POLLUTION THEORY AND HARIJAN STRATEGIES
AMONG SOUTH INDIAN TAMILS

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<u>ERRATA</u>

Page   Line*
(* - Headings, sub-headings, footnotes, Tables, Figures,
  etc., are included in line count)
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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers the concepts of purity and
pollution in a Tamil village context from a cosmological or
religious viewpoint. Thus it contrasts with the Dumontian
understanding which I argue is dominated by a 'secular'
point of view. This approach enables us to clarify the
ideological situation of the village Harijans (ex-
Untouchables) and to properly analyze their practices. This
ultimately contributes to the still inadequate studies of
Harijans.

The reconsideration of pollution from a cosmological
viewpoint, which leads us to focus on pollution associated
with life crises and the cults of local deities, elucidates
the essential (deep) dimension of pollution which I term
"pollution". That is, "pollution" indicates the creative
dimension of pollution which contains the logic of
sacrifice. In this sense, "pollution" should be clearly
distinguished from the shallow dimension of pollution,
defined as "impurity", which has an unambiguously negative
connotation as the opposite of "purity".

Through a comparison of the practices of the dominant
castes in the village (the Pillais and the Kallars) and
those of the Harijans (the Paraiyars), in terms of funeral
ceremonies, cults of lineage deities and the activities of
the local Milk Cooperative Society, it is revealed that the

dominant castes and the dominated Paraiyars primarily share a basic Tamil culture which holds "pollution" ideology as its fundamental value, even though the dominant castes manipulate the ideology of "purity-impurity" for their social domination. It is also argued that the practices of the Paraiyars can not be understood by a static and simplistic viewpoint, like that of consensus and disjunction theories, but that they should be interpreted as complex procedures which are strategies for seeking self-development. The findings of this thesis, therefore, are that between the dominant castes and the Harijans there is both cultural consensus based on "pollution" ideology and disjunction in terms of their interpretative and strategic manoeuvres.

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis is a monographic study of the ideological practices observed in a Tamil village, being especially concerned with the practices of the Harijans. This thesis is expected to contribute theoretically to two important themes of South Asian anthropology, that is, 1) Hindu pollution concepts and 2) the culture of the Harijans. A new understanding of the concept of pollution in the Tamil cultural context is provided as the fundamental basis on which the ideological practices of the Harijans are analysed. For this purpose, the research attitude is characterized by the "interpretative", "other-worldly", and "bottom-up" viewpoint. The ultimate aim of this thesis is to establish a fundamental viewpoint which is useful for abolishing 'untouchability' in practice, not just legally.

The above mentioned concerns have been gradually developed during the past ten years. My first encounter with Tamil society took place during fieldwork in 1980 and 1982 in the Jaffna Peninsula, Northern Sri Lanka. During my stay in Jaffna one of my most impressive experiences was that when a Vellalar (the dominant caste of Jaffna society) man told me about pollution, he did not make any distinction between pollution associated with life crises and pollution associated with caste, by using the same term *tuṭakku* (the most popular expression of pollution in Jaffna society).

This incident evoked my simple questions of how and why he could deal with these two different kinds of pollution together. I myself attempted to answer these questions in my 1983 article on birth and death ceremonies among the Jaffna Tamils [Sekine 1984]. The discussion on pollution among the Jaffna Tamils is reflected in Part Two of this thesis, even though in an indirect way. At that time, however, my attention to the lowest castes or 'the Untouchables' was not very strong. This is partly because Jaffna society does not draw as clear a line between the Caste Hindus and 'the Untouchables' as South Indian Tamil society does. Therefore, my conscious concerns with the Harijans' practices were only developed by fieldwork in the Madurai region, Tamil Nadu, which has been conducted intermittently from 1985 to 1989. Part Three of this thesis is penetrated mainly by these concerns.

Though it is impossible to list them all, I cannot avoid special mention of the late Mr. S. Balasubramanian who gave me all-out cooperation, with his gifted intelligence and affectionate manners. He was almost a joint researcher during my fieldwork. So this thesis is dedicated to the soul of my brilliant 'brother' who reached *mukti* (salvation) too early. I express my special thanks to Professor R. Venkataratnam, Head of the Department of Sociology of the Madurai Kamaraj University, whose generous support made it possible for me to carry out the fieldwork without any mishap. I also thank Dr. V. Sobhana Bai, a student of Prof. Venkataratnam, who helped me much during my stay in Madurai. I express my gratitude to the following members of the Department of Anthropology of Madras University: Professor N. Subba Reddy, Dr. U. C. Mohanty, Dr. V. Karuppaiyan, Dr. M. A. Kalam, Dr. V. Sudarsen, and Dr. A. Chellaperumal for their kind cooperation with my research work in Tamil Nadu. Dr. S. Subbiah of the Department of Geography, Madras University is acknowledged for his kind cooperation in my data-collection and especially for his friendship.

I owe a very great debt to Professor Lionel Caplan (SOAS, University of London) who supported me from the beginning to the compeletion of the development of this thesis as my supervisor, and I especially thank him for having given me various precise comments and useful advice. I also would like to record my appreciation to Professor

understanding. The completion of this thesis would have been impossible without her support. I should also note that my eldest son Yasuhito, who was three years old at that time, had to live in London while I was reading my postgraduate course at SOAS. My most longstanding debt of gratitude is to my parents, whose moral and at the same time financial support made possible the accomplishment of this project.

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LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The transcription used for Tamil words in this thesis is in principle a strict transliteration which is a system adopted by the *Tamil Lexicon* [University of Madras 1982: lxviii] with the exception that proper names for places, temples, kingdoms and persons follow the Anglicised version without diacritical marks, which indicates approximate pronunciation or customary usage. Caste names written with diacritical marks are found only in Tables 2.5 and 2.6. The

following Roman letters are used for the Tamil characters
[Tokunaga 1981: 1]:

<Vowels>

Short		Long	
a அ		ā ஆ	
i இ		ī ஈ (FF)	
u உ		ū ஊ	
e எ		ē ஏ	
o ஒ		ō ஓ	

ai ஐ   au ஔ

<Consonants>

	Guttural	Palatal	Retroflex	Alveolar	Dental	Labial
Stop	k க்	c ச்	ṭ ட்		t த்	p ப்
Nasal	ṅ ங்	ñ ஞ்	ṇ ண்	ṉ ன்	n ந்	m ம்
Lateral			ḷ ள்	l ல்		
Vibrant:flap				r ற்		
trill				ṟ ற்		
			ḻ ழ்			
Semi-vowel		y ய்				v வ்
Fricative	[h] ஃ	[j] ஜ்	[ṣ] ஷ்	[s] ஸ்		
	[kṣ] க்ஷ்					

In general, I transcribe Tamil orthography given to me
on the spot in Kinnimangalam. Otherwise I follow the
spelling found in the *Tamil Lexicon*.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and Overview of the Thesis

1.1.1 Aim and Structure of the Thesis

My primary and ultimate aim is to investigate the practices of the Harijans in a Tamil village so as to illuminate their real ideologies and the features of their behaviour. Through investigation, a more inclusive understanding of the Harijans' socio-cultural situation will be provided by going beyond both disjunction and consensus models. This project requires fundamental work in which the Hindu pollution concept as a key idea of Hindu society is re-examined. This is an unavoidable task for breaking the strong spell of the Dumontian understanding of Hindu societies, in which everything is encapsulated by an ideology of purity and impurity [Dumont 1980(1966)]. In order to do so, it is necessary to innovate in the research methodology. That is, we need to correct the defects of the research tendency biased to the "this worldly", "top-down" and "static (non-interpretative)" approach, which, as I argue, is typically found in Dumontian studies. Therefore, the task of overcoming such Dumontian limitations must be tackled by adopting the reverse approach to the Dumontian,

namely, the "other worldly[1]", "bottom-up" and "dynamic (interpretative)" approach. This approach naturally makes me pay special attention to rites of passage, sacrificial acts, basic Tamil culture (*vide infra*), and the Harijans' practices.

Thus, the main arguments of this thesis consist of two parts: a re-examination of the concepts of pollution in Part Two and an investigation of the ideologies (values) and practices (behaviour) of the Harijans in Part Three. In advance of these main arguments, a theoretical perspective is provided in section 1.2 of the Introduction, and the village setting is described as a background for the discussion.

1.1.2 Overview of the Thesis

Part Two aims at establishing my basic viewpoint for understanding Tamil society by focusing upon the concepts of pollution. Because, in order to acquire a proper understanding of Tamil society, one of the Hindu societies, it is an unavoidable task to re-examine systematically the

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[1]Though Dumont regards the value of purity and impurity as the 'religious' against the 'politico-economic' value, his usage of 'religious' is confined by his this worldly point of view, so that he fails to properly take into account sacrifice (see sections 1.2.1.1 (2) and (3)). It seems to me that the religious in a true sense must be the other worldly. This is my usage of the term "religious" here, which is different from Dumont's.

one-sided Dumontian view which regards the values of purity and impurity as the encompassing ideology.

Much criticism of Dumont's work [1980(1966)] has been voiced so far and various "alternative ideologies" [Ahmad 1973] such as the reciprocal (eg. [Das and Uberoi 1971]), the egalitarian (eg. [Parry 1974], [Holmstrom 1976]), the mutual (eg. [Raheja 1988]), the matriclan (eg. [McGilvray 1982]), the kingly (eg. [Dirks 1987], [Hoek 1979], [Burghart 1978]), and the transcendental (eg. [Heesterman 1981, 1985]) have been proposed. Though it is true that these critical works are invaluable and useful, they still do not succeed sufficiently in systematically illustrating the ideological configulation as a whole, in which both Dumontian "pure-impure" ideology and the "alternative ideology" are properly placed. In this respect, Malamoud [1981] ("revolving hierarchy") and Burghart [1978] (hierarchical models) are worthy of special mention as integrating works which investigate the dynamic relationships among several ideologies, such as the Brahmanic, the kingly and the transcendental. The merit of their works lies especially in their "dynamic and interpretative" approach. Nonetheless, their limitation is that they deal only with "top-down" ideologies working in the "this worldly" sphere, which can not adequately overcome the decisive shortcoming of Dumont, namely, that his viewpoint as an analyst and the dominant people's view are unwittingly overlapped in his theory. In

this sense, it is indispensable to adopt the "other worldly" and "bottom-up" viewpoint. For this purpose, the studies on so-called popular religion (popular culture), such as blood sacrifice, and *bhakti* (Tam. *pakti*) religiosity, are useful[2]. The point here is to throw light on the dimension of "the commonality of 'ordinary values'" [Caplan 1980: 235]. In sum, it is necessary for those who criticise Dumont to synthesize Burghart's "interpretative (dynamic)" approach, Shulman's concept of the "other worldly" and Caplan's "bottom-up" viewpoint of ordinary people's ideology.

In practice, pollution concepts in villagers' minds, which embody an 'ordinary ideology' and are not exhausted by a Dumontian understanding, require investigation from the "other worldly", "bottom-up" and "dynamic (interpretative)" viewpoint. This approach elucidates the depth of pollution concepts, which is not always consciously recognized by the villagers (see [Caplan 1980: 234])[3]. For example, the analyses of pollution associated with life crises reveal the

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[2]For example, [Caplan 1980, 1981], [Holmstrom 1971, 1976], [Parry 1974, 1980, 1982], [Fuller 1976], [Obeyesekere 1978, 1981], [Shulman 1980], [Beck 1981], and [Das 1983].

[3]This gap between what the villagers are aware of and analytical findings is very problematic. Good clearly deals with this problem in his criticism of ethnosociology [Good 1978: Ch.12]. His systematic critique, which is based on the tripartite model derived from Needham, i.e. the statistical-behavioural, the jural and the categorical, is as follows; "the ethnosociological approach rejects ... the comparative sociologist's dichotomy between 'we' (the students) and 'they' (the society under study)." [ibid.: 508] and "I take such categories to be data whereas for Marriott and Inden they are theory." [ibid.: 511].

deep level of connotation of pollution which is positive and creative[4]. I call this positive sense of pollution "pollution" in order to distinguish it from the unambiguously negative and exclusive sense of pollution, namely, "impurity" in my terms. The latter is doubtlessly the Dumontian conception of pollution, which, as the opposite of "purity", is used for justifying the caste hierarchy. These contrasting senses of pollution, namely, "pollution" and "impurity", reflect people's different attitudes toward pollution, that is, the *affirmative* manner or the *rejective* one. Since the former attitude leads to acceptance of other worldly power and its equal sharing; whereas the latter is connected to secular discrimination (segregation), it can be claimed that "pollution" ideology indicates "other-worldly (religious) egalitarian" values[5], while "(purity-)impurity" ideology implies "this-worldly (secular) hierarchical" values, namely, Dumontian hierarchical values. The villagers have both levels of connotation of pollution in their minds, because the cyclic

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[4]In this respect, Shulman's book "Tamil Temple Myths" seems to be a highly invaluable work because it beautifully elucidates the creative aspect of sacrificial death which is the essence of the basic Tamil culture. His work *per se* is a decisive criticism of Dumont.

[5]The "other worldly (religious) egalitarian" value is based on the most fundamental fact that death comes to everyone regardless of caste difference, which is described by Tamil villagers as the equality of *Yamatarmarājan*, the God of the world of the dead. This value is completely different from the "this worldly (secular) egalitarian" value which implies modern Westerners' sense of equality exemplified by Dumont's *homo aequalis*.

movement between dimension of "pollution" and that of "impurity" reflects their basic necessity of both aspects of "creation" and "conservation" in their everyday lives.

In the light of the ideological depth formulated by the distinction between "pollution" and "impurity", Part Three focuses on the ideological practices of the village Harijans (the Paraiyars, here). This doubtlessly contributes to the investigation of the "bottom-up" view, which is necessary to acquire an adequate understanding of Hindu society, as Parry, for example, points out [Parry 1974: 115]. Serious ethnographic studies focusing on the Harijans have already been published, such as [Cohn 1954, 1955, 1958], [Miller 1966, 1967], [Kolenda 1960, 1964], [Sachchidananda 1977], [Moffatt 1975, 1979], [Freeman 1979, 1986], [Vincentnathan 1987], [Deliege 1988], [Khare 1984], [Houska 1981], [Searle-Chatterjee 1979, 1981]. These studies mostly concentrate upon the Harijan's community itself and have contributed to our deeper understanding of Hindu society, but the problem lies in the assumption, perhaps made unwittingly, that the Harijans' community can be dealt with as if it is a separate world. In this respect, it should be made clear that the methodology I adopt is different from theirs. I try to deal with the ideological practices of the Harijans as part of the entire village dynamic (see [Deliege 1992]). It is necessary to place the Harijans' practices in the wider social context beyond their

own community, in order to acquire a proper understanding of their behaviour. I believe that this is the complementary approach by which the merit of the above-mentioned works focusing exclusively upon the Harijans can be more developed and their shortcomings can be compensated for.

The comparison between the Paraiyars and the dominant castes, such as the Pillais (the Vellalars) and the Kallars, is approached in Part Three. Through the analyses of the Paraiyars' practices, like funeral ceremonies (Ch.7), lineage festivals (Ch.8), and the problems of the local Milk Cooperative Society (Ch.9), their strategic behaviour for seeking self-development, which is based on "pollution" ideology, will be elucidated. To summarize:

(1) Both the dominant castes (the Pillais and the Kallars) and the Paraiyars primarily share basic Tamil culture whose key value is "pollution". It is noted that "pollution" is a positive and affirmative value that attaches importance to "productive power". On this shared cultural foundation, the hierarchical value of "pure-impure" ideology is superimposed and is manipulated by the dominant castes for their effective domination, according to their respective socio-cultural conditions. The Pillais, the ritually highest caste, are more faithful to the "pure-impure" ideology than are the Kallars, who are ritually low but are dominant socio-economically. Though the ideology is used as a means for domination by the Kallars, it is

difficult to say that it is their fundamental ideology. Therefore, the Paraiyars and the Kallars are similar culturally, though the politico-economic gap between them is decisively large.

(2) Other ideological systems, like the "pure-impure" and "class" ideologies tend to be translated by the Paraiyars into their fundamental value of "pollution". The Paraiyars' practices which appear to replicate the "pure-impure" ideology[6] do not necessarily indicate their belief in "pure-impure" ideology. Rather, their reasons for observing the ideology should be explained by the logic of "productivity" which is the key feature of "pollution" ideology. This is because today's Paraiyars consciously refute or deny the ritual hierarchy defined by the principle of "purity-impurity" [Freeman 1979: 378-385], and the existing social hierarchy tends to be explained in economic terms, as an economic differential (namely, the gap between the rich and the poor [Vincentnathan 1987: 452-453]). Though this directly means that the ritual hierarchy is interpreted as a class hierarchy by the Paraiyars, it should not be overlooked that "class" ideology is again accepted by them through the mentality fostered by "pollution" ideology. Both "class" and "pollution" ideologies commonly hold the value

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[6]Such replicatory practices are, for example, the Paraiyars' conservative attitude towards their caste boundaries (see [Mayer 1980: 398]) and their observance of the principle of "pure-impure" on religious occasions.

of "productivity", even though the former is this-worldly whereas the latter is other-worldly. Thus, it can be concluded that the Paraiyars' denial, disregard or replication etc. of the dominant values (passing, positive transactions, defiance, escape, avoidance in Vincentnathan's terms) can be regarded as part of their strategies for seeking self-development, which are primarily organized on the basis of "pollution" ideology.

(3) Although there is no doubt that the Paraiyars' strategies are formed under the influence of two aspects of their social relationships, namely, the vertical relationship with the dominant castes and the horizontal relationship within their own community, it is true that the latter aspect occupies much of their attention in their everyday life, as is exemplified in the problems of the local Milk Cooperative Society. A unit of competition has been dismembered from a collective group to a household or an individual and, in order to achieve self-interest, such individualistic Paraiyars rather manipulate conventional group boundaries, like the lineage, caste or village. They may also sometimes form a faction-like group based on support determined beyond the boundaries of caste and village. Three types of leadership, the "traditional", the "mediating" and the "independent", can be logically and in

practice extracted from the Paraiyars' practices[7]. The
"mediating" type of leader, who to some extent plays the
role of a new type of patron backed by government
reservation schemes, is influential in today's village
situation, and typically shows a strategic attitude for
self-aggrandizement. Such rather short-sighted struggles for
seeking self-interest wittingly or unwittingly encourage the
penetration of "class" ideology within the Paraiyar
community. It can not be denied that such struggles work
rather negatively for again placing the Paraiyars in the
lowest position of the "class" hierarchy, but I believe that
the gap between their rather harsh reality and their
unsatisfied expectations may finally become an innovating
force for their breaking through such an ironical trap.

The findings of this thesis have to be placed within
the theoretical perspective of studies of Harijans. In
conclusion, my findings do not fully support either the
consensus model or the disjunction model, and rather suggest
that it is not appropriate for an understanding of the
Harijans' situation to simply argue whether there is
cultural consensus between the Harijans and the upper castes
or not. The essential point of my theoretical contribution

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[7]These types of leadership are to some extent analysed
through Vincentnathan's theory on self-esteem management in
the context of intracaste relationships [Vincentnathan 1987:
Ch.V]. The result is found in the Conclusion (Ch.10).

to the study of the Harijans is that between the dominant castes and the Harijans there is both cultural *consensus* based on "pollution" ideology and *disjunction* in terms of their interpretative and strategic manoeuvres.

(1) We have to take into account the depth of the local culture which is exemplified by the distinction between "pollution" and "impurity". As a result, it is argued that "pollution" ideology as the deeper dimension is basically shared among all castes, high and low, in their practical lives. At least in Kinnimangalam, the "pure-impure" ideology is present but is not the primary shared value. It is claimed that there is cultural consensus between the dominant castes and the Harijans, but cultural consensus in my sense does not lie in the "pure-impure" ideology but in "pollution" ideology. Thus, I agree with Moffatt's claim of cultural unity, but disagree with his assertion that consensus is realized through the Harijans' replication of the upper castes' culture professing ritual hierarchical values. As many writers point out, Moffatt's shortcoming is caused by his non-interpretative viewpoint in which the gap between what the Harijans do, like "replication", and what they actually believe, like "consensus", is blurred (see [Deliege 1992]).

(2) I propose the necessity and the merit of using an interpretative approach for a study of Harijans, as opposed to a non-interpretative and static one. As mentioned above,

the interpretative viewpoint highlights that the level of external behaviour should be distinguished from that of internal belief. This approach thus invites a dynamic notion of 'strategy', which provides a bridge between external behaviour and internal belief and enables the perceptions and behaviour of the Harijans, which appear to be diversified and contradictory, to be understood as their strategic manoeuvring for self-development. This interpretative and strategic point of view further suggests that the people of a particular social group are not always confined to manipulating a particular ideology, but can manipulate several ideologies according to their strategic schemes. This contradicts the disjunction theorists' claim that the Harijans live exclusively within their own subculture. They rather naively posit a one-to-one correspondence between a particular ideology (subculture) and a particular social group. Though there is certainly an ideological difference between the Brahmanical and non-Brahmanical cultures, this distinction of ideological level does not imply that the Harijans possess only a separate subculture. Rather, I understand that the difference between the caste Hindus and the Harijans is found in their strategic behavioural level which reflects their respective socio-historical conditions. Compared with the Caste Hindus, the Harijans' strategies are much more limited and complex due to their depressed social situation. If it is taken into consideration that the Harijans have been long deprived of a

free choice of cultural activities, we can not regard such a historically distorted way of life as their independent subculture. In this sense, though I support the disjunction theorists in terms of their assertion that the Harijans are conscious interpreters rather than incompetent subordinates, as Freeman [1986] argues, I criticize their preoccupied insistence on viewing the Harijans as a separate subcultural group, which rather misleadingly works to justify and reinforce the socially imposed distinction between the Caste Hindus and the Harijans.

Thus, I will argue that the Harijans' culture is doubtlessly part of the village culture, which is characterised by "pollution" ideology, even though their behaviour differs from that of the upper castes due to their depressed social situation.

1.2 Theoretical Perspectives

1.2.1 Review of Theories of Pollution

1.2.1.1 The limitations of society-oriented studies

(1) Functionalist approach

Today, it can doubtlessly be claimed that we cannot avoid a discussion on concepts of pollution in terms of the understanding of caste society. Bouglé was one of the

earliest writers who asserted that the decisive principle of
the caste hierarchy is purity-impurity [Bouglé 1971(1908):
29-40]. Among modern social anthopologists who began to work
in South Asia, Srinivas made clear the folk knowledge of
ritual purity (*madi*) and ritual impurity (*polé*) in his
ethnography on the Coorgs of South India [Srinivas
1978(1952): 102-123]. He reports that the normal ritual
status, called *mailigé*, is opposed to both *madi* and *polé*, as
the sacred states. On the basis of these folk concepts, on
the one hand, he notes that "the concepts of ritual purity
and impurity systematize and maintain the structural
distance between different castes" [ibid.: 103]. On the
other hand, he emphasizes that "these concepts also occur in
certain non-structural contexts" like "praying or
sacrificing to an ancestor or deity" [ibid.: 104]. It is
notable that Srinivas distinguishes ritual state in non-
structural (religious) context from that in structural
(social hierarchical) context and makes clear the subjective
viewpoint of the Untouchables in which they consider
themselves as being "as subject to the various ritual states
as any one else" [ibid.: 110]. This is applicable to the
situation of the Harijans in Kinnimangalam (see Ch.5).
Srinivas' distinction between the structural and non-
structural contexts contrasts with Dumont's connection
between them in his ethnography [1986(1957)][8]. I support

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[8]Dumont notes, "The passage from occasional individual
impurity to permanent group impurity is exemplified here, as

Srinivas' distinction rather than Dumont's connection, as is clarified later.

Stevenson [1954] is the earliest work in which a generalized argument on pollution in Hindu culture is attempted. He firstly differentiates secular status from ritual status. The latter is then divided into group ritual status and personal ritual status. Further, he classifies several binary concepts of pollution, like permanent/temporary, voluntary/involuntary, and external/internal[9]. He tries to clarify status evaluation, namely, the relationship between pollution and ritual status, by formulating "the Hindu Pollution Concept"[10]

Harper [1964] formulates tripartite concepts, as does Srinivas, but the point Harper makes is in a sense represented by his concept of "respect-pollution" (a sort of

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Hocart has stated, by the washerman ..., or the barber ..." [Dumont 1986(1957): 463].

[9]Orenstein [1968] deals with "a grammar of defilement in Hindu Sacred Law", in which he classifies pollution types into 'relational pollution' based on kinship relations and 'act pollution' caused by contact with biological phenomena. He further classifies 'act pollution' into 'internal pollution' and 'external pollution', but these are not same as Stevenson's concepts.

[10]"The Hindu Pollution Concept" is a particular corpus of beliefs concerning purity and pollution, by which ritual status, both group and personal, is defined. The following, for example, are included in "the Hindu Pollution Concept": to commit the taking of life, to deal with a corpse, to treat human excretions, to slaughter a cow and eat its meat or deal with its skin, to take an alcholic drink, remarriage of a widow and so on. These polluting actions cause a decline in ritual status.

expression of respect in which impurity of the higher status
being is absorbed by the lower status being with the purest
condition), which is exemplified by a wife toward her
husband, a Brahman priest toward a deity etc. [Harper 1964:
181-183]. The concept "respect pollution" reflects, or is
deeply connected with, his notion that these tripartite
concepts penetrate into every domain, such as the individual
state, the social structure and the pantheon. This clearly
explains his deep concern with hierarchical status. In this
sense, Harper and Dumont share the same concern. Dumont
elucidates the vertical distinction between the pure
(vegetarian) god and the impure (meat-eating) god from the
Pramalai Kallars' religious practices [Dumont 1986(1957)],
and the principle of purity and impurity is extended to the
divine world by Harper.

As is suggested by the contrast between Srinivas and
Dumont, I prefer Srinivas' natural attitude toward purity
and impurity to Harper's or Dumont's. Harper's and Dumont's
views are biased by their attaching too much importance to
the hierarchical aspect of the principle of pure/impure. I
disagree with their views for two reasons. Firstly, Fuller's
statement, "the gods themselves cannot be polluted" [Fuller
1979: 459] contradicts Harper's extention of the pure/impure
principle to the divine world. Secondly, my investigation of
village deities (Ch. 4) and lineage deities (Ch. 8) does not
support the idea of a divine hierarchy. The problem

basically lies in their one-sided attitude that makes them
pay attention to hierarchy but ignore the fact that
viewpoints differ according to caste status. Therefore, the
dominant Brahmanic view, which posits ritual caste
hierarchy, unwittingly dominates their research viewpoint.
This tendency furthermore results in their contradictory
claims in the following sense. It is a contradiction that
they extend such a 'secular' notion of caste hierarchy,
implying social discontinuity, to the 'sacred' divine world,
whose nature is transcendental and continuous (*vide infra*,
see [Bataille 1976]). Their work can thus be regarded as
society-oriented, even though they deal with religious or
ritual matters. Let's examine Dumont's work further.

(2) Dumont's work and its critiques

In his outstanding and polemical work "Homo
Hierarchicus" [1966], Dumont clearly asserts that caste
society can be principally understood by the hierarchical
'ideology' (*vide infra*) of purity and impurity, though it
seems that he already had presented such a basic motif in
his early ethnographic work on Pramalai Kallars [Dumont
1986(1957)]. As already mentioned, the pure-impure dichotomy

for an understanding of Hindu society is not new[11], but the
decisive difference between Dumont and the functionalists
mentioned in the previous section lies in the fact that
Dumont presented the pure-impure principle as an 'ideology'
of Hindu hierarchical society. His work can be regarded as
pioneering, in that it connects the studies of caste society
with the general field of discussions on ideology, even
though he did not intend to use 'ideology' in the post-
structuralist's sense [Dumont 1980: xxvi] (see section
1.2.1.2). Rather he wittingly attempted as a
structuralist[12], or a French intellectualist, to elucidate
the central value which penetrates caste society, and which
defines the "structure" as a system of opposition of that
society. He presents his cultural consensus model, in
contrast to the model of the so-called disjunction
theorists, like Redfield, Srinivas and the early Marriott

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[11]It is said that Dumont's theory has two strong
foundations, Bouglé and Hocart. Dumont developed the theory
of Bouglé especially in terms of the concept of pure-impure
[Kolenda 1978: 38], though the connection between the pure-
impure ideology and the dualism of the varṇa system
(Brahman/Kshatriya) is Dumont's contribution [Kolenda 1976].
Dumont doubtlessly learnt a lot from Hocart's work [Hocart
1970: xvi]. For example, Dumont cites Hocart's idea for
supporting his argument of the passage from occasional
individual impurity to permanent group impurity [Dumont
1986: 463].

[12]In this connection, Burghart's evaluation of Dumont
is this. He notes that "Dumont's approach has often been
characterized as 'structuralist'. ... Dumont appears to be
more a Weberian sociologist than a Levi-Straussian
structuralist" [Burghart 1985: 6]. He suggests a contrast
between Levi-Stauss' universalist structuralist approach and
Dumont's culturally specific structuralist approach.

[Marriott 1955], who posit a disjunction between the little tradition and the great tradition within a single civilization [Keyes and Daniel 1983: 8][13]. This central value is called 'ideology' by Dumont.

Though Dumont's intention at that time (1960s) is understandable, there is no doubt that his theory has several limitations, as many critics[14] point out. Dumont himself organizes the criticisms of "Homo Hierarchicus", by comparing them to the four branches of a tree: "condemnation for betrayal of empirical data; condemnation for an approach focussing on ideas and representations (and for French intellectualism); condemnation for the inclusion of ancient texts in the study of contemporary society; and finally and most important, condemnation for the distinction proposed in *H.H.*, and in fact central to it, between status and power ..." [Dumont 1980: xvii-xviii]. The former three condemnations are related to the methodological problem of *H.H.*, which is pointed out from the viewpoint of the empiricists, on the basis of which the last condemnation of his primary claim is proposed. That is to say, Dumont's distinction between status and power and his theoretical

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[13]More broadly speaking, Dumont intends to refute the empiricism of Anglo-American anthropologists [David 1977: 239]. This is clearly stated in his Preface to the 1980 edition [Dumont 1980: xviii-xx].

[14]There have already been two review symposiums on Dumont's contributions, namely, [Madan et al. 1971] in "Contributions to Indian Sociology" and [Richards and Nicholas et al. 1976] in "The Journal of Asian Studies".

device of encompassing-encompassed become the main target of

his critics' attacks. It is questioned whether this

distinction is empirically valid or not (for instance,

[Leach 1971], [Tambiah 1972], and [Marriott 1976]). Burghart

also states, "Dumont has deprived politico-economic power of

its former religious status" [Burghart 1978: 520]. That is,

Dumont has been criticised for his theory of status/power

distinction being derived from modern Western dualism.

Marriott's monism (see [Marriott 1976(1973)], and [Marriott

and Inden 1977]) challenges Dumont's dualism but it does not

seem to be successful[15]. Moreover, Dumont's emphasis of

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[15]Marriott's theory is called the transactional,
ethnosociological, monist, or substance-codes theory, which
was originally inspired by Schneider's concepts of natural
identity and code for conduct [Schneider 1968]. According to
Marriott's notion, the theory tries to explain the "superior
value" ruling caste system by transactions of 'substance' in
order to overcome Dumont's dualistic thought. Marriott
notes, "Transactors and transactions are oriented ultimately
neither toward "purity" nor toward "power" as usually
understood in social science, but toward a unitary Indian
concept of superior value--power understood as vital energy,
substance-code of subtle, homogeneous quality, and high,
consistent transactional status or rank." [Marriott 1976:
137]. Transactional theory also invites much criticism. The
criticism of Barnett, Fruzzetti and Oster [1976] is
convincing and they point out the partiality of the monist
theory and conclude, "The exchanges and sharings of
substances defining genera and creating rank ... add little
to our understanding of what Indian society is all about."
[ibid.: 632-634]. (see also [Marglin 1977: 268]) Another
problem is that Marriott's theory is texual and
"reductionistic" [McGilvray 1982: 88], which seems to be
derived from the Sāṁkhya guṇa theory [Glucklich 1984: 38].
While some field research (eg. [Davis 1976: 9-21]) supports
Marriott, other (eg. [McGilvray 1982: 91]) does not.
Moreover, Good's critique of ethnosociology is fundamental
and important. He points out the insensitivity of
ethnosociologists to the distiction between 'data' and
'theory' [Good 1978: 511], which makes it impossible to
introduce an interpretative viewpoint. The defect remains

ritual hierarchy of 'status' as the encompassing ideology over 'non-ideological power' (in Dumont's terms) has caused heated responses of disagreement. Roughly speaking, we can distinguish three lines of argument, namely, 1) the emphasis of kingly ideology ('power'), 2) the emphasis of transcendental value based on a ritual sacrifice, and 3) the emphasis of egalitarian value.

The first argument is that kingly ideology (politico-economic power) as another hierarchical value is not always encompassed by Brahmanic ideology (e.g. [Dirks 1987], [Hoek 1979]). Several critics use this line of argument. For example, Marglin and Raheja attach importance to kingly ideology through their re-evaluation of concepts of auspiciousness/ inauspiciousness ([Marglin 1985] and [Raheja 1988]). In the present context, important works are Malamoud [1981] and Burghart [1978] because both theories take into account an interpretative (dynamic) and therefore multi-dimensional viewpoint. Malamoud introduces the concept of "revolving hierarchy" for going beyond Dumont's theory [Malamoud 1981: 41]. Using this concept, he explains that both Brahman and king can claim superiority over each other [ibid.: 49]. Burghart beautifully illustrates the inter-relationships among three different axes of hierarchy which are embodied by the Brahman, the ascetic and the king

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unchanged in the recent integrating work of Marriott and his students (Special Issue: Toward an Ethnosociology of India [Marriott et al. 1989]).

respectively [Burghart 1978]. Of value is the fact that he pays attention to the internal viewpoint of each domain.

Burghart's argument already covers the second line of argument in which the values of asceticism become fundamental. This standpoint is typically represented by Heesterman [1981, 1985]. Though Dumont also focuses on renunciation [Dumont 1980: Appendix B (1959)], it is suggested by Heesterman that Dumont's view overlaps with that of a Brahman householder. Heesterman properly clarifies, with its inner viewpoint, the transcendental sphere of the institution of renunciation which is embodied by internalized sacrifice [Heesterman 1981: 252,269], and asserts that "the preeminence of Brahmin is not based on his priesthood, but on his being the exponent of the values of renunciation" [Heesterman 1985(1964): 44] (see also [Van der Veer 1988: 193]). This difference between Dumont and Heesterman makes it clear that Dumont's theory consistently has a this worldly or society-oriented tendency and, at the same time, that sacrifice must be focused upon in order to acquire an other worldly (transcendental) viewpoint[16]. In this connection, Das' work [1976, 1977, 1983] which concerns sacrificial acts is important, and I will discuss it later.

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[16]Burghart [1983] more consciously analyses renunciation from the ascetic's point of view and clarifies the partiality of the Brahman householder's construction of asceticism.

The third line of argument consists of two streams. One, eg. [Das and Uberoi 1971] and [Parry 1979], underlines the significance of egalitarian values in contrast to Dumont's emphasis on hierachy[17]. Another stream is more radical and fundamental. This stream refutes Dumont's assertion that the whole of society is encapsulated by a hierarchical top-down ideology and claims rather that an independent bottom-up view can be found. This stream was founded by exploitation theorists like Mencher, and stratification theorists like Berreman. It has been developed by broader concerns which mainly consist of studies of popular culture ([Caplan 1980, 1981, 1985], [Singer 1966], [Holmstrom 1971, 1976], [Obeyesekere 1977, 1981], [Fuller 1976] etc.), and studies of the Harijans (see the next section 1.2.2). In this respect, Parry [1974] is seen as a pioneer in emphasising the significance of studies of various religious movements, such as conversion, sectarianism and *bhakti*, which are deeply connected with the standpoint of the socially repressed people (see also [Deliege 1992: 168-169]). In this context, McGilvray [1974]

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[17]While Das and Uberoi pay attention to an egalitarian mutuality or reciprocity which is observed in the removal of pollution among the lower castes, Parry extracts an egalitarian ideology of "brotherhood" through his extended ethnography, which not only is found within the intra-caste relationship but also spills over into inter-caste relationships. Raheja's concept of "mutuality" also falls into this stream [Raheja 1988]. Parry criticizes Dumont by comparing Dumont's theory to Polanyi's substantivist view, which is thought of as the reverse projection of modern Western thought [Parry 1974; 105-107].

seems to be important and suggestive, for he proposes matri-
clan ideology as the dominant social value from his
fieldwork in Eastern Sri Lanka. Namely, he provides an
actual example of 'ordinary values' [Caplan 1980: 235],
which are different from theological values. In other words,
McGilvray suggests that there is an indigenous cultural
tendency which is shared among all the villagers, regardless
of caste, and which can not be fully reduced to the
Brahmanic culture. In short, we can learn of cultural depth
from his work.

These criticisms of Dumont suggest the following three
related points, which we should take up more seriously. (1)
The first and second lines of argument imply that an
ideology should not be seen as objectively and unambiguously
defined but should be understood as "interpretation" from
each subject's viewpoint like the king's, Brahman's or
ascetic's. This "interpretative" point of view is the
fundamental basis on which the following two points are
based. (2) The second line especially suggests that it is
crucial for refuting Dumontian this worldly (society-
oriented) understanding to investigate the inner view of
other worldly liminal situations which are for example
represented by a world renouncer because this means the move
from this worldly veiwpoint to the "other worldly" one. (3)
The second stream of the third line of argument strongly
suggests that proper understanding of popular culture and

the investigation of socially repressed people's inner view is required in order to revise Dumontian one-sided top-down view. This attitude can be called the bottom-up approach. In sum, it is necessary to adopt the "interpretative", "other worldly" and "bottom-up" viewpoints in order to overcome Dumontian limitations.

The "interpretative" viewpoint is further discussed as the post-structuralists' sense of ideological approach in the next section. The "other worldly" point of view is considered by reviewing liminality theories in section 1.2.1.3. Then, the "bottom-up" viewpoint is more seriously dealt with in a review of the studies of 'Untouchables' (section 1.2.2).

1.2.1.2 The ideological approach

The necessity of the "interpretative" viewpoint requires leaving Dumont's non-interpretative usage of ideology for the neo-Marxist sense of ideology. For this, it is necessary to clarify the difference between the two.

Let's start from a famous passage of *The German Ideology*; "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force." [Marx and Engels 1970: 64]. This passage at least suggests 'a theory of incorporation', even though there is disagreement as to whether it is actually

claimed, and the neo-Marxists, like Althusser and Habermas, more clearly tend to emphasize the ideological incorporation of the working class [Abercrombie et al. 1980: 7-9][18]. In this sense, we can find a kind of similarity between such modern Marxists and Dumont in terms of the emphasis of superstructure and of incorporation. Nonetheless, there is a decisive difference between their research concerns and approaches. Dumont aims at clarifing the static "structured structure" in Bourdieu's term [Bourdieu 1979], whereas the neo-Marxists are concerned with the dynamic mechanism of how "the dominant ideology does incorporate the subordinate classes" [Abercrombie et al. 1980: 29], rather than merely with social morphology. Dumont's sense of ideology is naturally very different from the modern Marxist sense of ideology. This difference is well described by Turton as follows: "The concept of the ideological is used to refer not to fixed or systematic meanings, but to the moment of formation of consciousness in practical activity: in work, social and cultural reproduction, and in struggle" [Turton 1984: 19]. This view coincides with Therborn's statements that "We see ideologies not as possessions or texts but as

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[18]The standpoint of Abercrombie et al. is not the same as that of the Althusserians. Thompson comments, "The authors of *The Dominant Ideology Thesis* may have been right to criticise Althusserian Marxist theorists of ideology, and the Parsonian functionalist theorists of common culture, for over-stressing the incorporation of people into a community of shared values as a prerequisite for the reproduction of the relations of production or the maintenance of social order in late capitalism." [Thompson 1986: 48]

ongoing social process" [Therborn 1980: 77] and, moreover,
that "Ideologies differ, compete, and clash not only in what
they say about the world we inhibit, but also in telling us
who we are, in the kind of subject they interpellate"
[ibid.: 78]. Though Dumontian ideology is thought of as a
fixed text type, I adopt Therborn's or Turton's view of
ideology in the present thesis. It is noted that the latter
sense of ideological viewpoint is doubtlessly found in
Bourdieu's notion of "practice" [Bourdieu 1977] (see [Good
1987: 80]). This thus suggests that my adoption of this
viewpoint must invite a conception of "strategy" or
"strategic process" for my argument. This claim can be
supported by Dirks' statement, "History - viewed more as
process than as chronology - is fundamental to this concern
with practice" [Dirks 1987: 12][19].

This methodological standpoint is necessary not only
for reviewing pollution theories here but also for the
studies of the 'Untouchables'. Though wandering from the
present context, I briefly touch on the latter aspect for
the later argument (section 1.2.2). The notion of
ideological practices or of discursive practices in the

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[19]In this sense, going beyond Dumont is symbolic
because this shift can be linked with the more general
argument on the change of paradigm from the science of
"reversibility" (timeless) to the science of
"irreversibility" (time) [Prigogine and Stengers 1984].
Foucault's view, in which a concept of discourse as a
historical phenomenon is adopted and the notion of a pre-
existing system is refuted [Fowler 1987(1973): 64-65], can
be placed in the same theoretical stream.

above-mentioned sense is indispensable for understanding
real features of social dynamism in the village concerned
(cf. [Bourdieu 1979(1977)], [Cohen 1974: 80-82]). The
Harijans' practices, which are special concerns here, should
be investigated from such an ideological point of view. That
is, the "subject" formation of the Harijans, which is the
result of the interpellation of various ideologies, is the
topic of concern. It is necessary that we not only
reconstuct what kind of ideology (as the tendency
characterizing their interpretation) can be extracted from
their practices, but that we also must clarify how they in
practice "interpret" their own practices in a given socio-
historical context. Their own "interpretation" reveals the
real implications of their dynamic attitudes like
replication, independence and resistance, through which
their socio-cultural situation is, on the one hand,
reproduced and is, on the other hand, innovated. This
dynamic and interpretative approach is indispensable when we
try to overcome the problems associated with the controversy
between the consensus and the disjunction theorists, in
terms of the Harijans' culture (see section 1.2.2). Let's
return to the review of pollution theory.

1.2.1.3 Reconsideration of liminality theories

(1) The shift from the this worldly to the other worldly

It was suggested that the field of discussion must be shifted from the this worldly social domain to the other worldly religious domain. This does not simply mean the change of the object of discussion, but the important point is the change of point of view from the this worldly to the other worldly. The shift can be described as that from the value of *dharma* to the value of *mokṣa*, in the South Asian context. The necessity of the shift is supported by Glucklich, who is conscious of the gap between *dharma* and *karma*, as follows; "*Mokṣa* was a later addition to the *trivarga* of *dharma, artha,* and *kāma* of Vedic thought and according to many writers, it never did fit the *pravṛtti* ('transactional') tradition" [Glucklich 1984:28]. In his article [ibid.], he clearly points out that the Hindu ideas of pollution are not exhausted by the understanding derived from the transactional domain, or the domain of "tansferable *karma*", but require more extended understanding based on the dimension of *mokṣa* as "non-transferable *karma*". He rightly suggests that "the full implications of Das' observations have yet to be developed" [ibid.: 27]. This statement is a good introduction to our reconsideration of liminality theories of pollution, which enable us to overcome the limitations of the society-oriented (this worldly) studies.

(2) Liminality theories

The point is whether the so-called liminality theories actually embody the inner viewpoint of the other worldly

domain (*moksa*) or not. It is, therefore, necessary to
carefully examine each theory in terms of this point. In the
course of the examination, what the inner view of the
liminal domain is, and how sacrifice is understood, are also
made clear.

Liminality theories have been developed on the basis
of Van Gennep's inspiring classic [1960(1909)]. They
include, for instance, the time theory (or the
sacred/profane theory) [1961] and the taboo theory
[1972(1964)] of Leach, and the "communitas" theory [1969] of
Turner. In connection with the present topic of pollution,
Douglas [1966] is important. She proposed the notion of
anomaly or liminality[20] as a key concept for understandding
pollution (impurity). Das [1976], who deals with Hindu
culture, explains that she is a descendant of Van Gennep,
and in her work she takes a critical attitude to Dumont. Das
herself notes that her work owes much to Durkheim's concept
of "sacred", and to Van Gennep's concept of "marginality" or
"liminality". Firstly Leach's taboo theory is critically re-
examined and the significance of Bataille's theory of
religion is emphasized. Then, Douglas' and Das' studies and
other related works are reviewed.

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[20]Douglas explains that anomaly is not synonymous with
ambiguity but that there is little advantage in
distinguishing between these two terms [Douglas 1966: 37].
Furthermore, ambiguity, marginality and liminality are
interchangeable, as is suggested by the fact that she cites
Van Gennep in her important arguments.

(3) Leach's taboo theory and its critiques

named 'things'

tabooed parts of the
environment 'non-things'
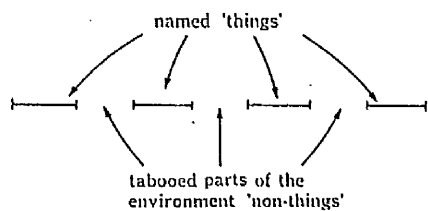
The relationship of tabooed objects to the world of names
[LEACH 1972 (1964): 48, Figure 3]

p   ~p

tabooed overlap
'both p and ~p'
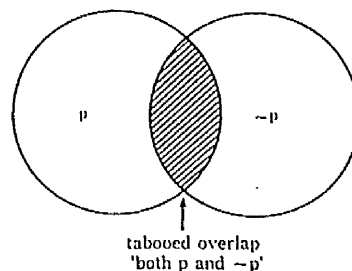
The relationship between ambiguity and taboo [LEACH
1972 (1964): 48, Figure 4]

The essence of Leach's taboo theory is summarised by
Figures 3 and 4 in his work [Leach 1972(1964): 48].
According to Leach, "We are taught that the world consists
of 'things' distinguished by names; therefore we have to
train our perception to recognize a discontinuous
environment. ... Language gives us the names to distinguish
the things; taboo inhibits the recognition of those parts of
the continuum which separate the things (Figure 3)"
[1972(1964): 47]. Leach's theory readily invites the
following criticisms. The first problem is one of logical
contradictions, which is found in Leach's identification of
Figure 3 with Figure 4. I am puzzled how Figure 3 can be
replaced by Figure 4, because 'tabooed parts' in Figure 3
are obviously outside of "named things" but 'tabooed part'
in Figure 4 overlaps into a particular verbal category p
(see [Halverson 1976: 510], [Platenkamp 1979: 177]).
Secondly, Leach's explanation of Figure 3 which attaches an
importance to named 'things' is criticised as follows; "the

complex interaction between the development of logical-operational structures and linguistic structures does not justify the exclusive function that Leach attributes to verbal categories *per se* in perception" [Platenkamp 1979: 174] (see also [Halverson 1976: 507-8]).

This is related with the more fundamental condemnation that Leach's theory is static (non-interpretative), this-worldly and top-down. As Platenkamp also points out, though Leach insists on the connection between anomaly on the structural categorical level and taboo on the empirical level, he fails to explain systematically how such a connection is actually possible. According to Halverson, this shortcoming causes Leach's sense of taboo to carry various definitions, like "respected, prohibited, held in awe, considered 'sacred ... unmentionable' [37-8] etc." [Halverson 1976: 513]. In this sense, Leach's theory is indifferent to dynamic processes such as who interprets it and how such an interpretation is possible. As a result, his generalized theory, which is produced by the reductionist approach lacking a contextual and interpretative viewpoint, is unwittingly fused with the ruling ideology[21].

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[21]The following aphorism of Eagleton is valid for this problem. "Such 'pure' literary theory is an academic myth: some of the theories we have examined in this book are nowhere more clearly ideological than in their attempt to ignore history and politics altogether." [Eagleton 1983; 195]

This top-down and non-interpretative viewpoint, which is deeply connected with his language-centred understanding of taboo, never pays attention to the inner view of the liminal tabooed area and confines his theory to the this worldly domain. This limitation is clearly found in his understanding of the other world and of sacrifice. As long as our view is confined to the this worldly view in which the world consists of discontinuous categories like named things, we cannot reach the religious domain in a true sense. If we entered into the inside of the religious domain, we would experience it as a 'continuity'. This exactly coincides with what Bataille points out in his *Theory of Religion* [Bataille 1976(1948)], as is explained subsequently. From this religious point of view, the shortcoming of Leach's theory is found in his this worldly notion in which the other world is defined just as a reversed domain of this world [Leach 1976: 81-82]. It seems that Leach's 'the Other World', where immortal and omnipotent gods reside, is an artificially imagined space, because he thinks that this-worldly men can communicate through rituals with the other world and draw gods' powers (graces) in order to enhance their everyday happiness. The other world in Leach's sense is seen as a rather controllable one and is therefore "the focus of ritual activity" [ibid.: 82], which is far from the untamed zone evoking fear of death. Thus, Leach's understanding of the

other world is thought of as strongly reflecting his "this worldly" point of view.

(4) Bataille's theory of religion

According to Leach, sacrifice is 'purposefully' dealt with as a topic of "communication between Man and Deity" or "changing the social status of individuals" [Leach 1976: Ch. 18]. However, religion in its nature must be free from usefulness, as Bataille deliberately argues [Bataille 1976]. Bataille notes, "Le principe du sacifice est la destruction, ... C'est la chose--seulement la chose--que le sacrifice veut détruire dans la victime. Le sacrifice détruit les liens de subordination réels d'un objet, il arrache la victime au monde de l'utilité et la rend à celui du caprice inintelligible. (It is the thing--only the thing--that sacrifice wants to destroy in the victim. Sacrifice destroys the real relation of subordination of an object, namely, it pulls apart the victim from a world of utility and returns it to that of caprice which is not intelligible." [ibid.: 307]. According to Bataille, a world where a victim is returned is the place of "l'ordre intime (the intimate order)", which requires denial of "l'ordre réel (the real order)" [ibid.: 308], where it is realized that "qu'il n'y a pas de différence entre elle (la mort) et la vie (there is no difference between death and life)" [ibid.: 308]. More precisely, he explains about the difference between "l'ordre intime" and "l'ordre réel": "L'ordre réel rejette moins la

négation de la réalité qu'est la mort que l'affirmation dela
vie intime, immanente, dont la violence sans mesure est pour
la stabilité des choses un danger, et qui n'est pleinement
révélé que dans la mort. (The real order rejects the
affirmation of the intimate and immanent life, in which
unmeasured violence is dangerous for the stability of things
and which is perfectly revealed by death, rather than the
negation of the reality represented by death.)" [ibid.:
309].

These statements of Bataille make clear that Leach's
notion of sacrifice remains within the domain of usefulness
("l'ordre réel") and is, therefore, confined within a this-
worldly view. In other words, Leach's this-worldly theory of
liminality produces or reinforces the discontinuity between
the central and the marginal because of its outer point of
view toward the liminal domain. To the contrary, if one
moved into the liminal area and acquired its inner
viewpoint, one would experience a continuous world where
liminality is shared by everybody, namely, liminality
disappears, as Bataille proposes.

Thus, we have learnt that liminality can be
interpreted from two different viewpoints, namely, the this
worldly ("the real order") and the other worldly ("the
intimate order") or the outer view and the inner view of the
liminal domain. The this worldly view results in the

repression of liminality whereas the other worldly view
leads to the acceptance of liminality.

(5) Douglas' theory

In Douglas' theory, anomaly is connected with
pollution, by which taboo in Leach's theory is replaced. The
essence of Douglas' theory is to some extent represented by
her statements; "dirt ... was a by-product of the creation
of order" [Douglas 1966: 160] and "dirt is essentially
disorder. ... it exists in the eye of the beholder." [ibid.:
2]. Although there is no doubt that a linkage between
pollution and anomaly (as disorder or danger) is her major
contribution, it creates problems as well. The principal
problem is said to lie in the simplistic and rather
psychological connection between pollution and anomaly. In
other words, she proposes a sort of generalized theory in
which different kinds of taboo situations are not
distinguished [Ardener 1967: 139], [de Heusch 1971: 10-12].
As many writers (for instance, [Hershman 1974: 293], [Bulmer
1967: 21], [Meigs 1978: 310], [Bradford 1983: 320-321],
[Uberoi 1967: 90] and [Platenkamp 1979]) have already noted,
Douglas' theory fails to explain clearly how anomaly can be
linked with pollution, because it lacks an "extensive body
of ethnography" [Bulmer 1967], or a "social historical

context" [Uberoi 1967][22]. In this sense, at least in terms
of her 1966 theory, it perpetuates the shortcoming of
uprooted "generalization", which is shared with Leach,
though she revised her original theory in her later essay
[1975 (1972)], in which Leach is clearly criticised by her
[ibid.: 288].

