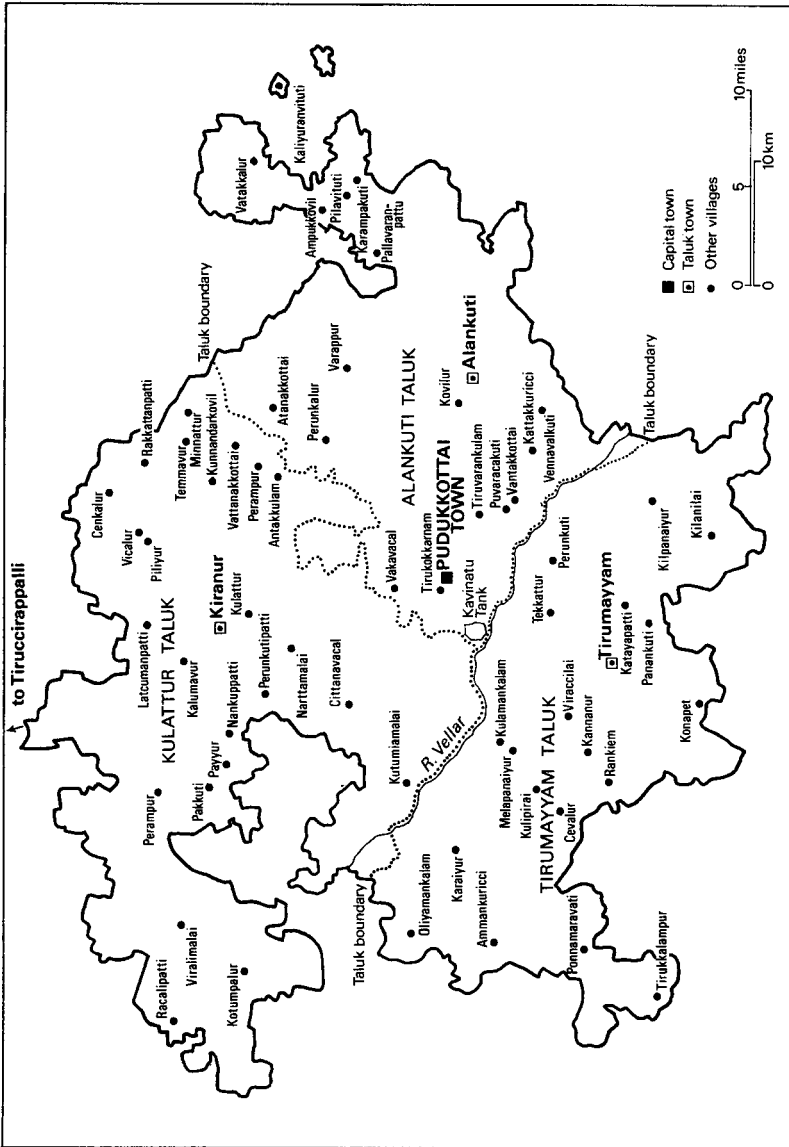
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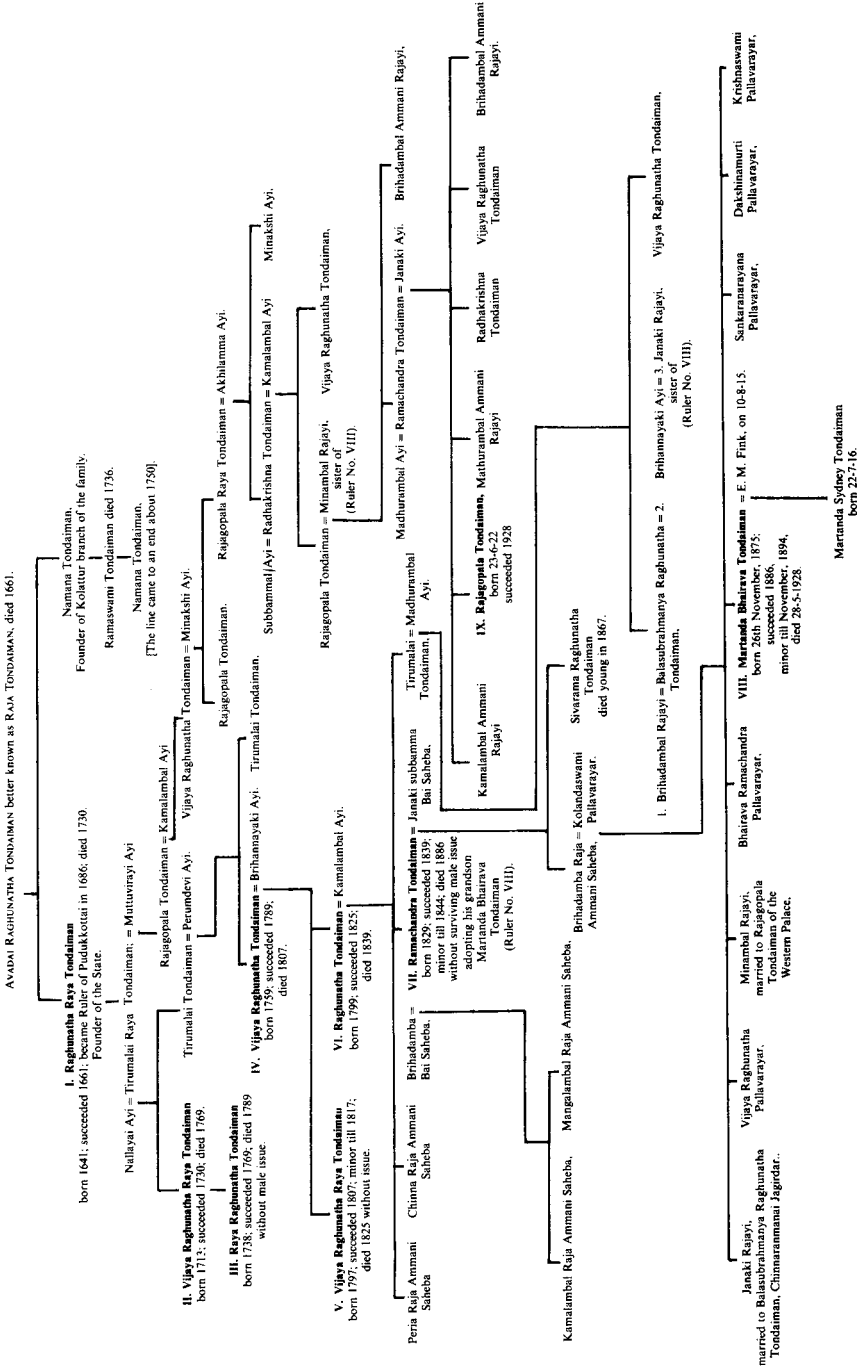
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Map 