Conventions

The orthographic conventions followed in this work, with few exceptions, use for Tamil terms the transcriptions of the *Tamil Lexicon,* and for Sanskrit terms the transcriptions found in the Monier Williams *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. The terms are italicised, and plurals are indicated by the addition of the English *s*. I dispense with such italics when words are frequently used (such as Skt. pūjārī and devadāsī). Certain familiar Indian terms and names of pan-Indian gods (such as Śiva and Kālī) are generally given in their more familiar Sanskrit forms rather than in Tamil. Words that have become part of the English language (such as Brahmin) have been written without diacritical marks. This is also the case for names of languages (Tamil, Malayalam, Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit) and well-known geographical names like Tamilnadu, Kerala, and Chennai, or district names such as Chinglepet not known to me other than as usually found in secondary sources. For Tamil personal names, diacritic marks have usually been used. When secondary sources are cited, the author's usage has been retained; hence discrepancies may crop up. No names of places or individuals have been disguised. The English translations of all passages taken from non-English works cited in the bibliography are, unless specified otherwise, my own. Interviews held during the field research were in Tamil. Any brackets [ ] used within citations are mine, if not stated to the contrary.

Goa

Andhra Pradesh

Karnataka

Tamil Nadu

Kerala

Sri Lanka

Tiruvottiyur
Chennai
Vellore
Kanchipuram
Chingleput
Tindivanam
Tiruvannamalai
Pondicherry
Chidambaram
Kumbakonam
Srirangam
Karaikal
Tiruvarur
Trichy
Nagapattinam
Thanjavur
Dindigul
Madurai
Tirupparankunram
Chengannur
Tuticorin
Tirunelveli
Palayamkottai
Trivandrum
Padmanabhapuram
Tirucuchendur
Nagarcoil
Suchindram
Kanyakumari

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