It seems to me that it is unjust and partial to
evaluate Douglas' work only from the above-mentioned
viewpoint. For Douglas' intensive study focusing on
pollution goes beyond Leach and succeeds in showing a
complexity and an abundance of pollution concepts. The merit
is derived basically from her materials supporting her
argument, which are collected from a broad range of
religions, from primitive religions to world religions. On
the basis of these materials, she re-evaluates Lévy-Bruhl,
who distinguished primitive thought from that of modern
westerners. She also criticizes the conventional tendency of
avoiding serious discussion on the primitive/modern
distinction, which is seen as "the product of secret
convictions of superiority" [Douglas 1966: Ch.5], and in
which ample connotation of pollution in nature is
misguidedly reduced to rational understanding of pollution,
namely, secular defilement [ibid.: Ch.2] or "social
pollution" as "a matter of aesthetics, hygiene or etiquette"

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[22]Douglas herself later accepts such criticism and
recognizes that anomaly is not always regarded as pollution
or taboo [Douglas 1975: 287-288].

[ibid.: 73]. Douglas seriously tries to dig into primitive
thought as represented by "cosmic pollution" (a religious
matter of a deviation from the cosmic order) [ibid.: 73].
Ultimately, she thus proposes the following universal dictum
as the definition of pollution: "uncleanness is matter out
of place" [ibid.: 40]. Only after this deliberated
understanding of pollution, both the clear-cut distinction
(discontinuity) between sacred and secular and that between
primitive and modern are meaningless [ibid.: 40].

Her investigation of primitive religion naturally
leads to her broad interests in pollution, ranging from its
social control to its ritual treatment, or from the negative
(supressive) response to the affirmative response [ibid.:
39-40]. This broad interest in pollution, including her
concern with the ambiguous or creative power of pollution
(see [ibid.: Ch.10]) prevents her theory from being a Leach
type of rigorous society-oriented study. Douglas'
understanding of pollution, which is crystallized especially
in Chapter 10 of her book, is insightful and stimulating,
going beyond the above-mentioned shortcoming. It is unjust
that her dictum of "matter out of place" is over emphasized.
Rather than this, we should pay attention to her statement
that "The moral of all this is that the facts of existence
are a chaotic jumble." [ibid.: 163]. This fundamental
recognition is crucial. Her remarkable contribution to the
theory of pollution lies in her proper understanding of

William James, and on this basis, her adoption of a two-dimensional framework of dirt-affirming and dirt-rejecting philosophies [ibid.: 164]. This distinction between two types of philosophies can correspond with Bataille's concepts of "the intimate order" and "the real order". Douglas notes, "Thus we have to reckon with two tendencies in Lele religion: one ready to tear away even the veils imposed by the necessities of thought and to look at reality direct; the other a denial of necessity, a denial of the place of pain and even of death in reality." [ibid.: 171] The former dimension, which is realized by the mysteries of the pangolin [ibid.: 169-170], is related to "the intimate order"; while the latter is related to "the real order". Moreover, Das' theory, to be explained subsequently, is supported by Douglas' clear statement that "When someone embraces freely the symbols of death, or death itself, then it is consistent with everything that we have seen so far, that a great release of power for good should be expected to follow." [ibid.: 178] Thus, the other worldly viewpoint, or the inner viewpoint of the liminal domain, is acquired by Douglas, and her theory is judged as a firm foundation for my later argument.

(6) Das' theory: liminality of death

Das' work [1976] which deals with liminality in the broad sociological perspective has the feature of her argument being constructed consistently on the basis of a

particular ethnographic context of Hindu society [Das 1976: 249].

On the conceptual bases of Durkheim's original sense of "sacred" and Van Gennep's "marginality" [Das 1976: 246-248], Das rejects Dumont's emphasis of the pure/impure dichotomy, and replaces it with the religious (transcendental) concept of the "sacred", namely, a cosmic order as a source of axiomatically legitimizing social institutions [ibid.: 247]. Das defines pollution as the liminal (marginal) situations in which "an individual experiences his social world as separated from the cosmic" [ibid.: 248] and which have a threatening nature. Religion provides the means by which liminalities are positively overcome. Das states the important dictum that "the paradigm of liminality *par excellence* is death" [ibid.: 252]. The essential meaning of 'ritual' for her is to "convert death (birth) from an accidental, contingent event capable of questioning the entire social order to a part of a design of a cosmic order" [ibid.: 256]. A sacrifice or a death ritual (cremation) is, therefore, the most typical 'ritual' in this sense (see also [Kaushik 1976]).

It is made clear that Das' argument can also be regarded as one of the attempts taking into consideration the dimension of "the intimate order", especially in the Hindu social context. However, I feel that Douglas' expression, "a great release of power through embracing

death", is more suitable than Das' expression of "the restoration of cosmos through a sacrificial rite". Das' contribution, mentioned above, is basically due to her special attention to the sacrificial aspect of death[23], which can not be reduced to the this worldly principal of pure-impure. This is the point which Gluklich wants to make when he recommends Das' argument, as previously mentioned. In sum, Das' discussion makes clear that Hindu ideology holds the transcendental value of the "sacred" which is reproduced according to the logic of sacrifice, or the logic of death and the regeneration of life. This naturally explains Das' standpoint from which she criticises Dumont's identification of life process pollution with caste pollution.

(7) Metaphor of death

In order to expand the point that Douglas and Das made clear, it is useful to take up Meigs' work on pollution, which challenges Douglas' theory on the basis of her monographic data from the Hua people of the New Guinea

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[23]Das' later work entitled "Language of sacrifice" [1983] examines Vedic sacrifice in the light of the same concern.

Highlands [Meigs 1978]. Here I focus only on the merits of her work and ignore its shortcomings[24].

Meigs also questions a point, which is repeatedly pointed out as a critique of Douglas' theory by many writers: "how can Douglas account for the fact that most anomalous, disordered phenomena are not polluting? Consider, for example, in that same context of the dining room table not shoes but a toy ship, or stationery, or a roll of paper towels, or a new dress. Each of these is as out of place as the shoes. Yet we do not feel them to be dirty or polluting. 'Messy' is the appropriate term" [Meigs 1978: 310]. Meigs asks what makes the difference between pollution and a mess. In response, she defines pollution as: "(1) substances which are perceived as decaying, carriers of such substances and symbols of them; (2) in those contexts in which the substances, their carriers, or symbols are threatening to gain access to the body; (3) where that access is not desired" [ibid.: 313]. In this definition, "the perception of decaying" is seen as the first key notion. This notion is based on the Hua view that "Anything that is polluting is a form of *nu* (vital essence)" [ibid.: 307]. "*Nu* is viewed as

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[24]It seems to me that Meigs' work is problematic as an independent study. For Meigs challenges Douglas' theory but fails to overcome its shortcomings because Meigs does not leave her non-interpretative (functionalist) viewpoint. This limitation is clearly found in her humble statement that: "at best pollution could only be a particular kind of marginality or ambivalence, a subclass of the larger class of ambivalent things" [Meigs 1978: 317, n.9].

the source of life, vitality, sexuality, youth. Its loss or
contamination may result in loss of health, ageing, or
death" [ibid.: 306]. Meigs illustrates that *aune*, which is
defined as the animating substance of matter, is *nu* in its
positive, health-enhancing aspect; whereas *siro na* is *nu* in
its negative, health-reducing aspect [ibid.: 308]. She
reports that menstrual blood and parturitional fluids are
the most dangerous and polluting but are, at the same time,
regarded as "the means *par excellence* of *aune* transfer"
[ibid.: 309].

Thus, Meigs shows that the perception of decay or of
losing *nu*, is recognized as pollution, and pollution is,
therefore, evoked by the liminal situation of dying.
Moreover, as is suggested by *aune* typically being embodied
by menstrual blood, pollution, namely, the perception of
death, is the moment of the regeneration of life. Through
these arguments an important point is raised. That is,
pollution is not death itself but perception of death
(dying). Meigs regards as the sources of pollution,
"substances which are perceived as decaying, carriers of
such substances and symbols of them". It is suggested here
that the "metaphor of death" evokes pollution. Though Meigs
does not use this expression, she insists that the
"perception of being drawn into death" is the point that
distinguishes pollution from messiness. Thus, we find the
following equation: liminality (matter out of place) plus

"metaphor of death" (the intrusion of other-worldliness)
equals pollution. Meigs fails to formulate this point well,
although she touches on it in her description. I can
formulate it more generally as follows: pollution is defined
when its carrier meets not only 'a sufficient condition' of
"matter out of place" but also 'a necessary condition' of
the "metaphor of death" or evokation of other-worldliness
(see fn. 26).

(8) Pollution and context

The above-mentioned equation vividly[25] suggests that
pollution must be defined in each individual context because
"metaphor of death" is not an absolute or objective feeling
but a subjective perception which reflects different
internal and external conditions.

In order to clarify this point, let us take up the
topic of "foreigness" described by Khare [1962-63].
According to his work, which deals with an Indian society,
people often see manners or things having a "foreign" origin
as being ritually polluting in the phase of social change.
Khare gives several examples. The Western manner of sitting

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[25]Though only the theory of "matter out of place"
logically leads to a contexual consideration, since the
situation can be described objectively as well, it is also
possible to blur the distinction between the subjective
viewpoint and the objective one. However, if we clearly took
into account a "metaphor of death", the necessity of a
subjective account would be inserted unavoidably into the
theory of pollution.

on chairs and placing food on a table is thought of as
polluting by old people. Tomatoes and carrots were treated
as non-vegetarian (ritually polluting) foods due to their
"foreign" origin. Here we have to notice the fact that the
pollution of the first example was strongly recognized by
the old generation and by people of the higher castes who
were conservative and against European contact, and was not
recognized by other people. Similarly, concerning the second
example, tomatoes and carrots are usual vegetables for
today's Indians who never say that these things are
polluting. Even in those days it was not a matter of concern
for non-vegetarians. Therefore, we can learn from these
examples that it is indispensable to take into account the
contextual settings in the definition of the concept of
pollution. That is, when, where, and how pollution is felt
and who feels pollution should not be missed. This logically
leads to the possibility that everything could become a
polluting thing depending upon the context in which it is
placed, if it met the 'necessary and sufficient
conditions'[26] of pollution in the context.

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[26]A relationship between $a=0$ and $ab=0$ is described
like this: $a=0$ is 'a necessary condition' of $ab=0$, and $ab=0$
is 'a sufficient condition' of $a=0$, because, if $a=0$, $ab=0$ is
always formed, but if $ab=0$, $a=0$ is not always concluded.
This means that $a=0$ is a stronger condition than $ab=0$.
Therefore, if we replaced $a=0$ by "pollution of carrot" and
$ab=0$ by "matter out of place", we could logically understand
the relationship between both conditions and the necessity
of both conditions for defining pollution adequately.

1.2.1.4 Toward theories of pollution: the distinction
between "pollution" and "impurity"

The discussion so far can be summed up as follows:

(1) The complete definition of pollution requires not
only the generalized cognition of liminality (anomaly),
which is expressed as "matter out of place" or "disorder",
but also the "perception of being drawn into death" or the
"metaphor of death". In short, pollution is thought of as
the "metaphorical perception of liminality of death". In
this sense, pollution is not an innate attribute of a
carrier, but an interpretation of a particular subject in a
particular socio-cultural context.

(2) Once pollution is defined, as described above,
pollution can be seen to invite two different attitudes
towards it, namely, the negative and the positive, which
correspond with Douglas' distinction between the dirt-
rejecting philosophy and the dirt-affirming one. The former
attitude comes from the viewpoint of the secular realm or
the viewpoint of the outsider of the liminal domain. This
negative attitude toward pollution is penetrated by the
principle of pure-impure and makes a hierachical
discontinuity between a pure non-carrier of liminality and
an impure carrier of liminality. In other words, the
attitude confines one to "the real order" in Bataille's
sense, in which pollution is segregated and suppressed.

To the contrary, we can imagine another positive attitude toward pollution which reflects the viewpoint of the sacred realm or the viewpoint of the insider of the liminal domain. This shift of viewpoint from the outsider to the insider is described as participation in the liminality of death, which is comparable to the sacrificial act. There, "the intimate order" in Bataille's sense, or a world of continuity, is realized through the principle of death and the regeneration of life.

We can extract two different attitudes to coping with pollution. One is an attitude of "elimination", in which pollution is regarded as a dangerous alien substance destroying the order of the system so that it must be eliminated out of the system or suppressed in the peripheral part of the system. This attitude is naturally connected with the social hierarchy defined by the principle of pure-impure. The theories of Dumont and Leach reveal this aspect of pollution. Another is an attitude of "acceptance", in which pollution is seen as cosmic pollution, so that it is once accepted and then converted into a creative power. In this sense, the sacrificial act is inevitable, as Douglas and Das make clear.

These differences in the attitudes toward pollution imply that there are two different dimensions hidden under the conventional concept of pollution. In order to differentiate these two dimensions of pollution, I propose

that the dimension of pollution directed by the attitude of "elimination" is called "impurity", while the dimension of pollution directed by the attitude of "acceptance" is named "pollution"[27]. "Impurity" always appears as the opposite of "purity", so that Dumont's ideology can be placed in this dimension; whereas "pollution" is seen as an independent notion, on the basis of which Das citicizes Dumont. Thus, my understanding of pollution provides the map on which both theories of pollution can be properly placed.

1.2.2 Review of studies of 'Untouchables'

In the previous section, I extracted the "pollution" aspect from the other worldly viewpoint, which can not be reduced to "pure-impure" ideology. This is the fundamental basis on which the important studies of Untouchables are reviewed. The main point of the discussion is to note the kind of ideologies actually accepted by the socially repressed people, labelled as the "impure", and how they manipulate these ideologies. This review aims at providing the theoretical framework for Part Three.

(1) Mencher's aphorism

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[27]Hershman vaguely touches on two kinds of pollution by saying that "The pollution of caste and eating is something which can be kept under control but the events of birth and death are outside human control and therefore they bring with them pollution" [Hershman 1974: 290].

At the outset, Mencher's aphorism in terms of the Harijans' viewpoint should be noted, because it strongly advocates the necessity of seeing a caste society from the bottom-up viewpoint. Mencher points out not only that the idea of *dharma*, which is embodied by the *jajmānī* system, has been used as an instrument of repression, but also that many people at the bottom of the social hierarchy have been aware of this [Mencher 1974: 470][28]. Furthermore, she makes the important remark that "Untouchables may accept these notions (*dharma* and *karma*) to some extent, but it is important to distinguish between the overt acceptance of such values and the holding of other values usually unexpressed to outsiders" [ibid.: 476][29]. This suggestion must be kept in mind when the socially repressed people are investigated. This furthermore reminds us of another more basic problem, which is related to what the unexpressed other value is. Prior to the problem of expression, the values in which the

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[28]Mencher seems to imagine the people at the lower end of the social hierarchy as conscious subjects like an awakened proletariat, who reject the dominant ideology [Mencher 1974: 469]. She is classified as an "outcaste images" theorist by Moffatt [Moffatt 1979: 10], and is regarded as a theorist professing "countercultural models" by Vincentnathan [Vincentnathan 1987: 74].

[29]Deliège also makes the same point, namely, the distiction between an actual experience and its representation, in his criticism of Moffatt [Deliège 1988: 112]. There, he raises the example that the Paraiyars do not usually accept that they are beef-eaters, even though they actually eat it. This example reveals that the Harijans have a strong desire for self-respect [ibid.: 112]. The point is further developed by Vincentnathan, who investigates the Harijans' behaviour under the concept of self-esteem [Vincentnathan 1987].

socially repressed believe are actually not always clear to them, because the indigenous basic culture which is deeply internalized in their minds and bodies does not have a clear-cut shape like the superimposed dominant ideology, as Caplan, for example, points out [Caplan 1980: 235]. Thus, a study of the Harijans requires a more careful approach than that of caste Hindus because we have to take into account both the Harijans' complex representations (expressions) and the less explicit ideology (value) they hold. It is, therefore, presupposed that there are complex relationships between the given social status and conditions, the given ideological configuration, and their contradictory behaviour.

(2) Moffatt's consensus model

Our primary questions are in what kind of ideology the Harijans actually believe and what kind of relationship is found between such a less explicit ideology and the dominant ideology.

At the outset, Moffatt's classification regarding the studies of "Untouchables" since 1950 is useful, though it is problematic, as I will show. He sets up three categories, i.e. (1) outcaste images (lack of culture)[30], (2) models of

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[30]Moffatt claims that Gough [1956], Mencher [1974], and Berreman [1971] can be classified into this category.

diversity (other culture)[31], and (3) models of unity
(replicated culture), and he then classifies his own work
into the third category [Moffatt 1979: Ch.1][32]. It is clear
that Moffatt's categorization is basically made according to
whether "Untouchables" share or replicate the dominant
ideology. This criterion distinguishes (1) and (2) from (3).
In this sense, the difference between (1) and (2), both of
which are thought of as disjunctive theories, is subtle.
According to Moffatt, the outcaste images imply that
Untouchables have some awareness of their own oppression,
while models of diversity contain no such implication
[ibid.: 21]. Moffatt claims that the main shortcoming found
in theories professing the disjunctive models (eg. Gough,
Mencher, Berreman, and Miller) lies in their attitude in
which the world of the Untouchables is described as if it
was a self-contained whole, "emphasizing distinctiveness and
failing to weigh continuities with the larger culture"
[ibid.: 23]. He asserts that the models of unity in which
his own theory is placed are based on the structural model
of Dumont and the "ethnosociological" models of Marriott,
Inden and Nicholas, and that both models, "contain

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[31]For this category, Cohn [1955], Kolenda [1964],
Gough [1960, 1973], Miller [1966] etc. are mentioned by him.

[32]Vincentnathan also takes up a similar categorization
to Moffatt's. Her tripartite models are the consensus model,
subcultural model and countercultural model [Vincentnathan
1987: 70-75]. It seems to me that these models correspond
respectively with models of unity, models of diversity and
lack of culture in Moffatt's sense.

principles of diversity, but in each model diversity is either "encompassed by," or generated from, a more basic unity" [ibid.: 24]. Moffatt, who emphasizes a cultural consensus [ibid.: 98], concludes as follows; "Those persons who are, in egalitarian terms, among the most oppressed members of Indian society are also among the truest believers in the system that so oppresses them" [ibid.: 304]. This statement indicates that Moffatt is not only a strong supporter of Dumontian theory, but also a representative of the consensus theorists in the field of Harijans studies. Moffatt's work is rather welcomed by Indianists, because his work contributes to undermining - as he himself intends - the empathetic attitude often found among the disjunction theorists, which reflects the researcher's personal distaste for caste hierarchy [ibid.: 22-23]. Mayer, for example, objectively evaluates Moffatt's book as follows; "the value of this ... book is to suggest an answer to the question of why it is that it is often the lowest castes which are the most conservative, and the most exclusive among themselves" [Mayer 1980: 398]. Deliège, who also studied the Paraiyars, says of Moffatt's work that it doubtlessly provides a good illustration of the Harijans' internalization of caste hierarchical values [Deliège 1988: 109-110; 1992: 156-160].

(3) Criticisms of Moffatt's work: The necessity of an "interpretative" viewpoint

Although Moffatt's intention is evaluated highly, even Deliège, who recognises Moffatt's profound contribution, points out the following methodological problems of Moffatt's work. One is that Moffatt fails to properly take into account the historical changes in the caste system when he discusses the position of the Harijans, though he himself provides such data (see [Moffatt 1979: Ch.3]). This problem appears because of his underestimation of the important role of repression for maintaining the caste system, and his improper understanding of the economic dependence of the Harijans which limits their activities [Deliège 1988: 110-111].[33] Another criticism is the matter concerning the epistemological order. As has already been pointed out (in fn. 29), Moffatt fails to distinguish the Harijans' experiences (what they actually do) from their representations (what they express to an outsider) [ibid.: 112][Deliège 1992: 167]. It is claimed that this failure leads Moffatt to overestimate the Paraiyars' profession of Brahman-like orthodoxy [Deliège 1988: 112]. Deliège concludes that, even though the Paraiyars accept the imposed hierarchy, this does not mean that the hierarchical ideology

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[33]This shortcoming of Moffatt seems to be derived from Dumont who, as Dirks argues, separated caste from the politico-economic sphere [Dirks 1987: 7-10]. Dirks notes that this problematic view is commonly found in comparative sociology which tends to remove politics from societies [ibid.: 8].

penetrates the Paraiyars' beliefs[34] but that there is an egalitarian value within their community [ibid.: 287] (see also [Deliège 1992: 168; 1987: 235-236]). Related to this, Deliège reports that the hierarchical divisions that Moffatt found in Endavur [Moffatt 1979: 216] are not found among the Paraiyars he studied [Deliège 1988: 114; 1992: 160-161]. Deliege's conclusion should not be, however, simply thought of as an argument for disjunction. On the one hand, when he notes that the contrast between the Brahmans' customs and those of the Harijans [Deliège 1988: 115] can be seen as the two poles of one continuum which is bridged by Sanskritisation [ibid.: 116][35], this aspect of his theory seems to follow Moffatt. On the other hand, since Deliège emphasizes the complexity and contradiction of the Harijans' behaviour and values [Deliège 1992: 171], his approach looks like a conciliation between the disjunction and consensus theories.

The distinction between what the Harijans experience and what they represent, which Deliège points out, can be translated into a slightly different distinction between what they actually believe and how they behave. The

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[34]Deliège clearly states elsewhere that: "there is no necessary link between these two concepts: replication does not imply consensus." [Deliège 1992: 160].

[35]The argument of Deliège is rather similar to Cohn's on the Camars [Cohn 1955]. In this sense, it seems that the categorization of the disjunction model itself is idealized in the disputes.

recognition of this distinction naturally suggests that we cannot take how they behave at its face value, but that we have to take into account how it is interpreted. It is necessary to adopt an "interpretative" approach for the investigation of the complex social processes of the Harijans and for resolving the superficial opposition between disjunction and consensus theories. In other words, the Harijans' behaviour does not hold fixed and objective meanings, but their subjective interpretation of ther own practices must be taken into account. From this point of view, Moffatt's approach is rather naive and problematic, for he short-circuits the observable morphological level, like replicated social and ritual structures, with the level of consciousness, like consensus, without any mediatory explanations [Moffatt 1979: 291-2][36]. The connection is made by his speculation based on "pure-impure" ideology [Deliège 1992: 167] rather than by the Harijans' own interpretations which seem to be motivated by their self-esteem. Such one-sided speculation by Moffatt is often problematic (eg. [Moffatt 1979: 115]). This shortcoming arises from his static investigation, in which he does not deal with dynamic incidents reflecting the Harijans' interpretations. Here, one is reminded of Miller's claim, based on Bailey's [Bailey

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[36]A link between replication and consensus is claimed by Moffatt on the basis of the Harijans' replication observed in the following three major areas: an inter-caste relationship among the Harijans, an intra-caste relationship within the Paraiyars and the Harijans' religion (see also [Deliège 1992: 157]).

1959: 91] criticism of Dumont; "shared components are *not* the indicators of participation in a *single* system--or tradition. It is the perceived relationship between components, the organization of the meaning of these relationships and components which gives body to a "tradition." [Miller 1966: 41]. Not only this claim suggests, but also Miller clearly points out the significance of an "interpretative" approach [Miller 1966: 28]. In short, the replicated morphology found among the Harijans does not always mean their replicated beliefs. The more dynamic relationships between replicated morphology and their actual beliefs need to be carefully investigated.

In this respect, McGilvray's study of Sri Lankan Tamils provides an interesting example: "the first major permanent temple to be constructed in the village was for Pillaiyar and not for Mariyamman, despite the fact that the cult of Mariyamman remains the most important focus of religious observance among the Paraiyars" [McGilvray 1983: 111]. This shows that the temple which is fine and big in appearance is not always in proportion to the significance of the actual religious beliefs. Another clear example is found in Maloney's work in Tamil Nadu [Maloney 1975], in which he systematically examines the villagers' interpretations of philosophical concepts like *dharma*, *karma*, *saṁsāra* etc. and the world view. Regarding their feelings about *dharma*; "Brahmans and many other villagers

who value piety define it in terms of morals, behavior, and thoughts. ... The non-Brahman landowners, merchants, and many farmers define *dharma* essentially as charity, for they are better at charity than at piety. ... But the third class level in Tamil Nadu, the Harijans, and other lower castes too, can vaunt neither piety nor charity and reject the idea that a donor can acquire merit at the expence of the recipient. For them, real *dharma* is giving at the temple. ... at least its purpose is to engender prosperity rather than to accentuate class or status distinctions." [Maloney 1975: 175]. Furthermore, in terms of *karma*, he sums up: "Brahmans define *karma* in moral and behavioral terms. Most farming and middle castes define it simply as sin. The majority of Harijans define it as misfortune, and in so doing they absolve themselves of responsibility for hard times, sickness, or ritual pollution." [ibid.: 176][37]. He concludes that most of the lower castes (the Harijans) maintain their subcultural identity through their own interpretation [ibid.: 189].

Thus, an interpretative approach requires a consideration of the following two points: what kind of *ideology* defines the Harijan's interpretations, and what

[37]Maloney's conclusion on the Harijans' definition of *karma* almost corresponds with the theory of fate (*karma*) among a group of North Indian sweepers (UP) which is described by Kolenda [1964]. Kolenda also claims that the sweepers do not believe in practice in the higher castes' philosophical understanding of the transmigration-*karma* idea [Kolenda 1964: 74].

kind of *motivation* penetrates their interpretations? It
should be here once again pointed out that the neccessity of
the interpretative approach is deeply related to the
introduction of the neo-Marxist sense of ideology (see
section 1.2.1.2).

(4) The level of *ideology* and the level of social
    category: the interpretative account

As to the first point of *ideology*, even after we
accept Moffatt's concern with principal cultural
integration, it is difficult to deny the existence of a non-
Brahmanical tradition in the village setting, as many
writers including the so-called disjunction theorists have
made clear, as an alternative ideology (value, subculture,
or interpretation). For instance, Miller clearly illustrates
a series of themes of a 'Great Tradition' for the Mahar
caste, which is an antithesis of the Brahmanical Great
Tradition, as follows; "equality ... ; individual ability
... ; emotionalism ... ; escape *from* the system ... ,"
[Miller 1966: 28]. It is, however, noted that these cultural
traits, with the exception of the last one, are not confined
only to the Harijans but are shared among a broader section
of the villagers, as is subsequently clarified in this
thesis. This is, for example, verified by the fact that
bhakti religiosity, which is never confined only to the
Harijans, possesses such traits. This suggests that it is
wrong and baseless to regard the connection between the non-

Brahmanical culture and the social category of the Harijans as a one-to-one relationship. In other words, a cultural disjunction is not found between the caste Hindus and the Harijans but is found "between theology and the ideology of 'ordinary people' (non-theological levels of ideology) [Caplan 1980: 234]. Thus, the level of social category and the level of ideology should not be confused. As was already argued in section 1.2.1, in the Tamil cultural context, the distinction of an ideological level corresponds with the contrast between "pure-impure" ideology (superimposed Brahmanical culture) and "pollution" ideology (indigenous basic Tamil culture). Obviously, "pollution" ideology is not possessed only by the Tamil Harijans, but is primarily shared among the Tamilians regardless of caste differences. This fact holds at least three related implications. 1) It is a barren dispute to give the Harijans a specialized position *a priori* and argue whether we can culturally (ideologically) draw a line between Caste Hindus and the Harijans. 2) In order to get rid of such a misunderstanding, it is firstly important to consciously distinguish the level of social category (class or status) from the level of ideology, and then we should proceed to consider the dynamic relationship between them with the interpretative approach. 3) As to the level of ideology, it is suggested that, though I believe there is cultural unity in the village, it is realized not by the Brahmanical ideology, but rather by the shared basic indigenous culture. These implications

legitimize the methodology I adopt in this thesis. I try to interpret the Harijans' activities by placing them in the whole structure of the village or sometimes in the broader social space beyond the village and, therefore, to avoid dealing with the Harijan community as if it was a separated entity, because it is necessary to know the dynamic relations between the Harijans' values and the values of the larger systems.

(5) The *motivation* for self-development

Let's shift to the second point of *motivation*. What is the driving force of the Harijans' interpretations? As many writers point out, there is a contradiction in appearance or 'half-way' situation in the Harijans' cultural practices. Parry notes, by citing Fuchs [Fuchs 1965(1908)], "they (SC and ST) frequently contain a strong element of ambivalence. On the one hand the inequality of man is explicitly denied, while on the other hand, cult members are urged to adopt a style of life and a set of customs calculated to enhance their standing in the eyes of orthodox society." [Parry 1974: 117]. In order to understand such complex social processes of the Harijans' behaviour, a closer examination is indispensable. In this respect, Freeman's attempt [1979], in which the life history of an Untouchable called Muli is reconstructed, is remarkable. In this work, Freeman throws light upon a very ordinary (non-elite) Untouchable's experiences, behaviour and thoughts, and tries to describe

his inner viewpoint, though he does not sufficiently analyse
the rich source materials in his book[38]. From his book, we
learn of the Harijan's strong desire for self-advancement
which ultimately penetrates Muli's diversified activities
ranging from opportunistic to defiant. Most impressive is
Muli's split attitude, on the one hand, aspiring to the
power of the higher castes and being keen on acquiring
friendship with them, but, on the other, ridiculing the
shamefulness of the higher caste people and cynically
enjoying the servile attitudes shown in front of him. Though
it is true that his attitudes appear contradictory, these
acts in fact suggest his consistent desire for escaping from
his socially oppressed position. It is especially
interesting that Muli is much concerned with the dimensions
of dyadic relationships. This is defined as "the pair
imaginary dimension" in Yoshimoto's terms[39], and includes
family, marriage relationships, sexual affairs, and

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[38]Freeman's later article [1986], which is produced on
the basis of his ample monograph, makes his theoretical
position clear.

[39]T. Yoshimoto proposes the hypothesis that the super-
structure in the Marxist sense, or "the total imaginary
domain" in his terms, consists of three imaginary
dimensions, namely, "the personal imaginary dimension", like
art and literature; "the pair imaginary dimension", like
family and sexual relations; and "the communal imaginary
dimension", like state and law [Yoshimoto 1982(1968)].
According to him, the former two dimensions are incompatible
with the third dimension. In this sense, Muli's aspiration
for having a pair relationship going beyond caste
boundaries, namely, his friendship with a Caste Hindu, can
be regarded as a challenge by him to caste feelings, even
though made unwittingly.

friendships. Here one can be freer from the social and
formal dimension such as the oppression of caste hierarchy,
which is defined as "the communal imaginary dimension" by
Yoshimoto.

In the present context, Vincentnathan's work [1987],
which doubtlessly can be classified as disjunction theory,
is outstanding, because the complex behaviour of the
Harijans are systematically analyzed in it. Her theoretical
framework is based on a Parsonian type of "systems" model,
which allows for explanation of contradiction among complex
social processes (of the Harijans), rather than on Dumontian
"structure" [Vincentnathan 1987: 81, 110-118]. Her key
assumption is "that people have a basic need for self-esteem
or a positive identity, and for positive communal esteem,
from which their self-esteem is in part derived" [ibid.: 81-
82]. She seems to see a basic need for self-esteem not only
as motivation (or an incentive for action), but as a key
need integrating several other basic needs, like security,
social ties, cognitive needs [ibid.: Ch.2][40]. She claims
that the Harijans' self-esteem management within the given
socio-cultural conditions is a consistent theme which
penetrates their diversified and contradictory actions, in
other words, that this consistent theme of self-esteem

[40]Though she repeatedly reminds us that the need for
self-esteem should not be regarded as a single determinant
of the personality system [Vincentnathan 1987: 84, 86],
there is no doubt that she deals with self-esteem as the
focal concept throughout the thesis.

produces, and at the same time integrates, their various

strategic behaviours. On the basis of Marriott's four

strategies corresponding with four *varṇa*s [ibid.: 63] (see

[Marriott 1976: 122])[41], she lists the Harijans' social

strategies as follows: in the spheres of intercaste

relations, passing, avoidance and withdrawal, positive

transactions, defiance, political movements and protests,

escape, non-caste-based status [Vincentnathan 1987: Ch.IV];

and in the spheres of intracaste relations, an optimal

strategy (disassociation, exemplary behaviour), an optimal

and maximal strategy (political power), a minimal strategy,

a pessimal strategy (cognitive reversal, deviant behaviour)

[ibid.: Ch.V]. This list of strategies, all of which are

motivated by self-esteem, provides a useful map for

understanding the various behaviours of different types of

Harijans ranging from passive, illiterate and rural Harijans

to positive, educated, urban Harijans. In this sense,

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[41]Vincentnathan's explanation of *varna* strategies is
as follows: "(1) The optimal or Brahman strategy, in which
less gross substance codes are received and more given; (2)
the maximal or Kshatriya strategy, in which there is a
vigorous giving and receiving of substance codes among
closely ranked castes, often for political reasons to
maintain a wide network of alliances; (3) the minimal or
Vaishya strategy, in which there is less giving, because
those above refuse, and less taking (from those above or at
same level, as well as from below) to maintain a pose of
being higher; and (4) the pessimal or Shudra strategy, in
which there is less giving because those above refuse, and
more receiving, because it will not lower their position
further, and often because they cannot financially afford to
refuse." [Vincentnathan 1987: 62]

Freeman's book can also be to a considerable extent analysed by using Vincentnathan's theory[42].

Here, I would like to follow especially her basic notion of self-esteem management. This notion is applicable for my present inquiry into what kind of motivation penetrates the Harijans' interpretations. However, I prefer to adopt a slightly modified concept of self-esteem, namely, the more inclusive concept of "self-development", for the following two reasons. The first reason is that, though Vincentnathan uses the concept of self-esteem in two ways, i.e. as one of basic needs and as a central need integrating other needs, I take up here the latter broader sense of self-esteem and would like to call it "self-development" in order to distinguish it from the former sense. The second reason is that I prefer self-development because it can represent a broader concept, including both self-esteem itself and a reflection of communal esteem upon self-esteem.

Thus, the coexisting attitudes of both accepting the system and blaming the system can be explained without contradiction as part of the Harijans' strategies for seeking self-development. This viewpoint doubtlessly leads us to a horizon where the unproductive dispute between

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[42]Muli's behaviour, described by Freeman, can be analysed like this. "Positive transactions", like friendship, and "defiance" seem to be predominant in the sphere of intercaste relations, and "pessimal strategy" is mainly adopted in the sphere within his community.

disjunction and consensus theories is overcome and
synthesized. This dynamic understanding of their activities,
which allows for the coexistence of different "systems",
furthermore makes it possible to properly take into
consideration the influence of the socio-cultural changes
due to westernization and modernization (for example, from
religion to ideology [Kolenda 1960: 287]; the change of
caste culture [Barnett 1975: 151]; or the increase in the
importance of non-caste-based status, like education,
economic class, and military position [Vincentnathan 1987:
248-263]) upon the Harijans' strategies, such as
disconnection from the village system, mass or individual
conversion, caste associations, conscious manipulation of
pollution as a social weapon and so on (see [Miller 1966],
[Kolenda 1960], [Barnett 1975], [Cohn 1955], [Searle-
Chatterjee 1979, 1981] etc.). There is no doubt that these
changes by and large contribute to releasing the Harijans at
least mentally because they tend to get rid of personally
confined subordination [Vincentnathan 1987: 263], even
though the Harijans' economic position has not always
improved. Nonetheless, the changes cause new dilemmas in
that the socio-economic differential between the socio-
economically better off Harijans (the Harijan elites
[Sachchidananda 1977]) and those less well off (the backward
Harijans) has been increased, and as a result both sections
suffer from severe problems. It is said that the Harijan
elites tend to have great psychological disturbances, caused

by falling short of their raised expectations [ibid.: 253];
while the backward people are put into a more unstable
economic condition than before [ibid.: 88] (see also [Gough
1989]).

The above discussion on their ideology and motivation
in terms of the interpretative approach can be in a sense
synthesized when we rethink "the Harijans' replication of
the upper castes' culture", which was proposed by Moffatt.
In this connection, Vincentnathan provides an interesting
example where the shift of the deity of the Anbur communal
festival from Kaliyamman to Murugan is understood not as the
conflict "between power, which is inherently contaminating,
and purity", but as that "between supernatural power and a
desire to increase communal esteem through purity"
[Vincentnathan 1987: 347]. This example vividly shows that
the Harijans' replication is not due to their being "the
truest believers", but is seen as an act aiming at self-
development. The replicatory acts of the Harijans are not
simply reduced to Sanskritization, but should be regarded as
strategic borrowing from socially evaluated cultural models
which is expected to enhance their self-development.

(6) What is the dominant culture to be replicated?

Lastly, there is a point I should make clear. When we
consider the Harijans' replication in the village sphere, it
is necessary to take into account two levels of social

space, namely, the space within a particular village, and
the broader social space beyond villages. As to the village
space, we can imagine two different cases according to the
dominant caste of the village system, that is, the Brahman-
dominated village and the non-Brahman-dominated village. In
the former case the upper caste culture is of course the
Brahmanical one; whereas in the latter case the upper
culture is usually different from the Brahmanical one, even
though it has been Sanskritized in various ways. In the
larger outside social space where modernization
(westernization) prevails, "class" ideology and the
Brahmanical ideology coexist and occupy the dominant
position in a complex manner [Kolenda 1960: 286]. The
village Harijans today thus logically have two-layered
models of dominant values to emulate, namely, the local
dominant caste's values (the traditional Brahmanic or the
traditional indigenous) and the more widely accepted values
which can be called the modern-Brahmanical values. If
Moffatt's work is placed in this logical framework, it is
evident that he is a bit careless because, as a Dumont-
follower, he wittingly or unwittingly confuses the upper
caste culture with the Brahmanical ideology ("pure-impure"
ideology) in his argument. Since the village I study here is
a non-Brahman-dominated village, I naturally have to be
conscious of such a distinction. As is pointed out later
(eg. Ch.7 or Ch.8), in the village the Harijans mainly
replicate the culture of the dominant caste (the Kallars)

and the Brahmanical cultural elements are also followed or claimed very fragmentally and peripherally. That is to say, in terms of the replicatory aspect, although there is no doubt that the values of the village social space still strongly confine the content of replication of most of the Harijans, their fragmental replication of Brahmanical cultural elements not only comes from the most Sanskritized village Pillais but also is to some extent influenced by the widely accepted Brahmanic values of the larger social space.

What is important here is that they replicate (or sometimes do not replicate) the upper castes' values in these wider social circumstances and, moreover, that, as Vincentnathan suggests, such replicatory behaviour should not be simply seen as acts derived from their true beliefs, but should be thought of as part of their strategic programme for seeking "self-development". As far as Kinnimangalam is concerned, such strategies of the village Harijans fundamentally seem to be based on "pollution" ideology, rather than on "purity-impurity" ideology.

1.3 On Fieldwork

A series of fieldwork excursions in Tamil societies
has been conducted intermittently during the past ten years.
The total period of fieldwork among Tamil societies was
roughly seventeen months, consisting of two stages. In the
first stage, I did fieldwork in the Jaffna Peninsula,
Northern Sri Lanka, between July and Septenber 1980 and
between July and August 1982, on which my article [Sekine
1984] is based. At the end of the first stage I had a one
month trip to Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka for an
extensive survey of house forms, in September 1982.
Nonetheless, the present thesis is produced mainly on the
basis of the second stage of field research carried out in
the Madurai area, Southern Tamil Nadu over eleven months
between July and September 1985, between July and October
1986, between August and October 1987 and between February
and March 1989. The first stage could be seen as a
preliminary one for my Tamil study, in which my various
concerns with caste society were developed. In contrast, the
second stage of fieldwork was more purposefully undertaken,
because I had started to follow my post-graduate course in
1983. The periods during which my fieldwork was carried out
were concentrated on the same season - from the end of the
dry season to the beginning of the rainy season, with the
exception of the last visit in 1989, which to some extent
compensated for this seasonal partiality. In this respect,
my fieldwork is not the most anthropologically desirable

one, but I had no option other than to carry out my
fieldwork in that period due to my college duties. However,
I think that this does not cause decisive damage to the
arguments in the thesis because the main issues discussed
here are rather free from seasonal change, though I did my
best to collect more reliable information in terms of the
incidents I could not directly observe.[43]

The outbreak of the Colombo riots in the summer of
1983 made it impossible to continue fieldwork in Jaffna, and
I decided to shift my field to Tamil Nadu. Apart from this
negative reason, I had the more positive purpose of making a
comparison between a society of island Tamils and that of
continental Tamils. In the course of my village selection in
Tamil Nadu, I had gradually become conscious about my
present attempt to reconsider the ethnographic basis on
which Dumont established his powerful theory of purity and
pollution. As a result, I decided to choose my field in the
Madurai area, where Dumont's field of Tengalapatti is
located. I thought that Dumont's monograph, focusing on the
intra-caste relations of the dominant caste Pramalai Kallar
(*sic*) [Dumont 1986(1957)], should be reconsidered by a study
of inter-caste relations in the same type of village. I was
encouraged by Dumont's statement, "I have not exhausted the

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[43]For example, I left my camera in the hands of S.
Balasubramanian, who was my best friend and research
partner, and asked him to take photographs of a village
festival which is held in *Paṅkuṇi* (March-April).

empirical complexity of my South-Indian ethnographic work"
[Dumont 1980: xix]. After visiting several villages around
Madurai city, Kinnimangalam, which is located about three
kilometers south of Tengalapatti, was finally chosen.[44]

The first villager I talked to in Kinnimangalam was an
ex-president of the Kinnimangalam panchayat, P. Cinnacami (a
Kallar) who happened to be chatting on the village *mantai*[45]
when I visited the village for the first time. At that time
there was no president of the village panchayat because the
local governmnet had postponed having an election for nearly
ten years due to political reasons. Therefore, he was in a
sense acting village president and he gave me permission to

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[44]Prof. N. Subba Reddy of the Department of
Anthropology of the University of Madras introduced me to
Prof. R. Venkataratnam of the Department of Sociology of the
Madurai Kamaraj University. I consulted Prof. Venkataratnam
about finding a suitable village in the Madurai region which
met several conditions for my study. He gave me a list of 6
possible villages which I should try to visit. I was not
satisfied with the first and second villages I visited, but,
when I entered Kinnimangalam and happened to have a
conversation with some villagers, I felt intuitively that
Kinnimangalam was 'compatible' (in V. Daniel's sense) with
me. I had no hesitation in choosing Kinnimangalam as my
field area, and it rather seemed to me that it was my fate,
as my village friends confirmed later. Kinnimangalam to a
large extent fulfills the necessary conditions. I should
also note that my field selection was to some extent
influenced by the following statement of Good that "such
villages (a village without a Brahman community), though
much the more numerous in the region to be studied (Pete
1917: 373), had so far received a disproportionately small
amount of attention in the ethnography of Tamil Nadu" [Good
1978: 5].

[45]*Mantai* is an open-air raised floor for a village
meeting or court. It is also used as a place for resting and
playing by male adults.

conduct research work in the village, after hearing a brief

explanation of myself and of my research purpose. He then

took me to the village priest's house where I was served a

coconut juice, and I chatted with the village priest, N.

Mutturamaligampillai (a Pantaram), and with Cinnacami's

elder brother's son, K. Cataccaram (a person of Cattayi

lineage of the Kallars). The following day, as soon as I

reached the village, I was taken to the front of one of the

biggest houses along the village's main street. There I was

welcomed by a young, but dignified, man named S.

Balasubramanian (a Pillai), the son of the late _nāṭṭāṇmai_ (a

village _muṉcīf_), who ultimately gave all-out cooperation

with my research work.[46] When I met him, I was convinced

that my village selection was right and that I was almost

formally accepted by the village. Other villagers have also

gradually recognized me as a Japanese college Professor

doing a village survey for a Ph.D thesis. I was accepted

basically as a guest of the _nāṭṭāṇmai_ family and this almost

meant that I became a guest of the village (more precisely,

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[46]S. Balasubramanian was at that time (1985) in his
early thirties but he had already earned enormous popularity
and the respect of villagers not only because of being a son
of a village _muṉcīf_, but also due to his being an
intellectual in a true sense and a paragon of honesty and
uprightness. In this sense, his acceptance of me produced an
atmosphere in which other people trusted me. His cooperation
was far more than I expected. I was very much impressed by
his scholary sense and ability so that he naturally became
almost a co-researcher. One day he told me delightfully, "I
really like this sort of research work". Hearing it, I was
happy and was grateful that I had met him. I now remember
the happiest of times with him, regretting his too early,
accidental death.

the Kinnimangalam hamlet). This process of establishing

rapport was very natural from the viewpoint of the village

power structure, so that most villagers naturally accepted

this situation.[47]

In order to carry out my fieldwork in this village, I

had no option but to accept this initial situation in which

I established my rapport with the villagers, even though it

had both merit and disadvantages. That is to say, this was

the position I had to accept when I considered how to make

contact with the village Harijans, where I should live and

how to use a research assistant. Though my fieldwork in

Kinnimangalam consisted of four periods as mentioned above,

in the first period I decided to stay in a guesthouse of the

Madurai Kamaraj University and went every day to the village

in the early morning, returning to the guesthouse late at

night. After the second period, I used mainly

Balasubramanian's house and sometimes the University

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[47]A culture of hospitality still remains in the
village. The villagers warm-heartedly accepted me, not
because they understood what I was doing in their village,
but mainly because of the fact that I was a visitor from a
distant place, and because of the incidental fate that
caused me to select their village from many other villages
for my work. In this connection, I am reminded of two
statements of villagers. One day soon after starting
fieldwork, an old woman asked me, showing her sympathy,
"Aren't you lonely, are you? How do you manage your
boarding? If you have trouble about meals, you could come to
my house, for my son's wife is a good cook.", and she then
told the persons accompanying me, "You all must look after
him well". Another occasion was when I was invited to lunch,
the master told me, "You have to eat plenty, because it will
be the shame of our village, if you lose weight".

guesthouse as my residences. This selection of my residences was partly because I was afraid that I was too involved with the higher caste communities from the beginning, and partly due to my physical and psychological needs which required a certain level of hygienic conditions.

I always kept in mind that the aim of my fieldwork was to collect data equally from all the castes of the village, and I consciously thought that this fieldwork aim distinguished me from Dumont and Moffatt, who concentrated upon a particular caste community[48]. Nevertheless, I had to recognize the practical fact that I was deeply involved, generally speaking, with the dominant castes but, more specifically speaking, with Balasubramanian's family. Thus, I was put in the dilemma that I could not neutrally carry out fieldwork both among the dominant castes and among the dominated. More simply, the problem was how the village Harijans would respond to me while I was identified as a friend or a guest of the dominant castes.

The Harijans seemed to have an antagonistic feeling toward the dominant castes, especially the Kallars, though there were some factional relationships in which the dominant caste members and the Harijans to some extent cooperated, as is shown in the problems of the Milk

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[48]Moffatt describes the caste structure of Endavur in Chapter 3 of his book [1979] only as the background of his main argument on the Harijan community.

Cooperative Society (Chapter 9). In this sense, when I

talked with the Harijans, I had to be aware of at least two

types of fabrications in their replies, invented in order to

protect their own positions or to save their faces, i.e. one

invented against the dominant castes and another against the

opposing Harijans belonging to other factions. It was

possible to see through these fabrications by interviewing

from many angles and repeatedly the same person, and at the

same time combining the opinions collected from Harijans of

other factions or from the Caste Hindus and, moreover, by

observing a person's actual attitudes.[49] In this connection,

the recent progress of urbanization proved an advantage for

disclosing such fabrications, because it encouraged the

Harijans' economic independence from the dominant castes,

which to some extent released the Harijans from their

oppressed position in the conventional village system (see

[Moffatt 1979: 84]). No doubt nowadays the Harijans are more

or less protected from the rude attacks of the Kallars by

the Untouchability (Offence) Act, as a result of which

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[49]An interesting example is taken from the experience
of interviewing two sons of an influential Harijan together.
When the younger brother said, replying to my question
whether he ate dead cattle meat, "I don't eat dead cattle
meat even though other people do it. I eat only the meat
bought from a shop", the elder brother cut in on us and said
to me, "He tells a lie. He also eats dead cattle meat". The
younger brother laughed and accepted what the elder brother
said. It seems to me that these examples show us not only
how we can see through the fabrications in their replies but
also that the interactive process itself found in the
example gives us much information about their thoughts. I
think that the latter point is most important for an
anthropological study.

today's Harijans do not have extreme hesitation in speaking about their village matters.

I think that my strong friendship with a Pillai family, not a Kallar family, helped to place me a little outside the direct oppressive power relationships between the Kallars and the Harijans. The Pillais are not regarded as a caste to be feared by the village Harijans. They are rather seen as "good" people by them, due to the fact that not only are there only three Pillai households in the village, but also that, as can be historically verified, their behavior is far more modest than that of the Kallars'. This means that my friendship with the Pillais was more acceptable to the Harijans than my friendship with the Kallars.

It seems to me that my fieldwork conducted intermittently, as mentioned above, to some extent prevented me from being entirely identified with a particular caste. On the one hand it can not be denied that I was identified with the status of the Pillais, but on the other hand I tended to preserve my outsider's position as a Japanese visitor until the end of fieldwork. This interruption of identification left open the possibility that the Harijans would confide in me rather more freely because of my perceived outsider's position.

When I interviewed the Harijans, I basically followed
a process in which I started from rather neutral questions,
with no direct reflection of village power relations, such
as kinship relations, processes of rituals and festivals.
Only after judging that I had established a good personal
relationship with that Harijan, did I touch on more
sensitive points, like inter-caste problems and inter-
lineage conflicts. When interviewing, I always visited each
Harijan's own house in order to avoid the presence of
unnecessary people, especially of dominant caste persons.
When I could not segregate a Harijan from other people, I
avoided more sensitive questions, and rather tried to
observe how the Harijan responded to both other people and
me.

Related to this, the presence of my research
assistant, mainly as an interpreter, must be taken into
account in the interviewing situation. It was necessary for
me to have the help of a research assistant because of the
limitations of my Tamil speaking ability especially at the
beginning of the fieldwork, though I reduced the use of an
interpreter in the latter stages. I selected as a research
assistant a non-Kallar outsider, taking into account the
situation of interviewing the Harijans. In this respect, it
was useful for me that, in the visit of 1987 when I
concentrated on studying the Harijan community, I luckily
found an educated young Harijan (a graduate of economics),

and could ask him to assist me in my survey of the Harijans.
I of course cannot insist that there was no bias caused by
the presence of an interpreter, though he was both an
outsider and a Harijan. However, after recognising this
problem, I still insist that I could draw various useful
information out of potentially biased data by taking the
whole dynamic process of data-collection into account.

I recognize that my fieldwork holds various
limitations, as indicated above. However, at the same time,
I believe that my 'data' collected among the Harijans has
enough reliablity for reconstructing their social and
cultural situation, for I always took efforts to pay
attention to the contextual connotations of our
conversations in the given interviewing situation. 'Data' in
my sense is not simply crude information about what people
say or how they behave, but rather is interpretative
information, found by placing people's statements and
behaviour in the context of data-collection. In this
connection, it is important to make clear the difference
between Moffatt's attitude and mine in terms of data-
collection. Moffatt fastidiously attempted to exclude any
"suspicion in the minds of the local Harijans that I
(Moffatt) might be reporting what they told to the high
castes" [Moffatt 1979: xxvi]. Though I of course admire
Moffatt's sincere attitude in terms of his fieldwork, I
rather suspect that this attitude corresponds to his static

understanding of data, which lacks an interpretative

viewpoint, as alredy pointed out (section 1.2.2). I do not

deny his efforts in seeking the neutrality of a fieldworker

especially in the study of the Harijans, but it seems to me

that if he naively believed he could collect data free from

any suspicion, his thinking would be a product of the ideal.

I think that it is more significant how a fieldworker

interprets the collected data distorted by the informants in

the given context. It seems to me that this attitude of

data-collection is more "anthropological" than that

excluding the informants' bias from the beginning[50].

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[50]My methodological claim here comes closer to what
Dirks argues as his understanding of ethnohistory. Namely,
fieldwork is regarded as a process of "textualization" in J.
Clifford's terms [Dirks 1987: 15].