2 Pudukkottai State

THE TONDAMAN LINE OF PUDUKKOTTAI



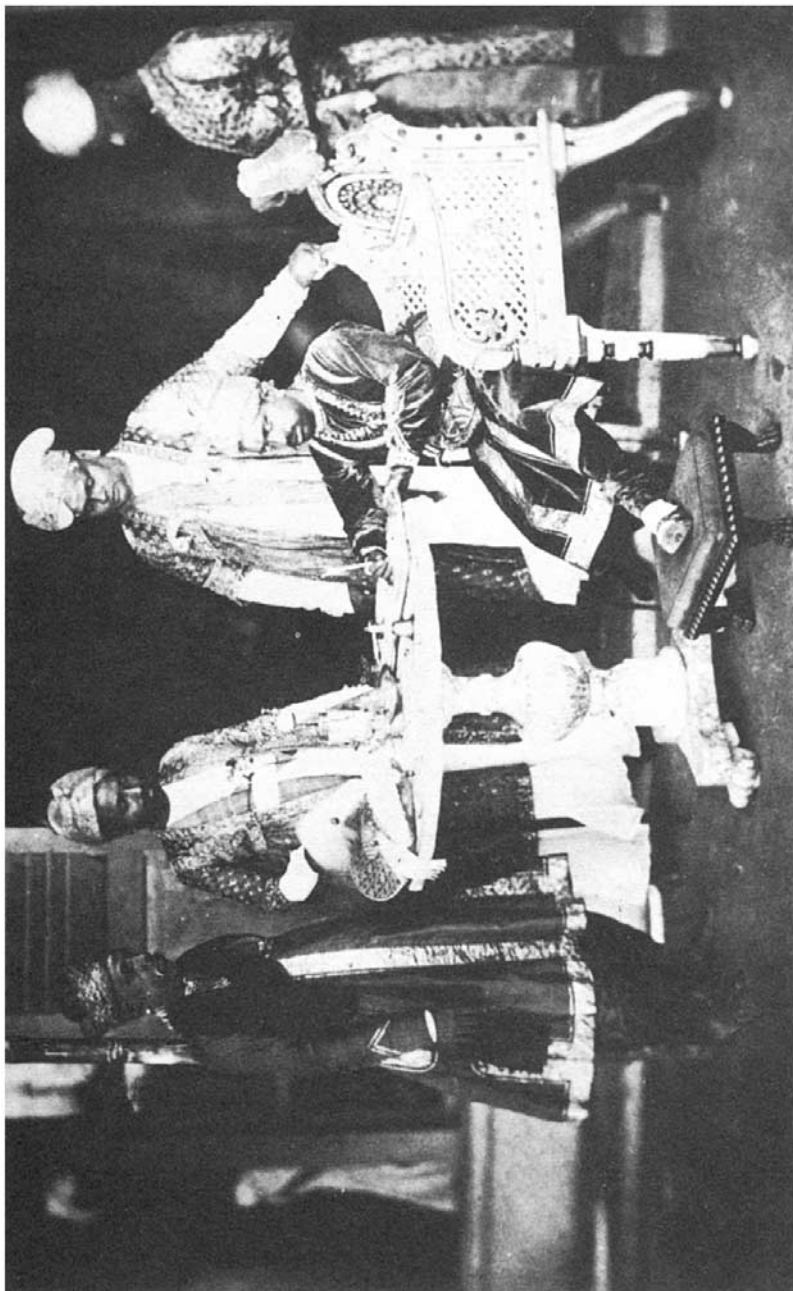
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