PART ONE: BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 2 VILLAGE SETTING

2.1 Geographical and Historical Sketch

2.1.1 Geographical sketch

The Tamil village Kinnimangalam (*Kiṇṇimaṅkalam*), where

I conducted fieldwork, is located about 15 kilometers west

of Madurai city, the capital of the Madurai district of

Tamil Nadu state.[1] The villagers of Kinnimangalam can easily

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[1]There are several opinions as to the etymology of the
word Madurai. One is that the word Madurai is derived from a
Sanskrit word "Madura", which means sweetness. Another is
that it is a broken form of "Marudapuri", the original
meaning of which is a fort-city surrounded by local trees
called maruda. As is well known, Madurai flourished for a
period as the ancient capital of the Pandya (*Pāṇṭiyaṉ*)
Kingdom from just before or after the beginning of the
Christian era, and later as the centre of the Nayaka
(*Nāyakkan*) dynasty until the beginning of British rule.
Today Madurai, whose population is about eight hundred and
twenty thousand, has two faces, one old, the other new, that
is, both a traditional, religious facet and a modern,
industrial one. The former is symbolized by the famous
temple *Mīnākṣī Ammāṉ Kōvil*, and the latter by the newly
developing factories, such as the T.V.S. motor company, the
Kothandaram spinning mill, and the Madurai Coats and Sri
Minaksi textile industries.

travel to and from this historic city by bus. Besides the
bus service between Kinnimangalam and Madurai which operates
three times daily, Kinnimangalam villagers can also use the
more frequent buses from their nearest town, Chekkanurani,
which is situated at the junction of the Madurai-Teni and
the Tirumangalam-Dindigal roads (Appendix B). Another town
that Kinnimangalam villagers sometimes need to visit is
Tirumangalam[2], which is 10 kilometers south of
Kinnimangalam, because there is a Taluk office there. A bus
service to Tirumangalam operates hourly from Chekkanurani.

Chekkanurani is located within walking distance of
Kinnimangalam, being located only one mile away from it.
Chekkanurani thus functions as part of the everyday life
space of Kinnimangalam villagers. Data pertaining to the
shops and services of Chekkanurani, the total number of
which is 258, is shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. Most of these
shops deal in goods and services which directly support
villagers' everyday activities. In this respect, the town,
which originated from a Saturday weekly market, is still in
germ and very dependent on the surrounding villages.

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[2]Tirumangalam, the population of which is about thirty
thousand, is a more urbanised area, which is indicated by
the availability of luxury items, such as tape recorders,
television sets, autobikes, scooters, jewellery, fashionable
garments, photocopiers, and high grade soft drinks.
Facilities such as pharmacies and a taxi service are also
available.

Table 2.1 Classification of the shops and services available in Chekkanurani

category	shops or services
agriculture/ stock raising (17)	chemical fertilizer(5), cotton brokerages(3), tyre repairs(3), chemical fodder(2), motor pump repairs(2), Milk Cooperative Society(1), farm tractor repairs(1)
daily life (65)	bicycles(13), barbers(12), firewood(7), florists(7), hardware(6), cleaning(3), bullcart repairs(3), bicycle parts(2), iron scraps(2), charcoal(1), astrology(1), frame making(1), iron smith(1), oil(1), *pantal*(a hut for rituals) making(1), key repairs(1), clay pots(1), stone statues(1), Saturday market (chickens and goats)(1)
food stuffs (56)	greengrocers(19), groceries(12), butchers (mutton)(5), fruiterers(5), grinding(5), rice dealers(3), steamed bread(3), snacks and sweets(2), dry fishes(1), beans(1)
factory (6)	soft drinks(2), aluminium products(1), calcium(1), cement boards(1), soap(1)
others/ urban elements (115)	tea stands(35), tobacconists(20), texitiles(14), tailors(10), restaurants(7), stationers(5), radio sales and repairs(4), clinics(3), drug stores(2), electric goods(2), fancy goods(2), studios(2), police station(1), post office(1), cinema theatre(1), bank(1), tape recorder repairs(1), furniture(1), printing(1), cram school(1)

total(258)

Table 2.2 Shopkeepers' castes

caste	number of shops	caste	number of shops
Kallar	122	Pillai	2
Natar	57	Raveji	2
Acari	17	Nayakkar	1
Ampattan	14	Valluvan	1
Cettiyar	11	Christian	1
Pantaram	5	unknown	20
Vannan	3		
Aiyar	2	total	258

Needless to say, a town attracts villagers not only to meet their practical needs, but also to offer them opportunities for recreation, such as the cinema.[3] In addition, villagers can enjoy being relatively free from the caste hierarchy in a town. Even though Chekkanurani is a very small town in which face-to-face relationships are still maintained, the feeling of caste discrimination is much reduced there compared to the situation in the village. The town, therefore, to some extent plays the role of being a refuge for the Harijans (Untouchables) of the surrounding villages.

Kinnimangalam is situated on flat land extending from the southern side of a range of mountains called the Nagamalai[4] (literally, a snake hill). The villagers make their living mainly by cultivating tank- or well-irrigated land, which occupies about 13% of the cultivated land. The villagers claim that recent agricultural production has been rather unstable because of irregular rainfalls, though the

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[3]Watching movies is the most popular amusement among the villagers. There are more than thirty cinema theatres in Madurai city. The late chief minister, M.G.Ramachandran, was a famous cinema actor and his outstanding popularity as a politician among the Tamil masses was basically derived from the image of the good man he played in his films. There is no doubt that the cinemas are a strong influence on the Tamil masses. This aspect is investigated in depth by Dickey [1988], Hardgrave [1973] and Sivathamby [1981].

[4]According to the Gazetteer of the Madurai District [Government of Madras 1960], local legend tells that Nagamalai is the remains of a giant snake which was produced by the magic of the Jains and which was finally defeated by the God Siva.

reason they claim is not always supported by the actual
statistics of rainfall. While the amount of rainfall during
the rainy season in recent years has in fact decreased,
compared with the average amount of 1870-1930 period, there
is no difference in terms of the amount of annual rainfall
[Government of Madras 1933: 46], [Government of Tamil Natu
1986: 58-61].

2.1.2 Historical sketch

The outline of the macro history of the Madurai area
is as follows. The Pandya Kingdom ruled the Madurai area
from just before or after the beginning of the Christen era.
The prosperity of the Kingdom is recalled, for example, by
Tamil Sangam Literature. From the 4th century A.D. to the
6th century A.D., the Pandya Kingdom was under pressure from
the adjacent Chola Kingdom and the Kalabrah Kingdom.
Although the Pandya Kingdom revitalized, it was ultimately
conquered by the powerful Chola Kingdom at the end of the
9th century. The Pandya Kingdom was again restored in the
13th century and ruled over the weakened Chola Kingdom. At
the beginning of the 14th century, these local kingdoms were
defeated by the invasion of Muslim powers from the north. At
that time, Madurai city was severely hit especially by the
first invasion of the Afghan power. In the middle of the
14th century, the rule of the Vijayanagar Empire reached
this area and the Muslim power was chased out from the
south. According to Shigematu [1976: 57-58], the ruling

system of the Vijayanagar Empire was changed both before and after the middle of the 16th century from "centralized feudalism" to "decentralized feudalism". Since the latter half of the 16th century the local lord, the Nayaka, became the major independent power and finally established a regional dynasty in the Madurai area. The middle of the 17th century particularly was the golden period of the Nayaka dynasty, when Tirumalai Nayaka (1623-1659), called "a king of kings", was very active. The Nayaka rule, however, had been unstable before the power of the Mughal Empire reached this area in the middle of the 18th century, partly due to the foreign pressures of the Mysore Kingdom and the Maratha Kingdom and partly because of the internal contentions between Madurai and Tanjavur. According to Rajayyan [1974: 33], the political picture of the southern part of Tamil Nadu in the middle of the 18th century, when European contact began in this area, can be divided into three areas, that is, the areas ruled by the Nayaka (Tiruchirapalli, Madurai, Tirunelveli), the areas ruled by the Tevars (Marawars, Kallarnadu) and the areas ruled by the poligars (little kings, *pāḷaiyakkārars* [Dirks 1987: 19, 52-54]). According to this political picture, it seems that the village I am studying, Kinnimangalam, was located between Madurai (the area ruled by the Nayaka) and Kallarnadu (the area ruled by the Tevars). As to the relationship between the rule of the Nayaka and that of the poligars, Good notes that until the latter half of the 18th century there were 48

auxiliary chiefdoms (ruled by the poligars) in the southern part of Tamil Nadu under the rule of the Nayaka or the Maravar chiefs and that such poligars were often transformed into Zamindars (*Jamīntārs*) under British rule [Good 1978: 70-78][Ludden 1985: 49].

It seems to me that the connection between the macro history of the Madurai area and the micro history of the village being studied can be confirmed since approximately the fourteenth century A.D., even though the evidence is not all that clear. The period called *paṭaiveṭṭukālam* (literally, the age of the warring states) by the villagers, which can be traced through the oral history of the villagers, almost corresponds with the period during which the Muslim powers who had conquered this area were chased out by the power of the Vijayanagar Empire. The villagers' claim that *paṭaiveṭṭukālam* was about 500 years ago also becomes circumstantial evidence to support my judgement.

The history of Kinnimangalam, which I reconstruct from what the villagers told me, is as follows. At the time known as *paṭaiveṭṭukālam*, two Zamindars, namely the Muslim Zamindar and the Zamindar of the Kauntar caste, controlled the village, and the people suffered much under their despotic rule. At that time, the village consisted of three separate hamlets, Amganampatti (which was located 500 meters north-east of the present Kinnimangalam), Konampatti (which was located 400 meters south-east of the present

Kinnimangalam) and Mangalapatti (which was developed just on the southern side of the present Kinninmangalam). Mangalapatti was the head hamlet of the three, where the Zamindars lived. It is said that under the control of the Zamindars there were several castes, such as the Acaris, the Ampattans, the Vannans, the Valaiyars, the Kucavars, the Natars, the Harijans and a Pillai working as a village muṉcīf (see [Fuller 1989: 38]). It is noted that there was no Kallar living there at that time. During the period of paṭaiveṭṭukālam, the migrations of various castes took place because of the social instability of the Madurai region. It seems to be at about this time that the early settlers of the Kallar caste, such as the Kecavan lineage and the Kamanan lineage, reached Mangalapatti.[5] As was commonly found in this area [Dumont 1986: 20], the Kallars took over the dominant positions by chasing out the former rulers. This was the case in Kinnimangalam, where two Zamindars were killed by the Kallars.[6] Thus, the basic caste structure as the foundation of that of today's village was almost prepared. After this incident, the village began to be constructed in its present site. That is to say,

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[5]The tendency of the expanding migration of the Kallars continued until the British government suppressed it [Dumont 1986: 15].

[6]It is said that the Kecavan pople (the pioneer lineage of the Kallars) with the cooperation of the Kartananti-Cinnananti (the core lineages of the Paraiyars) jointly killed the Kauntar Zamindar, while the Kamanan people (another core lineage of the Kallars) and the Urkalan (one of the Paraiyar lineages) slew the Muslim Zamindar.

Amganampatti and Konampatti were united with Mangalapatti,
and the name of the village was changed from Mangalapatti to
Kinnimangalam (see section 4.3.1). It is presumed that these
changes took place during the Nayaka rule.

On the one hand there is no doubt that Kinnimangalam
as a village dominated by the Kallars was under the
influence of the regional politics of the Kallarnadu.[7] On
the other hand, the village, the whole of whose land was an
inām (a grant of land) of the Minaksi Amman Temple, in other
words, a *tēvastānam* or a *kōvil māniyam* (land donated to a
temple)[8], was economically connected with the Nayaka kings
who granted these *ināms*. According to the Panchayat
president, Javaharlal, in the pre-British days

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[7]According to Tangaraj, the socio-political system of
the Kallarnadu is said to consist of 8 *nātus* (provinces) and
24 *upakirāmams* (secondary villages). A *nātu* again consists
of 18 *pattis* (hamlets) (also see [Dumont 1986: 159-169]).
The head office of the Kallarnadu was called *Nāttupuratāni*
and it was given to Karamanikariyanitevar of the Pinnattevar
lineage by Tirumalai Nayaka, at his own request, as a reward
since he discovered a thief wanted by the King (see also
[Dumont 1986: 155]). This indicates both aspects of the
Kallarnadu, independence and subordination, in the
decentralized character of the Nayaka rule. The political
centre of the Kallarnadu, the *rājatāni*, where the
Nāttupuratāni lives is Urappanur and the religious centre is
said to be Karumatur, where in theory *mūnucāmi* (three great
gods of Hinduism, namely, Siva, Visnu and Brahma) reside. In
Karumatur today, there are various important temples, the
number of which are more than three, such as the
Kaluvanadan, the Angala Isvaran, the Nallakurumbaiyar, the
Virumandi, the Chittraputran and the Kotta Mandai Karuppu.

[8]It is reported that at the end of the Nayaka dynasty,
nearly 200 villages, most of which were located in the
north-west direction of Madurai city, were defined as the
kōvil māniyam of the Minaksi Amman Temple [Fuller 1984: 92].
See also [Kumar 1965: 12].

kaṇakkappiḷḷai (a village accountant) collected *tēvatāyam*
(Skt. *dēvadāya*, grants to temples) in the form of grain (in
kind) and handed it to a collecter sent by the Minaksi Amman
Temple. Even after British rule, *iṉām* grants to the Temple
were allowed, but they were redefined as land revenue to be
collected in cash [Fuller 1984: 94], because the British
government was eager to establish the Ryotwari
administration.[9] As far as Kinnimangalam is concerned, the
major *iṉāms* were abolished and shifted to Ryotwari by the
Madras Estates (Abolition and Conversion to Ryotwari) Act
(26 of 1948), as the Detail Notes (*Vivarakkuṟippu*) of
Kinnimangalam revenue village clarify (see also [Gough 1981:
43]).

Although "Zamindari estates and private *iṉām* estates
were abolished shortly after the independence of India"
[ibid.: 43] (see [Mencher 1978: 81-83]), the offices of
karṇam (village accountant) and *nāṭṭānmai* (village *muṉcīf*),
which were originally appointed for the Ryotwari
administration by the British government, remained until

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[9]The revenue system of Ryotwari was introduced,
especially in southern India, in the 1830s, by the English
East Company, after a 30 years debate starting from the
grant of the Permanent Zamindari Settlement in Bengal (1793)
[Ludden 1985: 170]. In theory, it is a system of taxation in
which the government imposes a tax on each landowning
cultivator as a ryot. Nonetheless, as Kumar clarifies [Kumar
1965: 14-17], the British government faced complicated
problems, caused not only by the Zamindari system and the
Inamdari system, but also by the Mirasdari system, which
was, originally at least, a communal system of landholding
and which was later often modified. It took more than half a
century to shift to the Ryotwari system in practice.

they were finally abolished in November 1980. The post of

V.A.O. (village administrative officer) was introduced in

1982 after a two-year gap[10]. There is no doubt that these

historical changes in the revenue system have contributed to

the weakening of the village communal unity by the

enforcement of direct cash taxation on individual landlords

and the introduction of externally appointed revenue

officers.

2.2 On Village Community

The concept of "village" is one of the problematic

topics in the study of Hindu societies. Though I have used

words such as village and hamlet without any precise

definition, I must now explain how I use these terms here.

At the same time, it will be made clear why the hamlet of

Kinnimangalam is seen as a proper field to be studied in the

light of the present research aims.

Dumont uses the concepts of "residential cluster" and

of "territorial unit" in his ethnography on the Pramalai

Kallar community [Dumont 1986(1957)]. Since the settlement

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[10]It seems to me that the replacement of *nāṭṭānmai* and
karṇam, who are members of the village (*ūr* in Tamil), by
V.A.O., who is a purely administrative officer, foreign to
the village, was the final step that completely wiped out
the little remaining communality on the revenue level in the
village. See also [Mukherjee 1962: 249-250] and [Good 1978:
79-81].

pattern shows a congregated type at least in the Madurai area, it is easy for us to grasp Dumont's sense of "residential cluster", which is almost the same as what I call a hamlet (see the editor's footnote in [Dumont 1986: 33]). In this sense, the territory where I did most fieldwork can be called Kinnimangalam "residential cluster" in Dumont's terms (or Kinnimangalam hamlet in my sense). I should explain here why my field study, conducted mainly in the hamlet, provides sufficient data for my aims.

The important point Dumont makes is to avoid the use of "village" by introducing the concept of "territorial unit". It seems to me that Dumont wants to point out the danger for students of Hindu societies in unwittingly believing in the actual existence of the "village". In this connection, Good provides a useful perspective on the arguments dealing with concepts of "village" [Good 1978: 152-177]. Good basically accepts Dumont's standpoint and evaluates Beck's definition of dominance, in order to explain his own notion of "micro-region", consisting of several hamlets, as a necessary analytical framework [Good 1978: 152-264]. Concerning how he delineates the micro-region, Good clearly notes, "if I wished to 'make sense' of the social structure of TV - my original primary intention - it was essential that I should take VV and KP into consideration too" [Good 1978: 263]. In my case, however, I did not find it essential to take other hamlets into

consideration, because, as is shown in Table 2.3, the
Kinnimangalam hamlet forms the central core of a "micro-

Table 2.3 Caste structure of hamlets of the
Kinnimangalam Panchayat

hamlet name (Ward No.)	PIL	PAN	KAL	KAU	KON	ACA	NAT	VAN	AMP	KUY	KUR	VAL	PAR	CAK
Kinnimangalam (No.1 No.2)	3	1	202			10	10	7			1		174	
Pottuluppatti (No.3)													35	
Puvaracampatti (No.3)			90						6	7				
Alampatti (No.3)													44	
minakucipatti (No.4)					10			3				90		
Putumangalam (No.5)			43					1	1					
Mavelipatti (No.5 No.6)			119	9	3			3	1					40
TOTAL (913)	3	1	454	9	13	10	10	14	8	7	1	90	253	40

Revenue Village 203 Kinnimangalam

region"[11] within which the principal social interactions,
such as inter-caste relations (see section 2.3) and intra-

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[11]I do not claim that the Kinnimangalam hamlet is a
"micro-region" in itself, but I do insist that the hamlet
occupies the central part of the "micro-region".

caste relations, namely lineage activities (see section 2.4 and Chapater 8) are not fully, but adequately, observed. This does not mean that the Kinnimangalam hamlet is separate from the broader social space, but rather means that the hamlet provides sufficient social space for the present aims of this thesis. In this connection, it is necessary to describe an outline of the structure of the Kinnimangalam hamlet, in order to clarify the meanings of the hamlet boundary.

The landlords of the hamlet consist mainly of the Pillais, the Kallars, the Natars and the Pantarams. If these candidates of the dominant castes were checked by Srinivas' original criteria such as numerical preponderance over the other castes, preponderance of economic and political power, and a not too low status in the local caste hierarchy [Srinivas 1955: 18][12], it could be concluded that the Kallars pass almost all these conditions, since their ritual status is niether high nor too low; the Pillais sufficiently fulfil the criteria, except for the numerical condition; the Natars are limited only to economic dominance; and the case of the Pantaram priest managing large temple lands is too unique to be considered. It, therefore, would appear that the Kallars and the Pillais are the dominant castes of the

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[12]Later he adds the fourth criterion of 'Western', which indicates the number of persons in a caste who have Western and non-traditional education [Srinivas 1987(1959): 97].

hamlet. Nonetheless, as Mayer suggests [Mayer 1958: 425] and Good points out [Good 1978: 177], I also think that the concept of "dominant caste" is too vague to describe the actual village situation, and that attention should also be paid to the unit of "dominant family", even though my case is not as complicated as that of Good. At any rate, the relations between these dominant castes and the dominated Harijans (the Paraiyars) form the principal vertical axis of the social structure of the hamlet, on which the so-called *jajmānī* relations are based (*vide infra*). Let's briefly consider the relationships between villagers' actual activities and the hamlet, with this vertical social structural axis.

It has become more and more difficult today to look upon the hamlet as a confined unit of economic relations, though it is true that the hamlet is still the focal place where the villagers' main economic activity, agricultural production, takes place on the basis of a reduced degree of *jajamānī* relations (see section 2.3). The rapid fall of big landlords during the past two generations (see section 6.1.1) doubtlessly damaged the traditional socio-economic framework. Related to this, the recent general tendency of agricultural labourers being hired as day-labourers (*kūliyāḷ*) has eroded the convention of agricultural labourers being supplied within the hamlet on

the basis of permanent or annual contract[13]. Moreover, many villagers have to go outside the village to earn their living (see chapter 6). Though there is no doubt that these tendencies have been enhanced by recent rapid urbanization, I understand that, more basically, the introduction of the Ryotwari system by the British government in the 19th century led to an economic environment which increased the discrepancy between individual activities and local unity.

As to the political aspect, it is undeniable that the institution of the 'village (elected) panchayat (*kirāmap pañcāyattu*)', superimposed administratively after Independence, has weakened the power of the 'traditional panchayat', called *ūrātci maṉṟam* (a village assembly) or *periya mantai* (a big gathering), based on the hamlet (cf. [Mayer 1960: 113-131])[14]. Corresponding to this change,

[13]The present villagers distinguish three types of employment when the Paraiyar work under the dominant caste landlords (*nilaccuvāṉtār*). It is explained that they work (1) as an *aṭimaikāraṉ* (a hereditary bonded labourer attached to a particular family or lineage of the dominant castes), (2) as a *paṇṇaikkāraṉ* (a labourer employed on a one-year contract) or (3) as a *kūliyāḷ* (a day labourer). The former two are regarded as traditional types and have been rapidly disappearing in recent times. The third type, *kūliyāḷ*, is commonest today. Cf. [Kumar 1965:41] and [Moffatt 1979: 67].

[14]The introduction of an institution of panchayat was attempted in the 1920s under British rule but it failed [Retzlaff 1962: 45,48]. A new 'village panchayat' system was introduced to Tamil villages in 1958 (the Madras Panchayat Act) [Gough 1989: 15] according to the recommendation of the Balwantrai Mehta committee (1957), which stood for the ideal of 'democratic decentralisation'. The present panchayat is in its third term, and its current members were elected in 1986, after a ten year interval.

troubles within the hamlet tend to be taken to public
institutions, such as the police and law courts. However,
the 'traditional panchayat' still functions for managing
village festivals, appointing *tōṭṭi* and *maṭaiyaṉ* (village
menial workers chosen from the Harijans), arbitrating
between *paṅkāḷi*s (lineages) or between *vāricu*s (sublineages)
and settling minor village problems in its own way[15]. In the
Kinnimangalam hamlet, there are two separate 'traditional
panchayat', i.e. the main one mentioned above, *periya
mantai*, which consists of *kāriyakkāraṉ*s or *periyamaṉitaṉ*
(influential persons or big men)[16] of the Caste Hindus,
mainly those of the Kallars; and *ciṉṉa mantai* (literally, a
small gathering) which consists of *kāriyakkāraṉ*s of the
Harijans (see Table 2.4). Until a little while ago, the
Harijans sometimes took their problems to *periya mantai* when
they failed to solve them in *ciṉṉa mantai*.

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[15]The 'traditional panchayat' (*periya mantai*), as a
judicial system (*pañcāyattuk kūṭṭam*) has dealt with problems
concerning (1) *karai* (a traditional right and duty of
marriage preference), (2) *vivākarattu* (divorce), (3)
karpaḻippu (rape), (4) *kaḷavu* (stealing), (5) *cantai*
(fighting), (6) *vivacāya payir iḻappu* (agricultural crop
damage), (7) *caṭaṅku* (puberty ceremonies), (8) *iḻavu* (death
ceremonies) and so on. They have various kinds of methods of
judgement, called *cattiyam*, to be used when they find
difficulty in identifying who is in the wrong.

[16]A *kāriyakkāraṉ* is not formally selected, but is
informally admitted by the lineage members and the villagers
due to his abilities, especially due to his skills of
oratory at meetings.

Table 2.4 Distribution of influential persons

	caste	lineage(households)	*kariyakkaran*
Caste Hindus	Pillai(3)		–
	Kallar(202)	Kecavan(23)	2
		Kamanan(21)	2
		Cattayi(28)	4
		Panniyan(65)	5
		Kattappinnai(18)	2
		Cuntravalliyamman I(17)	2
		Cuntravalliyamman II(4)	1
		Cataci(4)	1
	Pantaram(1)		1
	Acari(10)		1
	Natar(10)		–
	Vannan(7)		1
	Kuravan(1)		–
Harijans	Paraiyar(174)	Kartananti(29)	3
		Cinnananti(15)	3
		Mataiyan(41)	1
		Urkalan(19)	1
		Tankalan(44)	3
		Cappataiyan(3)	1
		?	1
total			35

The survival of these *mantais* indicates that at some
levels the unity of the hamlet has been preserved. Moreover,
hamlet unity has to some extent been demonstrated by the
recent election of the president of the village panchayat.
Though the election was contested between one candidate
supported by the Kinnimangalam hamlet and another supported
by the Mavelipatti hamlet, it is interesting that the people
of Kinnimangalam hamlet united in their support of one
candidate and thus wittingly or unwittingly showed their
"hamlet-loyalty".

Hamlet unity can more clearly be seen in the annual festivals of village deities because these festivals are held basically by the hamlet community. Even if at a politico-economic level villagers' activities threaten hamlet unity, their feeling of loyalty to or love of their home hamlet still form the basis of their support for their village festivals. In this sense, the word *ūr* (village) well reflects one's subjective feelings to one's native place. That is, *ūr* basically involves the connotation of "my village" (see [Daniel 1984: Ch.2]). In this sense, *ūr* contrasts with the word *kirāmam*, which means village in an objective sense, and which is suitable for expressing an administrative sense of village, like a panchayat village or a revenue village.

Nonetheless, it would be hasty to conclude from the above discussion that hamlet unity is disintegrating, because it still remains to consider the aspect of kinship relations. The lineage network extends beyond the hamlet boundary, but at the same time it is also noted that in Kinnimangalam the lineage tends to be strongly connected with the locality of the hamlet. For example, the lineage festivals of the principal lineages are sponsored basically by lineage members living in the hamlet, while other lineages represented by only a few households virtually give up their festivals. In this sense, lineage identity is not always incompatible with local identity in this case. In

other words, there is a tendency that locality rather confines the lineage network. This tendency is clearly demonstrated by the geographically confined nature of the sphere of intermarriage (see Table 2.11). Most of the villagers, except the Pillais who are numerically fewer and ritually higher, take a bride within the hamlet or from neighbouring villages. That the kinship network is drawn toward locality, to some extent prevents the hamlet from losing its social unity completely.

After these empirical observations, since it is not my present task to define the boundary of the "micro-region", I feel that it is much more important for me to recognize the actual situation of the hamlet as it presently is. Fortunately, Kinnimangalam hamlet provides sufficient data of various social relations so that my purposes can be accomplished mainly by concentrating on the Kinnimangalam hamlet, while at the same time taking data from the broader sphere into account if necessary. In the light of this point of view, hereafter, when I use the terms Kinnimangalam, hamlet and village, each term means the Kinnimangalam hamlet and if I refer to a panchayat village or to a revenue village it will be clarified each time.

The hamlet of Kinnimangalam is roughly shown in Figure 2.3. Kinnimangalam is located between two large tanks, east and west, and it consists of four residential

clusters (not in Dumont's sense), one for the Caste Hindus
and three others for the Harijans (the Paraiyars).

(1) cluster I : This is the central cluster called
"$\bar{u}r$" where the Caste Hindus live. Whereas the dominant
castes like the Kallars and the Pillais occupy the central
part of it, other service castes such as the Acaris, the
Vannans and the Kuravans have their houses in the peripheral
area of the cluster.

(2) cluster II : It is the oldest residential area of
the Paraiyars, which is adjacent to cluster I, and therefore
is called '*Paraiya-vīṭu* (Paraiyars' residence)' by other
castes. This is a so-called *cēri*[17]. However, the Paraiyars
living there tend to think of it as part of *ūr*. This
interpretative difference should be noted. Nearly half of
the houses of this cluster were rebuilt or newly constructed
using house loans from the Uslampatti Cooperative Society.

(3) cluster III : It is a newly developed residential
area for the Paraiyars. Except for a few houses, almost half
of the houses were provided without charge under the
Congress state government in 1960, and another half were
again provided free of charge by THADCO (Tamil Nadu Harijan
Development Corporation) during 1974-5 under the DMK state
goverment. Other castes call this cluster '*Paraiya-kalani*

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[17]The word *cēri* is an insulting expression today, so
that villagers usually avoid using it.

(Paraiyars' colony)', but the Paraiyars themselves seem to prefer the name of '*Āti Tirāviṭar kuṭiyiruppu* (Adi-Dravida residential area)'. It should be noted that about ten Kallar houses were recently constructed between cluster II and cluster III.

(4) cluster IV : It is the newest colony for the Harijans, which is located to the northern side of, and a little away from, *ūr*. Under the AIADMK state government, most of the houses here were built using house loans from the Uslampatti Cooperative Society in 1981, and another five houses got house loans from the Tirumangalam Panchayat Union in 1982. The remaining house plots were given to those Paraiyars not in cash employment during 1977-1979. Because it is the newest development, it is often called '*putukkalaṉi* (new-colony)'. Sometimes, it is called '*Vatakku Āti Tirāviṭar kuṭiyiruppu* (North Adi-Dravida residential area)' by the Paraiyars[18].

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[18]It is noted that, in this Paraiyar cluster, there is an Acari household where an Acari widow and her children live. This reminds me of Moffatt's argument on caste structure where he shows that the second subset of the third set of castes, like the Chettiyars, the Pantarams, and the Acaris will come into the Harijans' colony to perform their *toRil*s [Moffatt 1979: 96].

Figure 2.1 Map of the Kinnimangalam hamlet and location of village deities (1 cm = 50 m)

residence of Caste Hindus
(cluster I)
a: Pillai
b: Pantaram
c: Kallar
d: Natar
e: Acari
f: Vannan
g: Kuravan

residence of Harijans
(cluster II,III,IV)
h: Paraiyar

T1 - T11: village deities

⌸ : well
++ : cemetry
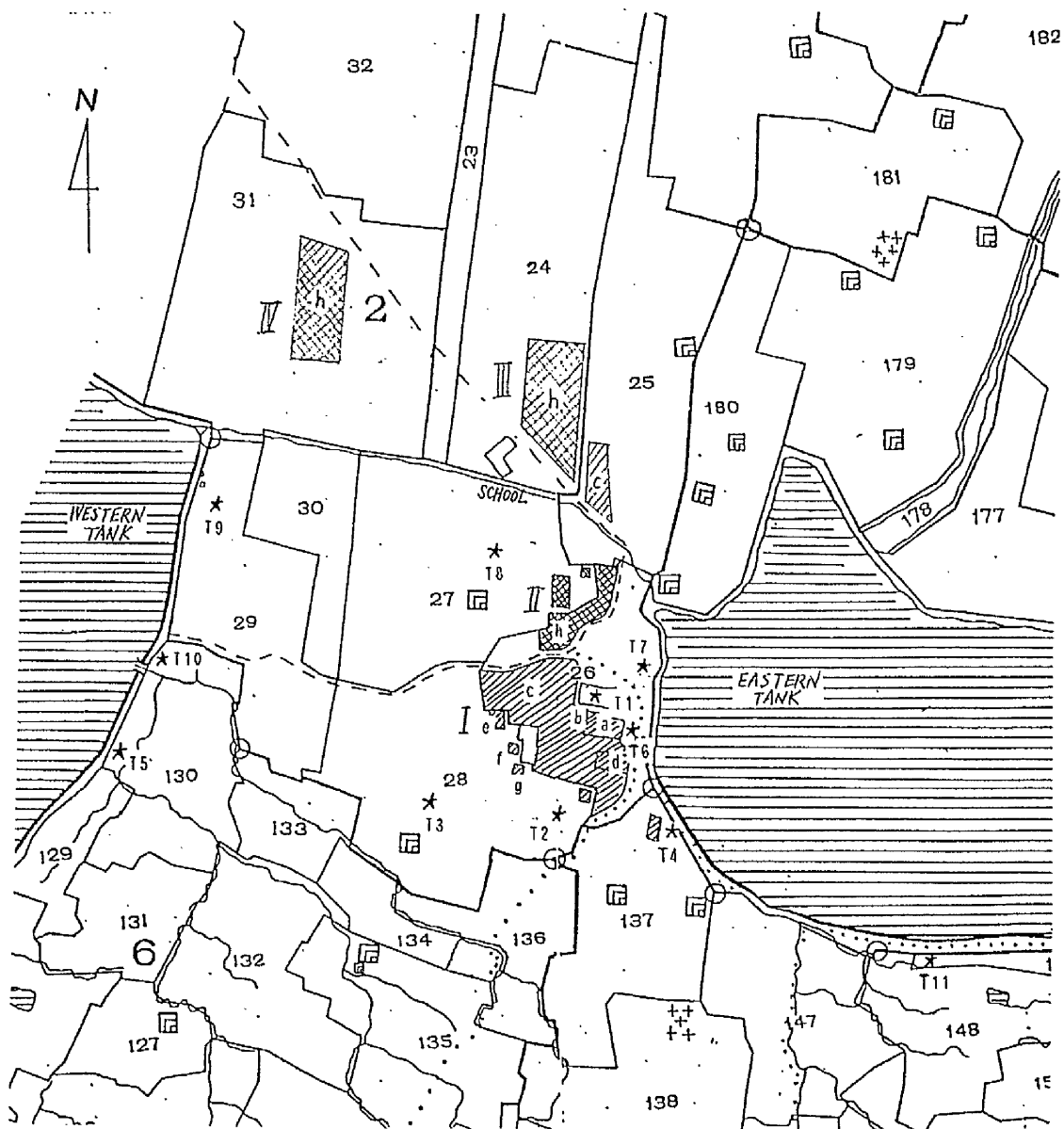
2.3 Caste Relationships

Though the Kinnimangalam hamlet consists of only eight 'castes' (more precisely speaking, 'subcastes')[19], fourteen kinds of castes are found in the panchayat village (see Table 2.3). Furthermore, if I asked a knowledgeable person, such as Balasubramanian, what kind of castes are found in the wider area, such as Tirumangalam taluk to which Kinnimangalam belongs, I would get a list of caste names, as shown in Table 2.5, which includes the names of 41 subcastes. Nonetheless, the so-called *jajmānī* relationships[20] (see section 2.3.2-(1)) found in the Kinnimangalam hamlet involve 17 castes, listed in Table 2.6. As is noted in Tables 2.3 and 2.6, eight castes out of these seventeen castes live in the Kinnimangalam hamlet, and another three castes, Kucavar, Ampattan and Cakkiliyar, are present in the adjacent hamlets of the Kinnimangalam panchayat village. Therefore, villagers get the services of the remaining six castes from the outside of the panchayat village, mainly from Chekkanurani town. Thus, today's modified *jajmānī* relationships of the Kinnimangalam hamlet are almost confined within the area between the hamlet and Chekkanurani.

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[19] I basically follow Kolenda's definition of caste and subcaste [Kolenda 1978: Ch.1].

[20] I also hesitate to use the concept *jajmānī* system naively so that I adopt, for convenience's sake, the term *jajmānī* relationships as an analytical concept, according to the suggestions of Fuller [1989: 41] and of Good [1982].

Table 2.5 Castes (sub-castes) in the Tirumangalam area

caste	traditional occupation	ritual status
Aiyar(Smartha Brahman)*	Priest	
Aiyaṅkār(Vaishnava Brahman)	Priest	
Celarāṣṭirar	Weaver	
Kārkāttār(Pillai)	Farmer	High
Vīrakōṭi(Pillai)	Farmer	
Ceṭṭiyār	Merchant	
Kāraikkattār(Pillai)***	Farmer	
Tuḷuvavēlāḷar	Farmer	
Illattuppiḷḷai(Pillai)	Farmer	
Koṭikkāppiḷḷai(Pillai)	Farmer	
Kollācāri(Ācari)*	Blacksmith	Higher-
Taṭṭācāri(Acari)*	Goldsmith	Middle
Taccuācāri(Acari)***	Carpenter	
Kallācāri(Acari)*	Mason	
Piramalaikkaḷḷar***	Farmer, Watchman	
Maṟavar	Farmer	
Akampaṭiyār	Farmer	
Cērvai	Farmer	
Nāyakkar	Farmer, King, Musician	
Reṭṭiyār	Farmer	Lower-
Kavuṇtar	Farmer	Middle
Mukamatiyar	?	
Kōṉār	Herdsman	
(Kiṟittuvar)	Christian	
Paṇṭāram***	Non-Brahman Priest, Florist	
Kaṇṇār(Īyampūcumācāri)	Brazier	
Cattiriya Nāṭār***	Merchant	
Maram ēri Nāṭār	Toddy-tapper	
Tōṭṭakkāra Nāṭār	Farm labourer	
Vaḷḷuvaṉ*	Priest for Harijans	Low
Kucavan(Vēḷālar)*	Potter	
Vaṇṇāṉ***	Washerman	
Kuṟavaṉ***	Basket maker	
Vaḷaiyar(Muppar)	Catcher of small animals	
Ampaṭṭaṉ*	Barber	
Oṭṭāṉ	Stone-cutter	
Pallar	Farm labourer	
Paṟaiyar***	Farm labourer, Tomtom-beater	
Cakkiliyar*	Leatherworker	Harijan
Potaravaṇṇāṉ*	Washerman/Barber for Harijans	
Narikkuṟavaṉ	Gypsy	

(***: being present in the Kinnimangalam hamlet, *: trading from adjacent villages or towns)

Table 2.6 Caste composition of Kinnimangalam

caste	no. of household	traditional occupation	traditional position
<inside the Kinnimangalam hamlet>			
[Caste Hindus]			
Piḷḷai	3	Landlord	village *muncīf* accountant
Kaḷḷar	202	Landlord Watchman Herdsman	
Paṇṭāram	1	Temple priest Florist Landlord of temple land	*pūcāri*
Taccuācāri	10	Carpenter Landlord	
Nāṭār	10	Merchant Toddy-tapper Landlord	
Vaṇṇāṉ	7	Washerman	
Kuṟavaṉ	1	Basket maker	sweeper
[Harijans]			
Paṟaiyar	174	Tomtom-beater Farm labourer	*talaiyāri*, *tōṭṭi*, *maṭaiyaṉ* (menial workers)
total	408		

<outside the Kinnimangalam hamlet>	
[Caste Hindus]	
Aiyar(Brahman)	Domestic priest
Kollācāri	Blacksmith
Taṭṭācāri	Goldsmith
Kallācāri	Mason
Kucavaṉ*	Potter
Ampaṭṭaṉ*	Barber
Vaḷḷuvaṉ	Priest for Harijans Astrologer
[Harijans]	
Cakkiliyar*	Leather worker
Potaravaṇṇāṉ	Washerman and Barber for Harijans

(*: inside the Kinnimangalam Panchayat village)
Note: The Valluvans are often regarded as one of the
Harijans by Caste Hindus.

Table 2.5 shows caste names in the descending order of caste ranking which is given by the Pillais, the ritually highest caste in the village, though the order is not always accepted by other castes (see Table 7.2). For the sake of convenience, I will briefly describe 15 castes involved in the present arguments, according to the order given by the Pillais.

2.3.1 The profiles of castes

(1) The Aiyars (the Smartha Brahmans)

In the Tirumangalam area, two kinds of Brahmans, Aiyar as the Saivites and Aiyankar as the Vaishnavites, are usually recognized by Non-Brahman people. Aiyar in this area can be classified as the Smarta, who recognise Trimurti [Thurston et al. 1987(1909): Vol.1, 269], or who worship both Siva and Vishnu but regard Siva as the Supreme being [Gough 1981: 28]. As in Thanjavur [Gough 1981: 28-29], in this area, the Telugu Brahmans are employed as domestic priests basically by the Sanskritized Non-Brahmans, such as

the Pillais and the Acaris[21]. Thus, the Non-Brahmanical tendency of the village is demonstrated by the fact that only about 3% (13/408) of the villagers to some extent have a stable connection with the Aiyars.

(2) The Pillais (Vellalars)

The Pillais or the Vellalars are one of the typical agricultural castes, which spread across the whole of Tamil Nadu. Their own explanations (see Table 2.5) and the description of Thurston et al. make it clear that the Pillais of the hamlet can be identified as the Karkattar subcaste, one subdivision of the Pandya Vellalars [Thurston et al. 1981: Vol.7, 373-375]. In the village sphere, the village Pillais as *nāṭṭāṇmai* (village *muncīf*) and as *karṇam* (village accountant) have enjoyed the highest social position both ritually and politico-economically. Even after the abolition of the system of *nāṭṭāṇmai* and *karṇam*, they successfully proceeded to higher status professions, such as station master, governmant official, school teacher etc.. It is also a clear difference between the Pillais and other village castes that they have conducted distant marriages (see section 2.5) and therefore hold a Tamil Nadu-wide

[21]According to Gough [Gough 1981: 24-5], a subcaste of the Brahman Kurukkal which is engaged as priests of Siva temples is given a lower status than other non-priestly subcastes of the Smartha Brahmans because of their priesthood (see [Fuller 1984: 50-51]). The status of domestic priests serving non-Brahmans, like the Telugu Brahmans, is lower than that of the *castiri* serving his same caste, the Brahmans.

social network ranging from South Arcot to Tirunelveli. This means, however, that their lineage unity is very loose and is almost dismembered into individual families.

(3) The Piramalai Kallars

The Kallars are said to be a subdivision of the *Mukkulattōr* (the people of three clans), which consists of the Kallars, the Maravars and the Akampatiyars [Natarajan 1978: 29]. Among the Kallars, there are two separate endogamous groups, *Kīl Nāttu Kallar* (the Eastern Country Kallars) and *Mēl Nāttu Kallar* (the Western Country Kallars), which are roughly separated by the Nagamalai hills. Whereas the former group is sometimes called *Īcā Nāttu Kallar* (the North-Eastern Country Kallars), the latter, who inhabit the western side of the Nagamalai, is usually addressed as *Piramalai Kallar*.[22] It is said that the name Kallar is derived from the Tamil word "kallan" which means thief [Natarajan 1978: 34-35]. The Kallars do not mind this interpretation and rather tend to be proud of their reputed braveness. As is suggested by this, they are relatively less sophisticated and less Sanskritized and are, therefore, not regarded as a ritually high caste, though there is no doubt

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[22]The difference between *Kīl Nāttu Kallar* and *Piramalai Kallar* is marked by their different titles. Whereas the former has the title *Ampalam*, the latter holds the title *Tēvār*. There are several opinions as to the origin of the name *Piramalai* [Natarajan 1978: 32].

that they have dominant power politico-economically. They are still classified into the Other Backward Class (OBC)[23] by the government. Unlike the Pillais, the Kallars attach importance to their lineage unity, which will be further clarified in Chapter 8.

(4) The Acaris (The Taccuacaris)

Acari or Kammalar who originates from Kannalar [Thurston et al. 1987: Vol.3, 106] denotes any of the five kinds of artisan castes, that is Kollacari (blacksmith), Taccuacari (carpenter), Kallacari (mason), Tattacari (goldsmith) or Kannar/Iyampucumacari (brazier). The Acaris living in Kinnimangalam are the Taccuacari so that villagers must get the services of the other four sections of the artisan trade from outside the village, especially from Chekkanurani. Their mythology claims that the Acaris are descendents of *Vicuva-karumā* (Skt. *Viśvakarmā*, the greatest architect of the cosmos since Rig-veda)[24]. As is suggested by this and is indicated by their wearing *pūṇūl* (a sacred string), the village Acaris are far more Sanskritized than the dominant caste Kallars. The Brahmanical tendency of the

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[23]Under its protection policy, the government has set up several social categories such as that of the Backward Classes (BC), which consists of Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST).

[24]Their caste association *Vicuva-karumā Toḻilāḻarkaḷ Cankam* holds the temple of Kamatciyamman.

is originally derived from their profession as house-

constructors, which requires them to study a treatise of

Table 2.7 Numbers of clients of the Acaris

Acari persons clients	A2		A7				no service
	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	
[The Kinnimangalam hamlet] (caste)(lineage)							
Kallar Kecavan	4	6	1	7	5	1	0
Kamanan	2	3	0	8	6	1	0
Cattayi	11	6	1	2	3	0	5
Panniyan	16	10	8	13	7	3	5
Kattapinnai	0	1	5	5	3	2	1
Cuntara-I	5	7	0	1	0	4	0
Cuntara-II	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
Conai	0	4	0	2	0	3	0
Kanni	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Cetti	0	0	0	1	2	1	0
Tarakan	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Cataci	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Veriyan	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
(total of Kallar)	(38)	(41)	(15)	(44)	(26)	(17)	(14)
Pillai	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Pantaram	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Natar	0	0	1	3	0	1	4
Acari	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Vannan	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Kuravan	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total-I	39	41	16	50	26	18	26
	80		110				
[Other adjacent hamlets] (hamlet)							
Putumangalam	20	0	0	0	5	10	
Minakucipatti	0	0	15	0	0	0	
Mavelipatti	5	0	0	0	0	0	
Cikkanpatti	5	0	0	0	0	0	
Total-II	30	0	15	0	5	10	
TOTAL(I+II)	69	41	31	50	31	28	
	110		140				

architecture (for example, *maṉaiyaṭi cāstiram*) systematized

in the Sanskritic tradition. As shown in Table 2-7, the six

active carpenters out of the ten households each have client

families, who are allotted by almost equally dividing their

father's clients among the sons residing in the village.[25]

It is known that their clients consist mainly of the Caste

Hindus of the Kinnimangalam hamlet. Apart from these *jajmānī*

relationships, the Paraiyars (the Harijans) who hold land

can obtain the services of the Acaris if they pay in cash

for each piece of work. This means that the Acaris do

carpenter work for the Paraiyars as *vēlai*[26], not as *tolịl*

which is rewarded on the threshing floor, on annual

occasions or in the domestic ceremonies of the life

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[25]A2 and A7 have 6 brothers, but their other brothers
left the village. As a result, A2 and A7 divided their
father's clients roughly in half. The fact that the number
of each Acaris' clients is not exactly the same suggests
that there are other factors which cause this difference.
The main factors are the skill by which they acquire their
reputation and declining health which reduces their number
of clients.

[26]This is different from Moffatt's explanation in
which the Acaris come to the colony to perform their *toṟil*s
[Moffatt 1979: 96].

course.[27] In this connection, it should be noted that the rewards in the *jajmānī* relationships are not enough for them to support themselves and their families so that the village Acaris are engaged in working as carpenters outside the village to earn cash. They also manage farms for themselves.

(5) The Pantarams

It is said that Pantaram was originally the name of an occupation, and was later recognized as one of the caste names. They tend to affiliate to Siva temples and there engage in making garlands for decorating Sivalinga, and in blowing brazen trumpets when offerings are made or processions are organized [Thurston et al. 1987: Vol.6, 45]. Though the Pantarams have occupied the position of assisting in Siva temples, at the village level they very often work as priests (*pūcāris*) of the village temple. This is the case in Kinnimangalam. The head of the Pantaram household engages

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[27]The definitions of *vēlai* and *tolil* in Kinnimangalam are as follows: *tolil* is one's hereditary job associated with special skills or knowledge, and *vēlai* generally refers to all jobs except *tolil* and rather connotes simple labour which does not always require special knowledge. According to Good, "*Vēlai* refers to job in the normal western sense, namely one's actual, current paid employment. *Tolil* refers to one's hereditary, caste-specific speciality, which one may or may not follow in practice." [Good 1982: 26]. He points out that "Work in the sense of *vēlai* seems therefore to be external to oneself", but this is not the case with *tolil* [ibid: 26]. The use of these terms in Kinnimangalam seems to be slightly different from that in Good's case in terms of the dichotomy of the skilled and the unskilled found between *tolil* and *vēlai*. Moffatt's definition emphasizes the aspect of "right" which *tolil* holds and connect *tolil* with caste ranking [Moffatt 1979: 91].

in the *pūcāri* of the biggest village temple *Ēkanātarcuvami*
Ālayam (or *kōvil*). He is given the right of cultivation of
the *kōvil māniyam* (land donated to a temple)[28] for his
management of the temple. The social status of this Pantaram
family in the village is ambiguous. Whereas the villagers
show respect to the *pūcāri* because he plays the role of
their village priest and he is a man of knowledge, the
villagers' conventional underestimation of the Pantaram
caste in general works to degrade his status.

(6) The Natars

The Natars are very famous as a typical caste who have
succeeded in socially raising themselves through the
exhaustive effort of the whole caste. The process of their
social rise, which took place at the beginning of 19th
century under British colonial rule, is well described by
Hardgrave [Hardgrave 1969]. The Natars, who originally
resided in the Tirunelveli area, migrated into Madurai or
Ramnad and there accumulated their economic stocks
especially through the trade of palmyra sugar, and they
ultimately succeeded in establishing their socio-political
position in the social circumstance resulting from British
rule. As a result, they were split into two different
groups, the traditional Natars mainly engaging in toddy-

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[28]The *kōvil māniyam* consist of 14 acres of *puncey*
(non-irrigagted land) and 2 acres of *nancey* (irrigated
land). The *pūcāri* has the biggest lands in the village
today, because other big landoweners have been dissolved.

tapping in the Tirunelveli area[29], and the Natars of the
Madurai or Ramnad areas who are active in the commercial
field. It is judged that the Natars of Kinnimangalam belong
to the latter group. In this respect, the village Natars are
not fully involved in the village social structure, because
they tend to depend upon the outside economy, even if they
hold some land in the village. Although nowadays the Natars
are administratively classified into the BC, as are the
Kallars, other castes do not always accept the social status
which the Natars themselves claim, because they stick to the
view that the Natars were originally a very low caste,
almost equal to the Untouchables.

(7) The Vannans

There are seven Vannan households in the village,
whose houses are located at the south-west corner of *ur*
(cluster I). Donkeys with their forelegs tied are an
indication of Vannans' residence. Though they classify
themselves into the second-graded subcaste Pantiya Vannans
among the five subcastes, they prefer the name *Ekāli* rather
than Vannan because they feel that the former is more
dignified[30]. The Vannans are obviously one of the main
service castes, indispensable for the *jajmānī* relationships

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[29]The Natars as toddy-tapper was rather known as the
Canar, whose status was just above that of the Untouchables.

[30]According to the village Vannans, they also have
other honorific names, such as Irkuli Vellala and Rajakan.

so that, as shown in Table 2-8, they have a strong relation
with the dominant castes, like the Kallars and the Pillais
and their activities are basically confined to the hamlet.
Since out of seven households, one household (V4) left the
village and another (V1) retired due to advanced age, only
five Vannans actually engage in the services of washermen.[31]

Table 2.8 Numbers of clients of the Vannans

Vannan		V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	no
clients	person								service
(caste)	(lineage)								
Kallar	Kecavan	0	4	2	0	4	7	5	0
	Kamanan	0	6	6	0	1	6	0	0
	Cattayi	0	14	6	0	4	0	1	3
	Panniyan	0	18	19	0	14	9	1	0
	Kattapinnai	0	2	6	0	9	0	1	0
	Cuntara-I	0	5	5	0	7	0	0	1
	Cuntara-II	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0
	Conai	0	1	0	0	1	9	0	0
	Kanni	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
	Cettikulam	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
	Tarakan	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Cataci	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
	Veriyan	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	(subtotal)	(0)	(55)	(50)	(0)	(45)	(32)	(9)	(4)
Pillai		0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Pantaram		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Acari		0	4	0	0	0	6	0	0
Natar		0	1	3	0	2	0	0	4
Vannan		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Kuravan		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL		0	61	55	0	47	39	9	16

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[31]The youngest Vannan, No.7, has only 9 clients
because he is engaged mainly in agricultural labour, whereas
the other four Vannans make a living by being washermen.

They do not give their services to the Ampattans (barber),
the Kuravans (basket maker) and the Harijans because these
castes are regarded as lower castes than the Vannans. The
essential function of the Vannans is to carry out ritual
roles rather than the usual laundry work. Moreover, there is
general recognition that the Vannans are the holders of
magical power.[32] Even if the village Vannans were replaced
by the town laundry service for secular washing under the
ongoing process of urbanization, they would still play an
important role in the ritual sphere in the village. The
split between *vēlai* (secular sense of work which is paid in
cash each time) and *tolil* (traditional work as a calling
which is rewarded by the year) will become more distinct in
the course of time. Even today, the village Vannans as the
kamin type of service caste engaging in their *tolil* are
deeply involved in conventional *jajmānī* relationships,
showing their extensive dependence upon the dominant castes.
For example, it is clearly only the Vannans who collect
cooked food from their patron-clients (the households of the
dominant castes) every morning and evening, which is part of
their reward. This point is also described by Good as an

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[32]This recognition has been reinforced by men who are
exorcists, medicine men and sorcerers, and women who are
midwives being relatively commonly found in the Vannan
caste. The late grandfather of the present active village
Vannans was such a powerful person, and he had a good
command of various *mantras*.

indication of *kuṭimakan* ('son of the village') [Good 1982: 28].

(8) The Ampattans

The villagers of Kinnimangalam obtain services from eight Ampattans living in the adjacent hamlets, or from 12 barber salons in Chekkanurani. Whereas most of the villagers go to Chekkanurani for haircuts, they tend to invite the Ampattans of the adjacent hamlets for ritual purposes. In particular, their role in the funeral ceremony is highly important. On the occasion of a birth, the Ampattan wife helps in the delivery as a midwife. In this manner, the Ampattans, like the Vannans, carry out the indispensible role of removing pollution. Today the division between *vēlai* and *toḻil* is also found in the case of the Ampattans. Although there is a report which states that the original occupation of the Ampattans was as medicine men, today barber work tends to come to the fore and supercede the aspects of medicine men or magicians (see [Thurston et al. 1987: Vol.1, 32, 39-40]). As is shown by the fact that haircutting causes *Ampaṭṭan tīṭṭu* (barber's pollution), their social status is very low. Generally speaking, the villagers regard the Ampattans as a lower caste than the Vannans, because they believe that the Ampattans are more likely to directly touch a polluting body, especially the lower half

of the body.[33] In the aspect of *tolil*, there is no doubt
that the Ampattans are again deeply involved in *jajmānī*
relationships. To the extent that they are involved in their
traditional rights and duties, they have to be placed in a
lower position of the social hierarchical ladder.

(9) The Kuravans

Only one household of the Kuravans lives in
Kinnimangalam. The head of the family is hired as the
village sweeper by the Kinnimangalam village panchayat
(salary - Rs 150/month), though the traditional occupation
of his caste is basket making. Besides sweeping work as his
main duty and his side work of basket making, this Kuravan
servant sometimes takes part in ear-piercing ceremonies or
supplies a special string made of the stems of palm leaves
for tying the joint of an agricultural tool, due to his
traditional skills in dealing with grasses and leaves. It is
said that the Kuravans are probably one of the early tribes
of Southern India. It is well known that they do not mind
eating meat and drinking alchohol. They are also famous for
eating cat's meat. When I asked the village Kuravan directly
of his preferred order of various kinds of meats, he
answered very frankly as follows: 1) goat, 2) sheep, 3)cat,

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[33]Attending funerals, shaving the pubic hair of the
Kallars and conducting circumcisions degrade the status of
the barber.

4) pig 5) hen or cock, 6) fish, 7) cow or bull.[34] It is very impressive that he did not show any feelings of shame about eating cat's meat, and that he put beef at the last of his preferred order. His straightforward attitude toward eating cat's meat can be explained by the fact that his position in the village is not a hereditary one, but is a contract-based one, so that he is somewhat free from the constraints of the village social structure. Nonetheless, it seems to me that his attitude to beef-eating demonstrates his competitive feeling toward the Paraiyars (Harijans).

(10) The Kucavans

There are no Kucavans in Kinnimangalam, but there are 7 households in Puvaracampatti. The traditional profession of this caste is pottery. Today it is more important for the Kucavans to provide pots and plates for religious or ceremonial purposes at no charge to the villagers with whom they are involved, because nowadays villagers can buy vessels for secular use in towns. It is also notable that the Kucavans make the deity statues for the annual festival and they often hold the office of the priest of the village goddess, such as Muttalamman (see Chapter 4). They are very conscious of their social status and are keen on claiming higher status than that which they actually enjoy.

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[34]The preferred meat order given by the usual non-vegetarian villager is: 1) goat or sheep, 2) hen or cock, 3) fish. Compared with the Kuravan's list, we can easily see the singularity of the Kuravans.

(11) The Paraiyars

The Paraiyars numerically occupy the dominant
position, after the Kallars in this village. Most of them,
however, as a dominated caste, engage in agricultural
labour. Though the Paraiyars as *atimaikārans* were originally
more deeply involved with the landlords of the dominant
castes[35], today they are usually employed as *kūliyāls* and
partly as *pannaikārans* in the sense defined in footnote 13
of the previous section. The agricultural labour, which they
engage in as *atimaikāran*, is a quasi-*tolil* for the Paraiyars
of Kinnimangalam. The Paraiyars have, as Moffatt notes, five
distinct roles as their original *tolils*: 1) *parai* drummers,
2) cattle scavengers, 3) cremation ground attendants, 4)
varayan announcers and 5) village watchmen [Moffatt 1979:
111]. These roles are valid for the Paraiyars of
Kinnimangalam and are indispensable for village life.
Whereas the Paraiyars are regarded as people holding the
unusual powers of being able to chase evil and of managing
pollution, the dominant castes see them as a heavily
polluted caste, basically due to their traditional calling
dealing with death pollution and the custom of beef-eating.
However, as far as today's village Paraiyars are concerned,
they tend to, in practice, look upon these works not as

[35]There is a hereditary connection between the Cattayi
lineage (the Kallars) and the Cinnananti lineage (the
Paraiyars), and one between the Kamanan lineage (the
Kallars) and the Urkaran lineage (the Paraiyars).

their *tolil* but rather as their *vēlai* by which they can earn
their basic living (see footnote 27 about the basic
definitions of *vēlai* and of *tolil*). This viewpoint of the
Paraiyars seems to reflect the mental detachment of the
Paraiyars from the dominant ideology which has confined them
to a repressed position under the name of *tolil*.[36] In
Kinnimangalam, the above mentioned *tolil*s are jointly
carried out under the responsibilty of menial village
servants called *tōtti* (grave-digger, cattle scavenger,
cremation ground attendant and messenger) and *mataiyan*
(caretaker of the sluice of the village tank), which are the
offices allotted to the Paraiyars and held in turn every
year by members of the different lineages.[37] Besides this,
talaiyāri, traditionally an assistant of the village *muncīf*,
who is chosen from the Paraiyars, is today appointed as a
menial government servant to assist the V.A.O..

Generally speaking, there is no doubt that the
Harijans today are quite conscious of their status, which is
a result of social discrimination. It is said that their

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[36]For example, as Moffatt notes, the dominant ideology
claims that to carry out *tolil* seriously is an action of
dharma. [Moffatt 1979: 92, fn12]

[37]Though the Paraiyar community of Kinnimangalam
consists of five major lineages, as is described in section
2.4, it is their traditional custom that *tōtti* must be
selected from one of the following three lineages: the
Kartananti, the Cinnananti and the Urkalan. The *mataiyan* is
chosen from the Mataiyan lineage. The office of *tōtti* is
rotated among these three lineages every year, in order that
each lineage can equally enjoy the privileges of *tōtti*.

social awakening has progressed remarkably since 1946, when

Congress came to power [Moffatt 1979: 80]. The Harijans have

acquired a much better position than that which they held

previously, due to administrative efforts under the

protection policy for the Harijans, even though this change

is still not sufficient, especially in the villages[38]. It is

of particular practical importance that the *Tīṇṭāmai Oḻippu*

Kāvalnilaiyam (the special police for the abolition of

Untouchability) and the *Tīṇṭāmai Oḻippu Aluvalakam* (the

section for abolition of Untouchability) of the District

Office were set up under the Untouchability (Offence) Act,

promulgated in 1955. The fear of being arrested under the

Act has much suppressed the crude persecution of the

Harijans. In this respect, it is very interesting that the

Paraiyars, who have suffered from discrimination based upon

Brahmanical "pure-impure" ideology, have myths explaining

their caste origin in which brotherhood between the Brahmans

and the Paraiyars is claimed (see Appendix A). Even though

the myth narrating their caste origin as having fallen from

the status of the Brahmans is broadly shared by the

Paraiyars, it should not be overlooked that they feel that

verbalising this myth will not help them to change their low

status. The village Paraiyars thus rather try to follow

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[38]The Paraiyars of Kinnimangalam are still not allowed
to draw water from the well of the Caste Hindus, to enter
the temples of *ūr* (the residential cluter of the caste
Hindus), or to enter the houses of the higher castes. Cross-
caste marriage between the Paraiyars and the Caste Hindus is
still strongly prohibited. See Appendix C.

their own paths and to minimise their contact with the dominant castes, as long as they are not intolerably disturbed by them.

(12) The Potaravannans

The Potaravannans are traditionally washermen and barbers serving exclusively the Paraiyars. Until about 50 years ago they were thought of as the Unseeables, people lower than the Untouchables. One Potaravannan moved from Kinnimangalam to Chekkanurani six years ago, but he still comes to the village if necessary. Compared with the service castes for the Caste Hindus, Moffatt points out three roles of the Potaravannans for the Harijans, the roles performed by the Vannan washerman, the Ampattan barber and the Vettaikaran *pūcāri*, [Moffatt 1979: 132], which support his theory that the Paraiyars replicate the position of the dominant caste. The role of Vettaikaran *pūcāri* is not directly recognized in Kinnimangalam [ibid: 136], but it is played by the lineage *pūcāris* of the core lineages of the Paraiyars. A Paraiyar elder, Mokkaiyan explains the relationship between the Paraiyars and the Potaravannans as follows: "They (the Potaravannans) are lower than us because they cannot live without depending upon us. This is exactly the same as the situation where we are seen as a lower caste than the Kallars because of our economic dependence on them." It is important here that the Paraiyars do not explain the low status of the Potaravannans by means of

ritual pollution. It seems to me that this rational attitude found among the village Paraiyars, in which caste hierarchy is interpreted as the differential of economic power, cautions against Moffatt's hasty conclusion.

(13) The Valluvans

The Valluvans play the priest's role for the Harijans, which is comparable to the Brahman priesthood for the Caste Hindus. Therefore, the Caste Hindus often regard the Valluvans as the highest-ranking Untouchables, although this view is not always accepted by either the Valluvans themselves or by the village Paraiyars.[39] In so far as Kinnimangalam is concerned, the relationship between the Paraiyars and the Valluvan priest is rather limited, compared with the case of Endavur [Moffatt 1979: 102-9].[40] In this sense, compared with Moffatt's case, the Paraiyars

[39]The village Paraiyars simply regard the Valluvans as Harijans and do not have a clear idea that the Valluvans, as priests, are higher than them. This is different from what Moffatt reports [Moffatt 1979: 102]. However, the Valluvans strongly reject being categorized with the Harijans, because they are proud of their 'clean' life in which they follow a Brahman type of life style.

[40]The occasions on which the Valluvan priest is invited by the Paraiyars are 1) the sixteenth day ceremony of a funeral, called *karumāti* (the ceremony for sending the soul of the dead to Heaven) 2) the thirtieth day ceremony of a funeral in the case of the death of the *pūcāri* (a lineage priest) or of the *cāmiāṭi* (a shaman possessed by a particular god or goddess) and 3) the simple ceremony of purification for cooking vessels at the beginning of the marriage ceremony. The first occasion is not always observed by most Paraiyars, an exception being made in the case of an influential person. The second occasion is only for *pūcāri* and *cāmiāṭi*.

in Kinnimangalam show far more self-sufficiency, being dependent on kinship rather than on caste relationships (see Chapter 7). The Valluvans are also famous for being *cōtiṭārs* (astrologers). As *cōtiṭārs*, the Valluvans have contact not only with the Harijans but also with the Caste Hindus. The traditional connection of the Valluvans with the dominant castes is found at harvest time, when a Valluvan visits the threshing fields of the dominant castes and sings paeans to the gods in celebration in order to acquire auspiciousness. For this margical act, the landowner rewards him with a small amount of crops (see section 2.3.2).

(14) The Cakkiliyars

There is no Cakkiliyar in the Kinnimangalam hamlet, but there are 40 households in neighbouring Mavelipatti. They are regarded as one of the Harijans because their traditional profession of leatherwork (not the tanning) is defined as polluting work. In the past their *jajmānī* relationships involved them making or mending *kamalaittōl* (a leather bag for drawing water from a well), but this work has become unnecessary as a result of the recent introduction of an engine pump. Another traditional job, the covering of the drumhead of a *tampaṭṭam* (a kind of small drum), is still dependent on their skill. Whereas the former job of supplying a leather bag was rewarded with a yearly payment in kind, the latter is paid for in cash each time.

In the standard opinion both of the Caste Hindus and of the Paraiyars, status ranking becomes lower in the following descending order; the Pallars, the Paraiyars, the Cakkiliyars and the Potaravannans. It is noted that this is different from Moffatt's case [Moffatt 1979: 140-143].

(15) The Narikkuravans

The Narikkuravans are a Gypsy-like wandering group, who are said to be one of the subcastes of the Kuravans. For example, Tamil Lexicon defines the Narikkuravans as a people of the Kurava sub-caste who hunt jackals for food. This claim makes the sedentary Kuravans lose face because the wandering Narikkuravan are regarded as a more unclean caste than the Harijans, so that other Kuravans are afraid of being degraded by the negative image of the Narikkuravans. Not only their appearance of uncleanliness, but also their alleged habit of not caring about eating other people's leftovers, are raised by the sedentary villagers as the reasons why the Narikkuravan are looked upon as the most polluting people. I can guess that their own view is different from that of the villagers, but I do not, regretably have such data.[41]

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[41]I have heard that they have a strict regulation that they will allow a woman to go out in the daytime but that she must come back home before sunset. If she fails to observe this rule, she will be punished by caste banishment. This suggests that they have their own independent moral-code.

2.3.2 On the threshing floor

(1) The *jajmānī* relationship

It should be noted that there is no inclusive Tamil expression corresponding to the "*jajmānī* system", which has been used by South Asianists, as if it were a universal concept, since Wiser [1958(1936)]. It is reasonable that Good asks, "Is this notion applicable to parts of India which lack the actual word '*jajmānī*'?" [Good 1982: 24], in order to challenge the notion of the "*jajmānī* system". Good ultimately dismisses the notion of "*jajamānī* system" as a universal concept and claims that the "*jajmānī* relationship (not a system)" in a limited sense can be used as an aspect of the broader prestations found in village life [Good 1978: 250-251].[42] In so far as Kinnimangalam is concerned, *kuṭi urimai* (literally, tenants' right) seems to refer to some aspect of the *jajmānī* relationship, especially from the standpoint of the service castes called *kuṭimakkaḷ*. Whereas the service castes of the Caste Hindus, such as the Acaris and the Vannans, are called *kuṭiyānavarkaḷ*, the service people of the Paraiyars were designated *aṭimaikāraṉ* or

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[42]Raheja who studies prestations in a North Indian village seems to share a similar view as Good that the *jajmānī* relationships should be placed in the broader sense of prestations [Raheja 1988: 13]. However, Raheja criticizes Fuller by saying that he should not too quickly "dismiss the possibility that the ensemble of *jajmānī* relationships constitutes a culturally meaningful entity" [Raheja 1988: 25] (cf. [Fuller 1977] and [Fuller 1989]).

aṭimaipparaiyan, these terms recently being replaced by the term *paṇṇaikāraṉ*. There is, however, no word equivalent to *jajmān* which holds not only the connotation of landlord but also that of *yajamāna* (sacrificer or institutor of a sacrifice), though the words *nilaccuvāṉtār* or *nilattukkārar*, which simply mean a landlord, could refer to a patron (see also [Good 1978: 245] and [Good 1982: 32]). *Kallarkaḷ* or *Tevārkaḷ* is useful in practice for indicating a patron because the Kallars form the majority of the dominant castes in Kinnimangalam. This expression comes a little close to *jajmān*. In everyday conversation, the expression of "*enka* (our) ..." is used more naturally when the landowning patron and the people of the service castes directly refer to each other. Such an expression, which evokes a feeling of involvement in the minds of both the speaker and the listener, conveys the hereditary inter-dependence between the dominant castes and the service castes, that is to say, the *jajmānī* relationships.[43]

It is recognized that the ritual aspect of *tolil* of the service castes still persists in village life, even since urbanization [Commander 1983: 310]. This reveals that the *jajmānī* relationship has a ritual aspect.[44] It seems to

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[43]This reminds me of Raheja's report that *phaslana* (harvest prestation) is given to the service castes holding "one's own" relationship with the *jajmāns* [Raheja 1988: 204-205].

me that the *jajmānī* relationships found in Kinnimangalam, in which the Kallars dominate the village community as patrons and the Pantaram priest and other service castes carry out their ritual roles, is regarded as a much modified example of a Hocartian understanding of the *jajmānī* relationship, namely, the view of the king-centred religious relationship. Dumont's model, which claims that the *jajmānī* system is a Brahman priest-centred institution, would not be valid for the Kinnimangalam case. Firstly, the relationship between the Kallars and the Pantaram priest does not embody that of *jajmān* and *purohita*. Secondly, the primary values of the Kallars is not "pure-impure" ideology but "pollution" ideology, as will be gradually clarified. In this sense, Raheja's argument, which basically follows the Hocartian view, seems to be important [Raheja 1988]. She elucidates the horizontal dimension of the village structure with her theories of "centrality" and of "mutuality" on the basis of

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[44]As is well known, there is a debate between a group which regards the ritual relationship as fundamental and another group which understands the *jajmānī* system as an economic institution. The former group includes two streams, the Hocartian [Hocart 1950] and the Dumontian [Dumont 1966]. The Hocartians claim that Brahman (Skt. *purohita*) and *kamīn* are similar in terms of "priestly" duties, whereas the Dumontians exclusively attach importance to the relationship between *purohita* and *jajmān* [Raheja 1988: 25-26]. The latter group again holds two different standpoints [Prinde 1977: 288]. One standpoint, which can be called the exploitative theory, emphasizes the coercive force of the dominant caste and the irrationality of payments (e.g. [Beidelman 1959], [Berreman 1962] and [Mencher 1974]). The other group evaluates the "economizing" aspect and recognizes the bargaining power of the *kamīn*'s side (e.g. [Wiser 1936] and Leach [1960]). See also [Kolenda 1963].

concepts of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness. As has already been noted in section 1.2, I basically admire her stimulating theory which has the challenging aim of criticising the conventional understanding of village structure, which has been strongly limited by the concept of the Brahman-centred "pure-impure" hierarchy. I share her viewpoint, which embodies the concepts of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness, in developing my argument of the egalitarian concept of "pollution", which attaches importance to "productivity" (see [Das 1977: Ch.4 & 5] and [Marglin 1985]).

The problem, however, lies in Raheja's understanding retaining the bias of a top-down view. As a result, she tends to emphasize the harmonious aspects of the *jajmānī* relationship[45].

(2) Prestations at the paddy harvesting

I provide here a standard example of the prestations associated with paddy cultivation, which are made by a large Kallar landlord. First, at the time of making a rice nursery (*nārraṅkāl*) in the month of *Puraṭṭāci* (Sept.-Oct.), one *mukkai* (three handfuls) of paddy is given to the service

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[45]It seems to me that Raheja underestimates the politico-economic power of the dominant caste by which the ritual aspect of the *jajmānī* relationship is supported in practice. This indicates that her analytical point of view and the dominant caste-centred view are unwittingly fused and results in her non-interpretative approach.

castes such as the Acaris, the Vannans, the Ampattans, the Kuravans, the Kucavans, the *tōṭṭi* and *maṭaiyan* and the Cakkiliyans. At the harvesting (*aṟuvaṭai*) in the month of *Tai* (Jan.-Feb.), the prestations on the threshing floor, as shown in Table 2.9, are given as the main part of the yearly-rewards of the *jajmānī* relationships. The details of the prestations on the threshing floor are these;

Labourers, both men and women, carry paddy bundles from the fields to the threshing floor. The people start threshing after worshipping the goddess of the earth, Pumadevi. The threshing process consists of two steps, and the distribution is also divided into two stages. The first step of threshing is to hit the bundles on a stone by hand, which is called *katir-aṭittal*. Then winnowing is firstly done by the men, using a winnow made of steel (*muṟam*). This work is called *muṟam potutal*. Only the paddy dropped leeward are again winnowed by the women, using a winnow made of a palm leafstalk (*cuḻaku*). This second winnowing is called *puṭaittal*. After this work, a small conical shape of cow-dung, which symbolizes the God Ganesh, is put on the top of a *poli* (a heap of paddy). The paddy dropped the most leeward, which is not good, is kept separately in a vessel called *nārpeṭṭi*. This vessel of paddy is shared among *aṭimaikāran* and *paṇṇaikāran* of the Paraiyars, after the master ritually takes a small portion. The *mukkai* is taken by the service castes from the *poli*. The rest of the heap, after giving *mukkai*, and the paddy left in the winnows are taken by *aṭimaikāran* and *paṇṇaikāran*. The second step of threshing is necessary because ears of the rice plant still have undropped paddy. The paddy straws are again spread on the threshing floor and cattle or buffaloes walk on them. This is called *cūṭu aṭittal*. Again, through the same process of winnowing, *poli* and *nārpaṭṭi* are separately prepared. Then the prestations are made by following the same procedure as in the first step. A small difference, however, is the participation of the Valluvan. After *cūṭu aṭittal*, a Valluvan comes to the threshing floor and sings celebratory songs there. For this service, he takes *mukkai* from the *poli*. *Varucakūli* are usually given sometime later after finishing this harvesting work.

Table 2.9 Prestations on the threshing floor

(in the case of 1 acre of paddy field with well-irrigation using *kamalai*)

service castes or service servants	*works in the village	prestations					
		(1) varuca -kūli	(2) first mukkai	(3) second mukkai	(4) katir -kaṭṭu	(5) cutan -tiram	(6) other
		[1 marakkāl=8 paṭi=6.5 litre, 1 kaṭṭu=12 ari, 1 ari=2 paṭi, 1 paṭi=0.8 litre]					
Acari *making & mending farming tools & bull-carts *making *kamalai*(#) *gifts of life-course ceremonies *mending houses *construction of a new house($$)		7 mara- kkāl	2 paṭi	2 paṭi	1 kaṭṭu 3 mara- kkāl	2-3 paṭi per one kamalai	
Vannan *services in life-course ceremonies *services in village festivals *washing clothes($)		6 mara- kkāl Rs.25	2 paṭi	2 paṭi	2-3 ari 4-6 paṭi		
Ampattan *services in life-course ceremonies *services in village festivals *circumcision(#) *cutting hair($) *cutting pubic hair(#)		6 mara- kkāl Rs.20	2 paṭi	2 paṭi	1-2 ari 2-4 paṭi		
Kuravan *mending farming tools *ear-piercing *basket making($) *sweeping($$)			2 paṭi	2 paṭi	1-2 ari 2-4 paṭi		
Cakkiliyan *making & mending a leather bag for *kamalai* *covering a drumhead($$)		3 mara- kkāl per kamalai	2 paṭi	2 paṭi	1-2 ari 2-4 paṭi		
Kucavan *providing pots & plates in village festivals and in			2 paṭi	2 paṭi	1-2 ari 2-4 paṭi		paddy straw

life-course ceremonies				
*making pots($$)				
Valluvan		2		
*singing celebra- tory songs		pati		
*astrologer($$)				
totti & *mataiyan*	2	2	5	
*announcement	pati	pati	ari	
with drumming			1	
*grave-digging			marakkal	
*cattle scavenging			2	
*menial services at funerals & marriages			pati	
*village watching				
*caretaking tank-sluices (*mataiyan* only)				
*menial services on village occasions				
atimaikaran & *pannaikaran*	nar- petti	nar- petti		
*supervising farm labourers	the rest of	the rest of		
*menial domestic work	the heap	the heap		
*farming works	the rest in the winnow 8 marakkal	the rest in the winnow 8 marakkal		
kuliyal			1	24
*harvesting works			kattu	marakkal divided among kuliyal
kuliyal		2		1-2
*transplanting (women only)		pati		pati the rest of the winnow

<Note> #: works no longer carried out or disappearing,
$: works requiring part cash payment
$$: works requiring full cash payment
1 *marakkal*: the full amount of a cylindrical box
called *kataka-petti*

These rather complex prestations are found only during

the paddy-harvesting time, i.e. in *Maci* month (February-

March). In the case of the harvesting of millet or of that of nuts and beans, the landowner gives *mukkai* only, or a combination of *mukkai* and *katirkaṭṭu* (one bundle of sheaves). As to vegetables, there is no fixed regulation, and the people of the service castes can take at any time, a certain amount for their food from the master's field. It is also added that the service castes can enjoy some reward (clothes and meals) on the occasions of the domestic rituals of their masters and of annual festivals, though they also give *moy* (a gift) to their masters. These prestations are basically made in kind, but today are sometimes paid in cash. This is partly because of the recent inadequate agricultural production and partly due to the increased production of cash crops.[46]

Table 2.9 shows that there are several kinds of prestations for the service and labour provided for paddy cultivation, as follows: 1) *varucakūli* (a yearly-stipend), 2) *mukkai* (three handfuls), 3) *katirkkaṭṭu* (sheaves of paddy or of millet) and 4) *cutantiram* (a perquisite). Good reports, from the Tamil village of Tirunelveli, that there are three types of prestations on the threshing floor, that is, *sampaLam* ('salary'), *sāshtiram* (literally, 'branch of

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[46]The main agricultural crops produced in Kinnimangalam are as follows: 1) *nel* (paddy), 2) *kēlvaraku* (ragi), 3) *kampu* (millet), 4) *parutti* (cotton), 5) *karumpu* (sugar cane), 6) *kattari* (eggplant), 7) *takkāli* (tomato) and 8) *veṅkāyam* (onion). All the crops except paddy are cash-crops. The introduction of these cash-crops has enhanced payment in cash.

specialised knowledge') and *sandōsham* ('mutual
satisfaction') [Good 1978: 180-185, 1982: 24-27]. It seems
to me that *varucakuli* corresponds to *sampaLam*, that *mukkai*
can be equated with *sāshtiram*, and that *katirkkaṭṭu* can be
regarded as *sandōsham*. Since *cutantiram* is a very specific
reward given only to the Acaris for their preparation of the
equipment of *kamalai* (a traditional well irrigation system),
I look upon it as part of *sāshtiram* for the Acaris. A
comparison of the examples of Good [Good 1978: 180-181] and
mine, makes it clear that the Acaris (carpenters), the
Vannans (barbers), the Ampattans (washermen), the Valluvans
(priests for the Harijans), the *maṭaiyan* (channel
controllers) and the *aṭimaikāran/paṇṇaikāran* (house
servants) are commonly raised as the important receivers of
prestations in both cases. However, the Cakkiliyans, the
Kucavans and the Kuravans also join in the sharing on the
threshing floor in Kinnimangalam. In my case, it is obvious
that the service castes expressed by "*eṅka ...*" receive all
varucakūli, *mukkai* and *katirkkaṭṭu*. The connection with
other necessary service castes is displayed by giving *mukkai*
and *katirkkaṭṭu*, which are the reward for their *toḻil*.
Today, since not only the agricultural labour force itself
is basically secured by a daily payment in cash rather than
by prestations in kind, but also the craft works done by the
eṅka artisans tend to be replaced by outsiders' services or
by machine-made items, it seems to me that the *jajmānī*
relationships are diminishing and becoming very limited.

2.4 Kinship System

There is no doubt that the kinship system which

defines intra-caste relationships reflects inter-caste

relationships, namely, village dynamism. In this sense, it

is necessary to understand an outline of the kinship system

of the village castes.

Generally speaking, the village castes consist of one,

or plural, patrilineal lineages as a clear kinship unit,

which is called *vakaiyarā* (literally, division or kind)[47] or

paṅkāḷi (shareholders of property).[48] *Paṅkāḷi* in a general

sense means a group of blood relations (*ratta uravu*) or

parallel relatives traced through the father's line

(*appāvaḷi*), which can be replaced by the expression of the

aṇṇaṇ-tampi (eB-yB) relationship.[49] *Uṭaṇpaṅkāḷi*, which

denotes a group of people sharing a blood relationship and a

common lineage god, *kulatevam*, should be distinguished from

muraikkupaṅkāḷi ('conventional brothers')[50], a group of

people who believe they are brothers, although this

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[47]The villagers sometimes use *kūṭṭam* (union, group, class or kind) instead of *vakaiyarā*.

[48]In Kinnimangalam, there are no castes without unilineal groups, such as the Konars and the Paraiyars of TV in Good's field area [Good 1980: 483].

[49]*Paṅkāḷi* in a narrow sense refers especially to the unity of the male members of the same generation.

[50]According to Dumont, *mureikki paṅgāḷi* is the brother relationship between the male descendants of two sisters [Dumont 1986: 203]. This is different from the definition that I heard in Kinnimangalam.

relationship can not actually be traced by them. *Uṭanpaṅkāḷi* works as a basic cooperative unit, whereas *muṟaikkupaṅkāḷi* simply provides a framework of exogamy. In this sense, *uṭanpaṅkāḷi* can be equated to *vakaiyaṟā*, which usually consists of several sublineages called *vāricus*. These categorical systems are directly applied both by most of the Caste Hindus and the Paraiyars with the exception of the Pillais. In the case of the Pillais, the larger social framework of *kōttiram* (Skt. *gōtra*), which can be seen as a patri-clan, works as an exogamous unit. This difference reflects the contrast that the Pillais are conscious of and attach importance to the title of *kōttiram*; whereas the Kallars, for example, recognize the title of *vakaiyaṟā* as the significant one. It is said that the *kōttiram* of the

Table 2.10 Marriage distances (km)

distance / caste	inside village	below 5	5 / 10	10 / 15	15 / 20	20 / 30	30 / 40	40 / 60	above 60	other districts	total
Pillai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Kallar	66	84	13	9	2	2	0	1	0	0	177
Pantaram	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Acari	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Natar	3	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	9
Vannan	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Kuravan	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Paraiyar	25	34	30	10	6	1	4	7	1	0	118
total	95	123	49	23	9	3	6	8	2	3	321
%	29.6	38.3	15.3	7.2	2.8	0.9	1.8	2.5	0.6	0.9	100.0
accumulated %	29.6	67.9	83.2	90.4	93.2	94.1	96.0	98.4	99.1	100.0	

Table 2.11 Lineages and Lineage deities

caste	lineage	lineage deities	place of temple	festive month
		(Note: Lineages having * form Two-*Tēvārs* & Four-*Paṅkāḷi*)		
Pillai (3)	Kiravan (*kūṭṭam*)	Puvayammal(F)		
	Kanicamar (*kōttiram*)	Ankalaisvari(F)	Cittalai	*Māci* (Feb.-Mar.)
Kallar (202)	*Kecavan(23)	Kottamantai-karuppu(M) Cilaikari(F)	Karumattur	*Māci*
	*Kamanan(21)	Ankalaisvari(F) Virapattiran(M)	Kinni	*Māci*
	Cattayi(28)	Cattayi(F)	Kinni	*Māci*
	Panniyan(65)	Virumanti(M) Pecciyamman(F)	---	*Māci*
	Kattappinnai (18)	Sivan(M) Pinniyammal(F)	Cikkanpatti	*Māci*
	Cuntaravalli-yamman I(17)	Cuntaravalli-yamman(F)	Cittalai	*Māci*
	Cuntaravalli-yamman II(4)	Cuntaravalli-yamman(F)	Cittalai	*Māci*
	Conaikamatci (9)	Conaicami(M) Kamatciyamman(F)	Tirali	*Māci*
	Kanni(3)	Kamatciyamman(F)	---	*Māci*
	Cettikulam(4)	Periyakarrupu(M) Pecciyamman(F)	Karumattur	*Māci*
	Tarakan(2)	Sivan(M)	Cinnavakaikulam	*Māci*
	Cataci(4)	---	---	---
	Veriyan(1)	---	---	---
	? (3)			
Pantaram (1)	---	Ankalaisvari(F)	Kampam(Curuli)	*Aippaci* (*Tai,Cittirai*)
Acari (10)	Palikkanci-yacari	Irulappacami(M) Ayamman(F)	Kamatcipulam	*Māci*
Natar (10)	---	Muttaiyacami(M) Cilaikari(F)	Kinni.	*Māci*
Vannan (7)	---	Irulappacami(M) Ankalaisvari(F)	---	---
Kuravan(1)	---	---	---	---
Paraiyar (174)	*Kartananti(29)	Periyanatcci & Ariyanatcci(F)	Kinni.	*Paṅkuṇi*
	*Cinnananti(15)	ditto	ditto	ditto
	*Mataiyan & Vettaiyan(41)	Meyyanamurtti(M) Marattiyamman(F)	Kinni.	*Vaikāci* (*Āṭi*)
	*Urkalan(19)	Urkavalcami(M) Cilaikari(F)	Kinni.	*Vaikāci* (*Āṭi*)
	Tankalan(44) Manakuli(6) Necavan(1) Cappataiyan(3) ? (16)	Muttaiyacami(M)	Kinni.	*Vaikāci*

Pillais have a common clan god but it is difficult for them
to carry out their clan festival in practice because of
their dispersed residence, which is indicated by the survey
of marriage distances shown in Table 2.10. In contrast,
other Caste Hindus and the Paraiyars in the village mostly
marry partners within the village or from the neighbouring
villages. It is notable that about 30% of the marriages
recorded in the village can be categorized as village-
endogamous.

As shown in Table 2.11, the village Kallars consist of
13 *vakaiyarās*, and the Paraiyars have 8 *vakaiyarās*.[51]
Furthermore, Figure 2.4 displays my reconstruction of the
villagers' knowledge of the *muraikkupankāḷi* relationship
among the Kallars. It is common knowledge among villagers
that *Iraṇtu-Tēvār=Nār-Pankāḷi* (literally, Two Heads of the
Kallars and Four Paraiyar lineages) form the fundamental
axis of the village structure. On the one hand, Two *Tēvārs*
are the representatives of the Kallars as the dominant caste
and they are chosen from the Kecavan and the Kamanan
lineages as the earliest settlers. On the other hand, Four
Paraiyar lineages refer to the Kartananti, the Cinnananti,
the Mataiyan (including the Vettaiyan) and the Urkalan. This

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[51]The numerically minor castes such as the Pantarams,
the Natars, the Vannans and the Kuravans do not know the
name of their *vakaiyarā*, though they are conscious of their
lineage gods.

fundamental axis forms the core of the village caste
structure. Nonetheless, it is obvious today that other
Kallar lineages such as the Cattayi and the Panniyan, have
increased their lineage members and the Tankalan of the
Paraiyar community has also developed as a big lineage.
Since these lineages are late comers, they tend to stand a
little outside the sphere of traditional rights and duties.
This is true especially in the case of the Tankalan, for, as
is clarified in Chapter 8, the lineage often shows an
outsider-like character as compared to the *Nārpankāḷi* who
occupy a central position in the Paraiyar community. There
is, in practice, a social gulf between the *Nārpankāḷi* and
the Tankalan lineage and their members have never married
each other.

Figure 2.2 Muraikkupankāḷi of the Kallars
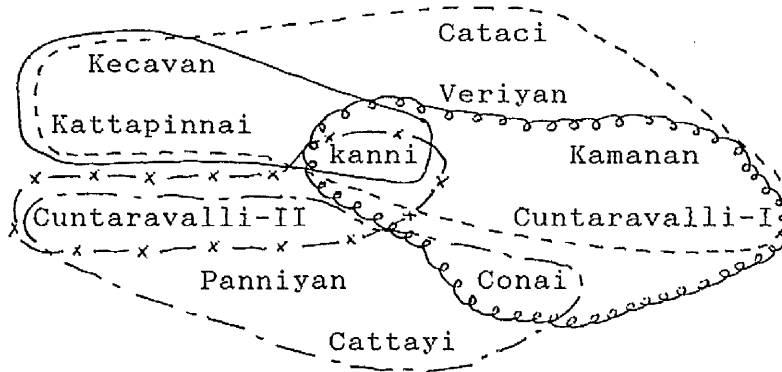
Besides *pankāḷimurai* or *annan-tampi murai* mentioned
above, there are another two distinguishable kinship
relations, that is, *māma-maccinan murai* and *cakalan*. *Māma-
maccinan murai* are regarded as affinal relations, which

include relations through the mother (*tāyvaḻiccontam*) and relations through the wife (*maṉaivivaḻiccontam*). *Māmaṉ* means mother's brother, father's sister's husband, father-in-law, etc (for example, [Dumont 1986: 304] in the case of the Pramalai Kallar, and [Trautmann 1981: 34] in terms of the Nanjilnattu Vellalar). It is clarified by Good that *māmaṉ* refers to cross relatives who are more senior than ego, through his elaborate discussion on eZDy marriage, which is found broadly among Dravidian societies [Good 1980: 492-493]. In the light of Good's argument, *macciṉaṉ* refers to cross relatives who are junior to ego, regardless of generation [ibid: 492].[52] As a result, the combined word *māma-macciṉaṉ muṟai* means ego's cross relatives as a whole, with whom marriages always occur. My data from Kinnimangalam supports the above mentioned view of Good. As is shown in Table 2.12, which has a list of kinship terminology related to the present argument, there is no fundamental difference between the Pillais, the Kallars and the Paraiyars in terms of the structure of kinship terminology (see [Dumont 1986:

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[52]Good evaluates Dumont's works as "the most satisfactory account" [Good 1980: 476] among the various analyses of Dravidian kinship terminology, and then criticises it. The interrelated points on which Good's criticism are based are these. 1) Terminological identity is not always equated with genealogical identity; 2) Besides the structural analysis, in the light of 'kin/affine' distinction, more attention should be paid to ego-centred modes of classification; 3) There is "the strong tendency for cross-relatives kinship terms to reflect relative age rather than genealogical position", such as generation [Good 1980].

Table 2.12 Kiship terminology of the Kallars*1)
(by a male speaker)

kinship term (terms of reference)	genealogical referents	level
cīyan*2)	FF, MF	+2
appatta*3)	FM	+2
ammatta	MM	+2
appā, appan*4)	F	+1
periyappan*5)	FeB, MZH (older than F)	+1
cittappan	FyB, MZH (younger than F)	+1
attā	M	+1
periyattā	MeZ, FeBW	+1
cinnattā	MyZ, FyBW	+1
māma(n)	MB, FZH, WF	+1
taymāman	MB	+1
attai	FZ, MBW	+1
māmiyār	WM	+1
annē, annan	Be, FBSe, MZSe	+0
akkā	Ze, FBDe, MZDe	+0
tampi	By, FBSy, MZSy	-0
taṅkacci	Zy, FBDy, MZDy	-0
maccān	MBSe, FZSe, WeBe, eZH	+0
matini	MBDe, FZDe, WeZe, eBW	+0
maccinan	MBSy, FZSy, WeBy, WyB, yZH	-0
koluntiyāl	MBDy, FZDy, WeZy, WyZ, yBW	-0
makan	S, BS, WZS	-1
annanmakan	eBS	-1
tampimakan	yBS	-1
matinimakan	WeZS	-1
koluntiyāmakan	WyZS	-1
makal	D, BD, WZD	-1
annanmakal	eBD	-1
tampimakal	yBS	-1
matinimakal	WeZD	-1
koluntiyāmakal	WyZD	-1
marumakan	ZS, WBS, DH	-1
marumakal	ZD, WBD, SW	-1
pēran	SS, DS, BSS, BDS, ZSS, ZDS	-2
pētti	SD, DD, BSD, BDD, ZSD, ZDD	-2

*1)The Paraiyars' kinship terminology is primarily similar to that of the Kallars.
*2)The Pillais refer to both FF and MF as *tātā*.
*3)The Pillais refer to both FM and MM as *pātti*.
*4)The Pillais refer to F as *appā* and M as *ammā*. The Paraiyars use *aiyan* for F and *ammai* for M.
*5)According to *4), F's or M's siblings are referred to differently.

303], [Good 1980: 416] and [Trautmann 1981: 34-35]), though some caste-specific expressions are found.

As Good clearly points out, the principle of 'relative age' penetrates kinship terminology. This is more vividly observed in the case of 'terms of address' than in 'terms of reference'. First, as Dumont reports, *maccān* is differentiated from *maccinan* according to relative age when they (the Kallars) 'refer' to, for example, MBS, but they do not usually 'address' MBSe as *maccān* or MBSy as *maccinan* but call MBSe *māman* or MBSy *māppillai* (/name). Secondly FZ is 'referred' to by the word *māmiyār*, but is 'addressed' mainly by *akkā*, which literally means eZ, and sometimes by *attai*.[53] These examples thus tell us that more importance is 'practically' attached to the criterion of relative age than to that of generation difference.

Cakalan relations refer to those among a wife's sister's husbands, and are thought of as types of parallel

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[53]The reason why FZ is possibly called *akkā* is that there is a fundamental tendency of looking upon the marriage as if it was a MB-eZDy union, so that, even though ego marries FZD, FZ is seen as eZDy's mother, that is, *akkā* (eZ). In the light of this tendency, MBW is also 'addressed' as *akkā*. It is explained that since ego's sister is a potential wife of MB (*tāymāman*), according to marriage with eZDy as the 'prescribed' [Barnard and Good 1984: 100-104] spouse, MBW can be regarded as *akkā*-like. In this sense, if I follow Bourdieu's concepts of "official kin and practical kin" [Bourdieu 1977: 33-38], an eZDy marriage can be regarded as a sort of "official marriage".

relatives (a pseudo-*pankāḷi*) because of being cross relatives of ego's cross relatives.[54]

There is no doubt that the three kinds of kinship relations mentioned above correspond well with the three categories of relatives proposed by David, that is, "sharers" (*sakotarar*), "uniters" (*sampantakkarar*) and "non-uniters" (*sakalar*) [David 1973: 525]. By citing these tripartite categories of David, Good criticises Dumont's analysis based on the 'consanguine/affine' distinction [Dumont 1961: 81] which ignores the category of "non-uniters", i.e., *cakalan* relations [Good 1980: 482-483]. Good thus claims that the dichotomy of cross/parallel in a broader sense, which respectively includes 'close' and 'distant', is a useful analytical framework for more fully understanding the Tamil kinship system.

Apart from the classificatory categories mentioned above, I also note the presence of the ego-centric distinction between 'close relatives' (*nerunkiya contam*) and 'distant relatives' (*tūrattu contam*), which is different from Good's sense. Though most people agree that the mother's line and wife's line have more explicit boundaries,

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[54]*Māma-maccinan* relationship is regarded as a joking relationship (*kēliccontam*) in which it is rather strange to have serious talk. It is not unusual for sexual topics to appear in conversations among the same generation, especially in the case of the Kallars. To the contrary, the relations where joking should be avoided are said to be *pankāḷi* and *cakalan*.

as to the father's line, it is difficult to get consensus.
Whereas some claim that they can also draw a certain
boundary line between 'close' and 'distant' in the domain of
the father's line, others deny such distinction because it
is meaningless since the father's line is *pankāḷi*, being
blood relatives.[55] In this sense, there are still some
obscure points, but, according to this ego-centric notion,
it is noted that the farthest edge of 'distant relatives'
must be fused into *aṇṇiyam* (unrelated persons, *vide infra*).
This also provides some evidence for verifying that Tamil
kinship relationships require us to take into account not
only structural and terminological identity, but also ego-
centred and genealogical identity, as Good and Barnard and
Good emphasize in [Good 1980] and [Barnard and Good 1984:
44-47]. As is shown in Table 2.13, in which there is no MBDy
spouse in the classificatory sense, ego's MB, referred to as
tāymāmaṉ, is sharply distinguished from *māma* as a
classificatory term. This is one of the typical examples
which support the above argument.

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[55]As to the mother's line, maternal grandparents,
mother's father's brothers, mother's brothers and sisters
and their families in a descriptive sense are regarded as
'close relatives'. The 'close-relatives' of the wife's line
are wife's parents, wife's father's brothers, wife's
mother's sisters, wife's brothers and their families. Wife's
sisters can sometimes be included. Some Kallars say,
concerning the father's line, that its 'close relatives' are
father's father's brothers, father's brothers and sisters
and their families, brothers and their direct descendents
and sisters and their families.

Table 2.13 Kinship relationship between husband & wife
before marriage (by male speakers)

relation-ship caste	'close relatives' (descriptive)				'distant relatives' (classificatory)				stranger (*anniyam*)	total
	FZD	ZD	MBD	?	FZD	ZD	MBD	?		
Pillai				1				1	1	3
Kallar	10	7	15	9	4	3		22	85	155
		41(26.4%)				29(18.7%)			(54.9%)	(100%)
Pantaram			1							1
Acari		1				2		1	3	7
Natar				1		1		2	4	8
Vannan		1		1		1		2	2	7
Kuravan										
Paraiyar	23	1	9	14	4	2		18	46	117
		47(40.2%)				24(20.5%)			(39.3%)	(100%)
total	33	8	27	26	8	9		46	141	298
		94(31.5%)				63(21.1%)			(47.4%)	(100%)

After having discussed several concepts for an
understanding of the kinship system, a discussion on
marriage practice follows. The traditional right and duty of
marriage preference called *karai*, which is regarded as the
"jural" level of social reality in the sense of Good [Good
1978: 499-500] and Barnard and Good [Barnard and Good 1984:
9-14], is basically found regardless of caste difference,
though there are some caste-specific characteristics. It is
claimed that "prescribed" spouses [Barnard and Good 1984:
100-104] in their tradition are, genealogically speaking,
FZDy, MBDy and eZDy, which are expressed terminologically as

koḻuntiyāḻ (a female junior cross-relative), from the male viewpoint. As is clarified by Good [1980], this again tells us that the junior-senior criterion is prior to that of generation. As is noted in footnote 53 of this Chapter, a MB-eZDy union occupies the position of an ideal marriage or a reference marriage by which affinal terminology is identified (see also [Good 1980: 493]). This is the case not only among the Pillais but also among the Kallars and the Paraiyars. Though Dumont reports that "the Kallar vigorously condemn sister's daughter marriage and their genealogies show almost no such marriages" [Dumont 1986: 204], it seems to me that both points are wrong in so far as my data from Kinnimangalam is concerned. Since the possibility that MBD and ZD can overlap is logically verified by Good, as is shown in Fig.2 of Good [1980: 486], it is known that "the preference for the matrilateral cross cousin" [Dumont 1986: 203] as a *urimai* preference [Dumont 1957b: 14] found among the Kallars is not incompatible with sister's daughter marriage. Thus, Dumont can be refuted not only by this logical viewpoint, but also by the fact that eZDy marriages are found in practice among the Kallars, as shown in Table 2.13.

In this connection, it is traditionally the general tendency for the villagers to have *pūrvīkaccontam* (literally, "hereditary relatives"), who have successively exchanged the "prescribed" spouses mentioned above with each

other, as is shown in Table 2.14, which provides examples of

pūrvīkaccontam. "hereditary relatives" is, logically

speaking, realized through "restricted" exchange, that is, a

Table 2.14 Pūrvīkaccontam of main lineages

caste	lineage	lineage as *pūrvīkaccontam* claimed	lineage from which spouses are most taken (1)the top (2)the next
Pillai	Kiravan	---	---
Kallar	Kecavan	Conaikamatci	(1)Conaikamatci (2)Panniyan
	Kamanan	Panniyan	(1)panniyan (2)Kattapinnai
	Cattayi	Kanni	(1)Kanni (2)Kattapinnai
	Panniyan	Kamanan	(1)Kanni (2)Kattapinnai
	Kattapinnai	Panniyan	(1)Virmanti (2)Kamanan
	Cuntaravalli-I		(1)Cuntara-II (2)Panniyan
	Cuntaravalli-II		(1)Cataci
	Conaikamatci	Kecavan	(1)Kecavan
	Kanni	Panniyan	(1)Panniyan
Pantaram			
Acari		Pettanacami	(randam)
Natar			Kamatci
Vannan		Karuppacami	Karuppacami
Kuravan			
Paraiyar	Kartananti	Vettaiyan, Urkalan	(1)Kumpakaran (2)Vettaiyan
	Cinnananti	Mataiyan, Urkalan	(1)Cappataiyan (2)Mataiyan
	Mataiyan (Vettaiyan)	Kartananti, Cinnananti	(1)Cinnananti (2)Kartananti
	Urkalan	Kartananti, Cinnananti	(1)Pucari (2)Kartananti
	Tankalan	Manakuli, Pattain	(1)Manakuli (2)Catayanti

bilateral exchange of FZDy and MBDy[56] or that of eZDy and
MBDy; and also through "generalized" exchange, i.e. a
patrilateral exchange of FZDy, or that of eZDy. This is in
practice supported by the "statistical-behavioural" level of
data shown in Table 2.13.[57] As Dumont points out, there is
no doubt that the Kallars have a strict custom (karai) that
MBDy must be given the first priority, whereas the Pillais
do not have this strict regulation. The Paraiyars primarily
follow the Kallar custom. According to several Kallar
informants, this is because they attach importance to unity
with the mother's lineage. Nonetheless, they also recognize
that it is more common for ego to marry eZDy, rather than
MBDy. In this sense, it seems to me that their strict
regulation of the MBDy marriage preference can be regarded
as a traditional device by which they try to prevent their
kinship relations from becoming part of a narrowly closed
system.

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[56]The bilateral exchange of FZDy and MBDy is an
exchange of sisters, which is called koṇṭān mārruc campantam
(literally, husband-subsequent-alliance). Aiyavu, a middle-
aged Kallar man, told me that this sort of marriage tends to
be avoided because a fight between one couple easily spreads
to other brothers' or sisters' couples and then it is very
difficult to settle the problem.

[57]In this sense, I cannot accept Dumont's rather
simplified understanding of marriage among the Kallars, in
which eZDy marriage is neglected and the urimai preference
for MBDy is focused upon.

In this connection, there is no doubt that *tāymāman* (MB) is a focal person in the selection of a marriage partner, because the MB can claim three possible "prescribed" marriages for his sisters' sons and daughters. That is to say, MB can marry eZDy (a eZDy marriage), MBS can marry MB's ZDy (a FZDy marriage) and MBD can marry MB's ZSe (a MBDy marriage). Due to their *urimai* preference for a MBDy marriage, the *tāymāman* of the Kallars, especially, insists on his regulated right that his ZS should marry his D. Therefore, if his ZS fails to marry his D, MB can require his ZS to pay a special fine called *karaip peṇṇukku tīrvai* (literally, a fine related to a traditionally defined girl).[58] However, despite their regulated preference for a MBDy, an eZDy marriage is rather common, even among the Kallars. This also reflects on the MB's behaviour by which his ZD's marriage can be threatened. For example, I know a Kallar man who got divorced twice due to the interference of his wife's *tāymāman* (MB).

I cannot disregard the fact that marriages between unrelated persons, called *anniyam*, account for almost half of the present marriages, as shown in Table 2.14. Although the numbers of *anniyam* on this Table partly reflect the fact that all brothers do not necessarily observe a "prescribed"

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[58]The amount of the fine is said to be Rs 8000-10000 for ordinary Kallars. Nonetheless, the fine is, in practice, decided according to the payer's economic ability, though the minimum Rs 500 must be paid in each case.

marriage, as Dumont points out [Dumont 1986: 207], there is
no doubt that modernization has encouraged the new tendency
for *anniyam* preference among the villagers. From modern
medical knowledge villagers are aware of the harmful effects
that may result from marriages with close relatives.[59]

Lastly, the prohibition of inter-caste marriage, which
is very well observed in the village is touched on. As to
actual examples of inter-caste marriages, I know of only one
couple (a Paraiyar husband and a Acari wife) living in the
Paraiyar quarter of the village and have heard of another
two couples (a Kallar husband and a Valaiyar wife, and a
Kallar husband and a Brahman wife) residing outside the
village. Though the former couple is legally married, the
latter couples, legally speaking, are not regarded as
formally married [Dumont 1986: 198-199]. Thus, inter-caste
marriage is still exceptional for the villagers. One day a
Kallar youth said to me, "We make love with other castes'
women but don't get married to them."

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[59]For example, Tangaraj stopped the convention of
taking wives from their "hereditary relatives", the
Conaikamatci lineage, because he judged that the sterility
of their lineage was due to the long "restricted" exchanges
between the Kecavan and the Conaikamatci. As a result, he
successfully had four children from his marriage with
anniyam.

PART TWO: POLLUTION THEORY

Part Two firstly aims at clarifying that there are objectively two different dimensions of interpretation (ideologies), that is, the dimension of "the Brahmanical cultural tendency" and that of "the basic Tamil cultural tendency". This is achieved through an investigation of the villagers' concepts of pollution (in Ch.3) and through an analysis of their understanding of village deities (in Ch.4). The villagers' strategic attitude in their everyday practices is touched upon in Ch.5, which preludes the discussion of Part Three, in which the Pariyars' (the Harijans') practices are focused upon.

CHAPTER 3 CONCEPTIONS OF POLLUTION AND THEIR PRACTICAL USAGE

This chapter is devoted to an elucidation of the villagers' conceptions of pollution. The theoretical arguments on concepts of pollution, discussed in section 1.2.1, are illustrated with ethnographic examples.

3.1 *Tīṭṭu* and its Essential Connotations

3.1.1 Denotation (extension) of pollution and folk terms

As far as Kinnimangalam is concerned, the folk terms which are expressions related to pollution include *tīṭṭu, aciṅkam, acuttam, cuttam illai, tuppuravuillai, tuymaiinmai, nalla illai,* and *ācūcai.* Among these terms, *aciṅkam, acuttam,* and *ācūcai* are derived from the Sanskrit words *asahya, aśuddha,* and *āśauca* respectively. *Cuttam illai* is a combined expression of a Tamilized Sanskrit word *cuttam,* and a pure Tamil suffix of negation *illai.* It is literally proper that both *acuttam* (Skt. *aśuddha*) and *ācūcai* (Skt. *āśauca*) are translated into 'impurity' as the antonyms of 'purity (Skt. *śuddha* or *śauca*). It is important that the pair words, *acuttam* and *cuttam,* are actually used for expressing a relative ritual ranking, as more precisely discussed in section 3.2. The most popular words, regardless of caste difference, are *tīṭṭu, aciṅkam* and *acuttam.*[1] Although *aciṅkam* is often used as a synonym of *acuttam, aciṅkam* has its own implications, refering to things and happenings which are ugly, unpleasant, or unusual. Therefore, *tīṭṭu* and *acuttam* are the two most important words directly referring to pollution or impurity, which are mainly investigated here. It should be remembered that even

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[1]The uses of *tuppuravuillai* and *tuymaiinmai* tend to be limited to the context of physical uncleanness, so that they are less frequently heard. *Ācūcai* is used only by the educated elders.

if the same words were adopted in the village, the meanings
of these words in their practical usage would differ
depending on the speakers' social context.

There are three categories of folk terms which are
deeply connected with the concepts of pollution mentioned
above. The first is a group of words denoting sin, crime or
fault such as *pāvam* (Skt. *pāpa*), *kuṟṟam*[2], *tappu* and *tavaṟu*.
The situations referred to by these words are described not
only as *aciṅkam* but also possibly as *tīṭṭu*. The second is
tukkam (Skt. *duḥka*), which means sorrow and mourning and
which is strongly related to death pollution. The third is
an astrologically inauspicious situation, called *tōṣam* (Skt.
dōṣa), in which people behave as if they were in *tīṭṭu*.

3.1.2 Ordinary interpretations of *tīṭṭu*

(1) What causes *tīṭṭu* ?

I take up *tīṭṭu* first because it is a pure Tamil word,
which presumably reflects the Tamils' indigenous mind more
naturally. There is a fundamental consensus among villagers
of all castes as to what causes *tīṭṭu*, with one exception –

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[2]Villagers sometimes use both the words *pāvam* and
kuṟṟam interchangeably, but they are also conscious of the
distinction between the two. It is said that *pāvam* which
originates from a Sanskrit word, refers to other-worldly sin
that is punished in the next-life and is, therefore,
connected with *karma* theory; whereas the Tamil word *kuṟṟam*
is this-worldly sin, that is punished within this life. This
difference between *pāvam* and *kuṟṟam* provides one of the
examples of the contrast between the Brahmanic cultural
tendency and the basic Tamil cultural tendency.

the Paraiyar's disagreement over the view that Caste Hindus
look upon the Paraiyars as a people of *tīṭṭu*[3]. This
exception is discussed later, in Chapter 5. There is strong
agreement among the villagers that four 'incidents'
occurring in the life course, namely childbirth
(parturition), puberty, menstruation and death inevitably
cause *tīṭṭu*. Only for the Kallars, was the circumcision of a
boy, which is no longer followed by the present generation,
a source of *tīṭṭu*, as is puberty for a girl[4]. Besides these,
it is also said that sexual intercourse causes *tīṭṭu*. These
'incidents' generating *tīṭṭu* are always associated with some
physical pollutants, like 'persons' or 'things'. Physical
pollutants of childbirth are blood from the delivery, a
woman in childbirth (a mother) and a newborn baby; those of
puberty and menstruation are menstrual blood and a
menarcheal woman; those of circumcision are blood resulting
from the treatment and a circumcised boy; that of death is a
dead person (body); that of sexual intercourse is semen.

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[3]The low castes of Caste Hindus are not referred to as
tīṭṭu, but only as *acuttam* in a relative sense, by the
dominant castes. It is noted that the Paraiyars alone are
defined as *tīṭṭu*. In everyday conversation, *tīṭṭu* of the
Paraiyars is euphemistically referred to by expressions such
as "*aricaṉattai toṭṭuttiyā* (Have you touched a Harijan?)",
and "*toṭak kūṭātava* (untouchable)", because it is obvious
for both the speaker and the hearer that the Paraiyars are
tīṭṭu.

[4]I interestingly witnessed a heated argument between
two middle-aged Kallar men about whether circumcision causes
tīṭṭu or not. It is impressive that the one who followed a
more Sanskritized behaviour strongly denied *tīṭṭu* of
circumcision, while the other, who was a more typical
Kallar, agreed to its *tīṭṭu* more readily.

Futhermore, it should be noted that there is a group of objects which to some extent provokes a feeling of *tīṭṭu*, though they are at the same time described as things *acuttam* and *aciṅkam*. Among these objects, nail clippings, fallen hairs and spat saliva are to some extent distinguished from the rest, such as decayed food, a nosebleed, bloodshed, a dead animal, a body with parts amputated or malformed, smallpox and a lizard falling onto the body. The former three are generally regarded as *tīṭṭu*; whereas the evaluation of whether the latter miscellaneous objects are *tīṭṭu* or not differs from person to person, and moreover, depends on the situation[5]. The polemical act of beef-eating should not be disregarded. Though it is claimed at least by the Caste Hindus that beef-eating is doubtlessly an act of *tīṭṭu*, today's Paraiyars never accept this opinion and

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[5]There is a general tendency that religious people, regardless of caste difference, pay more attention to *tīṭṭu* so that they tend to apply the word *tīṭṭu* to a broader range of acts and things, compared to less pious people. That is, less pious people see these things just as *acuttam*, but pious people think of them as *tīṭṭu*. The contextual situation in which a person has contact with these things is also important for making the decision of whether they provoke the *tīṭṭu* feeling or not. For example, food cooked on the previous day is not *tīṭṭu* in ordinary time, but becomes *tīṭṭu* during periods of fasting.

openly deny this view of the Caste Hindus[6]. Since the argument on beef-eating is directly related to the problem that the Paraiyars are regarded as *tīṭṭu* people, it will be taken up in later discussions.

(2) Ordinary metonymical explanations and their limitations

There are two characteristics to be noted in terms of the villagers' explanations of *tīṭṭu*. Firstly, the feelings of *tīṭṭu* are very negatively explained as being dangerous, unpleasant, disgusting and allergic. Secondly, they tend to recognize *tīṭṭu* as feelings brought about by certain pollutants (things and acts) which are themselves visible and tangible.

The clear example in which the cause of *tīṭṭu* is reduced to a visible pollutant is found in the cases of *tīṭṭu* of puberty and of menstruation. It is usually claimed that the source of *tīṭṭu* is a menarcheal woman due to her menstrual bleeding. This view leads to their custom that she is kept in a separate hut or room, in theory, for about 5 or

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[6]Muslims are also regarded as being *tīṭṭu* by Caste Hindus because Muslims are beef-eaters and often deal with beef as butchers. The village Paraiyars, however, often told me that they witnessed Caste Hindus sometimes secretly eating beef in towns. The same attitude is interestingly found among the Kallars, when the Kallars defend their non-vegetarian habit against vegetarian values. Some Kallars told me that there are Brahmans who eat mutton in Madurai city.

7 days during the period.[7] This usual explanation in which

tīṭṭu is due to some physical pollutant, however, can not

cope well with the following facts: 1) that puberty

pollution lasts 30 days (see Table 3.1 in which more details

are given) which exceeds the actual bleeding period; 2) that

puberty has the longer pollution period even though both

share the same cause of menstrual bleeding; 3) that, though

both share the same cause of menstrual bleeding, there is a

difference in terms of their influence. In the case of

puberty, it is basically claimed that *tīṭṭu* automatically

spreads to a girl's whole family[8], whereas *tīṭṭu* associated

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[7]The segregation of a menarcheal woman reflects upon
the euphemistic expression of menstrual *tīttu*, namely,
"*vīṭṭukku tūramāyirukku* (to be remote from a house)" or
"*vīṭṭukku vilakku* (to be shut out from a house)". As to the
Kallars, they sometimes use a direct expression including
the word *tīṭṭu* for menstrual *tīṭṭu*, namely, "*tīṭṭāyirukku*
(being polluted)". Generally speaking, more positive
expressions are used for *tīṭṭu* caused by puberty, such as
"*vayacukku vantuṭṭāḷ* ([she] has attained her majority)", and
"*cataṅku āyittal* ([she] is ready for marriage)", because
puberty is seen as an auspicious incident. The
auspiciousness of puberty is a clear indication of the
positive aspect of *tīṭṭu*, which is developed in the later
argument.

[8]Though it is said that a girl at puberty carries
tīṭṭu for one month, it seems that the degree of *tīṭṭu*
decreases after the celebration of the coming of age
ceremony held on the 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 15th or 16th day
after the onset of her first period. *Tīṭṭu* carried by other
family members almost vanishes after the ceremony. Some
Paraiyars claim that only after the 30th day can they give
meals to them, while other Paraiyars say that only the girl
at puberty is polluted. These oral claims of the Paraiyars,
which differ widely, indicate the complexity of their
situation. This point is developed in Part Three.

with usual menstruation is confined only to the menarcheal
woman, according to standard opinion[9].

The limitations shown by this example, therefore,
suggest that the cause of *tīṭṭu* must lie in the symbolic
meaning of these incidents, rather than in the physical
phenomena in a crude sense.[10]

Birth pollution (*tīṭṭu*) is in a roundabout way
addressed by the expression "*avaḷukku koḻantai peṟantirukku*
(she had a child)". The villagers' ordinary view is as
follows: A woman in childbirth is regarded as a direct
source of *tīṭṭu* due to bleeding associated with the
delivery. Thus she and her newborn baby must be
traditionally segregated in a detached hut or in a separate
room for 30 days[11]. This ordinary view leads to the opinion
that her baby is not basically *tīṭṭu* but is polluted by the

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[9]It is said in the present village that menstrual
tīṭṭu does not spread to other family members without
touching. This claim seems to be a result of modernization,
and it does not necessarily exclude the possibility that
there was a traditional custom that a husband shared his
wife's pollution, which is interpreted by the notion of
shared substance between husband and wife, according to
Buckley and Gottlieb [Buckley and Gottlieb 1988: 33].

[10]Ferro-Luzzi also makes the same point by saying that
"the independence of pollution from the physical fact is
clearly shown by the preferred numbers of segregation days"
[Ferro-Luzzi 1974: 122]. She repeatedly claims that the
length of segregation "can only be culturally explained"
[1974: 134].

[11]The Paraiyars also claim 30 days *tīṭṭu* for
childbirth and explain that mother and child must be
segregated for a week.

mother's bleeding, so that if the baby was given a bath, the *tīṭṭu* of the baby would go away. It is also obvious that the

Table 3.1 General opinions as to periods of pollution
associated with life course incidents (days)

incident caste	childbirth	puberty	usual menstrua- tion	death	circumcision
Pillai	30 (13/14 for *puṇṇiya-* *tāṉam*)	15 (11/13/15 for *caṭaṅku*)	7	30 (16 for *karumāti,* 1 year- mourning)	---
Kallar	30	30 (7/9/11/ 15/16 for *caṭaṅku*)	7	30/31 (7/9/11 for *karumāti,* 1 year-mourning only for *pūcāri* & *cāmiāṭi*)	15/16
Pantaram	30 (odd number day before 16 for *puṇṇiyatāṉam*)	30 (7/9/11/ 13/15 for *caṭaṅku*)	7 (4 days- segre- gation	16 (7/10/11/16 for *karumāti*)	---
Acari	30	30 (16 for *caṭaṅku*)	7	16/30 (1 year- mourning, 16 for *karumāti*)	---
Natar	30	30 (before 15 for *caṭaṅku*)	7	16/30 (3 for *karumāti*)	---
Vannan	30	16	7	30 (16 for *karumāti*)	---
Paraiyar	30	30 (11/13/15 for *caṭaṅku*)	7	30 (16 for *karumāti*)	---

metonymical explanation reducing *tīṭṭu* to a physical
pollutant of blood can again be shown to have limitations.
Firstly, there is another opinion that the newborn baby
itself is also polluting so that, even after giving it a
bath, the baby maintains *tīṭṭu* until the 30th day. Secondly,
as in the case of puberty, other family members also become
tīṭṭu due to childbirth, even though the degree of their
tīṭṭu is not as strong as that of the baby's mother.[12]

In the case of death, there is the same tendency to
try to find the source of *tīṭṭu* in a visible or tangible
thing. It is, therefore, claimed that a decaying dead body
causes *tīṭṭu*, so that *tīṭṭu* would increase if the dead body
was left without any treatment. The bad smell from the dead
body is also seen to evoke the feeling of *tīṭṭu*. In this
view, *tīṭṭu* of death must be much decreased after the burial
or cremation of a dead body. At the same time, it is thought
that death brings about 30 days *tīṭṭu* which is fully removed
with the ceremony of *mokṣa viḷakku* (a light offering for
salvation) on the 30th day[13], and that a chief mourner

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[12]I presume that the recognition of *tīṭṭu* of family
members in those days was stronger than is presently the
case. As a reference, I cite the Jaffna Tamils' case in
which pollution associated with childbirth spreads to blood
relations as a whole, as does death pollution [Sekine 1983:
133; 1984: 27].

[13]Among the Sanskritized castes like the Pillais and
the Pantarams, one year *tukkam* (mourning) is observed even
after the period of pollution has ended.

becomes the main pollutant after a dead body is no longer
present. When I pointed out the contradictions found in
their explanations to several respondents from the Kallars,
the Pillais and the Pantarams, a Pantaram young man who is a
graduate of a Hindu college proposed the following rather
rational solution. According to him, though physical *tīṭṭu*
disappears after the burial or the cremation, mental *tīṭṭu*
remains until the 30th day after the death. Although other
people are not fully convinced by this logical explanation,
it at least refers to the symbolic aspect of *tīṭṭu*. In other
words, this indicates that they doubtlessly recognize the
nature of *tīṭṭu* which can not be fully reduced to a physical
cause. Moreover, the fact that death *tīṭṭu* is shared
strongly by the family of the dead person and, even if to a
lesser extent, by the patrilineal members[14], again requires
the cause of *tīṭṭu* to be found in the incident of death
itself rather than in physical phenomena, such as the dead
body, the polluted house and the chief mourner.

3.1.3 Deep connotations of *tīṭṭu*: extraordinary level of
consciousness

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[14]As is shown by the villagers' expressions for death
pollution, such as "*kēta vīṭu*" or "*tukkavīṭu*" which means "a
house under mourning", the most intense *tīṭṭu* is carried by
the family members living together with the dead person in
the same house. It is important that the family members
living separately also have considerable *tīṭṭu*. Moreover,
other patrilineal relatives automatically become *tīṭṭu*, even
though it is not as strong and it recently tends to be
limited to close relatives.

In order to overcome the limitation and the contradiction of the villagers' ordinary interpretations of *tīṭṭu*, described in the previous section, it is necessary to throw light upon the incident itself. This means that the deeper connotation of *tīṭṭu*, hidden under the villagers' ordinary consciousness, needs to be investigated.

(1) *Tīṭṭu* associated with death

For this, let's start from the incident of death. Death is an incident by which, on the social level, society loses a member and, on the personal level, a family experiences mental sorrow and upset. The existing order in both senses is broken down and a situation of confusion arises. It is natural that the dead person's family and patrilineal relations (*uṭaṉpaṅkāḷi*) directly experience most intensely the disorder due to the loss of their member. A funeral ceremony, therefore, is regarded as a ritual attempt through which the chaos can be brought under control and a new order introduced. Thus, it is reasonable to regard *tīṭṭu* as the villagers' expression referring to the state of disorder or of confusion, which is brought about by death. Though this interpretation of *tīṭṭu* is mine which is elucidated from my observations of funerals in the village, this is at the same time a social meaning of funerals which has been generally accepted since Radcliffe-Brown's understanding of death among the Andaman Islanders [Radcliffe-Brown 1922]. This idea does not, in fact,

contradict the villagers' practices that *tīṭṭu* is shared by the family concerned and by the patrilineal relations, and that *tīṭṭu* is step by step decreased by having a funeral ceremony consisting of the management of the dead body (burial or cremation), *karumāti* (a ceremony for sending the dead person's soul off to heaven) and *mokṣa viḷakku*. (See Chapter 7 in which details of a funeral ceremony are described. See also [Sekine 1984].)

This understanding of death *tīṭṭu* reminds us of Douglas' theory that anomaly as a danger to symbolic or social order is connected with pollution [Douglas 1966]. Though the above argument basically supports her theory, I must point out two inadequate aspects of this theory. As I have already pointed out in section 1.2.1.3-(5), these are her disregard 1) of the otherworldy character of pollution and 2) of its contextual character[15]. These criticisms are clarified in the following discussion.

The first point of otherworldliness is related to Douglas' revised argument that "not all symbolic anomalies

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[15]Although her theory here basically refers to the theory shown in "Purity and Danger" [1966] and in "Pollution" [1968], her revised position found in "Self-evidence" [1972] is also taken into account. In the latter work she accepts some defects of her initial generalized theory. She emphasizes there the importance of a culturally specific context for deciding what are anomalous beings [Douglas 1975(1972): 282]), and recognizes that anomaly is not always coded as polluting [Douglas 1975(1972): 287-288]. It seems to me that these revisions are useful but my criticism of her theory is still necessary.

must be coded as polluting" [Buckley and Gottlieb 1988: 27].
In this statement she clearly confesses that pollution can
not be defined only by the condition of anomaly. In order to
define pollution more correctly, only one condition of
anomaly is not enough and another condition needs to be
added. I propose that the other condition is
otherworldliness. It is obvious for the villagers that death
is a departure on a journey from this world to the other
world, as their funeral rites themselves verify. In other
words, death is looked upon as an anomalous situation
between this world and the other world, which is recognized
as an intrusion of other worldly power into this world. This
recognition is described as the command of *Yamatarmarājan* or
as the God Siva's invitation by the villagers.[16] This
indicates that 'death *tīṭṭu*' is not simply the result of
an anomaly or from matter out-of-place spoiling
categorization, but that it is necessary to add the
condition of otherworldliness to the condition of anomaly
(liminality). The addition of the condition of
otherworldliness aims at emphasizing the point that an
incident of death is not simply an anomaly between different
known categories within this world (see also [Douglas
1975(1972)], but that between a known category of this world

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[16]They tend to regard death as a divine act, *viti*,
because it is basically an inexplicable incident. For
example, when Mr. Balasubramanian had a traffic accident and
died, his elder brother wrote to me that he had been invited
to heaven by God Siva because he had accumulated enough
karma for reaching *mukti*.

and an unknown category of the other world. It must be
recognized that the anomaly of death provides people with
the experience of actually confronting the intrusion of the
otherworldly power, namely, the experience of "the menace of
death".

This fundamental recognition about the *tīṭṭu* of death
naturally leads us to the second point, dealing with the
contextual character of pollution, because "the menace of
death" is a subjective recognition. Therefore, it is
necessary to ask who feels "the menace of death". On the
occasion of death, the subject must be a person living in
this world, namely, an insider of the known category of this
world. This suggests the following two interrelated points.
Firstly, it shows that it is necessary to pay attention to
who claims *tīṭṭu* and to notice that there are many-sided
viewpoints even within one specific culture[17]. Secondly, it
logically suggests that, though "the menace of death" takes
place in its direct sense in the case of death as an
incident between this world and the other world, the liminal
incidents between the known category and the unknown
category are also associated with "the menace of death" in a

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[17]From this point of view, Douglas' revision of her
initial theory is still not sufficient, because her failure
lies in her objective analysis of anomaly defined in one way
and in her disregard of the subjective and dynamic point of
view. A good example is Buckley and Gottlieb's criticism of
Douglas. They point out the methodological prejudice of her
male-dominated analytic standpoint [Buckley and Gottlieb
1988: 30].

metaphorical sense. For an insider of the known category,
the intrusion of the unknown category means the intrusion of
the threatening power destroying the order of the familiar
known category. What should be emphasized is that anomaly is
defined as "the menace of death", or polluting, from the
viewpoint of the subject standing within the known category.
An anomaly of death which becomes the archetype of the
subjective feeling of "the menace of death" is thus seen as
the paradigm of pollution in general. Therefore, Das'
statement that "the paradigm of liminality *par excellence* is
death" [Das 1976: 256] would be more meaningful if it was
connected with the subjective viewpoint or a contextual
character.

Thus, I insist that *tittu* (pollution) is the
subjective recognition of the feeling of "the menace of
death". I think that this is the necessary definition to be
adopted for bridging anomaly and pollution.

After this consideration, the villagers' ordinary
explanation of *tīṭṭu*, that is, the propensity of villagers
to reduce the source of *tīṭṭu* to a visible or tangible
pollutant, can be comprehended as follows. Those physical
pollutants such as a dead body, a chief mourner with a
shaven head and a dead person's house can be regarded as the
symbolic indications referring to 'death *tīṭṭu*' in a deeper
level of connotation which evokes the feelings of "the
menace of death". It is difficult to directly obtain this

understanding from the villagers themselves, since they are
not usually conscious of such a relation.[18] It seems to me,
however, that, for the villagers, the word *tukkam* rather
holds a closer meaning to the deeper level of connotation of
'death *tīṭṭu*' in my sense.

(2) Other *tīṭṭus* and "the menace of death"

It is the present task to consider how the
paradigmatic statement that *tīṭṭu* is caused by an incident
which subjectively evokes a feeling of "the menace of death"
can be applied to other incidents and things coded as *tīṭṭu*.

What about *tīṭṭu* associated with childbirth ? An
incident of childbirth has two facets, one related to the
newborn baby which tends to be socially repressed, and the
other to the mother in childbirth. A newborn baby is
regarded as a transitory being, coming from the other world
to this world. This other worldly character of childbirth
coincides with people's opinion that childbirth itself is
seen as a divine act (*viti*). A newborn baby can be compared
to a dead person, even though their directions of movement
are opposite, because both are in the unstable liminal
position between this world and the other world.[19] The fact

[18]However, it seems to me that the deeper level of
connotation of *tīṭṭu* is intuitively underatood by the
villagers, who state that *tīṭṭu* is pollution which cannot be
removed by bathing.

that both birth and death are associated with the same time-
span of pollution, 30 days, strongly supports this
similarity (see [Kolenda 1978: 19]).[20] For a baby, delivery
must be the difficult experience of crossing a boundary,
where the baby may have to overcome the confusion of
adapting to this world, a sphere which is the unknown for
the newborn baby [O'Flaherty 1988: 98,100]. From the social
point of view, childbirth can be described as the social
experience of accepting a new member of the family and of
the *vakaiyarā* (patrilineal lineage), so that it requires a
renewal of the order of the family or of the lineage. As to
the mother, she also experiences drastic changes, both
socially and physically. If she is having her first baby,
the change in her social position is very big because she
acquires the additional position of mother besides being a
wife. Delivery with severe bleeding is physically very
dangerous for a mother. According to the belief of
villagers, it makes her body very "hot" and it takes 30 days
for the recovery of the confusion of her body system by
"cooling down".

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[19]For example, a verse of the *Tirukkural*, "*Uraṅkuvatu
pōlum cākkāṭu uraṅki viḷippato pōlum pirappu* (Death is
falling asleep, birth is awakening from that sleep)"
expresses this idea. One of the clear pieces of evidence for
the correspondence between birth and death is a villager's
comment on the posture of a dead person lying in a burial
pit. According to him, the posture can be compared to a baby
suckling.

[20]Most *Smṛtis* also prescribe the same length of
pollution of 10 days for both birth and death [Ferro-Luzzi
1974: 115].

Tīṭṭu associated with childbirth can be thus possibly interpreted by the paradigm of *tīṭṭu* associated with death. Childbirth must be a harsh liminal experience, for both the baby and the mother, in which the feeling of "the menace of death" is provoked by their encounter with the unknown situation.

The incident of puberty provides an anomalous experience to both a girl and her family. She for the first time experiences the unknown phenomenon of menstrual bleeding, and she may be upset and uneasy for some time[21]. This experience can be interpreted as her confrontation with the intrusion of the unknown post-pubescent sphere, in other words, the death of her childhood. Through a ceremonial process of coming of age, the girl mentally overcomes the gap between pre-pubescence and post-pubescence and becomes conscious of her fertility. At the same time, it puts a family having a marriageable post-pubescent girl into a new social situation. There is a clear propensity that the villagers see puberty as being auspicious, as they tend to avoid directly using the word *tīṭṭu* for puberty, or as it is said, a family having 'puberty *tīṭṭu*' is thought of as a *nallavīṭu* (good-house). It is possible to say that 'puberty *tīṭṭu*' indicates the drastic change from childhood to

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[21]In order to mitigate her worry, there is a custom that she is accompanied by her grandmother or another old woman and is given useful knowledge and advice by this elder woman.

adulthood which embodies death and the regeneration of life in a metaphorical sense. To understand *tīṭṭu* as "the menace of death" is fundamentally valid for the case of puberty.

Monthly menstruation as a part of everyday life is associated with less ceremonial than is puberty, but it seems to repeat the motif found in the case of puberty in a minimal way. For supporting this claim, it is useful to know how menstruation is understood by the villagers. For example, a Kallar man explains that a woman becomes *tittu* because "bad" blood gradually increases in her body, and that the monthly bleeding of this "bad" blood, that is, menstruation, makes her body "clean (*cuttam*)". He insists that she would have a "good" child if she conceived just after menstruation, because her body is then "clean". There is no doubt that the speaker regards menstrual blood itself as the source of the woman's *tīṭṭu*, recognizes the cleansing power of menstrual bleeding[22], and regards women as being most fertile just after the menstrual flow[23]. This explanation should be understood by connecting it with the following opinion I heard from several Kallar men that what is *tittu* is the menarcheal woman herself, not the menstrual

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[22]This cleansing aspect of menstrual bleeding is also pointed out by Hiltebeitel [1981: 203] and by Hershman [1974: 286].

[23]This can be connected with the indigenous opinion that conception in the most purified womb, just after a woman's periods, is preferred (cf. [Hiltebeitel 1981: 204-5]).

blood, which is just *acuttam* (unclean). The latter opinion
indicates that *tīṭṭu* associated with monthly menstruation
refers to the dynamic state of the menarcheal woman as a
whole, not just to "unclean" or "bad" menstrual blood.
'Menstrual *tīṭṭu*' indicates the whole dynamism in which "bad
and unclean" blood is replaced by "good and clean" blood
once a month. It, therefore, seems to me that these Kallars'
opinions reflect their basically positive view of
menstruation.

It is notable here that these positive remarks are
made by Kallar males. This suggests that the extent to which
women's views are repressed by men's views is not so large
among the Kallars, though it is also true there is to some
extent a bias reflecting the male's viewpoint. The negative
view of menstruation, expressed by them, is that women's
menstrual bleeding provokes allergic feelings in men. There
is no doubt that there is a consensus among all castes as to
the primary values of placing importance on women's
reproductive powers. However, while there is not much
difference between the Paraiyar and the Kallar men as to the
understanding of menstruation and the women's position, it
is noted that the Pillai men, the most Sanskritized people
in the village, tend to more strongly show their negative
view on menstruation and degrade women's position (see
[Allen 1982: 18]). Apart from these male-centred viewpoints,
a positive evaluation of menstruation is more naturally

found in women's views.[24] This claim is supported by the
following remark I heard from a Pillai female informant
(middle-aged and married). According to her, a family
properly having *tīṭṭu* is called "*nallavīṭu* (good-house)",
from which people like to take a bride. This shows that not
only is the menstrual flow not a fearful incident for a
mature woman, but she may also be conscious of the social
recognition that having menstrual *tīṭṭu* is evidence of her
fertility, and therefore an honour for her.[25] Today, with
modernization, some women have a more rational understanding
of menstrual *tīṭṭu*. They explain that the segregation of a
menstruating woman in the name of *tīṭṭu* gives her a
publically recognized resting period for coping with her
unusual body condition, which is called "menstrual
vacations" by Harper [1964: 160].

There is a fundamental consensus, regardless of
gender, that menstruation is an inevitable painful
experience, which is regarded as a temporal disorder, for
acquiring the renewed fertility of a woman's body.
Menstruation can be culturally thought of as a sort of

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[24]As Buckley and Gottlieb [1988] claim, it is
necessary to carefully take into account women's opinions on
menstruation because in Hindu societies women's views are
usually repressed under the formal social norms which
strongly reflect men's domination.

[25]This positive attitude to menstruation can be
logically connected with the ideology of "embryo murder" in
which a child is formed from menstrual blood so that a
woman's menstruation should be rendered fruitful [Krygier
1982: 77].

sacrificial process for re-creation, in other words, as a
dynamic process of positively coping with "the menace of
death"[26]. This essential connotaion of menstruation has been
referred to as menstrual *tīṭṭu* by the villagers.

After the discussion of *tīṭṭu* associated with these
four occasions, it is interesting to note that the intensity
of the feeling of "the menace of death" seems to correspond
with the length of the *tīṭṭu* period which the villagers
claim, as shown in Table 3.1[27]. This table indicates that
there is a decisive difference between the incidents
associated with rites of passage, such as death, childbirth

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[26]As is discussed in the next section, this
sacrificial nature of menstruation is used for various types
of magic. The deep connection, in general, between sacrifice
and menstrual blood is pointed out in Buckley and Gottlieb
[1988: 36].

[27]There is no doubt that the intensity of "the menace
of death" chiefly determines the length of the pollution
period, though there are some influences of other factors,
as Ferro-Luzzi shows [Ferro-Luzzi 1974: 142-3].

and puberty[28], which commonly require one month of *tīṭṭu*,

and the more usual incident of menstruation, having only 7

days *tīṭṭu*. The more discontinuous an incident, the longer

the time it takes to cope with it. It seems that setting the

tīṭṭu period is a type of traditional wisdom in which this

situation of vulnerability, marked by *tīṭṭu*, is overcome or

protected against with the cooperation of the family and of

the relatives (both kin and affine) concerned, which is

described as the sharing of *tīṭṭu* [Buckley and Gottlieb

1988: 38].

Lastly, I have to consider that there are things such

as fallen hair, nail clippings, spat saliva and ejaculated

semen which not only are seen as *acuttam* but also to some

extent provoke feelings of *tīṭṭu* in the minds of most

villagers. As mentioned above, the essential nature of *tīṭṭu*

does not lie in the physical object itself, but in a

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[28]Pollution associated with marriage is exceptionally
reported among the Kaikatti section of the Kanakkan (a Tamil
accountant caste), according to Thurston and Rangachari.
"After the marriage ceremony, the girl is kept inside the
house, and not allowed to move about freely, for at least
two or three days. She is considered to be under some kind
of pollution. It is said that, in former times, she was
confined in the house for forty days, and, as occupation,
had to separate dhal(peas) and rice, which had been mixed
together." [Thurston and Rangachari 1989(1909): 152] This
case seems to be remarkable, because, as is suggested by the
fact that the focus of pollution is the bride, who
experiences a more radical change in social status than does
the bridegroom, marriage logically satisfies the condition
of pollution. In this connection, Parry notes that "in folk
dream-analysis a naked woman or a bride is a presentiment of
impending death" [Parry 1982: 81]. I, therefore, understand
that people generally repress marriage pollution by
attaching more importance to the auspiciousness of marriage.

subjective incident which evokes the feeling of "the menace

of death". From this point of view, these things must thus

hold some incidental factor which brings about the feeling

of "the menace of death", even slightly. That is to say, it

is necessary to find a factor which distinguishes these

things from other bodily wastes or bodily excretions, which

are simply thought of as *acuttam* (unclean) or as *aciṅkam*

(ugly). This investigation also reveals the inadequacy of

Douglas' theory of "matter out-of-place", because even her

revised theory can not explain adequately the villagers'

differentiation between *acuttam* and *tīṭṭu*. For example,

Douglas' theory can not clearly distinguish ejaculated semen

from discharged faeces, a distinction which is recognised by

the villagers. Their opinions that semen is equal to blood

as the seat of life[29], and that sexual intercourse makes a

man weak are important (see [Parry 1982: 81]). This is the

point which distinguishes semen as being *tīṭṭu* from other

bodily wastes as being just *acuttam*. On the basis of this

view, it is believed that semen has a vital force, and that

the loss of vital energy due to the loss of semen is an

incident which evokes not only the feeling of *acuttam* but

also that of *tīṭṭu*. Ejaculated semen is thus again

metaphorically associated with the feeling of "the menace of

death". In this respect, it seems to me that Meigs' insight

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[29]According to Davis, men's semen can be equated with
women's uterine blood among the Bengali Hindus [Davis 1976:
19].

into pollution concepts of the New Guinea Highlanders supports my present argument and extends it. According to her, "Anything that is polluting is a form of *nu* (vital essence)" [Meigs 1978: 307] and "Its loss or contamination may result in loss of health, ageing, or death" [1978: 306]. In this sense, the other three things associated with *tīṭṭu*, fallen hair, nail clippings and spat saliva, were initially alive as bodily elements and after their removal from the body can also be seen to provoke the perception of a loss of vital force, even though slightly[30]. The argument on semen is thus basically valid for them. As circumstantial evidence, I can cite the fact that, for his magic, the *mantiravāti* (a sorcerer) particularly is said to use menstrual blood and these four *tīṭṭu* things, rather than other things such as faeces, urine, and so on, which most people regard as being just *acuttam*. This is because these things coded as *tīṭṭu* provoke a sense of the loss of vital force, namely the feeling of "the menace of death", and at the same time are useful for contagious magic due to their strong identification with the person from whom they are removed. It is kept in mind here that these *tīṭṭu* things do not simply indicate the loss of vital energy but they are

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[30]It seems to me that villagers' special attention to hair and nails as vital elements of the body reminds us of the description of embryology in *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, because it specifically mentions nails and hair growing out of subsidiary limbs [O'Flaherty 1988: 97].

believed to have a potential power which is generated in practice by other worldly manipulation.

Thus, it is necessary to more consciously add the conditions of other-worldliness and of context (subjectivity) to Douglas' theory of anomaly in order to define an incident of *tīṭṭu* fully. It is concluded that the evocation of the feeling of "the menace of death", which is theoretically the subjectively defined integration of anomaly and other worldliness, is the essential or deep connotation of *tīṭṭu*.

3.2 Two kinds of attitude toward *tīṭṭu* and *puṇitam*

(1) The distinction between "impurity" and "pollution"

It has been argued that *tīṭṭu* is regarded as the indispensable disorder for regenerating a new order. This essential connotation of *tīṭṭu* is referred to by the expression of "the menace of death". In this sense, *tīṭṭu* indicates the situation that is ambiguous, risky and at the same time potentially powerful, and the situation of *tīṭṭu*, therefore, requires proper management, guided by various taboos and rituals in order not to invite a bad result.

Firstly, there is a belief that *tīṭṭu* negatively invites misfortune (see also [Ferro-Luzzi 1974: 113], [Yalman 1963: 29]). For example, it is said that "you would be attacked by *pēy* (an evil spirit) if you went out without

taking a bath after sexual intercourse", and that "you had better avoid going out on the day you have had a hair-cut, otherwise you will have an accident". In these cases, an attack of *pēy*, or having an accident, can be thought of as the negative symbol of the other worldly unknown force. God's anger is another form of misfortune believed to be invited by *tīṭṭu*. The actions of polluting a god are thought of as having the reaction of the god's punishment. It is, therefore, necessary to eliminate *tīṭṭu* before facing a god[31]. A menarcheal woman or a person who has just had sexual intercourse, for instance, should not enter the praying room[32]. As far as the negative aspect of *tīṭṭu* is concerned, then, the elimination of *tīṭṭu* is of first importance.

This understanding of *tīṭṭu* can be seen operating in reverse in the thought process shared by the villagers in which an inexplicable misfortune tends to be attributed to

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[31]It is said that it is necessary to observe one *maṇṭalam* (40 days or 41 days) of continence in order to meet god in a true sense. An example is found in the pilgrimage to the Ayyappa temple at Sabarimalai [Daniel 1984: Part 2]. As to the number 40, Ferro-Luzzi discusses its significance [Ferro-Luzzi 1974: 148-152].

[32]In this connection, the story that a Kallar told me, half in a joke, is impressive. According to him, a god himself is not polluted by the invasion of *tīṭṭu*, but a god cannot stay in a polluted place any more. Thus a thief may throw a cloth with menstrual blood into a temple compound and steal the treasures of the temple, because the god will not be present once the site is polluted. This reminds me of Fuller's statement that "the gods themselves can not be polluted" [Fuller 1979: 459].

tīṭṭu. Tīṭṭu, even in a negative way, contributes to connecting this worldly incidents with the other worldly sphere. In other words, *tīṭṭu* provides an opportunity for the villagers to become conscious about their cosmology. This suggests that one could draw unusual cosmic power from the cosmological sphere if one succeeded in manipulating *tīṭṭu* after careful preparation. This can be called the positive aspect of *tīṭṭu*, which I focus upon next.

In this respect, the *mantiravāti* (a sorcerer) can be taken as a good example. The *Mantiravāti* is said to have his own individual god, and he gains the supernatural power to manage *tīṭṭu* by praying to this god[33]. According to the villagers, he can use his power for both good and bad purposes, depending on his client's will. For example, in black magic, something attached to the target person such as a fallen hair, nail clipping, or a cloth stained with menstrual blood, which are *tīṭṭu*, are said to be indispensable. In the case of white magic in which, for example, the betterment of the husband-wife relationship or the realization of love is aimed at, the *mantiravāti* again is said to use a cloth stained with menstrual blood (see also [Buckley and Gottlieb 1988: 34-35]). It is most

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[33]According to Buckley and Gottlieb, the logic is as follows; "potent, negatively valued substances such as menstrual blood may be manipulated for positive ends by those who are themselves spiritually potent enough to reverse the valence and make it positive" [Buckley and Gottlieb 1988: 37].

striking that the skull and the brain of a dead foetus or of
a baby who has died within 30 days of its birth are said to
be the most powerful objects for charming, because they are
the most *tīṭṭu* due to their double pollution, of death and
of birth. This shows that the strength of magical power is
proportional to the degree of *tīṭṭu* of the object used for
charming. The stronger the *tīṭṭu* is, the more powerful it is
believed is the other worldly power which is generated under
the operation of the *mantiravāti*.[34]

There are other instances showing the positive aspect
of *tīṭṭu*. One is a ritual dining on the first day after a
marriage ceremony, through which the unification of husband
and wife is realized. The essential point of the co-dining
is that the wife takes her meal from a banana leaf which has
already been used by her husband. The used leaf is regarded
as being *eccil* (anything defiled by contact with the mouth,
i.e. saliva), a sort of *tīṭṭu*. It is noted that unification
is thus realized through *tīṭṭu*. Another example is the
traditional wisdom in the village that one should take a

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[34]It is noted that the social position of the
mantiravāti itself is marginal in a village-centred society.
This is partly verified by the fact that Muslims, who are
socially peripheral in Hindu society, often become sorcerers
in this area. There is another type of magician (or shaman)
called *kōṭāṅki* or *cāmiāṭi* who is recruited from ordinary
villagers and who tends to be engaged in white magic, such
as exorcisms and healing. There are several contrasting
points between *mantiravāti* and *kōṭāṅki*, respectively as
follows: an outsider of the village: an insider of the
village:: worship of an individual god: worship of lineage
gods:: indispensable *tīṭṭu*: indispensable *cuttam*:: more
fearful and powerful: less fearful and powerful.

wife from a *nallavītu* (good-house), which means a wholesome family regularly having *tīttu* associated with life crises, like birth, puberty, menstruation, and death. This indicates that the occurrence of *tīttu* guarantees future fertility of the new family.

The examples mentioned of the positive aspect of *tīttu* suggest that an acceptance of *tīttu* under careful management produces unusual creative power, which is indispensable for the continuance of the villagers' lives. This is the fundamental reason that the concepts of *tīttu* associated with life crises have been observed among the villagers, as part of their traditional wisdom. The acceptance of *tīttu* is regarded as the metaphorical experience of death and the regeneration of life, or of a sacrificial death[35]. This positive attitude toward *tīttu* which tends to be hidden under the ordinary level of consciousness, doubtlessly reveals the essential connotation of *tīttu*. To the contrary, the ordinary level of attitude toward *tīttu* is inclined to its elimination by simply seeing it as a negative disorder inviting misfortune.

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[35]A sacrifice in this context reminds me, for example, of the necrophagous ascetic, "a group of ascetics who are intimately associated with death, corpses and the cremation ground", discussed by Parry [Parry 1982: 74-110]. More generally, the necessity of a sacrificial death for the regeneration of life is pointed out by many scholars. For example, Shulman notes, "To attain more life ... the life of the victim must be extinguished" [Shulman 1980: 90].

For analytical purposes, I would like to call the ambiguous but positive aspect of *tīṭṭu* associated with an attitude of acceptance as "pollution"; whereas the unambiguous and negative aspect of *tīṭṭu* corresponding with the attitude of elimination is referred to by the term "impurity".[36] What is important is that the distinction is a subjective and interpretative one, which is defined by differing attitudes (views) toward *tīṭṭu*.

(2) Two kind of atittudes toward sacredness (*puṇitam*)

The positive management of *tīṭṭu* is believed to generate unusual cosmic power transcending the secular sphere. "Pollution" in my sense 'potentially' holds sacred power and is, therefore, intimately associated with the sphere of sacredness, *puṇitam*. From this point of view, it will be made clear that there are two paths to sacredness.

The village cemetery can be taken as a typical example for the present argument, for most of the villagers, regardless of caste, claim that the cemetery is sacred. It is because, according to them, God resides in the cemetery[37], so that it must be *puṇitam*. They say that the

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[36]In their book on the study of menstruation, Buckley and Gottlieb clearly point out the limitations of conventional pollution theory and attach importance to the creative power of pollution [Buckley and Gottlieb 1988: 33-38].

[37]There is no doubt that this notion is derived from *ruttiratāṇṭavam* (Skt. *Rudra-Tāṇḍava*, Siva's dancing in the cemetery).

cemetery is far from a fearful place because the presence of God prevents *pēy* (an evil spirit) from coming there. This claim is very impressive to me because it is absolutely the opposite of the Jaffna Tamils' opinion that the cemetery is a den of *pēy* and is a very dangerous place [Sekine 1984: 29].[38] The question arises why most of the villagers can regard the cemetery which must be polluted by corpses as *puṇitam*. There would be a contradiction in their outlook if we seriously adopted their view, previously mentioned, that *tīṭṭu* spoils *puṇitam*. For answering this question, the following argument may be proposed. They recognize some difference between the *puṇitam* of the cemetery and the *puṇitam* of the temple. For example, it is said that a sacred tree, the bo-tree, is suitable for the temple but is unsuitable for the cemetery, because corpses are buried in the cemetery, even though it is *puṇitam*. In this connection, Good's observation about the cremation ground comes closer to my point. "It is not a shrine as such and worship is never performed there but it does hold a divine presence in the form of Siva in his poisoned aspect (Good 1980)." [Good 1985: 123] Though it is difficult to expect further systematic answers to this question from the villagers, it is possible to give a logical answer on the basis of the

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[38]I should note that there are a few people who see the cemetery as *keṭṭa iṭam* (literally, a bad place). This naive view is an important clue to understanding the ambiguous *tīṭṭu* of the cemetery which is strongly suppressed by the absolute notion of *puṇitam* embodied by the presence of Siva.

distinction between "impurity" and "pollution" in my sense.
For there is a clear contrast that *puṉitam* of the temple
rejects (excludes) *tīṭṭu* whereas *punitam* of the cemetery
accepts (includes) *tīṭṭu*. This logically indicates that
there are different attitudes toward *tīṭṭu* associated with
the temple and the cemetery. While *tīṭṭu* associated with the
temple is seen as "impurity", that associated with the
cemetery is seen as "pollution". It is thus necessary to
distinguish two kinds of attitudes toward sacredness
(*puṉitam*), which correspond with the kinds of attitudes
toward *tīṭṭu* crystallized by the concepts "impurity" and
"pollution". The temple type of *puṉitam* always requires
"purity" by eliminating "impurity"; the cemetery type of
puṉitam is associated with "pollution" as the potentially
creative. I thus propose the distinction between "purity-
sacredness", exemplified by the temple[39], and "pollution-
sacredness" exemplified by the cemetery. "Purity-sacredness"
reflects the protective attitude of avoiding "impurity",
through which sacredness is sought out; whereas "pollution-
sacredness" expresses the sacrificial attitude which

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[39]Though I so far have dealt with the temple in a
simplified way in order to emphasize its contrast with the
cemetry, it will be revealed in Chapter 4 that the village
temples themselves can be associated with two kinds of
attitudes towards sacredness.

concerns the creation of sacredness due to "pollution" as the ambiguous power.[40]

This distinction can not simply be regarded as a binary opposition, but "pollution-sacredness" is more fundamental than "purity-sacredness", because sacredness is acquired through sacrifice. As noted by O'Flaherty [1973], Parry [1982], Heesterman [1981], Das [1976, 1983], Shulman [1980] and Sahi [1980], the logic of sacrifice (death and the regeneration of life) in Bataille's sense (see also [Parry 1982: 100]), whether it is explicit (animal sacrifice) or implicit (*pūjā*) [Biardeau 1976: 138-153], exteriorised or interiorised [Heesterman 1981: 252], has consistently penetrated not only Tamil thought (see Shulman [1980]) but also Hindu thought in general, in terms of transcendance [Parry 1982: 100]. For example, it is obvious that the *puṇitam* of the cemetery, or "pollution-sacredness" in my sense, corresponds with Parry's understanding of

[40]This distinction of sacredness reminds me of the various examples and arguments in terms of woman and of the renouncer. Allen, for example, provides a typical example as follows; "the orthodox renouncer *avoids* women as dangerous destructions; ... ; while the Tantric *uses* them as a necessary means of attaining spiritual liberation" [Allen 1982: 18]. This shows the contrast between Vedic Brahmanical *sannyasin* [Burghart 1983] and the necrophagous ascetic [Parry 1982]. Obeyesekere's distinctions in the Sri Lankan context are also noted. He presents a series of dichotomies such as 1) the Hindu view of celibacy and the Buddhist view of celibacy, 2) matted hair and the shaven head, and 3) personal symbols and psychogenetic symbols [Obeyesekere 1981]. Stirrat's discussion on the sacred, in which the Durkheimian sacred and the Eliadean sacred are distinguished, is also suggestive to the present argument [Stirrat 1984].

Benares as "sacred to Siva, the Great Ascetic, the Lord of the Cremation Ground and the Conqueror of Death; and the cornerstone of its religious identity is its association with death and its transcendence." [ibid.: 75] In this connection, though its details will be described in Chapter 4, it is suggestive that the Ekanatarcuvami (Siva) temple which is the biggest and most Sanskritized temple in Kinnimangalam, was built on the tomb (*camāti*) of the ascetic, Arulanantacuvamikal, and is a good example for elucidating the dynamic relationship between "purity-sacredness" and "pollution-sacredness". As the origin myth of the temple (see section 4.3.1) shows, this Siva temple, professing "purity-sacredness" in the ordinary level of consciousness, crystallizes the dynamic relationship in that "purity-sacredness" (embodied by the God Siva) can be derived from the basis of "pollution-sacredness" (embodied by the *camāti* of the ascetic). In this sense, just as O'Flaherty points out, that the asceticism (*tapas*) and eroticism (*kāma*) of Siva should be understood as "the problem of cycles" [O'Flaherty 1973: 313], it would be very reasonable to regard the relationship between "purity-sacredness" and "pollution-sacredness" as the cyclical change of creation (religious generation) and maintenance (social presentation), rather than as a simple opposition. In other words, the transformation from "pollution-sacredness" to "purity-sacredness" can be seen as a shift from the religious cosmic sphere to the this worldly social

sphere where the hierarchical measure of "purity-impurity" works.

This argument, in which the fundamental significance of "pollution-sacredness" and its relationship to "purity-sacredness" is revealed, suggests a dynamic relationship between "pollution" and "impurity", rather than a simply opposed distinction, as is further discussed below. This means that an unambiguous and negative notion, "impurity" has a broader foundation in the ambiguous and potentially positive notion of "pollution".

3.3 The Configuration of Folk Terms and Analytical Concepts

(1) *Cuttam* and *acuttam*

As already noted, when the villagers express the hierarchical difference of ritual status among castes, they often use the words *cuttam* and *acuttam* which are derived from the Sanskrit words *śuddha* and *aśuddha* (see footnote 1). The words *cuttam* and *acuttam* can be unambiguously defined and therefore can be translated exactly into the paired concept "pure and impure" in Dumont's sense, which provides

the ideological expression reflecting the this worldly
(social) power relationship.[41]

(2) *Acuttam* and *tīṭṭu*

It was shown that *tīṭṭu* manifests two aspects
according to the subject's attitude toward it, namely,
"impurity" and "pollution". Whereas *tīṭṭu* appears as
"pollution" in its essential connotation, *tīṭṭu* in a shallow
sense can be equated to "impurity". Since *acuttam* can be
translated into "impurity", the meaning of *tīṭṭu* in the
shallow sense and *acuttam* overlap in the analytical concept
of "impurity". In the overlapping area, named as "impurity",
there is no difference other than intensity between *tīṭṭu*
and *acuttam*. That is, an intense *acuttam* can be regarded as
tīṭṭu within the domain of "impurity". This explains the
ordinary view among vilagers who often use *tīṭṭu* and *acuttam*
interchangeably[42].

The Caste Hindus' usages of *acuttam* and of *tittu* in
reference to the Paraiyars provides a good example for
revealing the categorical relationship between these folk

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[41]It is said that *śudh*, which is the original verb
form of *śuddha*, means an action of beautifying or purifying
by bathing and adorning. This suggests that *cuttam* and
acuttam seem to be more or less manipulated under this
worldly control, compared with *tīṭṭu*, which is deeply
connected with uncontrolled other worldly power.

[42]It seems to me that Moffatt simply accepts this
villagers' ordinary view of pollution and never investigates
it deeply [Moffatt 1979: 87].

terms and the analytical concepts "impurity" and
"pollution". The dominant castes, like the Kallars and the
Pillais, claim that the Paraiyars are not only *acuttam* but
also *tīṭṭu*. In contrast, they never describe the lower
service castes as *tīṭṭu* people, but just as *acuttam* in a
relative sense.[43] This shows that the Paraiyars only
socially carry *tīṭṭu* in a fixed sense, which logically
includes both unambiguous intense "impurity" and ambiguous
"pollution". In this view of the dominant people, the
Paraiyars are regarded as a people of an unknown category,
evoking the feeling of "a menace of death" metaphorically.
However, today, the "pollution" aspect of the Paraiyars
appears to be repressed and their "impurity" aspect can be
seen to be dominant in the eyes of the dominant castes. Thus
the Paraiyars are today unambiguously regarded as the most
intensely "impure" people and placed on the bottom of the
social ladder, and their creative "pollution" aspect is
found only in limited situations, as in the case of the

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[43]The reason which is raised by the Caste Hindus
especially for explaining the difference between the lower
Caste Hindus and the Paraiyars is the eating of beef and the
meat of dead cattle. Nonetheless, this seems to be a
tautological reasoning for justifying the already fixed
distinction. For, in reply to my question, a Kallar said,
"No, they (the Paraiyars) could not leave their *tīṭṭu*
position even if they stopped their custom of eating beef,
just as higher education could not change it. Because it is
tradition (*pāramparai*), in which there is no room for
argument". In this connection, I am reminded of
Pfaffenberger's statement that it is necessary for the
Vellalars to "depict the Untouchables as *lower* than the
impure, ..." [Pfaffenberger 1980: 207].

Paraiyar priest of one of the village temples, the
Mataikaruppacuvami Temple (see Chapter 4).

The above mentioned subjective view of the dominant
castes is shared by other lower Caste Hindus, like the
Vannans and the Kuravans. It is, however, also true that the
village Paraiyars today never accept this top-down view
where they are regarded as *tīṭṭu* mainly in the negative
sense. The Paraiyars never think that non-vegetarian dishes
or beef-eating make the eater *acuttam* or *tīṭṭu*. Most of them
claim affirmatively that beef-eating is their own
traditional custom[44]. This can be very naturally understood,
since the pollution concept is always defined by the
subjective point of view. Moreover, it also shows that
today's Paraiyars are not so naive as to merely accept the
dominant view. Though the Pariyars' practices are to be
seriously investigated in Part Three, I very briefly mention
this point here. The Paraiyars tend to deny the ritually
defined social hierarchy, but they have to recognize the
actually existing hierarchy in which they are placed. As a
result, they prefer to explain the social hierarchy by the
differential of economic power, rather than in ritual terms.
However, this does not mean that the Paraiyars are

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[44]Several Paraiyar informants told me that if their
economic conditions became better they would stop eating
beef. However, this does not mean that beef-eating is
regarded as being polluting by them, but their intention of
stopping beef-eating lies in their strategic calculation for
reducing its associated social stigma.

indifferent to ritual language. My overall impression of the
Paraiyars' verbal discourse is that they basically do not
like to use words such as *cuttam*, *acuttam* (*cuttam illai*),
and *tīṭṭu* for referring to the ritual status differential of
the social sphere. Rather, they tend to limit using these
words to the religious context, like a village festival and
a lineage festival. That is, on those occasions it is
important for them whether a person or a thing is suitable
for facing god or not. *Cuttam* in this usage means a suitable
condition for worshipping god, in other words, a state
holding enough positive power for attending a sacrifice and
receiving god's grace properly[45]; whereas *tīṭṭu*, *cuttam*
illai or *acuttam* refer to the conditions unsuitable for
this. Both are commonly seen as a deviation from the normal
ritual status to a sacred ritual status (see section 1.2.1.1
(1)). There is a tendency for the context in which these
ritual words are used to be not the man-man hierarchical
relationship but rather the man-god relationship, professing
egalitarianism in front of the god. As Srinivas, for
example, points out, it is not special that they recognize
such horizontal dichotomy between the usual state and the

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[45]The Paraiyars say that ritual fasting and eating
only vegetarian dishes, for example, make a person *cuttam* so
that the *pūcāri* (a lineage priest) should observe such
regulations for some time before a festival. It is specially
noted that their positive attitude to vegetarians is not
associated with the view that non-vegetarians are degraded
compared to vegetarians. They never think that non-
vegetarian dishes cause *acuttam*, but they recognize that
fasting or eating vegetarian dishes makes body conditions
suitable for meeting gods.

sacred state [Srinivas 1952]. This usage of ritual words by the Paraiyars is not limited to them, but is shared by the Caste Hindus as well. In other words, the Paraiyars basically share with the Caste Hindus the same verbal world in the religious sphere but they attempt to limit their involvement in the social hierarchical sphere.

(3) *Cuttam* and *puṇitam*

The relationship between *cuttam* and *puṇitam* seems to be parallel with that between *acuttam* and *tīṭṭu*, discussed above, because *cuttam* is a relative concept whereas *puṇitam* is an absolute one, and *cuttam* and a shallow level of *puṇitam* (social interpretation of *puṇitam*) overlap in the domain of an analytical concept of "purity-sacredness". I try to make clear here the relationships between the folk terms, *cuttam* and *puṇitam*, by using my analytical concepts "purity-sacredness" and "pollution-sacredness".

Generally speaking, the village Caste Hindus see the Aiyars (Brahman householders) as the most *cuttam* caste and place them in the highest ritual position in the social sphere.[46] Nonetheless, the villagers also claim, in general, that a world renouncer is more *cuttam* than a Brahman householder, because the former has no sexual pleasure. This

[46]The Paraiyars' attitude toward the Aiyars seems to be ambivalent. Some Paraiyars deny the special value of the Aiyars but other Paraiyars give value to the Aiyars' religious background, like vegetarian life style and their knowledge of *mantras*.

shows that a renouncer who takes a vow of celibacy can be
placed in the overlapping area of *cuttam* and *puṇitam*, since
he can be categorized among the Houseless renouncers who
seek transcendence (*puṇitam*) with celibate lives [Burghart
1983: 642], namely, with the attitude of "purity-sacredness"
(in the sense discussed in section 3.2-(2)) at least at the
beginning. For clarifying the villagers' view that a
celibate renouncer is ritually higher than a Brahman
householder, the Pantaram village priest's description of
the world renouncer is useful. According to him, there are
four successive stages within the inclusive category of a
world renouncer (*canniyāci*) as follows:

1)'*Canniyāci*' is a trainee renouncer who stays in a temple
or in a monastery and thinks only about God, under the
guidance of a Guru. He goes about asking for alms and
observes a vegetarian way of life.

2)'*Cittar*' is a self-supporting renouncer who has acquired a
certain level of *cakti* (sacred power) and who is pleased to
use his *cakti* for saving people. In this stage, although he
usually eats fruit and drinks milk, he does not reject any
food offered to him as alms, even if it is *tīṭṭu*. It is said
that his use of *cakti* for secular people carries two
disadvantages, namely, a disturbance of his meditation and a
decrease of his power.

3)'*Muṇivar*' is an advanced ascetic who leaves the secular
world and lives in a remote forest. There he is lost in
meditation and it is said that he possesses enough *cakti* to

control himself and to do anything he wants, but he never
uses this power for the people. He does not take cooked
food, but eats only wild grasses and fruits.

4)'*Ñāṇi*' is an ascetic who has attained the final and the
highest stage, in which he holds perfect knowledge and power
controlling the senses. He breaths, but takes no food so
that he is almost equal to the immortal. He fervently
continues to meditate in the forest, being segregated from
the secular world. His meditation is so deep and his *cakti*
is so strong that no one can come near and disturb him. He
never uses his power for secular people.

The above description is suggestive for the present
argument. The latter two stages ('*Muṇivar*' and '*Ñāṇi*') can
be regarded as true renunciation or as reaching the *puṇitam*
state, completely separated from the secular social sphere.
In contrast, since '*caṇṇiyāci*' as a beginner of world
renunciation would be vulnerable to secular influence, this
stage is described as *cuttam* rather than as *puṇitam*. The
'*cittar*' stage is placed between these two. This suggests
that a renouncer begins to seek out *puṇitam* through the
principle of "purity" and ultimately reaches the
transcendental state of *puṇitam* where he is fully engaged in
self-sacrifice. Transcendence is a locus of creation where a
renouncer ceaselessly sacrifices himself and, therefore, is
never influenced by secular pollutants. This can be called
the path of "purity-sacredness", but, if a renouncer once

reaches the state of *puṇitam*, there would be no difference

between "purity-sacredness" and "pollution-sacredness". In

other words, a logic of "pollution-sacredness", which

directly indicates creation through sacrifice (death and the

regeneration of life), is essential for *puṇitam* and refers

to the religious essence of generation of sacredness.

However, the generated sacredness can socially manifest as

"purity-sacredness". This aspect of sacredness can be

compared to *cakti* used for social purposes; whereas the

aspect of "pollution-sacredness" is indicated by *cakti*

ceaselessly generated by self-sacrifice of '*Muṇivar*' and

'*Ñāṇi*'. Thus a concept of "purity-sacredness" mediates

"purity" in a social sphere and "pollution-sacredness" in a

religious sphere. In this sense, *cittar* embodies, in

practice, "purity-sacredness" because he can be seen as

standing at the point of change from "purity" to "pollution-

sacredness" or vice versa, and goes in and out between them.

He creates *cakti* with the attitude of "pollution-sacredness"

and socially consumes it with the form of "purity-

sacredness". Thus, it can be claimed that "purity-

sacredness" is based on "pollution-sacredness".

Now we can understand what is implied by the

villagers' outlook that a world renouncer is ritually higher

than a Brahman householder. Their claim seems to imply that

puṇitam is a source of *cuttam* or that *puṇitam* legitimizes

cuttam. This means that the villagers attach more importance

to *puṇitam* than to *cuttam*, and, when such relationship
between *cuttam* and *puṇitam* is interpreted in the social
sphere, the above villagers' view is formed. For, their
understanding of *cuttam* and *puṇitam* can be seen as a
summary of the present argument: a renouncer is seen as
relatively more *cuttam* ("pure") than a Brahman in the social
hierarchical sphere; a renouncer is absolutely regarded as a
generater of sacredness ("pollution-sacredness") or as
punitam in the religious sphere; *cuttam* and the shallow
level (or the social aspect) of *puṇitam* are continuous in
the domain of "purity-sacredness".

(4) Conclusion

What I have discussed here is summarized in Figure
3.1, which shows the configuration of folk terms and my
analytical concepts. In sum, the this worldly (social)
hierarchical values of *cuttam* and *acuttam* ("purity" and
"impurity") are contrastingly sandwiched between two other
worldly and cosmic concepts, *puṇitam* and *tīṭṭu*. Both
spheres, indicated by *puṇitam* and *tīṭṭu*, can be commonly
seen to include the cyclical shift between the two different
facets (attitudes), namely, the this worldly (conservative)
facet and the other worldly (creative) one. The point is
that the creative aspect can be the essential dimension of
tīṭṭu or of *puṇitam*, where "pollution" and "pollution-
sacredness" come closer by means of the act of sacrifice,
and the conservative aspect is strongly adopted by the

Figure 3.1 The configuration of folk terms and the
         analytical concepts in terms of pollution,
         purity and sacredness

$\longleftarrow$----<man-god relationship>----$\longrightarrow$

the secular world   the sacred world
this worldly   other worldly
social   ← a cyclic shift → cosmic
conservative   creative

punitam

"purity-sacredness"

"purity"
cuttam

<man-man   "pollution-sacredness"
relationship>

cuttam illai $\longleftarrow$----------$\longrightarrow$ *cuttam*   <sacrifice>
acuttam
acinkam

                                        "pollution"

acuttam
"impurity"

tittu
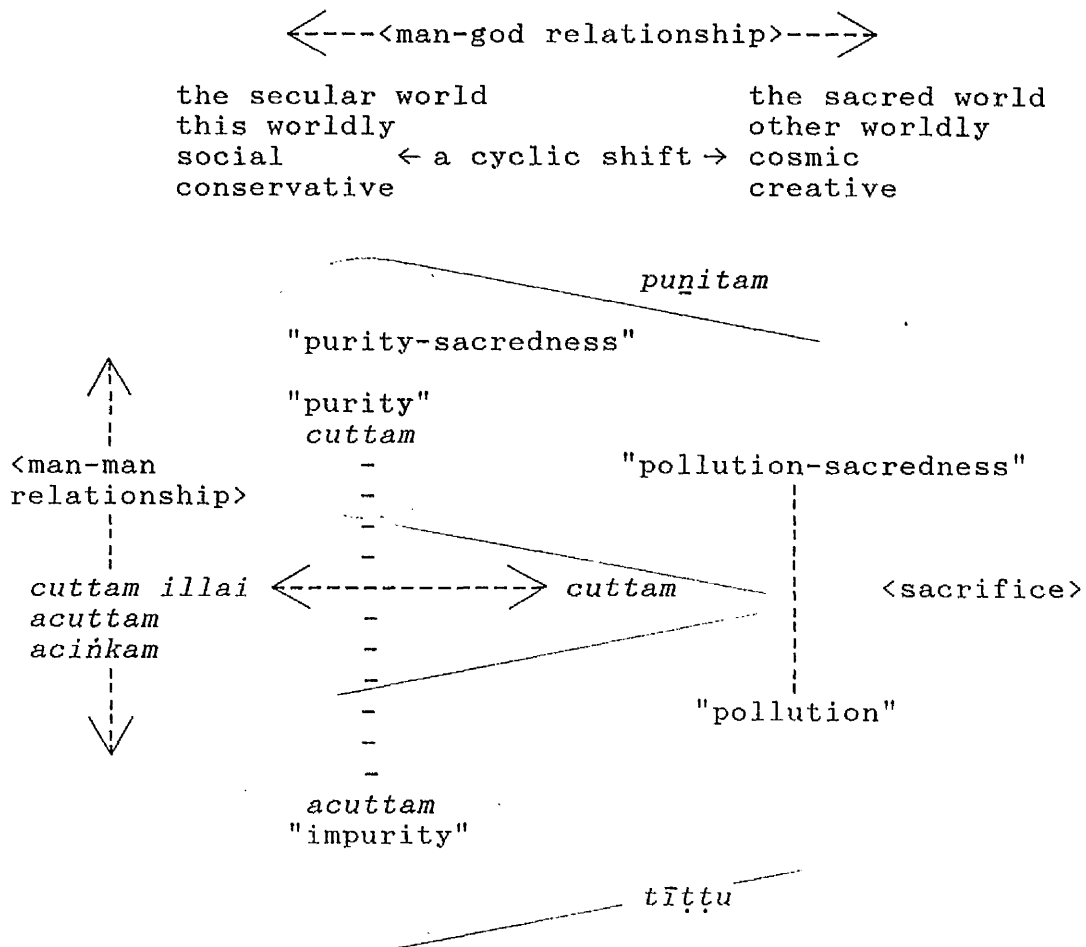
dominant people in order to maintain their social control.

This aspect forms the "purity-impurity" ideology. In so far

as *punitam* is the source of *cuttam*, the secular social world

can not be basically maintained without sacrificial creation

in the sacred world, or, in my terms, the acceptance of "the

menace of death" and its transcendance. Once creative power

(*cakti*) is acquired, the power can be used for maintaining

the social hierarchy of the secular world. This is the

hierarchical usage of *cuttam* and *acuttam* under the conservative attitude, which produces the hierarchical caste differences. Besides this hierarchical understanding of *cuttam* and *acuttam* in the social context, it should not be disregarded that in the religious context *cuttam* and *acuttam* have a rather casteless and egalitarian value in front of god. This dimension can be connected with the notions of auspiciousness/inauspiciousness (see section 1.2.1.1-(1)). *Cuttam* in this usage means a positive preparation which is necessary in order to attend sacrifice and receive god's grace properly.

Though the ideological configuration shown in this Figure is valid regardless of caste, it is a different matter how each caste manipulates or interprets it in practice. In particular, the Paraiyars' interpretation should be separately investigated. This is the topic of Part Three.

CHAPTER 4 VILLAGE DEITIES AND THEIR CULTS: BLOOD SACRIFICE AND "POLLUTION-SACREDNESS"

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter dealing with village deities (Skt. *grāmadevatā*) and their cults is to support my argument on the understanding of pollution, purity, and sacredness, which was discussed in the previous chapter. In particular, the dynamic relationship between "pollution-sacredness" and "purity-sacredness", which is based on the distinction between "pollution" and "impurity", is clarified by focusing upon blood sacrifice, which is frequently found in the festivals of the village deities. It will be argued that from the viewpoint of "pollution" ideology, the dynamic (cyclic) relationship can be understood as "creation" and "conservation" of sacred power. This will naturally provide a different interpretation of village deities from the Dumontian understanding, which adheres strongly to the "purity-impurity" dichotomy.

Pali (Skt. *bali*) means "offering given to gods, manes, etc., in sacrifice", which is the first meaning of the Tamil Lexicon. *Pali*, therefore, is not necessarily limited to animal sacrifice. Nonetheless, in the village *pali koṭuttal*

(literally, giving sacrifice) is often used as the
expression for the ritual act of holding a blood sacrifice.[1]
In Kinnimangalam, there are two kinds of village deities,
namely, those deities which accept animal sacrifice and
those deities which reject it. Though the former deities are
deemed as degraded "impure" gods from the Brahmanical point
of view (for example, [Dumont 1986: Part 3]), they seem to
be more familiar to and are regarded as being more reliable
by most of the villagers than are the latter Sanskritic gods
(see [Whitehead 1921: 16], and [Srinivas 1952: 214])[2]. I
want to take up here the fact that villagers tend to believe
that gods' grace is acquired by means of the so-called

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[1]In his paper, after recognizing that *pūjā* also has an
idiom of sacrifice, Fuller emphasizes the contrasting
relationship between *naivēdya* (a part of *pūjā*) and *pali*
(*bali*) in the village context [Fuller 1988: 24]. He also
notes that "the ordinary people who practice it usually
refer to it by a literally descriptive phrase, such as
'cutting the goat'" [ibid.: 23]. This is a little different
from the case in Kinnimangalam.

[2]Srinivas' classification of 'All-India
Hinduism','Peninsular Hinduism','Regional Hinduism', and
'Local Hinduism' based on the concept of 'spread' is
convenient for distinguishing cultural levels neutrally, and
I use it in order to make clear the contrast between 'All-
India Hinduism' and 'Local Hinduism'. However, the
classification itself is somewhat misleading, because it
invites the idea that 'All-India Hinduism' is most universal
and 'Local Hinduism is most parochialised. Nonetheless, I
use his classification in the following sense. My argument
is based on the concept of 'sharedness', rather than the
concept of 'spread'. For, from this standpoint, 'Local
Hinduism', even though it looks diversifying, is rooted most
deeply and widely, even beyond culture and, in this sense,
the degree of 'sharedness' diminishes toward 'All-India
Hinduism'. With this modification, a god accepting blood
sacrifice can be classified into 'Local Hinduism'; whereas a
god rejecting blood sacrifice can be classified into 'All-
India Hinduism' or 'Sanskritic Hinduism'.

'polluting' acts of bloodshed and death[3]. This attitude of villagers' can not be well described by the "purity-impurity" ideology, but requires us to positively evaluate the creative aspect of pollution, that is, the "pollution" aspect. The deity accepting blood sacrifice provides a typical example to illuminate an aspect of "pollution-sacredness". Though this is the focus of my investigation here, I also explore the articulation between these two kinds of village deities, or, in other words, how "pollution-sacredness" and "purity-sacredness" can be articulated. This exploration reveals the necessity of replacing the static Dumontian understanding of village deities by the more generative (dynamic) view.

The approach I adopt here is not an intensive one, but rather an extensive one. In order to clarify the interrelations of village deities, I place more stress upon taking into account the whole structure of the village deities, rather than upon deeply analyzing the details of a particular deity.

4.2 An outline of villagers' religious life

The following four categories of deities (gods and goddesses) in which the villagers believe can be distinguished: 1) *ūr potutteyvam* or *kirāma teyvam* (a village

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[3]In her discussion on who kills a sacrificial animal, Beck points out that "the beheading of any living being is a demonic or polluting act" [Beck 1981: 115].

deity: a common god or goddess worshipped by the villagers),
2) *kulateyvam* (a lineage deity: a god or goddess worshipped
by a particular lineage), 3) *vīṭṭu teyvam* (a family deity: a
god or goddess worshipped by a particular household), 4)
iṣṭa teyvam (a personal deity: a god or goddess worshipped
by a particular individual). In addition, there is another
category of deity called *cāti teyvam* (a caste deity), which
is worshipped exclusively by members of a particular caste.
Caste deities are not possessed by every caste, and in
Kinnimangalam only the carpenter caste (*Taccu-ācāri*) has a
caste deity. As has been noted in section 2.3.1-(4),
Kāmātciyamman, who has attractive and passionate eyes, is
worshipped by this caste as their guardian deity, and their
caste association possesses the goddess' temple.[4] The four
categories of deities mentioned above are possessed by all
village castes, including the Paraiyars. Even though they
worship these plural deities, this does not mean that they
are polytheists, because they themselves claim that there is
only one God. In this view each deity can be seen as a kind
of medium for the acquisition of the grace provided by
transcendental sacred power, which is unique. In this
context, Siva is the God which represents such

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[4]The cult of *Kāmātciyamman* is not limited to *Taccu-
ācāri* (carpenters), but is shared by five kinds of artisan
castes, which are called *Ācāri* or *Kammāḷar* generically.

transcendental power.[5] Therefore, the villagers can rather be described as being pantheistic monotheists.

4.2.1 Personal deities

The selection of a personal deity is to some extent influenced by the lineage which one belongs to, but most villagers tend to prefer one of the great Gods of Saivism. The overwhelmingly popular God among the villagers is the God Murugan. The God Ekanatarcuvami (Siva) is also often chosen as a personal God, mainly because he is the main deity of the biggest village temple. Although a few villagers prefer the God Visnu or the Three Gods, and some women like the Goddess Minatciamman, there is little doubt that the Hindu Gods belonging to the so-called great tradition, especially the male deities of Saivism, tend to be adopted most commonly as the villagers' personal deities. The most obvious expression of their devotion (*pakti*, Skt.

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[5]In this connection, the distinction between *teyvam* and *kaṭavuḷ*, which was recounted to me by several villagers, seems to be interesting. According to them, they can not make contact with *kaṭavuḷ*, the unseeable great God, without the mediation of *teyvams*, the seeable and more familiar gods. They also say that the villagers are more concerned with sacred power itself than with each deity having a proper name. This sacred power corresponds to "the divine" in Dumont's sense [Dumont 1986: 458], "shakti" in Wadley's sense [Wadley 1975], and "sacred power" in Harman's sense [Harman 1989: 98]. According to Yamasita, this hierarchical split between *teyvam* and *kaṭavuḷ* took place toward the middle ages [Yamasita 1988].

bhakti) to such great gods is to conduct a pilgrimage[6].
However, only a limited number of villagers can afford to do
so due to financial reasons [Harman 1989: 98].

4.2.2 Lineage deities

Chapter 8 is devoted to the description and discussion
of lineage deities, so that I only briefly touch on their
characteristics in this section. It is obvious that a
lineage deity holds a collective character reflecting a
lineage group, which contrasts with the individuality of a
personal deity. Though every lineage claims that there are
21 gods and goddesses as its lineage deities[7], goddesses are
relatively more significant in the case of lineage deities
than they are in the case of personal deities which are

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[6]First of all, the famous pilgrimage centres, such as
the Minaksi Amman temple in Madurai city, the Alagar temple
in the eastern side of Madurai city, and the Murugan temple
in Tirupparankunram (one of *ārupaṭai vīṭu*) are easily
accessible for the villagers. In addition, they also
sometimes visit Palani, one of the six holy places of
Murugan (*ārupaṭai vīṭu*), the Ayyappan temple in Cabarimalai,
and so on. The pilgrimage to the great Hindu gods itself is
deemed as an act of self-sacrifice [Shulman 1980: 17-29].

[7]The lineage members do not always know all the names
of their 21 lineage deities. There is a consensus about the
names of the main deities and several guardian deities, but
the names of the rest of lineage deities often vary from
person to person.

dominated by male deities (see Table 2.11)[8]. It is because, without exception, a goddess is either the chief-main or the sub-main deity of lineage deities. It can be also pointed out that a family deity is definitely a goddess who is the main or sub-main lineage deity. These facts suggest that there is a profound relationship between a goddess and a collectivity based on blood relations.

Another important point derives from the fact that a lineage festival inevitably has a blood sacrifice. The 21 lineage deities by and large consist of local deities, though the main deities tend to be identified with the great Hindu God or Goddess. In this sense, the main deities are regarded as *cuttamuka teyvam* (literally, a pure-face-deity), who reject blood sacrifice, while most of the rest (guardian deities) are *tutiyāna teyvam* (literally, a fearful deity)[9], who require blood sacrifice. Hereafter, I call *cuttamuka*

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[8]According to Table 2.11, the composition of the main deities of the Kallar lineages are 5 goddesses, 3 gods, and 3 pairs (god and goddess), and, in the case of the Paraiyars, the main deities consist of a pair of goddesses (elder and younger sisters), 1 god, and 2 pairs (god and goddess). This doubtlessly shows that goddesses are indispensable for their lineage cults.

[9]*Tutiyāna teyvam* is described as a deity which easily possesses a person and, if necessary, punishes a person within this life, not in the next life, like a king.

teyvam "a deity rejecting blood sacrifice" and *tuṭiyāṇa*

teyvam "a deity accepting blood sacrifice".[10]

N

Figure 4.1 The open-air shrine of the Kamanan lineage
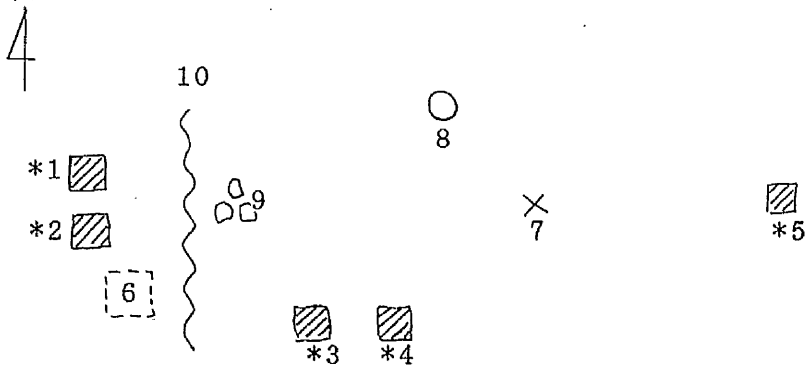
*1. Ankalaisvari (goddess)
*2. Virapattiran (god)
*3. Cinnacami (god)
*4. Rakkaciyamman (goddess)
*5. Kalyanikarrupu (god)

6. a location where a "sacred chest" is placed during a lineage festival
7. a location for animal sacrifice
8. a stone pillar for a light
9. a hearth for cooking a *ponkal*
10. a cloth for blindfolding

Let's take up one typical example briefly. Figure 4.1 shows the open-air shrine of the Kamanan lineage (the Kallars), one of the pioneering lineages of Kinnimangalam, where the deities are symbolized by stones half buried in the ground. During the lineage festival the main deities facing east are blindfolded with a white cloth during the

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[10]As is well known, Dumont adopts the dichotomy between "pure (*cuttam*) god" and "impure (*acuttam*) god" or between "vegetarian god" and "meat-eating god" [Dumont 1986]. However, as Fuller [1988: 21] argues, Dumont's analytical translation, which results from his naive application of the "purity-impurity" ideology to the gods' world, seems to be far from the truth from the villagers' viewpoint.

animal sacrifice which is offered to the guardian deities
facing north. Even if the main deities are segregated from
the blood sacrifice, there can be little doubt that the
blood sacrifice is an important act to climax the festival.
It is this contradictory fact that I focus on in the
following discussion on village deities.

4.2.3 Village deities

Here a village refers to Kinnimangalam hamlet, *ur* in a
broad sense, as discussed in section 2.2. The village
deities I deal with here are basically worshipped by the
people of Kinnimangalam hamlet. These village deities guard
the hamlet people exclusively. In other words, they reflect
the collectivity based on a particular region. In this
sense, the local expression of *ūr potutteyvam* (*ūr* common-
deity) is more relevant than *kirāma teyvam*. The actual
disposition of the 11 village deities obviously shows the
Caste Hindus' centricism, for these deities' temples are
located around the Caste Hindus' residential area (cluster
I), *ūr* in a narrow sense, as shown in Figure 2.1. This
spatial centricism corresponds to the fact that the Caste
Hindus financially support the village deities' festivals.
This does not mean that the Paraiyars are perfectly excluded
from the festivals. The Paraiyars rather tend to interpret
ūr in a broader sense, within which they are included, and
they believe in being protected by these village deities,

even though they do not contribute financially[11] and live outside of the ūr boundary marked by these village deities (cf. [Daniel 1984: 72-79]). Table 4.1 displays 11 village deities' names and some related details. Though the details will be discussed later, casting a glance at the list, it is obviously rich in local colour due to the predominance of local gods and goddesses[12].

Table 4.1 List of village deities

	name	sex	C/T	festive month	animal sacrifice	priest's caste
T1.	Ekanatarcuvami	M	C	Maci	No	Pantaram(i)
T2.	Vinayakar	M	C	--	No	ditto
T3.	Perumal	M	C	Purattaci	No	ditto
T4.	Urkkavalcuvami	M	C	Maci	Yes	Kavuntar(o)
T5.	Ayyanar	M	C	Purattaci	Yes	Kuyavar(o)
T6.	Muttalamman	F	T	Pankuni	yes	Kuyavar(o)
T7.	Kaliyamman	F	T	Vaikaci	yes	Kallar(o)
T8.	Vatakkuvacelli-yamman	F	T	Purattaci	yes	Pantaram(o)
T9.	Pattattaraci-yamman	F	C(T)	ditto	No(Yes)	Kavuntar(o)
T10.	Mataikaruppacami	M	T	ditto	Yes	Paraiyar(i)
T11.	Nakammal	F	T	(Maci)	No	Kavuntar(o)

note 1: C means "a deity rejecting blood sacrifice", whereas T means "a deity accepting blood sacrifice".
note 2: (i) means an insider and (o) means an outsider.

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[11]*Tōtti* and *mataiyan*, and *Nārpankāli* of the Paraiyars have to do various types of menial work for the festival. This means that the festival provides the Paraiyars with the opportunity of receiving some reward from their patrons.

[12]The deep relationship between the goddess and the particular bounded area of village (ūr) has been repeatedly pointed out (for example, [Whitehead 1921: 17][Kinsley 1988: 198-200].

This brief general view reveals that village religious life chiefly consists of the cults of the personal deity, of lineage deities, and of village deities. It is suggested that there is an interesting contrast between the individual cult, like the worship of a personal deity, and the collective cult, such as the worship of lineage deities or village deities. The former cult depends upon the great Hindu God (*katavul* type), especially on male deities, whereas the latter cults tend to require local deities (*teyvam* type), in which goddesses are inevitably included This point will be developed later[13].

4.3 Village deities and their festivals

In this section, the characters of eleven village deities are described. The focus of the description is how each deity responds to blood sacrifice. The numbers of the 11 deities, T1-T11, correspond with the numbers in Figure 2.3 and the numbers in Table 4.1. Except for T1, which is enshrined in a big temple, and T4, T6, and T9 which are enshrined in small temples, the rest have no temple buildings and their statues are placed in the open air. It should be noted that the size of the temple building does not correspond simply with the popularity of the deity

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[13]This contrast recalls Whitehead's distinction between the Dravidian deities dominated by goddesses, and the Aryan deities dominated by gods, and Srinivas' distinction of four levels from "All-India (Sanskritic) Hinduism" to "Local Hinduism".

enshrined in it (see [McGilvray 1983: 111] and [Dumont 1986: 349]).

4.3.1 Ekanatarcuvami (T1)

The Ekanatarcuvami temple originated in the tomb (*camāti*) of the outstanding world renouncer ('*cittar*') called Arulanantacuvamikal, who played an active part in this area during the ruling time of Tirumalai Nayaka (the latter part of 17th century). The temple was built by putting a Siva linga on the place where the renouncer is said to have reached salvation (*camāti nilai*) and is, therefore, identified with the Siva temple. It is said that Arulanantacuvamikal announced beforehand to the people, "You will see my figure in five diffrent places at the same time when I reach salvation"[14], and what he said actually happened. This episode explains why the deity is called Ekanatarcuvami, which means an "omnipresent god". The present village name of Kinnimangalam is also derived from

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[14]It is said that the renouncer sat in the meditation form on the day of the twenty second of *tiruvōnam nakṣattiram* of *Cittirai* month and appeared in the following five places simultaneously: Kinnimangalam, Solavantan, Madurai, Periyakulam, and Cinnamanur.

the achievements of the renouncer[15]. These origin episodes associated with the renouncer who once lived, are to some extent useful to the villagers for regarding Ekanatarcuvami as a familiar god, even though he is identified with Siva as a *kaṭavuḷ*.

The Ekanatarcuvami temple, facing east, is located in almost the centre of the *ur* in a spatial sense, and exactly in the centre of the *ūr* in a cosmic sense. It has a big walled compound in which the main God Siva is enshrined in the centre and the Gods Vinagayar and Murugan are also enshrined at the back corners. This large and fine temple is formally the representative of village temples, though this does not simply mean that it enjoys the most ardent worship of the villagers. The present temple buildings and compound were constructed by architects sent by the Nayaka king. The origin of the temple indicates that the temple is not purely

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[15]The following legend shows why the old village name, Mankalapatti, was changed to Kinnimangalam. One day, Arulanantacuvamikal, who lived in the forest of Nagamalai, asked a young shepherd to milk a barren cow, handing him a bottomless bowl (*kiṇṇi*). Though the man wondered how it was possible, he did it and strangely he was able to get a full bowl of milk. The news of this miracle spread at once among the people of this area and they started to ardently worship the renouncer. He became more and more popular as he did good things for the people. Since various village people asked him to come and settle in their villages, after consideration he proposed to them that he would live in the village where his bowl (*kiṇṇi*) fell, and he threw it in the air. The bowl fell in the place where the Ekanatarcuvami temple is located, and the renouncer came to this village, as he promised. After this incident, the villagers began to call their village Kinnimangalam after *kiṇṇi*. The story continues further, but I mention only the relevant part of it.

indigenous but reflects power superimposed from outside[16].
This is an important point, which contrasts with the
character of the village deities mentioned below, which were
from the beginning connected with a particular region.

This temple has been managed for generations by the
Pantaram priest (*pūcāri*) who has settled in the village. The
priest has been given the right of cultivation of the land
associated with the temple called *kōvil māṇiyam* (18.12
acres) because of his priesthood. This means that he must
bear all the expenses of temple management and his family's
living costs by means of agricultural production from the
land. Since he serves the great Hindu God Siva, he observes
a Brahman priest-like life style. He also has to take care
of another two village deities, Vinayagar and Perumal, who
reside on the southern borders of the village, because they
are also great Hindu Gods. It is the Ekanatarcuvami temple
that is responsible for the celebrations of the Tamil annual
festivals, shown in the right side column of Table 4.2, as
the representative of the village temples. Besides this, the
festival peculiar to this temple, *Guru pūcai* (the
anniversary of Arulanandacuvamikal), is celebrated on the
day of *pūram* (the eleventh *naksattiram*) of Vaikāci month
(May-June) and the offering withdrawn (*piracātam*) is given

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[16]This provides evidence that the Nayaka dynasty
carried out a policy of encouraging Hinduism by constructing
Hindu temples in the areas under its rule. This policy was
adopted mainly with the aim of displacing the Muslim power.

to '*canniyācis*' who gather from Tiruparankunram[17]. The most important festival for Ekanatarcuvami is *Makācivarattiri*, which is celebrated on the night of the new moon in Māci month (February-March). On the same day, most of the Caste Hindus' lineages also conduct their lineage festivals, even though not every year, so that the whole village is enveloped in a festive mood. In these important annual festivals, a special elaborate *pūjā*, including five kinds of *apiṣēkam* (Skt. *abhiṣēka*)[18], is often offered to the Siva linga. After this, the priest gives *mutanmai* (the order of honour)[19] by distributing *piracātam* to the participants. It is further noted that, on the five occasions marked by *p.* in Table 4.2, *pacaṇai* (an act of chanting hymns) is offered to God by a voluntary group consisting of 17 male members recruited from the Caste Hindus (1 Pillai, 1 Pantaram, 12 Kallars, 2 Acaris, and 1 Natar). In everyday life, God is served every morning and evening, and on every Tuesday and

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[17]According to the priest, the *Cittar* Arulananta-cuvamikal is sitting in the form of meditation at the right side of the linga.

[18]1) *cantaṇa* (sandalwood) *apiṣēkam*, 2) *pannīr* (rose-water) *apiṣēkam*, 3) *iḷanīr* (young coconut juice) *apiṣēkam*, 4) *pañcamirta* (a mixture of banana, honey, sugar, ghee, and grape) *apiṣēkam*, 5) *pāl* (milk) *apiṣēkam*

[19]According to the priest, the order of *mutanmai* is as follows; 1) *karṇam*, 2) *nāṭṭāṇmai*, 3) the Kamanan lineage, 4) the Kecavan lineage, 5) the Acari, 6) *tōṭṭi*, *maṭaiyaṇ* and the representatives of *Nārpaṅkāḷi* (selected from the Paraiyars), 7) other villagers.

Friday the priest does a *pūjā* associated with a *poṅkal*[20].
There is little doubt that Ekanatarcuvami professes a
Brahmanical tendency. As a result of this, the Paraiyar
people are even today prohibited from entering the temple
compound.[21]

The characteristics of the Ekanatarcuvami temple can
be pointed out as follows. Firstly, the temple is clearly
connected with "purity-impurity" ideology and, therefore,
tends to come closer to Sanskritic Hinduism in Srinivas'
sense. Secondly, Ekanatarcuvami is continuously "sacralized"
[Hubert and Mauss 1964(1899): 95] by the regular *pūjā*
conducted by the village *pūcāri* (priest) as an insider.
These characteristics promise a continuous and stable
provision of God's grace for the villagers.

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[20]It is interesting that a *pūjā* associated with *poṅkal*
is not conducted on Monday which is normally said to be
suitable for worshipping Siva, but is done on Tuesday and
Friday which are said to be good days for the worship of the
goddess. According to Dumont, "Generally ... the Goddess
priest is a Pandaram" [Dumont 1986: 355]. I presume that
this convention influences the choice of the days for more
elaborate worship. See also [Good 1985: 139].

[21]One Paraiyar tells me that the Pantaram priest
himself never says that the Harijans should not enter the
temple compound, but they do not do so because they were
afraid of the Kallars' physical force.

Table 4.2 Festivals of village deities and annual festivals

Tamil month	festival of village deity	annual festivals conducted in the Ekanātarcuvami temple
Cittirai (April-May)		*Varutap pirappu**1
Vaikāci (May-June)	Kālīyamman(Tues.)	*Guru pūcai* (*pūram*)
Āṇi (June-July)		

------<the beginning of *dakshinayanam*>-------------------------

Āṭi (July-August)		
Āvaṇi (Aug.-Sept.)	Perumāl Vināyakar	*Kokulaṣṭami*(*p.*)*2 *Vināyakar caturtti**3 (*p.*)
Puraṭṭāci (Sept.-Oct.)	Vaṭakkuvācelliyamman(Tues.) Pattattaraciyamman(Tues.) Aiyaṉār(Thir.) Maṭaikaruppacuvami(Fri.)	*Puraṭṭāci varapacaṉai* (*p.*)*4
Aippaci (Oct.-Nov.)		*Āyuta pūcai*(*p.*)*5 *Tīpāvalip paṇṭikai**6
Kārttikai (Nov.-Dec.)		*Cokkappan koḷuttutal**7
Mārkaḷi (Dec.-Jan.)	Perumāl(*Vaikunta ekataci*(*p.*))	*Tirupaḷḷi eḷuci**8 *Tiruvātirai**9

------<the beginning of *uttarayanam*>-----------------------

Tai (Jan.-Feb.)		*Tai poṅkal**10 *Māṭṭu poṅkal**11
Māci (Feb.-March)	Ūrkkāvalcuvami Nākammāḷ	*Makācivarattiri**12
Paṅkuṇi (March-April)	Muttālamman(Tues.)	

(note 1) *p.* means that *pacaṉai* (chanting hymns) is carried out.
(note 2) This column shows only the important festivals for the Ekanatarcuvami temple, according to the priest.
  *1 *Varutap pirappu*: the Tamil new year day,
  *2 *Kokulaṣṭami*: the celebration of the birth of Krsna,

*3 *Vināyakar caturtti*: the celebration of the birth of
    Ganesa,
*4 *Puraṭṭāci varapacaṉai* or *Puraṭṭāci caṉivaram*: chanting
    hymns every Saturday of *Puraṭṭāci* month,
*5 *Āyuta pūcai*: a service for books, agricultural tools,
    carpenter's tools etc.,
*6 *Tīpāvalip paṇṭikai*: offering lamps in commemoration of
    the victory of Krsna against Narakasura,
*7 *Cokkappaṉ koḷuttutal*: the fire festival for worshipping
    Siva, which is associated with the story of the
    competition between Visnu and Brahma,
*8 *Tirupaḷḷi eḻuci*: the early morning worship on the day
    corresponding with the daybreak of God's one day, which
    means the end of the dark half of a year,
*9 *Tiruvātirai* : worshipping Siva who dances on the day of
    tiruvātirai nakṣattiram of Markali month,
*10 *Tai poṅkal*: the harvest festival in which *poṅkal* is
     offerred to the god of sun and the god of wind and the
     lineage gods are worshipped as well,
*11 *Māṭṭu poṅkal*: giving a share of *poṅkal* to the bullocks,
*12 *Makācivarattiri*: the festival in honour of Siva as the
     God of destruction).

4.3.2 Vinayakar (T2)

The God Vinayakar, facing east, is enshrined at the

southern boundary of the village. Vinayakar is said to be

the God of wisdom and fortune, and promises success for new

undertakings if he is worshipped beforehand [Good 1985:

122][22]. Why is the Vinayakar temple located at the southern

border? One knowledgeable person says that the Gods

enshrined at the sourthern borders, such as Vinayakar and

Perumal, protect the village from the influence of the world

of the dead, where *Yamatarmarājaṉ* (Skt. *Yama*) is said to

reside. This indication could be connected with Good's

statement that Vinayakar is also a gatekeeper [ibid.: 122].

Vinayakar is classified as a Sanskritic god but he was

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[22]In the village, a Kallar man explains that Vinayakar
is the god holding *poṛumai* (meekness or patience).

enshrined originally by simply putting a statue on the
ground, and, more recently, on a little raised base. Thus
anybody can come close to this statue. During my period of
observation, not many people participated in the *pūjā* in the
festival of *Vināyakar caturtti*, which is conducted by the
Pantaram priest of the Ekanatarcuvami temple[23]. Nonetheless,
the necessary persons, like the panchayat president, the
Two-tevars and the Four-pankalis, and *tōṭṭi* and *maṭaiyaṉ*, at
least attend the *pūjā* and, afterwards, they receive
mutaṉmai. It was observed that the Paraiyars (the Four-
pankalis, and *tōṭṭi* and *maṭaiyaṉ*) stood at a distance,
rather than at the end of the queue in front of the god.
Though the Vinayakar temple in the compound of the
Ekanatarcuvami temple is completely isolated from the
Paraiyars, this outdoor temple does not spatially reject the
Paraiyars' approach.

4.3.3 Perumal (Visnu) (T3)

Perumal is also located at the southern boundary of
the village, and faces toward the east. Apart from his
significance as a boundary god in this village, the
villagers' worship of Perumal is not very enthusiastic

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[23]There is no regular *pūjā* to Vinayakar enshrined at
the southern border. *Vināyakar caturtti* is the unique
occasion on which the god receives *pūjā*. On the festival
day, a sweet called *koḻukkaṭṭai, poṅkal*, and boiled Bengal
gram are prepared, and an unglazed statue of Vinayakar is
brought by the people. After having a *pūjā*, statues of
Vinayakar are thrown into the Eastern tank water.

because they are basically believers in Siva. This god's statue has been moved to the Ekanatarcuvami temple temporarily because a roofed building is under construction[24]. This again supports the general trend that the Sanskritic gods tend to be more completely enclosed spatially. Once he had been managed by a Brahman, who left for Madras about 45 years ago, but he is today served by the Ekanatarcuvami priest. As is the case with Vinayakar, there is no regular *pūjā* and only two occasions, namely, *Kokulaṣṭami* (Krisna's birthday) and *Vaikuṇṭa ēkātaci* (the day when the gateway to heaven is broadly open to believers), provide an opportunity to worship Perumal.

The above mentioned three gods, as Sanskritic gods, reject blood sacrifices. In addition, temple celebrations which are prepared and conducted solely by the Ekanatarcuvami priest involve the participation of important village officials and do not necessarily require the attendance of all the villagers. This clearly differs from the celebration of the following more localized deities, whose communal festivals are held with the all-out cooperation of the villagers. It should be noted that the lack of regular *pūjā* and the emphasis on the village boundaries are two points which distinguish both Vinayakar and Perumal from Ekanatarcuvami. Next, I deal with the local

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[24]The construction was started in 1982 but was still not completed after more than 7 years.

male deities who are classified into the category of
cuttamuka teyvam, unassociated with blood sacrifice.

4.3.4 Urkkavalcuvami

$\bar{U}rkk\bar{a}val$ literally means "village-guardian". As
indicated by this name, the villagers regard this god as
their main village protector. Urkkavalcuvami, facing east,
is enshrined in the roofed temple[25] on the bank of the
eastern tank, in order to protect the tank, which is the
lifeline of the villagers, and ultimately to guard the
village territory as a whole. The god Ayyanar, with whom I
deal next, is symmetrically located on the bank of the
western tank, for the protection of both the tank and the
village. Urkkavalcuvami is described as follows: 1) he has
two consorts, 2) he does not accept blood sacrifice, 3) he
can be identified with Siva, and 4) he patrols the village
boundary at midnight. These characteristics obviously
overlap with those of Aiyanar. In fact, several villagers
agree with this identification of Urkkavalcuvami and

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[25]It is said that the statue was made more than 200
years ago and that the temple building was built about 50
years ago. This temple is a branch of the main temple of
Puliyankulam, a neighboring village, which is located in
Panjamalai (a part of Nagamalai), so that the priest of the
main temple holds concurrently the priesthood of the
Kinnimangalam temple. The main temple priest is a Kavuntar,
who came originally from Karnataka. In this connection, the
movable statue of the main temple visits the temple of
Kinnimangalam during the *Purattāci* festival of the main
temple.

Aiyanar[26]. Thus, there is little doubt that Urkkavalcuvami
of Kinnimangalam is part of the so-called Aiyanar cult,
popular in Tamil Nadu. It should be noted that the
discussion on Aiyanar in the next section is, therefore,
applicable to Urkkavalcuvami as well.

The annual festival for Urkkavalcuvami is held in *Māci*
month (February-March). The highlight of this festival is
the offering of 5 clay horses to the gods as the village
watchmen. Urkkavalcuvami is offered three horses by the
villagers, by V.A.O. (traditionally, *karṇam* and *nāṭṭāṇmai*),
and by two-Tevars respectively. Apart from this, Aiyanar and
Mataikaruppacami are also offered one villagers' horse
each.[27] The festival process is as follows. The villagers go
to the village boundary to meet the Kavuntar priest, who
carries *cāmipeṭṭi* (the sacred chest) symbolizing the god,
from Puliyankulam, and they form a procession to the temple.
It is emphasized that women, except those after menopause,
should not approach the procession. Urkkavalcuvami, as the
main deity, receives only a vegetarian offering, whereas his

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[26]According to a Kallar person, the god Urkkavalcuvami
is deemed to be *Ūrkkāla Aiyan*, which means a Brahmanic god
guarding the village. See also [Dumont 1986: 447] and
[Oppert 1978(1893): 505].

[27]It is said that Urkkavalcuvami, Aiyanar, and
Mataikaruppacami patrol the village from 12 midnight to 2
a.m. One guardian deity, whose name I failed to identify,
patrols the village in the evening, and Kaliamman is said to
inspect the village at daybreak. It is said that these
guardian deities are located at the village borders, in
order to protect the village.

21 guardian deities, such as Cinnacami and Pecciyamman[28],
enjoy blood sacrifice. Therefore, when a young male goat
(*cattikkuṭṭi*) is killed, not only is the sacrifice made
behind the temple, but also the main deity Urkkavalcuvami is
curtained, so as not to be polluted by the animal sacrifice.
The priest offers a goat's head in whose mouth the right leg
is held, and conducts *kapālapūcai* (literally, a skull-*pūjā*).
The priest brings the head back to his village the following
day. He is seen off by the villagers at the village border.
Thus, the festival emphasizes the following points: 1) the
collectivity of the village, 2) the village boundaries (the
border between inside and outside), 3) the role of the
outsider priest, 4) the purity of Urkkavalcuvami, and 5) the
significance of the goat's sacrifice.

4.3.5 Aiyanar (T5)

The cult of a Tamil local deity Aiyanar is very
popular, especially among the people of central and southern
Tamil Nadu. Aiyanar who is enshrined on the bank of the
western tank[29], is in the southwest direction from the

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[28]21 subordinate gods are not fully identified by the
villagers, as is the case with the lineage deities.

[29]It is said that since Aiyanar was born on the
riverside, the people made the temple near the water. Dumont
also reports that Aiyanar, associated with a goddess, is
enshrined on the tank's bank [Dumont 1986: 354] [Dumont
1970: 25]. The connection between Aiyanar and tank/river is
touched on by Oppert as follows: "Under his special charge
are the boundaries, forests, tanks and rivers" [Oppert
1978(1893): 506]. As to the connection between Aiyanar and
the west, see [Oppert 1978(1893): 510].

village. Three deities whose statues are carved on one stone
are placed facing the east in the open air. The central main
deity Aiyanar, who has a sitting posture called *cukācaṇam*
(Skt. *sukha+āsana*, a Yogic posture characterised by ease and
comfort, one of nine Yogic postures[30], is associated with
the virgin goddess *Kaṇṇimā* (a worshipper of Aiyanar) on his
right side, and the guardian deity *Muṇṇōṭum Karuppu*
(literally, the Karuppu who recites a mantra at the lead) on
his left side. Though Kannima here is the sole goddess, it
seems to me that the goddess can be understood in two ways,
namely, 1) as the southwest directional deity *Kaṇṇi* who
represents the dynamic ambiguity of death and the
regeneration of life in the Tamil area [Reiniche 1981: 47-
55], and 2) as the seven virgins *Kaṇṇimār* [Oppert
1978(1893): 511]. Oppert's descriprion of the Aiyanar temple
structure suggests that Muṇṇōṭum Karuppu could be identified
with *Munnadiyar*, two gigantic guardians standing at the
gates of the temple [Oppert 1978(1893): 511]. The Karuppu is
sometimes simply called *Kāvalkāratteyvam*.

In the village, it is said that Aiyanar rides on a
white horse with a green coloured saddle during his
inspections (hunting), and he is preceded by a dog[31]. It is

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[30]As is described by Oppert [Oppert 1978(1893): 511-
512] and as Dumont notes [Dumont 1986: 448], Aiyanar
iconographically holds both the characters of an ascetic
(*tavaci*) and a hero (*vīran*).

said that if a woman alone meets Aiyanar's party during its midnight patrol, she will definitely die (see [Oppert 1978(1893): 505]). The fundamental communal role of Aiyanar is to protect the tank water for agriculture (see [Dumont 1970: 22]), and to guard the village as the night watchman. It is also believed in the village that he is effective in curing diseases and in facilitating conception[32]. In connection with the latter personal benefits, one who makes a vow and whose desire is fulfilled, often offers a clay horse figure as a return.

As is well known, Aiyanar is one of the polemical local deities in the Tamil area. Though there is not a big difference in the description of the observed features of Aiyanar, it is not easy to agree how we should define the character of Aiyanar. The earlier notable works are Oppert [1978(1893)] and Whitehead [1921(1907)], which contrast with one another. Oppert regards Aiyanar as a portion of the Gauda-Dravidian belief [Oppert 1978(1893): 509]; whereas

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[31]Oppert notes, "Mounted on a wild elephant or on a horse, he rides sword in hand over hills and dales to clear the country from all obnoxious spirits. It is generally believed that at midnight, preceded by heralds, and followed by his retinue, Aiyanar leaves his residence to go a hunting" [Oppert 1978(1893)]. See also [Whitehead 1921(1907): 33].

[32]Oppert lists the various functions of Aiyanar from the contents of prayers as follows; "to grant wealth, to bestow sons, to destroy enemies, to avert drought, to secure the favour of women, to destroy the evil effects or omens caused by lizards, and similar boons" [Oppert 1978(1893): 506].

Whitehead looks upon him as a Brahmanized deity [Whitehead
1921(1907): 18]. Both inquire whether Aiyanar should be seen
as Aryan or non-Aryan. A dichotomous framework, consisting
of an Aryan cultural layer and a non-Aryan one, was refuted
by Dumont who strongly professes his theoretical viewpoint
that royal power is encompassed by Brahmanic status based on
"purity-impurity" ideology. Dumont defines Aiyanar as the
Lord or the Master by saying that Aiyanar combines the real
(and original) values of the temporal chief with the rather
official values of the Brahmanic quality [Dumont 1986: 448].
This conclusion is reached after a discussion of the
relationship between Aiyanar and Karuppucami on the one
hand, and that between Aiyanar and the goddesses (his two
wives) on the other hand [Dumont 1986: 440-448] [Dumont
1970: 31-32]. Dumont claims that both Aiyanar's
relationships with Karuppu and with the goddesses (wives)
hold two kinds of hierarchies, namely, the Brahmanic and the
royal. In these discussions, the identification between
Aiyanar and Siva is made clear by him raising their common
characteristics, like their connection with a bull, and
having two wives (pūrṇa and puṣkara), as many people point
out. The villagers generally recognize this. Dumont's
conclusion appears to hold for the case of Kinnimangalam as
well. In fact, Aiyanar is said to have two wives, and the
above mentioned stone statue shows Aiyanar associated with
Karuppu and Kannima as iconographical evidence, though
Kannima is said not to be his wife. As Dumont points out,

Aiyanar's annual festival is held in *Puraṭṭāci* (Sept.-Oct.)
on Thursday soon after the festivals of the goddesses
Vatakkuvacelliamman and Pattattaraciamman (see Table 4.2 and
[Dumont 1986: 424-448] [Dumont 1970: 24,31]) and shows a
deep association between them (see [Good 1985: 131]). The
relationship between Aiyanar and Karuppu is made clear in
the scene of the goat sacrifice of the annual festival[33].
Aiyanar and Kannima are curtained so as not to see the blood
sacrifice offered to the 21 deities, including Munnotum
Karuppu. There is little doubt that this fact emphasizes the
contrast between Aiyanar as the Brahmanic chief deity, and
Karuppu (and others) as one of the non-Brahmanic surbodinate
deities. Nonetheless, even though I have this data
supporting Dumont's observations, I am still not sure
whether I would reach the same conclusion on Aiyanar's
character as Dumont does. In his analysis, he uses a
hierarchical ideology based on the dichotomy of Brahman and
Kshatriya, namely, "Brahmanic qualities" ("purity-impurity")
and "royal qualities" (master-servant) in his terms [Dumont
1986: 448].

My main criticism of Dumont is that he persists too
strongly with the monistic explanation from the dominant
viewpoint. As a result, he fails to properly throw light on

[33]The priest of the Aiyanar temple is a Kuyavar (a
potter) living in the neighbouring village, as is usual
[Dumont 1986: 442-443] [Brubaker 1979]. The sacrificial goat
is beheaded not by the Kuyavar priest but by the Kecavan
with a knife handed over by a Kamanan.

the indigeneous cultural elements. Therefore, in his theory,
these local elements tend to be interpreted as inferior
aspects, such as the "impure" against the "pure", or the
royal against the Brahmanic from the viewpoint of the
encompassing Brahmanic ideology. It seems, therefore, that
in his understanding of Aiyanar the puzzling character of
Aiyanar which can not be reduced to Brahmanic qualities is
deemed to have royal qualities.

In order to overcome this limitation, it is important
to notice a fundamental pattern commonly penetrating the
local cults, including both the cult of the lineage deities
and that of the village deities. In this context, Oppert's
description of Aiyanar, in which he is defined as "the Lord
of ghosts", can be re-evaluated. Oppert seems to observe the
festival sequence as a whole, which includes blood
sacrifice, and the ambiguous character of Aiyanar is
therefore properly emphasized [Oppert 1987(1893): 505-506,
512][34]. The fundamental point lies in the fact that the cult
of Aiyanar as a whole inevitably requires blood sacrifice,
even though Aiyanar himself is said to be segregated from
seeing it. The whole process of the cult of Aiyanar can be
understood as an integration in which the villagers' two
requirements which appear contradictory from the Brahmanic
viewpoint are fulfilled at the same time. These requirements

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[34]In contrast to Oppert, Whitehead overestimates the
aspect that blood sacrifice is not offered to Aiyanar.

are 1) the necessity of blood sacrifice and 2) the necessity of the "pure" main deities (the Brahmanization of the main deities). The former necessity is fulfilled by the blood sacrifice dedicated to the 21 subordinate deities, represented by Munnotum Karuppu, while the latter requirement of the conservation of sacred power is met by Aiyanar and Kannima being the main *cuttamuka teyvams* (the deities rejecting blood sacrifice), who recall again a pair of main deities of the lineage cult (see Ch.8). The logic of my argument for explaining the Aiyanar cult thus is this. Firstly, I recognize the villagers' fundamental religiosity which requires blood sacrifices for their cults of folk deities, even though this sacrifice is dedicated to subordinate deities. From this point of view, I ask why the villagers want to segregate the main deity Aiyanar from blood sacrifice. The answer is in their need for stabilizing sacred power and preserving the god's grace. Thus, the Aiyanar cult itself has a dynamic sacrificial process, namely, the dynamism of the generation of sacred power and its conservation. In other words, the festival can be seen as an act bridging "pollution-sacredness" and "purity-sacredness". This interpretation, which is different from the Brahmanic one, is more appropriate for understanding the villagers' thought, in which the above-mentioned two requirements are not contradictory.

This non-Brahmanic understanding is also to some extent supported by the character of Kannima. For, Kannima is not Aiyanar's wife but an independent goddess, though she is seen as *cuttamuka teyvam*. That is, the relationship between Aiyanar and Kannima is not a marriage relationship, which is an indication of the degree of Sanskritisation. This halfway situation of Kannima, between her independence, and her residing at the side of Aiyanar, reflects the real character of the Aiyanar cult which is not fully Brahamanized, but basically preserves local ideas attaching importance to productivity. Thus, in my concept, Aiyanar embodies the dynamism of productivity by manipulating both "pollution-sacredness" and "purity-sacredness", though the former is more fundamental.

I believe that the difference between Dumont and me has been clarified. What I understand by the concept of "pollution-sacredness" seems to be explained as the royal (Kshatriya) quality by Dumont[35]. However, it is problematic that both are equated, for I understand the cult of Aiyanar as a whole by including blood sacrifice, whereas Dumont takes up Aiyanar separately and deals with him as the "pure" god, even when he argues the royal aspect of Aiyanar. The

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[35]The villagers' use of the adjective "kingly" is different from the royal in Dumont's sense. For example, when they explain *tutiyāna teyvam* (a deity accepting blood sacrifice), they use it. In this context, *tutiyāna teyvam* is compared to a "kingly" deity because it punishes the people in this life, as a king does.

point is that the cult of Aiyanar does not refer to the sole worship of Aiyanar himself, but is formed by a group of deities consisting of not only Aiyanar, but also other surbodinate deities. This group of deities as a whole, like the lineage deities, represents the dynamism of the Aiyanar cult, which reflects upon the festival processes. As I have already mentioned, the present argument on Aiyanar, which is deemed as a category of gods [Dumont 1986: 441], is valid for Urkkavalcuvami as well.

Next, I shift to the local goddesses.

4.3.6 Muttalamman (T6)

The goddess Muttalamman is enshrined in the centre of the village square, near the *mantai*, and faces east. Though her temple itself is small and lacks a compound, Muttalamman is doubtlessly the most important village goddess, which is indicated by the fact that the grandest festival is held for her. There is no goddess' image in the temple, where only the palanquin used in the festival is found (*vide infra*). Muttalamman literally means "a pearl goddess" and she is, therefore, possibly identified with the goddess of smallpox, Mariyamman [Dumont 1970: 24]. However, both the icon carved on the facade of the temple and the goddess' statue, which is made only during the festival, show characteristics of the goddess Durga. Nonetheless, it seems that the proper names of goddesses are not very important for the villagers.

A member of the Kallars, for example, says that the goddesses, like Muttalamman, Kaliyamman, Pecciyamman, and Durgayamman, are basically the same, but are revealed in different forms, each goddess sharing the duty of destroying a particular demon (see [Moffatt 1979: 249]). But, as Kinsley warns [Kinsley 1988: 197], the identification of a local goddess with a great Hindu goddess (*mahādevī*) in terms of their icons or their names does not always mean that the village goddess carries the characteristics of the great Hindu goddess.

As is well known, Mariyamman is characterized by her dualistic nature, which is symbolized by the split body theme, that is, her figure consisting of the head of a Brahman woman and the body of an Untouchable (Chakkiliyan) woman (for example, [Beck 1981: 127] [Moffatt 1979: 249]). How she became such a combined figure is explained in the legend of her origin. I also collected the legend of the origin of Muttalamman, which is very similar to that of Mariyamman (for example, in South Indian villages, [Moffatt 1979: 248-249] [Beck 1981: 126-127]), though an Untouchable

woman does not appear in the Muttalamman legend.[36] In this respect, the duality of Muttalamman is not claimed by the shape of her figure, but the contrasting change from the chaste wife to the angry independent woman is at least recognized by the story as a whole. Actually, the villagers

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[36]According to Gail, the legend originates from the incident of Rama of "Mahabharata", in which his mother Renuka is beheaded by Rama, and was begun to be narrated with the name of Parasurama in the Puranas after the first half of the 6th century A.D. [Gail 1977: 221-228]. The Muttalamman legend I collected from a Kallar elder is as follows, though I presume that it is only one of several variants found in the village. "Once upon a time, an ascetic lived in the forest and strove for meditation. His wife who lived with him cared for him. One morning, as usual, the wife went to the river and was making a mud pot for a *pūjā*, after which she took a bath. At that time, she noticed the flying figure of Ghandharva reflected on the river. Since he was so beautiful, she looked up at him in the sky and was attracted to him. After this, she could not make the pot, so she returned home without one. She told her husband honestly what had happened at the river. The husband got angry on hearing it, and decided to punish his wife. First, the husband commanded his first son to behead her, but the first son refused. Then he asked the second son Parasurama to do this. Since Parasurama did instantly, the ascetic was much satisfied and promised the second son he would grant any request of his. Parasurama asked his father to revive his mother. The ascetic fulfilled his request by connecting her body with her head, which was kept on *muccanti* (according to a villager's explanation, the raised base near the junction). The revived wife, however, could not tolerate her husband's cruel conduct. She got so angry that she left him. This angry wife, as a matter of fact, is the goddess Muttalamman. Therefore, that is why people have to break the goddess' statue at the end of the festival, in order to avoid her fearful anger." It is very obvious that this Parasurama legend is incomplete due to various omissions, but it seems to narrowly preserve the basic story. That is, the story is that a wife who fails to control her desire (Renuka) is beheaded by her son Parasurama under the command of her husband but, after she is revived again by virtue of Parasurama's request, she shows her strong anger against her huband. It, therefore, embodies the general motif that a woman who is very badly treated by a man transforms into a fearful goddess with unbearable anger [Kinsley 1988: 201].

regard Muttalamman as a goddess having two natures, a calm
and kind aspect, and a dangerous and harmful aspect. The
former nature is found in the strong tendency in which
Muttalamman is drawn toward (identified with) the goddess
Minaksi of Madurai, who is to a considerable extent
encapsulated by Sanskritic Hinduism [Kinsley 1988: 202-
203][37]. This tendency is indicated by the placing of
Muttalamman in the main position among village goddesses. It
is confirmed by the following facts: 1) Her temple place was
shifted from the boundary to the centre, 2) Her temple faces
east, 3) The annual festival of her temple is held in
Pankuni (March-April), and 4) Her temple festival is of the
biggest scale among the village festivals. This attempt at
emphasizing the benevolent aspect of Muttalamman, who is
described as *cantama teyvam* (a calm deity) by the villagers,
shows the people's desire to seek the goddess' grace in a
stabilized way.

Nonetheless, the villagers share the recognition that
another ambiguous and dangerous aspect of Muttalamman,
symbolized by her anger, is part of her basic nature. In
fact, the dangerous and powerful aspect is regarded as a
reflection of her independent and topocosmic character. This

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[37]It is difficult to say that Minaksi is a Sanskritic
goddess because, as has been already argued in various
places, such as [Fuller 1984: 17-20], [Shulman 1976: 138-
146], [Shulman 1980: 138-139] and [Harman 1989: Chapter 4],
Minatci is said to still hold the indigeneous aspect of an
independent and topocosmic deity as her basic character.

aspect is clearly revealed through the observation of her
annual festival in which blood sacrifice is included. The
following points should be noted: 1) A <u>low caste</u> potter
living in the adjacent village, who makes the statue of
Muttalamman, is the goddess' priest. It is noted that the
priest is an <u>outsider</u>. 2) The goddess' statue which appears
only during the festival (for two days) is directed toward
the <u>north</u> in a *pantal* (a hut built temporalily for a ritual)
in front of her temple. 3) There is a ceremony called
kaṇtiṟattal (a ceremony of putting the eyes into the
goddess' statue) conducted at the village <u>boundary</u> (in the
northeast direction) where Muttalamman was originally
enshrined[38]. 4) The <u>goat sacrifice</u> is conducted by the hand
of Two-Tevars (the Kecavan and the Kamanan
representatives)[39] on the morning of the second day of the
festival. 5) At the end of the festival, the goddess' statue

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[38]On the first morning of the festival, Two-Tevars and
other Caste Hindus go to the potter priest's house in order
to receive the goddess' statue. They bring the palanquin for
the procession, the goddess' clothes and decorations, and
the necessary things for a *pūjā*. After the *pūjā* in the
priest's house, the goddess' procession leaves the house for
Kinnimangalam. When the procession reaches the entrance of
the *ur* (near the elementary school), the goddess is taken
down and *kaṇtiṟattal* is held there. During this ceremony,
many Paraiyar people gather there and worship the goddess.

[39]This is different from Beck's argument that the
sacrificer often introduces an outsider for beheading the
sacrificial animal and this results in the easier
identification between the sacrificer and the sacrificial
animal [Beck 1981: 115].

is <u>broken</u> at the <u>northern boundary</u> of the village[40], because

otherwise, it is believed, she would destroy or burn the

whole world by means of her excessive power. Though the

dangerous aspect is clarified by analyzing her festival

process, I also note that the festival is an indispensable

device for the villagers to generate (release) and acquire

(enjoy) the goddess' powerful grace. This shows that it is

thought that Muttalamman can not regenerate her power

without returning to her fundamental nature as a local

goddess, which is commonly shared by other village

goddesses. Here, the focal point is the relationship between

the generation of sacred power and the goat's (blood)

sacrifice.

As is well known, the animal sacrifice in the cult of

the goddess can be understood by the theme of "the demon

devotee" [Shulman 1980: Chapter 5]. It is thought that the

bloody sacrifice of the male victim makes him transform into

a devotee of the goddess, or realize union with the goddess.

By this process, the creative sacrifice, which adopts the

shape of the divine marriage in south India, is embodied.

Moreover, Shulman claims that Tamil myths introduce the

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[40]After finishing the dedication rites of *muḻaippāri*,
the important people like *nāṭṭāṇmai*, *karṇam*, Two-Tevars, and
the potter priest bring the goddess' statue and *taḻukai*
(vegetarian offerings) to a place under a milk tree, called
pālai maram, standing at the northern village border, and
there the goddess' statue is broken by the hands of the
potter priest after a small pūjā. At the same time,
muḻaippāri, which is sometimes claimed as the goddess'
symbol, is thrown into the eastern tank.

demon devotee instead of the death of the god himself in order to avoid the god's contact with the polluting act of death (see [Shulman 1980:317]). Beck also discusses the marriage of Mariyamman with the demon in the villages of Tamil Nadu [Beck 1981]. Her discussion, which is obviously based on Turner's communitas theory, leads her to the conclusion that the metamorphosis of the male victim finally appeases the anger of the goddess [Beck 1981: 113-115]. Nonetheless, there is a decisive difference between both the interpretations of the blood sacrifice of the male victim, namely, the creative sacrifice by Shulman and the appeasement of the goddess' anger by Beck. I support Shulman rather than Beck, for Beck's interpretation does not work well in terms of my example of Muttalamman. If Beck was right, the goddess would no longer be dangerous after the goat's sacrifice on the second morning. However, this is not the case with Muttalamman, who is still ambiguously powerful even after the sacrifice, so that her statue must be broken or removed from the village in the final moment of the festival. In this respect, and as far as my observations are concerned, it is more natural to understand the situation as follows. The people recognize that Muttalamman's ambiguous power is continuously active throughout the festival, namely, as long as the goddess is present in the village (or in the world). Therefore, it is important to clearly mark out her appearance (*kantirattal*) and disappearance (the ritual destruction of her statue) on earth, which take place

at the northern boundary. Her perceived birth and death is
also expressed by the movement of her statue in and out of
the village border. In this sense, it is more logical that
blood sacrifice itself forms the climax of the festival.
This is deemed as "the creative sacrifice" [Shulman 1980:
Chapter 3], rather than as the ritual for the appeasement of
the goddess. In other words, I argue that the condensed act
of the creation of sacred power is basically embodied by the
goddess' presence throughout the festival (see [Shulman
1980: Ch.4]).

This argument is supported by the remarkable fact that
the degree of women's participation in the festival is much
higher than in the case of the male deities' festivals, like
Urkkavalcuvami or Aiyanar. Firstly, women take the
initiative in dedicating the offerings to the goddess, such
as *māvilakku* and *poṅkal*[41] on the first day, and *mulaippāri*[42]

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[41]*Māvilakku* (literally, a rice flour lamp) is a
special oil lamp having a small cotton wick on its base,
made from a mixture of rice flour, water, sugar, cardamom,
ginger etc. *Poṅkal* is boiled ritual rice. *Māvilakku* and
poṅkal are put in front of the goddess and then the priest
conducts a *pūjā*. According to Beck, *māvilakku* and *poṅkal*
must be dedicated before the animal sacrifice [Beck 1981:
113]. She also suggests that there is a symbolic equation
between the sacrifice, the head of the sacrifice, and the
māvilakku light [Beck 1981: 114].

on the second afternoon. Secondly, women in general are not

banned from approaching the goddess' procession, though, as

was already noted, Urkkavalcuvami rejects women except those

who are post-menopausal. As is directly symbolized by the

dedication of *muḻaippāri*[43], there is little doubt that the

productivity of the woman is deeply connected with the

creativity of the goddess. This means that there is a clear

correspondence between the women's productivity, realized

through menstrual "pollution" (see Chapter 3), and the

"creative sacrifice" embodied by the goddess who can not

avoid slaying, which is a "polluting" act (see [Shulman

1980: 317]). In this sense, the festival of Muttalamman

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[42]*Muḻaippāri* is a little grown sprout of nine kinds of grains planted in a small bowl, which is nursed in a dark room by the hands of a small girl before the onset of menstruation or of a woman after menopause. She has to take a bath before watering it. In this sense, *muḻaippāri* is not made by all the households of the Caste Hindus but is planted by several lineage-based families chosen from the suitable families at the rate of one household per 10 or 15 households. Of course, voluntary participation is allowed due to personal reasons. They begin to make *muḻaippāri* eight days before the festival's starting day. The dedication of *muḻaippāri* is associated with the women's dancing, called a *kummi*, around the *muḻaippāris* in a circle (*kummi pāṭal*), and is followed by the personal animal sacrifice or by penance such as *cēṭṭanti vēṣam* (the dancing done by a person with mud applied on his body and having magosa leaves) and *akkiṇicaṭṭi* (a penance of carrying a fire bowl in which a firewood is burning) in return for the personal vow.

[43]It is said that the workmanship of *muḻaippāri* tells the fortune especially in terms of the fertility or productivity of the house (or the household) which the woman taking care of it belongs to, because it indicates the goddess' will. There is little doubt that these sayings suggest a symbolic equation between *muḻaippāri*, the woman, her household (which could be extended to her lineage), and the goddess in terms of prosperity based on productivity.

should not be reduced to an understanding within Turner's framework [Turner 1969], but, as a whole, should be regarded as the generation of sacred power or as the realization of "pollution-sacredness".

Thus, Muttalamman can be defined as the goddess who embodies "pollution-sacredness" in her fundamental nature but, at the same time, she is on the way to being a Minaksi type of goddess, who is not simply Sanskritic but still preserves her topocosmic nature. In other words, she is required to reply to the villagers' greedy desire for her, through not only the creation of sacred power but also the conservation of it. Muttalamman, therefore, also can be seen to stand between "Sanskritc Hinduism" and "Local Hinduism", as does Urkkavalcuvami or Aiyanar, but she is more deeply rooted in her original nature of embodying creation, compared with him.

4.3.7 Kaliyamman (T7)

Kaliyamman is placed at the north-east corner of the ūr (the Caste Hindus' residential cluster) and faces north. The goddess is symbolized by the trident (*tiri-cūlam*, Skt. *tri-śūla*)[44] laid on the raised stone base. This open-air

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[44]According to *Devīmahātmya* compiled in 5th or 6th century A.D., *Mahiṣāsuramardinī* (the great goddess slaying the buffalo-demon) was given various weapons by the gods witnessing her birth. At that time, Siva gave her a trident drawn out from his own trident. Therefore, a trident is one of her weapons, showing her connection with Siva.

temple is said to be the newest village temple, built by the
contribution of the Kecavan lineage. In this sense, it is
not surprising that, since the temple was purposefully
built, there is more textual knowledge about the temple,
compared to the cases of the other older village temples.
Actually, the most knowledgeable man of the Kecavan lineage
says that the goddess Kaliyamman was enshrined there as
Mahiṣāsuramardinī (the goddess slaying the buffalo demon),
which is another name for *Mahādevī* Durga (see *Devīmahātmya*,
a part of *Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa*). Therefore, even though
Kaliyamman, as one of village goddesses, holds the localized
character of granting the villagers' requests, such as
curing smallpox or cholera, and removing misfortune, there
was a conscious will, at least among the temple builders,
that the goddess bears the image of *Mahādevī*. As a result,
she has several different points which to some extent
distinguish her from the other goddesses protecting the
village at the northern boundary, namely,
Vatakkuvacelliyamman and Pattattaraciyamman. One is the
difference of the festive month. Kaliyamman is celebrated in
the hottest and most difficult month Vaikāci (May-June),
independently. Another difference is found in the scale of
the festival. The festival of Kaliyamman is considerably
grand, second only to that of the Muttalamman festival.
Moreover, the tendency toward *Mahādevī* is suggested by the

fact that *karakam*, which is deemed *amman eluntarulutal* (the symbol of the goddess)[45] during the festival, is made by the Ekanatarcuvami (Siva) temple priest[46]. These subtle differences seem to indicate that the villagers seek to increase the certainty of the protection of the goddess having the name of *Mahādevī*.

In the festival of Kaliyamman, blood sacrifice is conducted on the first day. The highlights of the first day are the goat sacrifice in front of the *karakam*, and then the dedication of 200 *uruntai* (a rice ball mixed with pieces of cooked meat of the sacrificial goat) to the goddess. The main ceremony of the second day is the dedication of *mulaippāris* by women, after the individual offerings of *ponkal* and sometimes an animal (chicken etc.) sacrifice. Finally the *karakam* and the *mulaippāris* are thrown into the eastern tank water, because it is believed it is necessary to cool down the excessively powerful goddess' *shakti* to a suitable level for everyday activities.

4.3.8 Vatakkuvacelliyamman (T8)

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[45]*Karakam* is a pot filled with sacred water, on which margosa leaves and a coconut are put [Beck 1981: 116, footnote 44]. I heard of another explanation, that *karakam* is a favourite thing of Kaliyamman.

[46]The local deity in whose festival the Ekanatarcuvami temple priest, even partially, participates is only Kaliyamman among the village deities, with the exception of the Sanskritic Gods, like Siva, Vinayakar and Perumal.

The goddess Vatakkuvacelliyamman, the spelling of whose name was given by a villager (S. Balasubramanian), is the same as Vaṭakku-vācaṟcelvi [Tamil Lexicon], Vaḍakku vāsal selli ammaṉ [Dumont 1986: 426], or Vaḍakku-vāsal Celviyamman [Good 1985: 119][47], which can be translated as "the north-gate goddess". In fact, a pair of goddess' statues, who are said to be sisters, are laid in the fields of the northern side of the ūr, and moreover face north. These are accompanied by Kaṉṉimārkaḷ (seven virgin goddesses) nearby. This goddess typically embodies the deep connection between the goddess and the north (see [Shulman 1980: 48, 138] and [Good 1985: 123, 127]). It is said in the village that Vaṭakkuvācelliyamman not only holds the character of Mahiṣāsuramardinī, but also works real miracles for the diseases peculiar to women (see [Good 1985: 120]). In this sense, the participation of women in her festival is again notable[48].

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[47]It seems that Vaḍakku-vāsal Celviyamman in Good's report rather occupies a similar position to that of Muttalamman as the central village deity. This shows that it is necessary to take into account the position of the deity concerned, within the whole structure of the village deities, in order to identify the character of the deity.

[48]The women attend the function by dedicating poṅkal, muḷaippāri, and piṭṭu (a conical shape of confectionery made from black gram flour) to the goddess. Since, in the village, the shape of piṭṭu is looked upon as a breast, these offerings doubtlessly symbolize fertility or productivity.

Vatakkuvacelliyamman has her annual festival on a
Tuesday of Puraṭṭāci (September-October).[49] The festival
starts with the *pūjā* conducted by the Pantaram priest living
in the neighbouring village (Kokkulam)[50], in which only the
village representatives participate and dedicate offerings.
Then the Paraiyars' music of the procession returning from
the goddess' temple to the *ur* tempts the people to gather in
the central square. There, a big procession attended by the
other villagers is again formed and proceeds to the goddess'
temple. It becomes dark. In the darkness, the dedication of
taḷukai and *māviḷakku*[51], and blood sacrifice are carried out
in front of the goddess.

4.3.9 Pattattaraciyamman (T9)

Pattattaraciyamman has a small roofed building, in
which her statue, facing north, is enshrined. Her temple is
located in the north-west direction of the *ūr*.
Pattattaraciyamman literally means "the goddess as the
queen" and she is identified with Kamacciyamman, having

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[49]The actual festival date and each household's share
in the festival cost is decided at the Caste Hindus meeting
(*periya mantai*). The villagers are informed of the date by
tōṭṭi, and their share is collected by the members of the
Kecavan and of the Kamanan. Though the 1987 festival cost
nearly Rs 300, it is said that Rs 2 each was collected from
the Caste Hindus' households.

[50]The priest is given a small portion of the temple
land but the festival is held at the Caste Hindus' expense.

[51]It is noted that there was no dedication of
muḷaippāri in this festival.

attractive eyes (see section 4.2), so that she is regarded as a very powerful goddess in the village. It is believed that she not only cures smallpox and leprosy, but also that she has the special power of curing eye-diseases. Mental diseases and leg pains are sometimes included in the list of illnesses which this goddess can cure.

Furthermore, there is also a view that she can be one of the agricultural deities, that is, a topocosmic deity. In this connection, it is notable that, in front of the goddess, there is a statue of the guardian deity Karuppacami, which faces east, on the foot of the western tank bank[52]. It is said that Karuppacami resides there in order to protect the goddess, as is stated in the origin story of Karuppacami which is obviously derived from the story of Daksa's *yāga*[53]. The attendance of the 20-30 dancing

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[52]This spatial relationship reminds us of the division of labour according to which the goddess protects the north direction exclusively, whereas Karuppacami watches other directions in the village [Dumont 1986: 427].

[53]The story I heard from a Kallar elder is as follows. "Pattattaracityamman was born as the daughter of Tatcan (a carpenter), so that she was named Tatcayini. After having grown up, she married Siva. Her father, Tatcan, was so envious of Siva's great power that he plotted to steal this power from Siva. For this, he conducted a special *pūjā* called *yākam* (Skt. *yāga*). Siva noticed it and became angry. He commanded Virapattiram and Vairava to kill Tatcan. They, however, failed to do so. Then Tatcayini herself went to her father and destroyed the *yākam*. Soon after, she entered into deep meditation. At that time Karuppacami, as an incarnation of Visnu, appeared and protected her. Since then, she has been guarded by Karuppacami." This story obviously originates from that called "the destruction of Daksa's *yāga*" in Puranas so that Tatcan and Tatcayini are easily identified with Daksa and Sati [O'Flaherty 1973: 128-129].

Paraiyars, whose sides are hooked by pins and are pulled by ropes, at the final stages of the goddess' annual festival is very suggestive when the relationship between Pattattaraciyamman and Karuppacami is considered. For, when the origin story of the goddess, based on the story of Dakṣa's *yāga*, is connected with this Paraiyars' practices of penance, called *kavaṟukuttutal*, and their carrying out a blood (cock) sacrifice dedicated to Karuppacami, one is again reminded of the theme of "the demon devotee" (see the section on Muttalamman). In this respect, the most meaningful fact is that the cock brought by the Paraiyars is beheaded by the Kavuntar priest of Pattattaraciyamman, though the goddess herself does not accept blood sacrifice. Taken seriously, through the mediation of Karuppacami and the Paraiyars, namely, through her sanction of the Paraiyars' blood sacrifice to her guardian deity Karuppacami, the theme of "the demon devotee" would be still preserved in Pattattaraciyamman's festival. In this sense, it seems to me that Pattattaraciyamman herself replicates the Sanskritic tendency of avoiding the direct contact of a god (or a goddess) with the polluting act of death [Shulman 1980: 317], by transferring her blood-thirsty nature to Karuppacami. Nevertheless, this transference does not seem to be completed because the goddess accepts a non-vegetarian offering in *Makācivarattiri*. In this connection, it is interesting that there is confusion among the villagers as to whether she accepts blood sacrifice or not. This

confusion seems to be further complicated both by the
goddess' blood thirsty image being deeply rooted in their
minds, and by the cock sacrifice conducted at her festival.

Since the Kavuntar priest comes from Mavilippatti, an
adjacent hamlet, the people of Mavilippatti also attend this
goddess' festival. This case of having participants from
outside the Kinnimangalam hamlet is unique.

The next temple with which I deal with is unique, in
that a Paraiyar priest manages it.

4.3.10 Mataikaruppacuvami (T10)

Since *matai* means sluice, Mataikaruppacami literally
designates the guardian deity of the sluice of the bank. In
this case, the god is located on the western bank.
Mataikaruppacami is regarded as an agricultural deity
because he guarantees the production of irrigated land
(*nancey*) by guarding the tank bank and controlling the tank
water. The most striking fact is that this god is served by
a Paraiyar priest, who is always selected from the Mataiyan
lineage, one of *Nārpaṅkāḷi* (Four-lineages). How a Mataiyan
person acquired the priesthood of Mataikaruppacami is

explained in the origin legend of this god[54]. Nonetheless,
if the fact that the Paraiyars are most probably the
previous occupants is taken into account, it can be imagined
that the legend describes the process by which
Mataikaruppacuvami, who was originally the local deity of
the Paraiyar community[55], was seized by the Caste Hindus, as
late comers, and was transformed into one of the village
deities (cf. [Dumont 1986: 355]).

The annual festival is held on the Friday of Purattaci
following the festival of Aiyanar. The date of the festival,
which is decided at the meeting of *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*, is finally
fixed with the permission of the Caste Hindus. The expense
of the festival is covered by the Caste Hindus and both the
Kecavan and the Kamanan are responsible for collecting money

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[54]The story I learned from a Mataiyan elder is this.
"One day, an ancestor of the Mataiyan lineage happened to
find a water leak from the western tank bank. The tank was
full of water due to the rainy season and the tank bank
might have broken at any moment. He made a desperate effort
to stop the leak, but he failed. He was upset. Suddenly,
Karuppacuvami appeared and said to him, "Don't worry. I will
protect the bank while you inform the villagers of the water
leak. So you hurry and go." Hearing this, he hurried back to
the village and explained what was happening. Nonetheless,
the villagers surprisingly killed him on the spot, because
they judged that if they went back to the bank with him,
Karuppacuvami would disappear, and the bank would break.
Since then, Karuppacuvami has resided there and has guarded
the bank. By virtue of this incident, the right to
monopolise the priesthood of Karuppacuvami was given to the
Mataiyan lineage as compensation for its member becoming a
victim."

[55]Another Mataikaruppacuvami is enshrined on *cinna
mantai* which is located in the square of the oldest
residential cluster of the Paraiyar. This Mataikaruppacuvami
is clearly recognized as their community god.

and preparing the necessary things including a sacrificial

goat. The balance of the money is given to *Nārpaṅkāḷi*. The

festival starts in the evening at *cinna mantai*. The Mataiyan

priest (*pūcāri*) asks the god-dancers (*cāmiāṭis*) of the

Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages, who are in trance, whether

people can proceed toward the Mataikaruppacami temple on the

western bank. After getting their permission, Two-Tevars

give the garlands to the *pūcāri* and the *cāmiāṭis* and then

the procession, in which both Caste Hindus and Paraiyars are

mixed, leaves *cinna mantai*. In front of the stone pillar

symbolizing Mataikaruppacami, *poṅkal*, which is made by using

water taken from the western tank with the hands of the

priest, is offered, and the goat's sacrifice is conducted by

the hands of Two *Tēvārs*. The Paraiyar *pūcāri* then

distributes sacred ash and *piracātam* (offerings blessed by

the deity) to the gathering people, including *nāṭṭāṇmai*,

karṇam, and Two-Tevars, according to the order of *mutaṇmai*.

Though the Caste Hindus return to their homes, the Paraiyars

remain there, because they must cook the goat meat and eat

it there. It is said that the cooked meat should not be

taken to their homes because it is sacrificial meat for

tuṭiyāṇateyvam.

I have briefly described the details of this festival

process because phenomena which can not be explained by the

logic of "purity-impurity" are recognizable in it. It is

obvious that if the Caste Hindus regarded the Paraiyars

simply as "impure" people, they would not accept the priesthood of the Paraiyars. There is no doubt that the Caste Hindus give priority to the status of the priesthood rather than to the status of the Paraiyars during this festival. More positively, the festival itself seems to be evidence for the Caste Hindus' appreciation of the Paraiyars' (especially, the Mataiyan lineage's) special power of drawing the grace of Mataikaruppacami, which is based on the deep connection between the Paraiyars and the god. It is a very important fact that Mataikaruppacami is a unique village male deity, in terms of directly accepting blood sacrifice, compared to other village male deities who reject blood sacrifice. This shows that this uniqueness, namely, the main male deity as *tuṭiyāṉateyvam*, must be controlled by the Paraiyar's power. In this situation, the Paraiyar is looked upon as the indispensable agent for drawing the positive power of guarding the village from *tuṭiyāṉateyvam* through the polluting act. This verifies that the Caste Hindus do not simply confine the Paraiyars to the "impure" category, but that they recognize and use the ambiguous and, therefore, positive aspect of the Paraiyars, namely, their "pollution" aspect. However, at the same time, it should be remembered that this positive character of the Paraiyars is realized only in very temporally and spatially limited situations such as the festival night and at the temple site.

Though I have finished explaining the important village deities, another minor goddess, who is not so significant structurally, remains. I deal with her last.

4.3.11 Nakammal (T11)

Nakammal literally means "a snake-mother", and this goddess is said to protect people working in the fields from snake-bites. The goddess' statue, placed on the inside of the eastern tank bank, is located at about 300 meters distance from the $\bar{u}r$ in the southeast direction. This goddess reminds us of the snake goddess Manasa of the Bengal area, which is reported by Dimock [1962], but Nakammal here, at least today, does not have much importance as a village deity[56]. Though there is no annual festival for this goddess, a small $p\bar{u}j\bar{a}$ is held in Purattaci and in $M\bar{a}ci$ by the Kavuntar $p\bar{u}c\bar{a}ri$ living in Mavilippatti.

4.4 Discussion: Structure and Interpretation

4.4.1 Structure

In the previous section, the characteristics of the village deities have been considered, but the aim of this final section is to integrate these descriptions and discussions, and to elucidate the total structure in which

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[56]As is recorded in the village history, there were hamlets called Konampatti near the Nakammal temple, so it is guessed that the goddess enjoyed a more active worship in the past.

these deities are placed. As a result, it is possible to find two levels of binary oppositions from the above descriptions, as is shown in Figure 4.2. Firstly, there is the main opposition between the central group and the peripheral group. Secondly, amongst the sub-categories of the peripheral group, another opposition between the northern group and the southern group is found. Needless to say, these binary oppositions are not simply opposed, but are rather regarded as part of the complementary relationship by which the total structure is formed. It should be remembered that these oppositions are basically presented as relationships in the domain of meaning, rather than in the objectified spatial sense, although in Kinnimangalam there is some correspondence with physical spatial relationships.

(1) the central group and the peripheral group

Ekanatarcuvami and Muttalamman form the central group among the village deities. Ekanatarcuvami represents the male deities who reject blood sacrifice, while Muttalamman occupies the chief position of the female deities who accept blood sacrifice. This centrality reflects upon the fact that both their shrines are located in the village centre.

Figure 4.2 Locations of village deities and
their semantic structure

*direction temple faces
　　--facing east
　　--facing north
(note: a female deity is
　indicated by (f.).)

*features of the main deity
　--no blood sacrifice+
　　great Hindu god
　--no blood sacrifice+
　　local deity
　--blood sacrifice+
　　local deity
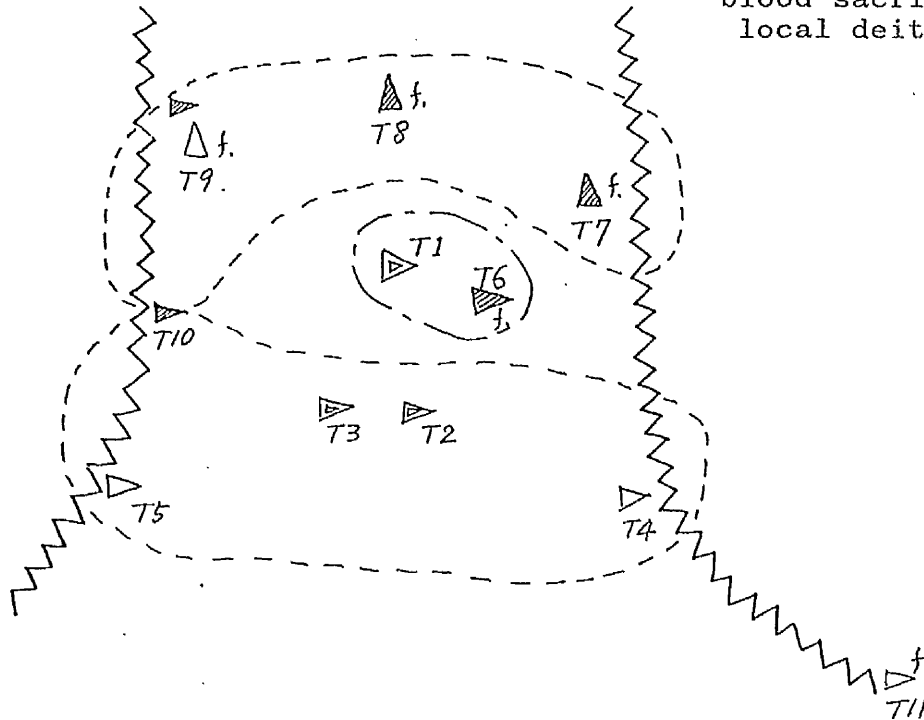
What is the relationship between Ekanatarcuvami and

Muttalamman? To discover this, it is useful to sum up the

characteristics of both (see Table 4.3). As is shown by the

origin of the temple, the Ekanatarcuvami (Siva) temple,

which originated from the tomb of the *cittar*, was not

established purely on an indigenous religious basis, but

rather has a Brahmanic tendency, which was to some extent

imposed by the policy of the Nayaka dynasty. In this sense,

Ekanatarcuvami professes 'Sanskritic Hinduism' which is

associated with the "purity-impurity" ideology and,

therefore, avoids blood sacrifice, even though the temple

priest is a non-Brahmin (the Pantarams). It is, furthermore, characterized by the following points: 1) The priest is a vegetarian and lives inside the village; 2) The regular *pūjā* and the annual events according to the Tamil calendar are constantly held, but such functions do not always involve the villagers as a body, but rather there is a tendency to limit the participation to village representatives and ardent devotees; 3) The production from the farm land donated to the temple covers the expense for these occasions. On the other hand, Muttalamman who can be regarded as a deity of 'Local Hinduism', encourages the villagers' cordial religious sentiment and acquires the most remarkable popularity among them. She has the following characteristics: 1) She is celebrated only on the unique occasion of her annual festival, during which the goddess' statue, made by the potter priest, appears before the people; 2) The priest is a non-vegetarian, of a low caste, and lives outside the village; 3) the annual festival is participated in by basically all the villagers; 4) The festival processes emphasize the village boundaries; 5) Since blood sacrifice is inevitable for the goddess' celebration, the goddess can be seen to embody "pollution-sacredness" in my sense.

How can we understand that the villagers need both the Sanskritic god, Ekanatarcuvami, and the indigenous goddess, Muttalamman? As I discussed in the previous section, the

answer lies in the division of labour found between

Ekanatarcuvami and Muttalamman. Muttalamman can be deemed as

an indispensable device for the generation of sacred power

Table 4.3 Comparison between Ekanatarcuvami and Muttalamman

<Ekanatarcuvami>	<Muttalamman>
*male deity	*female deity
*kaṭavuḷ	*teyvam
*big temple facing east	*small temple facing east
*immovable and permanent statue facing east	*movable and temporal statue facing north
*walled precincts (The Harijans can not enter the temple's precincts)	*lacking precincts (The Harijans can come near the temple building)
*permanent priest living in Kinnimangalam	*temporal priest living in an adjacent village
*regular worship throughout a year	*worship only in an annual festival
*limited numbers of villagers attend ceremonies	*all the villagers attend the festival
*vilage centrality emphasized	*village boundaries emphasized
*managed by production of a temple land	*managed by collected money
*rejecting blood sacrifice	*accepting blood sacrifice

(cakti) through blood sacrifice, whereas the "pure" god

Ekanatarcuvami can be seen to play a role in stabilizing

such rather ambiguous power in order to guarantee the

villagers' well being. It is noted that Muttalamman herself

tends to be transformed into a more stable and meeker

character, like the goddess Minaksi. This Sanskritic

tendency makes Muttalamman move from the northern border to

the centre. Nonetheless, Muttalamman is never deemed to be

the wife of Siva, and is therefore still very independent.

In this sense, the goddess basically maintains her local character under the influence of Sanskritic culture[57].

(2) The northern boundary group and the southern boundary group

Table 4.4 Contrast between the northern boundary and
the southern boundary groups

the southern boundary group			the northern boundary group	
Vinayakar Urkkaval		Matai-karuppu	Pattattaraci-yamman	Kaliyamman
Perumal Aiyanar				Vatakku-vacelliyamman
male deities			female deities	
temple facing east			temple facing north	
insider-priest (Pantaram)	outsider-priest	insider-priest (Paraiyar)	outsider-priest	
main deity avoids blood sacrifice			(avoids) main deity enjoys blood sacrifice	
festival has no blood sacrifice			festival has blood sacrifice	

The northern boundary of the _ūr_ is protected by a group of goddesses accepting blood sacrifice, while the southern boundary is guarded by a group of gods rejecting

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[57]The contrast between the independent goddess who engages in the fight against the demons, and the goddess tamed by her consort (the god) is clearly discussed, for example, in [Tapper 1979: 15-16] and [Kinsley 1988: 202-203].

blood sacrifice[58]. Table 4.4 shows not only this fundamental contrast, but also some variations included in each group. The southern group consists of two kinds of gods, that is, the Sanskritic deities, like Vinayakar and Perumal, and the local gods identified with Siva, like Urkavalcuvami and Aiyanar, whose guardian deities require blood sacrifice. As for the northern group, though Pattattaraciyamman tends to avoid blood sacrifice, even though imperfectly, there is no doubt that the motif of "the demon devotee" is repeatedly carried out by these goddesses. It is also noted that Mataikaruppucami can not be easily categorized into either group. He must be placed in the marginal area between both sides, because he requires blood sacrifices even though he is a main male deity. It is also ambiguous that Mataikaruppucami has an insider, but Harijan, priest. This is again marginal between the case of Sanskritic gods served by the insider priest of the Caste Hindu (Pantaram), and the case of the local guardian deities who are, generally speaking, served by outsider priests recruited from the Caste Hindus. Therefore, it can be speculated that the

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[58]As I noted before, a knowledgeable Kallar explains this contrast as follows. On the one hand the southern side deities defend against the intrusion of death coming from the southern world ruled by *Yama*. On the other hand, the goddesses protect the village against the evil power symbolized by *Mahiṣāsura* on the northern boundary and invite the grace of the god of wealth, *Kupēraṉ* (Skt. *Kubera*). This knowledge is not always shared by the ordinary villagers, but it can not be denied that the present village deities were placed according to the guidance of the knowledgeable leading persons.

marginality of Mataikaruppucami invites a Paraiyar priest who is an insider of the village but at the same time an outsider from the viewpoint of the Caste Hindus (the *ūr* people). Nonetheless, if importance was attached to the dedication of the clay horse to Mataikaruppucami, it would not be unnatural that he was regarded as one of the southern group of male deities.

Table 4.5 Structure of the village deities
(pre-interpretation)

centre	southern boundary	centre	northern boundary
Ekanatarcuvami		Muttalamman	
	Vinayakar(S)		Pattattaraci-yamman(NW)
	Perumal(s)		(Karuppacami)
	Aiyanar(SW)		Kaliyamman(NE)
	Urkkaval(SE)		Vatakku-vacelliyamman (N)
	Mataikaruppu (W) (Nakammal)		
dominance of male deity		dominance of female deity	
a main deity rejects blood sacrifice		a main deity accepts blood sacrifice	
propensity to "purity-sacredness"		propensity to "pollution-sacredness"	
the Brahmanical cultural tendency			the basic Tamil cultural tendency

Table 4.5 is the integration of the above mentioned
two axes, that is, of Tables 4.3 and 4.4. It can be seen in
Table 4.5 that the opposition and the complementarity found
between the main deities of the central group is extended
repeatedly in the total structure of the village deities.
The villagers' religiosity, shown in their cult of village
deities, is grasped between "the Brahmanic cultural
tendency", based on "purity-impurity" ideology, and the
local cultural tendency, which is typically revealed by the
cult of the local goddesses. The latter could be called "the
basic Tamil cultural tendency"[59], in which the creative
power generated through the act of "pollution" becomes
significant. "The basic Tamil cultural tendency" is,
therefore, based upon "pollution" ideology. The complex
characteristics of the local deities, like Aiyanar,
Muttalamman and Pattattaraciyamman, are understandable, if
they are deemed as deities who have been formed through the
friction on the boundary between the "Brahmanic" and "basic
Tamil " cultural tendencies.

However, if I simply presented the static view that
the cult of village deities holds the double layered
structure of "the Brahmanic cultural tendency" and "the
basic Tamil cultural tendency", I could doubtlessly be

[59]I should say that I do not propose a concept of "the
basic Tamil cultural tendency" as a historically verified
one, but, by using the concept, I indicate a local cultural
propensity which has a different ideology from the
Brahmanical one.

criticised for turning back to the functionalist view, which
I myself have criticised. Thus, I point out that my argument
is not yet completed and that I will argue this structure
from an interpretative viewpoint in the following section.

4.4.2 Interpretation

The actual meaning of the above mentioned structure
does not lie in the static juxtaposition of two different
cultural tendencies, but rather lies in the struggle between
different ideological viewpoints, or between different
interpretations. In other words, the cult of the village
deities should be regarded as the arena where the debate
between interpretation from "the Brahamanic cultural
tendency" and that from "the basic Tamil cultural tendency"
is conducted. The point is that the external and static
analysis of cultural elements is not sufficient for an
understanding of the village cult, but that the villagers'
internal viewpoint, or how they interpret the village
deities, must be taken into account. In this sense,
"cultural tendency", in my sense, does not refer to crude
cultural elements, but rather means 'ideology' in Therborn's
sense [Therborn 1980: 77-78] (see section (4) of 1.2.1.1).
The cult of the village deities should be analysed as a
dynamic process of the ideological debate between the
"purity-impurity" ideology ("the Brahmanic cultural
tendency") and the "pollution" ideology ("the basic Tamil
cultural tendency").

I will explain the developmental process of the
arguments through which I have reached the above conclusion.
First of all, the predominant understanding of the
functionalist approach, found in Srinivas and the early
Marriott, in which the village cult in southern India is
seen to embody the juxtaposed structure of the Sanskritic
culture and the Dravidian culture, was refuted by Dumont and
Pocock, who profess a monistic theory. It seems to me that
their criticism of the functionalist dualism is reasonable
because it is difficult to imagine that two different
attitudes toward the village deities coexist in the same
villager's mind simultaneously. Dumont and Pocock claim that
the village cult should be understood from the viewpoint of
monism, based on the binary opposition between "purity" and
"impurity" (e.g. [Dumont and Pocock 1959: 45]). Though I
agree that the structuralist approach contributes to
theoretical progress, this theory also has limitations.
There can be no doubt that the Dumontian non-historical
theory is useful for describing the villagers' religious
minds, but this does not mean that the historical existence
of "the Brahmanic cultural tendency", as the great
tradition, and of "the basic Tamil cultural tendency", as
the little tradition, can be ignored at a stroke. There is
another point made by Marriott and Srinivas which tends to
be forgotten under the strong influence of Dumontian theory
but which should be reconsidered [Keyes and Daniel 1983: 8].
That is, while it is true that Srinivas' concept,

"Sanskritization", or Marriott's concepts,

"universalization" and "parochialization", are inadequate

because they lack an ideological viewpoint, these concepts

do pay attention to the transaction (the dynamic

relationship) between 'Sanskritic Hinduism' and 'Local

Hinduism', a point which deserves reevaluation. Thus, my

standpoint is formed by adopting the merits of both the

functionalist approach and the structuralist one[60].

It is necessary for further argument to clarify the

limitations of Dumont. Though I agree with Dumont's monistic

understanding of village cults, this does not mean that I

also agree with his claim that the logic of "purity-

impurity" penetrates every aspect of local religion [Dumont

1980(1966)]. As has already been argued, the fact that blood

sacrifice is indispensable for the cult of the village

deities cannot be underestimated by being confined to the

framework of "purity-impurity". If not only my own data, but

also Shulman's work [1980] and other important works on the

religious notions and behaviour of the Tamils[61] were

referred to, there would be no doubt that Dumont's view

leans to the Brahmanic cultural side. Thus, it can be

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[60]The development from functionalism through
structuralism to the post-structuralist theory of ideology
is concisely summarized by Fardon in his Introduction to
"Power and Knowledge" (1985).

[61]For example, [Beck 1981], [Good 1985], [Moffatt
1979], [Reiniche 1979, 1981], [Hoek 1979], [Brubaker 1978]
and [Whitehead 1921] support my present argument.

confirmed that the logic of "purity-impurity" is not the unique value of village religion but, far from it, the villagers rather attach fundamental importance to "pollution" ideology. Furthermore, what is significant is to consciously adopt the concept of ideology in the post-structuralist sense in order to make use of the merits of Dumont's monistic understanding. It is necessary to always invoke the relative view that a given outlook is the interpretation from a particular subjective position. In other words, using the term ideology aims at keeping a distance from the naive view that a meaning (a value) is *a priori* attached to an object. From this point of view, though Dumont is rather unaware of it, it is obvious that his theory unwittingly overlaps with the Brahmanic top-down ideology. In this sense, it is reasonable to understand that his theory provides an integrating interpretation from the "purity-impurity" ideological viewpoint. This suggests that there can be another uniting interpretation based in "pollution" ideology, which is the essential value of "the basic Tamil cultural tendency".

The "pollution" ideological view is typically expressed by the festival of the goddess which embodies the dynamism of death and the regeneration of life. Through the mediation of blood sacrifice, namely, the destructive death "pollution", sacred power (*cakti*) is acquired. As has been discussed, I call this creative process, which realizes the

motif of "a demon devotee", "the paradigm of the goddess"[62].
In this connection, I have argued that the local gods also
practise "the paradigm of the goddess", even though in an
indirect way. It can not be denied that the sublimation of
"pollution" into "pollution-sacredness" takes place in such
a creative process.

How can the village gods who profess the "purity-
impurity" ideology and, therefore reject blood sacrifice, be
understood from this "pollution" ideological point of view?
Sanskritic or Sanskritized gods can be seen as religious
devices for stabilizing sacred power, which is excessively
and dramatically generated by blood thirsty goddesses, in
order to support the villagers' everyday activities. This
understanding is obviously different from the Dumontian
interpretation of the binary and hierarchical opposition
between the "pure" god and the "impure" goddess, but it
provides the complementary dynamic process of the "creative"
goddess and the "maintaining" god. This is the integrating
interpretation from the "pollution" ideological viewpoint
(see also [Marglin 1985: 78-79]). The "creative" goddess can
be regarded as a powerful device for inviting the villagers
who are at the level of *l'ordre réel* in everyday life,

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[62]In this connection, Hiltebeitel's work [1981] which
deals with the dynamism of "polluting" menstrual blood by
focusing on the Draupadi of Mahabharata strongly supports my
argument. His extended argument on the Draupadi cult in
general [Hiltebeitel 1988, 1991] is also suggestive and
important.

toward the deeper dimension of *l'ordre intime*, in which
"continuity of existence" is revealed (see [Bataille 1976:
307-309], [Bataille 1957: Introduction]). The "maintaining"
god can be seen as playing the role of preserving the sense
of sacredness which originates from the deep experience in
people's minds[63].

As is clarified by this discussion, the structure
shown in Table 4.5 can be compared to an icon, which awaits
interpretation. More concretely speaking, the dualistic
structure of Table 4.5 is compared to the icon of the great
god of Hinduism having two wives. For example, Siva has *Umā*
(*Pārvatī*) and *Kālī*; Visnu has *Lakṣmī* (*Śrīdevī*) and
Bhūmidevī; and Murugan has *Tēvayāṉai* and *Vaḷḷi*. If I tried
to read these icons, it would be soon noted that there are
at least two different interpretations which correspond with
the two different ideological standpoints. According to
"purity-impurity" ideology, the former wife represents the
"pure" and good aspect, whereas the latter is unambiguously
deemed to be the degraded "impure" wife. Nonetheless, if we
adopt the "pollution" ideological viewpoint, the latter
wife, who accepts "pollution", contributes to the creation
of sacred power, and the former wife bears the role of
stablizing and maintaining this power. What is emphasized is
the need to distinguish a binary opposition of a dimension

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[63]It seems to me that the arguments found in [Beck
1981: 118] and [Kinsley 1988: 211] come close to the present
understanding of a goddess.

of materials (eg. whether there is blood sacrifice or not) from that of a dimension of interpretation (eg. whether a blood sacrifice is deemed to be a degrading act or to be a creative act).

In sum, though a unified understanding is necessary for appreciating the villagers' religious lives, interpretation is not fixed in one way. As I have shown so far, there are at least two different interpretaions. In addition, it is noted that the villagers attempt to form their integrating interpretation of their religious lives within the struggle between both these ideologies. Most villagers share the common attitude in which their religious lives are fundamentally defined by the "pollution" ideological view. However, it is also remembered that there are higher castes, like the Pillais, who more strongly depend upon Brahmanic ideology. Therefore, this suggests that it is necessary to investigate more precisely how the different groups form their own interpretations, according to their socio-economic conditions. This is the topic of Part Three.

CHAPTER 5 POLLUTION CONCEPTS MANIPULATED: A DESIRE FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

In the previous two chapters, I have attempted to reveal the significance of the cosmic ideology represented by such concepts as "pollution" and "pollution-sacredness", which are by and large disregarded under Dumontian "purity-impurity" ideology. Not only have I refuted the Dumontian view by introducing the dimension of "pollution", but also, especially in Chapter 4, the dynamic relationship between "pollution" ideology and "purity-impurity" ideology has been made clear.

So far, I have concentrated on an investigation of the ideological configuration *per se*, especially through a consideration of pollution concepts, from the rather objective viewpoint. Therefore, as Burghart suggests, for an interpretative account[1], it is necessary to inquire into the villagers' practices from a subjective viewpoint. In other

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[1]Burghart claims here that the institution of renunciation should be interpreted from the ascetic's viewpoint in order to overcome the partiality of an understanding from the Brahman's standpoint [Burghart 1983]. I am influenced by his emphasis on the significance of the subjective interpretation of each social category.

words, it is necessary to understand how these ideologies
are actually manipulated by different social sections, like
the dominant castes and the Harijans. Such investigation
brings the ideological configuration to life, because
ideologies actually work in socio-economic power
relationships. The present chapter deals especially with the
manipulation of pollution concepts, and plays the role of
introducing Part Three, in which the Harijans' practices are
considered in more depth.

5.2 Practices of the dominant castes

I will mention several examples which can not be
logically explained only by "purity-impurity" ideology.
Other explanatory logics or ideologies must be found to
explain these examples.

Example 1: It is usually said that contact with the
Harijans pollutes the Kallars. Nonetheless, it is not
uncommon for a Kallar man to keep a mistress of the Paraiyar
caste (the Harijans). How is this possible? A Kallar man who
openly told me that he had a Paraiyar mistress explained
that this love affair was different from other usual
matters. Hearing his answer, other Kallar men added with
much laughter that such pleasure was free from pollution. I
asked the former Kallar, "You said you could visit your
Harijan mistress but, if she came to your house, would you
be polluted by her?". Responding to this, he shouted, "If

she did so, I would behead her". How is it possible to understand this contradictory behaviour?[2]

Example 2: The dominant castes basically do not allow the Harijans to use the wells of the Caste Hindus, though there are several opinions concerning the result of the Harijan's contact with the well. While one Kallar man says that the Harijan's contact pollutes the well but not the well water itself[3], another Kallar man claims that the water is also polluted by the Harijan's use and that it must be purified by pouring milk. A Pillai man says that he will fight the Harijan who draws water from the Caste Hindu's well. On the one hand, as mentioned above, there is a prohibition against the Harijan's use of the well. On the other hand, it is also said that there is no problem if a Harijan uses the well of the Caste Hindus while on his master's business[4]. I know of a Paraiyar boy who was hired as a servant for carrying a water pot from the Caste Hindus' well to the Kallar master's house, though the boy himself did not draw water from the well. In this case, needless to

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[2]A Paraiyar youth consciously points out contradictions found in the Kallars' behaviour. Another example is that, according to him, there are several Kallars who, after drinking spirits, come to Paraiyar houses and eat beef curry there.

[3]A Kallar man says, "We can drink water drawn from the Harijan's well if we do not use their vessels."

[4]It is claimed that the Kallar people often hire Harijan labourers for digging their well, but they insist that the well water is never polluted by these Harijans.

say, he touched not only the pot, but sometimes also the water itself. How can we understand this contradiction?

Example 3: The Paraiyars (the Harijans) work as agricultural labourers in the fields of the dominant castes. Why do the dominant castes not mind eating the products that the Harijans touch in the course of this production? Many Kallars support the idea that cooking changes things from the neutral state to the polluted or unpolluted state depending on who cooks them. In this sense, raw materials are open to cooking, namely, a change of pollution level. Due to this logic, the Brahman can take raw rice and vegetables from ritually lower people. However, I still wonder how it is possible to claim such logic without arbitrariness.

It is obvious that the contradictions or arbitrariness shown in these examples can not be consistently explained by "purity-impurity" ideology, but rather strongly reflects the convenience of the dominant castes. It is, moreover, noted that there is a characteristic common to the above mentioned examples in which the dominant castes can be free from the logic of "purity-impurity". That is, the dominant castes do not feel polluted by contact with the usually polluting Harijans in these cases where the dominant castes have the positive motivation of fulfilling their own needs or interests. In other words, such subjectively positive

motivation works for suspending "purity-impurity" ideology temporarily[5].

With this preliminary suggestion, the problem of inter-caste marriage, in which the hierarchical status difference is dependent on "purity-impurity" ideology, can be dealt with. As was mentioned in the final part of section 2.4, inter-caste marriage in a formal sense is practised only very exceptionally in the village. There is no doubt that every caste strictly observes the prohibition of inter-caste marriage even today, though there are a number of inter-caste relationships which are not legally regarded as formal marriages. As a Kallar comments, "We make love with other castes' women but do not get married to them". There is little doubt that the strict prohibition of inter-caste marriage found in the village seems to be basically derived from the so-called South Indian (Dravidian) type of marriage system, in which "various forms of exchange marriages including the patterns of cross-cousin marriage" [Milner 1988: 149] are predominant as a response to the inferiority

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[5]I can provide another example to show that a positive motivation of a higher caste person suspends "purity-impurity" ideology. A Paraiyar, Mokkaiyan, who acquired the skill of massage during his army career, is in high demand for his services from the higher caste people, such as the Kallars and the Acaris. I actually observed him touching a higher caste person's body while giving a massage. The latter, who wanted to improve his well-being, did not mind this touching.

of wife-givers, as Milner suggests[6]. By asking theoretical questions in terms of inter-caste marriage, I do not purport to investigate the attitudes toward hypergamy or hypogamy as an institution, but to explore the views on deviations from their cultural tendency of isogamy, by which status homogeneity is preserved. An understanding of their notions on inter-caste marriage, which would break such status homogeneity based on the "purity-impurity" ideology, must suggest the principles of their practices.

These are the replies of several Kallar informants. Firstly, in the setting of inter-caste marriage with a caste lower than the Kallars, it is claimed that a hypergamous union (eg. a Kallar husband - a Valaiyar wife) is associated with lighter excommunication than a hypogamous union (eg. a Valaiyar husband - a Kallar wife). This response is not relevant for the case of inter-caste marriage with castes higher than the Kallars. For example, the hypergamous union between a Brahman husband and a Kallar wife is said to be

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[6]Milner[1988] provides a good perspective on the South Asian marriage system in general. He shows the two polar responses to the inferiority of wife-givers as a pan-Indian phenomenon, that is, institutionalised hypergamy in the North and exchange marriage in the South, by taking into account the ideology of *kanyadan*. As cited by Milner, Parry [1979] elucidates a typical North Indian type in which intra-caste relations and inter-caste relations work together, whereas Trautmann [1981] contributes to clarifying the characteristic of the South Indian type. Milner's argument is clear and interesting, but I rather doubt his premise that the ideology of *kanyadan* penetrates throughout India when I follow Kolenda's insight which distinguishes "woman as flower" in the South from "woman as tribute" in the North [Kolenda 1984].

unforgiven by and intolerable to the Kallar community. If
such a marriage was forced, the Kallar woman would be
expelled from the Kallar community. By contrast, the
hypogamy between a Kallar husband and a Brahman wife (even a
Pillai wife) is rather proudly accepted by the Kallar
community, far from being rejected. The explanation given by
one Kallar and supported by other Kallars is this. A woman
is regarded as the property of her family, of her lineage
and of her caste, so that it is desirable that a woman is
kept within her own community. In this sense, giving a woman
to another caste means a loss of her caste property, which
is thought of as dishonour for the caste. Taking a purer
woman from a higher caste (a hypogamous union with the
higher caste) is regarded as honourable, due to the
acquisition of valuable property. This is the logic with
which both a hypergamous union with a higher caste and a
hypogamous union with a lower caste are disapproved of. The
Pillais also have the same sort of response as the Kallars,
though they do not show their feelings of pleasure openly.
Though the above mentioned view on inter-caste marriage is
completely different from the so-called North Indian type of
outlook, in which hypergamy is accepted but hypogamy is
rejected[7], what should be paid more attention to is the

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[7]Milner explains logically that hypogamy is eliminated
by "the patriarchal components of *kanyadan*, and Hindu
society in general" [Milner 1988: 150].

dominant caste's interpretation of regarding a woman herself as their property.

How can I interpret the dominant castes' views mentioned above? In this connection, Kolenda's work [1984] is suggestive, in which she makes clear the contrasting images of women between the North Indian Rajput and the South Indian Nattati Nadar.[8] The contrast can be expressed symbolically as "woman as tribute" in the North, and "woman as flower" in the South. This clearly indicates that the North Indian woman is seen as a means for bridging the hierarchical relations, whereas a woman in the South tends to be given an independent value as a property possessor. This claim is, for example, made clear by a discussion of property-transfer in marriage, such as the brideprice, groomprice, and *cītaṉam* [Kolenda 1984: 108]. In the North, the choice between a groomprice marriage and a brideprice marriage directly depends upon the hierarchical power relations between wife-taker and wife-giver; whereas in the South, the bride's side's economic contributions are free from the hierarchical differential found between the couple because *cītaṉam* is not the property transfered from bride's side to groom's side, but is moved from a bride's parents to

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[8]As Miller points out in her extensive exploration of marriage payments in India, not only differences between the upper and the lower social class, but also north/south differences should be taken into account [Miller 1980: 103]. Miller's Tables 2 and 3 [Miller 1980: 106-111] indicate that it is necessary to carefully deal with variety due to regional and class differences.

a bride.[9] Two fundamental features of the South Indian type
of marriage can be seen from the above argument: 1) that its
marriage pattern has an egalitarian tendency and is rather
free from caste hierarchy [Dumont 1983: 167], and 2) that a
bride (woman) herself is the focal person as a property
holder, namely, "as flower".

As this first feature indicates, the dominant castes
in Kinnimangalam, who observe caste endogamy almost
perfectly, in practice, look upon marriage as an opportunity
for creating or reproducing the unity of affinal relations,
rather than for seeking an increase in their status.
Moreover, the above-mentioned second feature is also found
in the village. The marriage payment of the Kallars and of
the Pillais basically consists of *paricam* (bridewealth),
varataṭciṇai (groomprice), *cītaṉam* or *stiritāṉam* (property
given by the bride's parents to the bride), and other
occasional *cīr*s (gifts by the bride's side to the couple,
especially in the first *Āṭi* month and in the first *Tai*

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[9]In South India, the custom of *cītaṉam* or *stiritāṉam*,
which is given to a bride by her parents, is important.

month)[10]. It is said that *cītanam* is usually given to a wife after she has had her first child, because having a child is regarded as evidence of the couple's stable relationship.

The above mentioned two features help us to understand the Kallars' responses to inter-caste marriage. Since they see a woman herself as valuable property, their welcome of a higher status woman and conversely their rejection of the loss of their own women can be consistently understood by their concern with the increase or the protection of productive power in which ritual status is not literally accepted but is translated into a form of power. Whether the Kallars clearly distinguish between "status" and "power", in Dumont's sense, seems to be very doubtful because, for them, "status" is rather encapsulated by "power". In other words, a *cuttam* woman is not a means for climbing the status ladder, but is seen as being powerful property for them.

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[10]In the bride's side's house, an engagement ceremony is held. Both parties, who are represented by *tāymāmans*, discuss the marriage payment. Firstly, the amount of *varatatcinai* (literally, offering to bridegroom) is stated by the bride's *tāymāman*, in front of both parties. Then, *paricam* as bridewealth, is given to the bride's *tāymāman* (*paricam pōtutal* in the case of the Kallars, *niccaya tāmpūlam* in the case of the Pillais), and half of the *paricam* is returned to the groom's side a little later. *Varatatcinai* is equated with dowry in the sense of groomprice, which is clearly different from *citanam* as bride's property. According to Kolenda, *cītanam* recently tends to have been replaced by groomprice (*varatatcinai*) [Kolenda 1984: 108]. The point is that *cītanam* is a bride's own property. The distinction between *cītanam* and groomprice is doubtlessly crucial, as Kolenda righly points out, but Tambiah and Dumont fail to recognize this [Tambiah 1973][Dumont 1957b][Miller 1980: 103].

Thus, this interpretation typically found among the Kallars is continuous with "pollution" ideology in the dimension of "the basic Tamil culture", for both seek to increase power by attaching importance to women's potentiality.

If the Pillais' response to inter-caste marriage is examined, it will be clear that they share the same tendency as the Kallars. However, the Pillais, who are the most Sanskritized in the village, tend to adopt the "purity-impurity" ideology more strongly than the Kallars[11]. The relative difference between the Kallars and the Pillais in their responses reflects their respective social positions. "Role theory" can be applied to the situation. Whereas the Kallars are deemed to be politico-economically powerful but are never expected to follow a ritually higher attitude, the Pillais are thought of as the more sophisticated people

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[11]For example, the Pillais have a type of marriage called *kannika tānam* (literally, virgin gift) in which the bride's side bears all expenses for the marriage. It seems that, though *kannika tānam* takes place within the same caste, it embodies the ideology of *kanyadan* which attaches importance to the ritual hierarchy. Compared with this, the Kallars tend to regard such a marriage as shameful for the bridegroom's side because it publicly shows the powerlessness of the groom's family. Therefore both the Kallars and the Pillais basically share the same ideological basis of pronouncing power but the Pillais are relatively more Sanskritized than the Kallars.

because of their high ritual status[12]. In order to reproduce
or reinforce the Pillais' high social status, it is
important for them to meet these social expectations. They
behave so wittingly or unwittingly. This explains the
relative difference between the Kallars' practices and the
Pillais' practices, despite both sharing the same basic
Tamil cultural tendency stressing productivity.
Consequently, this discussion of the practices of the
dominant castes suggests that the "pure-impure" hierarchical
ideology is manipulated by their subjective interpretation,
based on their need for seeking productivity, which is an
essential feature of "pollution" ideology.

Practices of the dominant castes cannot be
consistently understood by simply applying a single
objective standard, like the "purity-impurity" ideology. To
understand their pollution concepts or practices properly
requires taking into account their subjective
interpretations, which reflect their social positions.
Furthermore, their subjective interpretations are basically
motivated by their need for seeking productivity, namely,
self-development. A subjective account sometimes leads to

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[12]Most villagers comment that the Pillais are good
people because they are said to behave gently. This
reputation of the Pillais rather contrasts with that of the
Kallars. The Pillais are encouraged not to behave roughly,
like the Kallars do, by other villagers' conventional view
of them. Therefore, for instance, the crude ill-treatment of
the Paraiyars, as shown in Example 1, will not much harm the
Kallars' reputation but will definitely degrade the Pillais'
dignity, if they did so.

the situation where "purity-impurity" ideology fades behind
(is suspended by) their primary value of productivity,
"pollution" ideology. The dominant castes wittingly or
unwittingly manipulate the "purity-impurity" ideology under
their primary value of "pollution" ideology and this
arbitrary manipulation aims at self-development.

5.3 Practices of the Paraiyars

Apart from the dominant castes, the socially dominated
caste, the Paraiyars, will be focused upon here as an
introduction to Part Three, where the practices of the
Paraiyars are dealt with in more depth.

It is clear that the village Paraiyars today wittingly
negate the caste hierarchy based on the "purity-impurity"
ideology (c.f. [Pfaffenberger 1980], [Gough 1959]), in which
they have been placed in a repressed social position. In
particular, the younger generation more explicitly and more
radically express their feelings of hatred against this
hierarchy, more so than do their elders[13]. The elders tend
to agree on caste <u>distinction</u> itself, though they no longer

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[13]For example, Muttaiya, a young Paraiyar told me,
"The unnecessary caste system is dying actually and I think
what we need is only two castes (*jāti*s), namely, man and
woman". Tottikkaruppan, one of the influential elders of the
Paraiyar community, explained to me about the caste
difference as follows: "*Jāti* is like a different kind of
tree. A mango tree and a banana tree are of course
different, so that they can not be mixed with each other.
Like this, people belonging to different castes can not
marry each other."

believe in the caste _hierarchy_ in a ritual sense. The
Paraiyars today, young and old, think that there is no
reason for them to be said to be polluting (_tīṭṭu_) and they
reject the ritual hierarchy. However, since the social
hierarchy doubtlessly persists even though they oppose it,
they tend to recognise the hierarchy by describing it in
economic terms.[14] Therefore, as shown in the examples
mentioned in the previous section, the one-sided attitude of
the dominant castes, especially that of the Kallars, in
which the "purity-impurity" ideology is arbitrarily applied
or suspended is unacceptable and intolerable for the
Paraiyars.

In order to confirm their view on hierarchy, it is
helpful to know the Paraiyars' outlook on inter-caste
marriage. Their response is quite similar to that of the
Kallars. For them, the acceptance of a woman from another
caste is more tolerable than the loss of a woman from their
own caste, though they also basically avoid inter-caste
marriage. Their view is made clear by the fact that hypogamy
with a Kallar woman is welcomed but hypergamy with a Kallar

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[14]When I asked an old Paraiyar man, over 60 years old,
about the hierarchical relationship between the Paraiyars
and the Potaravannans, he explained, "We do not think they
(the Potaravannan) are more impure (_acuttam_) than us, but
they are socially lower than us because they depend upon us
economically. This is exactly the same as our situation of
depending on the Kallars for making a living."

man is not acceptable[15]. According to this, the Paraiyars

share the ideology of "woman as flower" as well. It is also

pointed out that today's custom of marriage payments again

closely resembles that of the Kallars. There are two

features of their marriage payments, compared with the

Kallars'. That is, 1) the usual amount of both bridewealth

and dowry is relatively small due to their economic position

and 2) the balance between bridewealth and dowry is more

clearly emphasized[16]. Thus, this indicates that their

negation of the "purity-impurity" hierarchy not only results

from their resistance to the caste hierarchy, but is also a

result of their cultural tendency of attaching importance to

productive power, which is basically shared with the

Kallars.

Although there is no doubt that this outlook of the

Paraiyars is in the mainstream today, there are two factors

to be considered which make their attitudes complicated,

[15]The hypogamous union with a higher status woman is
very positively accepted by them. There is an actual
marriage between a Paraiyar husband and an Acari wife in the
village and the couple is happily accepted by the Paraiyar
community.

[16]Miller's Table 3 [Miller 1980: 111] shows only
bridewealth of the lower class (unpropertied people) by
citing from [Moffatt 1978] and [Gough 1956]. However,
Thurston's report on the Tangalan Paraiyars [Thurston et al.
1987 Vol.5: 100] and my data are different from Miller's.
The point is that the Paraiyar have not only bridewealth
(*paricam*) but also the custom of dowry (*cītaṇam*), even if
this custom is little followed due to poverty. It is said
that the amount of dowry should exceed the value of
bridewealth.

namely, they not only simply reject the socially dominant
view but, in addition, they may also sometimes accept or
replicate it. The first factor is their desire for a rise of
social grade, or at least for saving face socially (see
chapter 6). This desire for self-esteem in Vincentnathan's
terms prevents the Paraiyars from being free from the
dominant values, by which the dominant castes preserve their
social status. For example, their own opinions on the habit
of beef-eating or of eating dead cattle verifies this. On
the one hand, denying the Caste Hindus' view that the habit
causes *tīṭṭu*, most of the Paraiyars I interviewed positively
claim that the habit has been part of their tradition and
that meat-eating, including beef-eating, is good for a body
and provides it with necessary physical energy. On the other
hand, several Paraiyars comment that though they personally
do not mind eating beef, they would like to stop the habit
if it were possible, in order to reduce the social dishonour
caused by it, but poverty has prevented them from doing so.
This comment well indicates that in their attitude, account
is taken of the prevailing negative evaluation of the habit.
Moreover, this suggests that they adopt the dominant castes'
view not because they believe it, but because they can
benefit by avoiding the act which is perceived as degrading
them.

This problem cannot be exhausted by a consideration of
their strategic replication under such cool calculation.

Their religious loyalty also influences or supports their attitude toward the 'replication' of the dominant view. In this connection, their ambiguous evaluation of vegetarianism, which naturally includes the argument on beef-eating, provides a good example. Some insist on the nonsense of the distinction between vegetarian and non-vegetarian, whereas others accept the idea that the vegetarian is purer (more *cuttam*) than the non-vegetarian. This complex attitude seems to have at least two causes, namely, 1) their strategic calculation, as has been explained above in terms of beef-eating, and 2) their religious beliefs. Though there is no doubt that they never think non-vegetarian dishes makes them *acuttam*, on religious occasions they accept the idea that vegetarian dishes are useful for preparing a *cuttam* (pure) body, which is suitable for worshipping gods, as is verified in their observance of *viratan* (fasting) before a festival. This attitude also helps to understand their view that a world renouncer is more *cuttam* than a Brahman. Thus, as has already been explained in section 3.3.2, their acceptance of the concepts of "purity" and "impurity" in the religious context (not in the social hierarchical context) seems to make their arguments on vegetarianism/non-vegetarianism complicated.[17]

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[17]Their main concern in being *cuttam* lies in their religious aim of enjoying god's grace, not in the rise of their ritual status. In other words, they do not believe in the ritual hierarchy but believe in Hindu gods. In this respect, it is also suggestive that none are followers of the DK movement (the Dravidian nationalistic movement, which

In sum, since the Paraiyars today basically reject the caste hierarchical system based on the "purity-impurity" ideology, they tend to understand the actually existing social hierarchy as an economic hierarchy. It can be, moreover, noted that this rational understanding is not only derived from their defiance, but is also based on the shared "pollution" ideology, which attaches importance to increases in productivity. Nonetheless, this traditional and at the same time rational tendency is made complicated by their practical attitudes, such as 1) their strategic attitude for saving face or seeking a rise in social grade and 2) their religious attitude in depending upon the grace of the Hindu gods. Since the former attitude sometimes includes their observation of the dominant value of "purity-impurity", even for mere form's sake, they can be seen as followers of the dominant values (or look to 'a true believer' in Moffatt's expression), or they at least can not be seen as opposers criticizing it, even though they do not believe in it. The latter attitude leads to their acceptance of the "purity-impurity" concepts in the context of the man-god relationship (see section 3.3.2), which ironically provides a moment for mystifying the "purity-impurity" ideology defining the man-man hierarchical relationship, or which at least weakens their power to criticize this hierarchical sense of the "purity-impurity" ideology.

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stands for the negation of belief in Aryan gods as the root of all evil).

Thus, the rationale for the practices of the Paraiyars can again be thought of as being a subjectively strategic attitude for seeking self-development or the increase of productivity. In this sense, it is argued that Moffatt, who simply emphasizes the Harijans' replication of the dominant ideology, lacks this interpretative and strategic viewpoint. It seems to me that if the interpretative and strategic viewpoint is adopted, the achievements of these Harijan studies, which I reviewed in section 1.2.2, would be more positively revived.

This summary provides only a preliminary perspective on the Paraiyars' practices, which has been elucidated from a limited discussion of their attitudes toward pollution concepts. What I have discussed in this section is more extensively investigated in the following Chapters. In this sense, this section can be regarded as an introduction to Part Three.

PART THREE: HARIJAN STRATEGIES

Part Three is devoted to an elucidation of the actual
features of the ideological practices of the village
Paraiyars through a comparison of their practices with those
of the dominant Caste Hindus, in other words, through an
understanding of the whole social context of the village. As
already mentioned, the rough sketch presented in Chapter 5
will be extended and deepened by the investigation of the
various aspects of the Paraiyars' activities in the village.
At the outset, Chapter 6 reveals the socio-economic position
of the Paraiyars in the village context as the fundamental
basis to their practices. The following three Chapters deal
with the Paraiyars' practices. The task will be achieved by
successive arguments beginning with ritual or religious
facets, such as funerals (Chapter 7) and lineage festivals
(Chapter 8), and being extended to more secular aspects
which more vividly reflect modernization. The latter aspects
will be illustrated through a discussion of the activities
of "the Cooperative Society of Milk Producers" (Chapter 9).

CHAPTER 6 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF THE PARAIYARS

In the previous Chapter, I pointed out the Paraiyars' general interpretation of their socially repressed position. The Paraiyar people tend to think that the disadvantages of their social position are caused by their economic dependence on the dominant castes, and they dislike reducing them to ritual reasons. It is, therfore, an indispensable task to understand their present economic condition, which provides the basis for this interpretative statement. Furthermore, in order to fully explore the social power of the present Paraiyars, not only their economic situation, but also their educational background and their political circumstances need to be taken into account[1]. The former two, namely the economic position and the educational level of the Paraiyars in the village setting, are dealt with in this chapter. Their political behaviour and conditions will be discussed in the argument on the Milk Cooperative Society (Chapter 9). Since I aim to elucidate the Paraiyars' socio-

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[1]It is well known that Beteille attempts to understand the social stratification of a Tanjore village as a combination of triadic social formations, namely caste, class, and power [Béteille 1965]. Gough adopts basically the same concepts as Béteille's, that is, politics, caste, and class, though she also pays attention to ecology [Gough 1989]. Bourdieu, in his analysis of French society, elucidates the contrasting concepts of "capital economique" and "capital culturel", and furthermore, adds the concept of "capital social" [Bourdieu 1979]. These three types of capital correspond respectively with the economy, education, and politics. These frameworks support my selection of using these three elements to analyse social power.

economic position within the village social framework, it is necessary to describe the other castes' socio-economic conditions as well.

6.1 Economy

6.1.1 Agricultural lands

(1) Classification of cultivated lands

Agricultural lands are primarily classified into two categories, namely, *puncey* (irrigated land) and *nancey* (non-irrigated land). Both can be, moreover, divided into two sub-categories according to whether water supply from a well is available or not. If well-irrigation is available, the land is called *tōttam*, and, if not, it is simply called *kātu*. Therefore, there are logically four categories of agricultural land[2], but, in the villagers' everyday conversation, they usually adopt only three categories: 1) *puncey* or *puncey kātu*, 2) *puncey tōttam*, and 3) *nancey*. The reason that in practice they reduce these categories to three is understandable, because whether the land is *tōttam* or not makes the decisive difference in the case of *puncey*

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[2]The four categories of agricultural lands are 1) *puncey kātu* (land lacking both tank-irrigation and well-irrigation), 2) *puncey tōttam* (land having only well-irrigation), 3) *nancey kātu* (land having only tank-irrigation), 4) *nancey tōttam* (land having both tank-irrigation and well-irrigation). Though *nancey* usually has a higher value than *puncey*, when the tank-irrigation does not work well due to irregular rainfall, the value of *tōttam* rises relatively.

but not in the case of *nancey*. Hereafter, I adopt these three divisions, according to the villagers' use.

(2) On the survey of land possession

A survey of land possession in the village is very problematic. Firstly, the administrative register[3] is not up to date. Dumont has already pointed out such a time lag [Dumont 1986: 137]. The name of the owner in the register, therefore, does not always refer to the actual possesser of the land. Secondly, there is the serious problem of the register not distinguishing between *puncey kātu* and *puncey tōttam*. This detail is vital for an understanding of the actual economic situation. Thirdly, usefulness of the register is further decreased by the customary and popular institution of loans, called *otti* or *pōkkiyam*. *Otti* is the institution whereby people transfer the usufruct of their property, such as land or houses, as a mortgage to the lender for the loan of money, the usual purpose being to raise money for marriage, medical expenses, repayment of a

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[3]Land possession is registered by the combination of "Patta No.", which is identified with a landowner, and "Survey No.", which corresponds to the division of the land itself. This is useful for recording the frequent movement in land ownership. The available register, called *Cittā*, records the changes in land-ownership through sale after 1963, but it is not kept up to date.

debt, gifts etc.[4] *Otti* is associated with the shift of the right of use to the taker of the mortgated land[5]. These informal transactions in the right of cultivation never appear on the register, despite the fact that they take place frequently and are significant for villagers.

Table 6.1 The transactional price of agricultural lands
        (round figures, 1987)

	sale (transfer of ownership)	otti (transfer of cultivation right)
puṇcey kāṭu	PK: Rs.10000/acre	PKO: Rs.7000/acre
puṇcey tōṭṭam	PT: Rs.20000/acre	PTO: Rs.15000/acre
naṇcey	NA: Rs.30000/acre	NAO: Rs.20000/acre

Thus, the problem lies not only in the time lag or in the categorization of the register, but also in this informal movement in the use right through the *otti* institution (see [Dumont 1986: 137]). This, therefore, suggests that it is necessary to understand the movement of the usufruct in order to understand the villagers' actual

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[4]*Otti* was usually transacted verbally, but there is a recent tendency of drawing up a promissory note (*uṛuti moḻi*) because of an increase in associated problems. A typical difficulty arises if the *otti* giver sells the *otti* land to a party other than the *otti* taker.

[5]In this sense, *otti* is "usufructuary mortgage" [Dumont 1986: 131] so that the movement in the cultivation right of an *otti* land is usually regarded as being payment of interest. In this connection, the tax for the *otti* land is still formally the responsibility of the *otti* giver, as the owner, but in practice, it is paid by the *otti* taker, as the actual cultivator.

Table 6.2 Caste-wise cultivated land holdings
(1987, acre)

note 1): the upper row refers to own cultivated land and the lower row refers to *otti* cultivated land.

note 2): figures with an asterisk * refer to land value which is caluculated by the following expression:
total value = PKx10000+PKOx7000+PTx20000+PTOx
(Rs)   15000+NAx30000+NAOx20000

note 3): gr.= gross, av.= average

caste	PK		PT		NA		total	
	gr.	av.	gr.	av.	gr.	av.	gr.	av.
Pillai (3)	0.70	0.23	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.07	0.92	0.31
							*13600	*4533
Kallar (202)	138.43	0.69	142.90	0.71	53.85	0.27	335.18	1.66
	48.94	0.24	24.12	0.12	11.65	0.06	84.71	0.42
							*6795180	*33640
Pantaram (1)	11.00	11.00	5.00	5.00	2.12	2.12	18.12	18.12
							*273600	*273600
Acari (10)	8.25	0.83	0.63	0.06	1.85	0.19	10.73	1.07
	3.00	0.30			0.25	0.03	3.25	0.33
							*176600	*17660
Natar (10)	4.00	0.40	7.00	0.70	1.50	0.15	12.50	1.25
	4.90	0.49			0.45	0.05	5.35	0.54
							*268300	*26830
Vannan (7)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Kuravan (1)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Paraiyar (174)	15.34	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.94	0.01	16.28	0.09
	11.80	0.07	3.18	0.02	2.12	0.01	17.10	0.10
							*354300	*2036
total (408)	177.72	0.44	155.53	0.38	60.48	0.15	393.73	0.97
	68.64	0.17	27.30	0.07	14.47	0.04	110.41	0.27
estimation from the Detail Notes[6]	556.63				92.79		649.42	

[6]The total area of cultivated lands that I could collect directly is about 80% of the area that can be calculated from the figures of the tax-fixed-cultivated-lands (*vari tīrmāṇikkappaṭṭu aṉūpōkattiliruppatu*), appearing in the Detail Notes of Kinnimangalam Revenue Village, which is based on the 1962 survey. However, the difference between my data and the revenue office data should not present a serious problem here, because my main purpose is to compare the land distribution among the different castes.

economic situation. I eventually decided, as did Dumont [Dumont 1986: 137], to collect information on both the cultivated lands that are actually possessed, and on the *otti* lands taken or given, though I use the official register as the reference[7]. Table 6.2 shows the present (1987) conditions of the cultivated land holdings of each caste, using the data I myself collected. This Table distinguishes the cultivated land actually owned, and the cultivated land taken by *otti*.

(3) Changes in the distribution of land possession

Table 6.2 indicates that even the dominant caste, the Kallars, do not possess enough agricultural land to support themselves, even if the 20% gap was revised. It is said in the village that the combination of 5 acres of *puncey tōṭṭam* and 2 acres of *nancey* would be enough for maintaining one average household of five family members, providing the rainfall was average. This is the minimum standard for maintaining a family by agriculture alone. The *tōṭṭam* is usually used as a garden for vegetables and cash crops; while the *nancey* is used as a rice-field. As is shown in Table 6.3, today only five Kallar households are able to

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[7]Through direct data collection, I noticed that the villagers are very familiar with others' landholdings and their moves by *otti*. This means that villagers have played the role of witnessing each other's land moves. This type of mutual watch seems to still exist in the present village, in addition to the promissory note.

reach the above mentioned standard for maintaining a family by agriculture alone[8]. Even if the standard was lowered a little, only another two Kallar households (No.148 and No.160) would come near to this level. As to the other castes, only the Pantaram priest's household (No.166) and one Natar household (No.31) exceed this standard. Thus, it is revealed that only the top nine landholders out of 408 households can maintain a family by agriculture alone. It is also remarkable that there are no longer any big landlords in the village, except for No.15, who has in total 50.8 acres[9].

This notable fragmentation of landowning (cf. [Gough 1989: 132, Table 7.4]) is made clearer when the current situation is compared with that in the previous generation (30 or 40 years ago). Table 6.4 shows a list of large landlords at that time. If you compare Table 6.4 with Table

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[8]The two joint households, No.129/130 and No.123/124, are compensated for a little shortage of *puṇcey tōṭṭam* by having a little more *naṇcey*, whereas in No.9, the shortage of *naṇcey* is balanced by *puṇcey tōṭṭam*.

[9]The lands which the Pantaram priest manages are not his own private property but are temple lands, so that he cannot be regarded as another big landlord. The landholding of No.15 obviously is greater than the maximum permissable holding (15 standard acres for a family of 5 members) fixed by the Tamil Nadu Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Amendment Act (1970) [Gough 1989: 24]. However, holding such big lands may be possible partly due to the calculation of "standard acre" [Moffatt 1979: 68, fn.4] and partly because of tactics of registration [Gough 1989: 41].

Table 6.3 The landholders reaching the standard for
         maintaining a family agriculture alone
         (5 acres of *puṇcey tōṭṭam* and 2 acres of *naṇcey*)

(acre)

caste	house No. (lineage)	*puṇcey tōṭṭam* own	otti	*naṇcey* own	otti	*puṇcey kāṭu* own	otti
Kallar	7 (Catayi)	5.15	2.00	2.00	0.00	6.40	0.00
Kallar	15 (Kattapinnai)	15.00	1.00	15.00	1.80	15.00	3.00
Kallar	123/124 (Kecavan)	3.75	0.00	2.00	1.72	4.60	1.00
Kallar	129/130 (Kecavan)	4.25	0.00	5.00	0.00	9.25	3.75
Kallar	9 (Catayi)	3.81	3.63	0.29	0.87	1.38	4.14
Kallar	148 (Panniyan)	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-5.50
Kallar	160 (Panniyan)	6.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.50
Pantaram	166	5.00	0.00	2.12	0.00	11.00	0.00
Natar	31	7.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Table 6.4 Large landlords of the previous generation

(acre)

name	caste	approximate landholding *puṇcey*	*naṇcey*
Arumukampillai	Pillai	25	40
Cankarakurralampilai	Pillai	25	40
Kanapatittevar	Kallar	10	15
Ponnantittevar	Kallar	35	20
Mekanpalaniyantittevar	Kallar	20	10
Vativelnatar	Natar	20	5

6.3, it will be noted that, firstly, Table 6.3 has no

descendents of the families listed in Table 6.4; and, secondly, that there were in the previous generation several big landlords who monopolized the village economy, the two largest of whom were Pillai families. Therefore, there is no doubt that the fragmentation of agricultural holdings rapidly took place in the process through which the previous generation's property was handed over to the present generation. In this process of change, the agricultural lands were dispersed from the two Pillai families and a few influential Kallar families who had long dominated the village. The positions they occupied were replaced by the newly socially rising lower-middle class Kallars and Nadars who succeeded in acquiring their lands. A typical example showing such change is found in the case of the *nāṭṭāṇmai* family (the line of Arumukampillai). The grandson, who is the present head of the family explains the process as follows. His father, the son of Arumukapillai, to a considerable extent used his property for family concerns, especially for the higher education of his three sons. In addition, large sums of money were consumed for generously welcoming various visitors, in his position as the village headman. He also emphasizes that his father's taste and behaviour was very regal. Thus, it can be easily understood that his father had to sell off his lands to cover these expenses, because the rapid extension of monetisation associated with modernization required cash rather than kind. Furthermore, such dismemberment of the big landlords

has been basically accelerated by the rapid changes toward

modernized agriculture, though villagers usually relate the

dispersion of land to low agricultural production due to the

irregular rainfall and the series of changes in land

legislation dealing with land ceilings and the protection of

tenancy rights (see [Gough 1989: Ch.3]). These changes which

affected the Pillai landlords in this village are very

similar to what the *mirasdārs* of the Tanjore village

described by Béteille [Béteille 1965: 201-202]

experienced[10].

Nonetheless, it should be noted that the loss of

agricultural lands of the traditionally influential families

does not simply mean a decline in their socio-economic power

in the village context. This is because their descendents

have suceeded in acquiring stable urban employment, for

example as station masters and government clerks. In other

words, holding agricultural land is no longer the only

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[10]Beteille points out that, though the power of the
mirasdārs was considerable at the beginning of the present
century and the village socio-economic relations were formed
on the patronage of such *mirasdārs*, in the 1960s not only
were there a smaller proportion of landowners resident in
the village, but also the size of individual holdings was
greatly reduced. He does not clearly explain the changing
processes of land dispersion, but he describes the
difficulties that the present *mirasdārs* face. They can not
adequately play the role of the patrons of the village
because of their reduced land holdings, their increased cost
of living, the increased expense of education, the
investment in acquiring urban employment, tenancy
regulations for strengthening the position of tenants, and
land ceilings for curbing the powers of landowners [Beteille
1965: 201-202]. See also [Moffatt 1979: 67-73].

source of maintaining one's economic position today. It is

obvious that they can not afford to show their "generosity"

as their ancestors did, as the patrons of the village

jajmānī relationships, because their salaries are fixed. The

families shown in Table 6.3 who have achieved a rapid

economic rise in the present generation (see [Gough 1989:

45]), do not play the role of traditional patrons, but

rather have contract-based (capitalistic in Gough's sense

[Gough 1989: 233]) relationships with day-labourers[11]. Their

behaviour is rather individualistic and is influenced by the

new value of "economy" or "cutting down expenses". This is

completely opposite to the traditional value of "generosity"

which the patron should show. However, there is no doubt

that "generosity" is still important for understanding

social hegemony. In this respect, as Beteille clarifies in

his work [Béteille 1965], the domains of politics and

administration have become significant arenas where the

village leaders newly embody the attitude of "generosity".

This point will be developed in Chapter 10.

6.1.2 The income and expenditure of the Caste Hindus

I now deal with some details of the economic lives of

the villagers. Firstly, in order to understand the economic

position of the landed farmer, I examine the agricultural

[11]The shift from bonded labourer to casual day
labourer was encouraged under the Emergency imposed by
Mrs.Gandhi (1975-1977). Gough argues the influence of this
policy [Gough 1989: 149-151].

production of household No.7 (Table 6.5) which enjoys

relatively better economic conditions. Secondly, I examine

the cost of living of six households chosen from different

castes (Table 6.6), and take up the characteristics of the

expenditure of each household, which reflect the social

situation of each caste.

Table 6.5 Annual income and expenditure of No.7's
agricultural production (1986-87)

kind of land	product	area (acre)	expenditure (Rs)	income (Rs)	net profit (Rs)
puncey kāṭu	*peanut	4	5000	9000	4000
	*red bean(side crop)	25	300	275	
	*onion	2	4000	6000	2000
	*rice	1	2000	4000	2000
	*eggplant	1	1500	2500	1000
	*tomato	1	1500	3000	1500
puncey tōṭṭam	*millet(*keppai*)	0.5	200	500	300
	*lady's finger	0.5	100	1000	900
	*cotton	1	1000	3000	2000
	*peanut	1	1000	3000	2000
	*drumstick	0.25	50	200	150
nancey	(not cultivated due to water-shortage)				
total			16375	32500	16125

Table 6.6 Cash expenses (yearly, Rs)
A: No. of adult memebers, C: No. of child members
/p: per person, /p/m: per person per month

caste / item	Pillai A:2	Kallar A:4,C:2	Acari A:2,C:2	Pantaram A:4,C:2	Natar A:7,C:4	Paraiyar A:2,C:3
food (*uṇavu*)	2160 1080/p	6120 1020/p	3000 750/p	1260 210/p	6000 545/p	3600 720/p
grocery (*palacarakku*)	240 120/p	1440 240/p	600 150/p	1620 270/p	1800 164/p	150 30/p
necessary (*cōppu*)	--	126	--	--	--	--
clothing (*uṭai*)	100 50/p	2610 435/p	1500 375/p	700 117/p	4500 409/p	400 80/p
cleaning (*calavai*)	84 42/p	350 85/p	240 60/p	180 30/p	600 55/p	192 38/p
hair-cutting (*muṭi tiruttam*)	--	--	--	120	--	--
travelling (*pōkkuvarattu*)	480 240/p	2700 675/p	1440 720/p	900 225/p	2400 342/p	900 450/p
electricity (*miṉcelavu*)	66	168	720	840	300	0
medical (*maruttuvam*)	60 30/p	550 92/p	600 150/p	120 20/p	1200 109/p	200 40/p
education (*kalvi*)	0	50 25/p	240 120/p	1000 500/p	360 90/p	360 120/p
prestations (*moy*)	25 (0.5%)	3000 (16.9%)	1500 (12.5%)	500 (6.5%)	1000 (3.8%)	750 (11.1%)
offerings (*kōvilcelavu*)	450 (10.4%)	400 (2.3%)	720 (6.0%)	300 (3.9%)	300 (1.1%)	99 (1.5%)
luxuries (*āṭamparam*)	60 30/p	240 40/p	600 150/p	180 30/p	1800 164/p	50 10/p
others	600	--	840	--	6000	75
total	4325 2163/p	17754 2959/p	12000 3000/p	7720 1286/p	26260 2387/p	6776 1355/p
	180/p/m	247/p/m	250/p/m	107/p/m	199/p/m	113/p/m

Household No.7 is an extended family consisting of two old parents, their son, his wife, and their five grandchildren - two boys and three girls. Table 6.5 shows, in round figures, the annual income and expenditure of Household No.7's agricultural production in 1986-1987[12]. According to this Table, the annual net profit is roughly Rs 16000, and it provides Rs 148 per person per month. What does this mean? It can be noted that Household No.7's income is never high, if the amount is compared with the expenditures of other households shown in Table 6.7, which range from Rs 107 to Rs 250 per person per month. This comparison only provides a rough guide. The recent rapid increase in cash expenses can be made clearer if the present situation is compared with that at the end of the 1940s, as reported by Dumont [Dumont 1986: 126-127][13].

Before shifting to the economic condition of the Paraiyars, I sum up the points shown in Table 6.6.

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[12]The main agricultural period is the rainy season which starts in September and ends in January or February of the next year. Supplementary agriculture is conducted in the dry season. Therefore, the agricultural year spans two years, such as 1986-1987.

[13]Several items in Table 6.6, such as travelling expenses, electricity, medical charges and education fees, which together account for about 20% of the total expenditure, were not commonly incurred at the end of the 1940s. Nowadays it is said that in Madras Rs 1000 per person per month is necessary for an upper-middle standard of living, and Rs 500 per person per month is required at least for a minimum standard of living.

<1> Whether the household concerned specializes in agriculture or not makes a difference in terms of the cash expense of food. According to Table 6.6, even in the case of partial self-supply, Rs 700 per person per year is necessary for having simple meals (rice or millet with one side dish). If more than Rs 1000 per person per year was available, one could eat rice with each meal and have two side dishes and sometimes yoghurt. In this respect, the claim of the Paraiyar household seems to be a little doubtful, because the food expenditure of the household claimed by them does not match their actual meals, where lunch is sometimes ommitted[14], though it should be, of course, taken into account that the Paraiyars need more cash due to their not being self-sufficient as far as food is concerned.

<2> The Pillais' expenses for clothing is far less than that of the other castes, even below that of the Paraiyars. This is explained by the fact that this Pillai household consists of a widowed mother (in her 70s) and her unmarried son (in his 30s), who is an ardent Murugan devotee. As the ritually highest woman, she has strictly observed a socially restricted widowhood, while her son also leads a simple life modelled around being a world renouncer. He never wears trousers, but wears traditional sarongs,

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[14]One day I visited his house in the early afternoon. He got up and told me, "I have taken a nap because I don't want to waste my energy". Not uncommonly, he had not had lunch on that day.

called *vēṭṭi* (*dhoti*), and never uses soap or shampoo for
religious reasons.

<3> The above mentioned religious enthusiasm is
directly reflected in the expense of the temple offerings.
The offering charges occupy a higher percentage of the total
expenditure in the cases of both the Pillais (10.4 %) and
the Acaris (6.0 %), who enjoy a higher ritual status in the
village. The Pantarams should be added to this group even
though the expense of their temple offerings is officially a
little low (3.9 %), if it is taken into account that they
separately spend large amounts on priestly work.

<4> It seems that the expense of *moy* (prestations)
corresponds greatly with the significance of kinship
relationships and with the liveliness of the activities of
the local caste association. This is verified by the fact
that the Kallars, the Paraiyars and the Acaris spend a lot
on gifts[15]. In contrast, it is noted that the amount spent
by the Pillais on prestations is judged as very low. This is
partly because they do not have many kinship interactions
due to their dispersed distribution, and is partly due to
them having economically withdrawn from patronage today. The
present head, however, maintains the high status of his

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[15]The Kallars and the Paraiyars who are the numerical
majority in the village are involved in frequent gift
exchanges within their lineages and among lineages. In the
case of the Acaris, their activities in the caste
association push up their expense of *moy*, apart from the
prestations associated with their kinship relations.

family line in the religious and intellectual domain, by
observing a sober life as mentioned above.

6.1.3 The economy of the Paraiyars

(1) The economic position of the Paraiyars

Generally speaking, most of the landless and
uneducated Paraiyars, who acount for nearly 65% of the
Paraiyars, make a living by working as day-labourers, called
kūliyāḷ, in the fields of the higher caste landlords. Since
they work as day-labourers, not as *aṭimaikāraṉ* or
paṇṇaikāraṉ deeply involved within the *jajmānī* relationship,
they have become freer from the traditional framework. On
the other hand, it is also true that their economic position
is rather more unstable than before, because the landlords
can hire anybody, not necessarily the village Paraiyars, so
that whether one is engaged in labour or not becomes
uncertain (cf. [Moffatt 1979: 82])[16]. Needless to say, the
large supply of labourers and the limited demand for
agricultural work inevitably keep the labourers' payment
low. How much can be earned by engaging in agricultural
labour today? In the case of both husband and wife going to
the fields under ordinary demand, this can be calculated as
follows: <husband: Rs 8/full-day x 15-20 days/month = Rs

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[16]Though Dumont points out that "field workers are
apparently taken in turn" [Dumont 1986: 43], I am not sure
whether there ever was such a system in Kinnimangalam, and
this is not the case today.

Table 6.7 Landholding of the Paraiyars

(note) PK: *puṇcey kāṭu*, PKO: *otti* land of *puṇcey kāṭu*,
PT: *puṇcey tōṭṭam*, PTO: *otti* land of *puṇcey tōṭṭam*,
NA: *naṇcey*, NAO: *otti* land of *naṇcey*

house No.	lineage	PK	PKO	PT	PTO	NA	NAO	Property value(Rs)
267	Kartananti	2.00	2.00					34000
250	Tankalan				2.00			30000
270	Cinnananti	1.50					0.50	25000
332	Tankalan	1.25				0.03		21500
246	Urkalan	0.30				0.20	0.52	19400
292	?				1.18			17700
304	Urkalan	0.70					0.50	17000
261	Cinnananti	1.20				0.16		16800
205	Tankalan		1.80					12600
219	Tankalan	1.25						12500
201	Mataiyan	0.75				0.08	0.08	11500
279	Cinnananti	0.90						9000
331	Tankalan	0.90						9000
226	Tankalan	0.30	0.50				0.12	8900
227	Mataiyan		0.40			0.20		8800
373	Urkalan	0.80						8000
206	Tankalan		1.00					7000
241	Kartananti		1.00					7000
299	Tankalan		1.00					7000
300	Tankalan		1.00					7000
371	Mataiyan						0.33	6600
249	Urkalan		0.50				0.15	6500
232	Mataiyan	0.40				0.08		6400
203	Tankalan	0.60						6000
221	Tankalan	0.20	0.50					5500
322	Mataiyan	0.50						5000
355	Kartananti		0.70					4900
336	Tankalan	0.45						4500
354	Tankalan	0.20	0.30					4100
288	Mataiyan		0.50					3500
284	Kartananti		0.30					2100
290	?		0.30					2100
214	Tankalan	0.15						1500
215	Tankalan	0.15						1500
326	Tankalan	0.15						1500
222	Tankalan	0.12						1200
331	Tankalan	0.12						1200
total		15.34	11.80	0.00	3.18	0.94	2.12	354300

Table 6.8 Landholding among the five main lineages of
the Paraiyars

lineage	number of households (A)	number of landowners (B)	B//A (%)	B//C (%)	land value(Rs)* gr. (D)	av.	D//E (%)
Kartanantai	29 (16.7%)	4	13.8	10.5	48000	1655	13.4
Cinnananti	15 (8.6%)	3	20.0	7.9	50800	3387	14.2
Mataiyan	41 (23.6%)	6	14.6	15.8	41800	1020	11.7
Urkalan	19 (10.9%)	4	21.1	10.5	50900	2679	14.2
Tankalan	44 (25.3%)	19	43.2	50.0	147000	3341	41.0
others	26 (14.9%)	2	7.7	5.3	19800	762	5.5
total	174	38 (C)	21.8	100.0	354300 (E)	2036	100.0

*Land value is calculated by the same method as that in
Table 6.2.

120-160/month> <wife: Rs 3.5 /half-day x 15-20 days/month =
Rs 52.5-70/month> The total earning is estimated as Rs
172.5-230/month. Since it is said that for even a minimum
standard of living Rs 250/month is required for a household
consisting of five members[17], the result shows that their
earning power, even in better seasons when demand is higher,
does not reach this minimum level.

Today, there are Paraiyars who hold land. Table 6.7
shows a list of 38 Paraiyar landholders (21.8% of 174

[17]It is reported in the 1981 Census of India (Tamil
Nadu) that the total children born per 100 total married
women is 311 on average in Tamil Nadu, or 315 on average in
the Madurai district.

Paraiyar households)[18] in descending order of the total

value of their land, which is calculated by using the prices

shown in Table 6.1. According to this list, only the first

two persons mentioned come close to the avarage land

holdings of the Kallars, the value of which is Rs 33640. The

Kallars' average is 16.5 times greater than the average

value of the land holdings of the Paraiyars, Rs 2036[19]. This

obviously indicates that not only is there still a big

economic differential between the Kallars, as the dominant

caste, and the dominated Paraiyars but also that the

economic gap within the Paraiyar community is expanding. The

top two Paraiyars, KP and CV, whose property values exceed

Rs 30000 are two very influential leaders of the Paraiyar

community, as is shown in the discussion on problems of the

Milk Society (see Chapter 9). Table 6.8 also shows the

distribution of landholdings among the five Paraiyars

lineages. This Table indicates that the people of the

Nāṛpaṅkāḷi (the main four-lineages of the Paraiyars) hold

slightly less land than do the people of the Tankalan

lineage. It is, moreover, noted that the landholding ratio

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[18]42.59% of the Harijans are landed householders in
the village Moffatt studies [Moffatt 1979: 74].

[19]According to Moffatt, assuming that two to three
acres of medium-to-poor quality land is required for the
maintenance of a Harijan family, 16 out of the 108 Harijan
families meet this standard in his village [Moffatt 1979:
81]. If this standard is applied to Kinnimangalam, only two
Paraiyar households, each of which holds the same amount of
land as the average Kallar household, could be said to enjoy
economic self-sufficiency.

of the Tankalan people, 43.2%, is much higher than that of
the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, 17.4%. If it is taken into account that the
Tankalan lineage is socially peripheral in the Paraiyar
community, the two following points are suggested. Firstly,
the socially peripheral group may be more anxious to acquire
their own property in order to stabilize their economic
position. Because they are rather excluded from the
traditional interdependence found between the dominant
castes and the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, they need to independently
establish their economic basis by their own efforts.
Secondly, the Tankalan people are economically more
egalitarian than those of the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, among whom there
is a split between the few landholders and the landless
majority (see Chapter 9).

(2) How do the Paraiyars acquire land?

KP's father and CV, who are listed as the top two
Paraiyar landowners, provide examples of how the Paraiyars
can succeed in acquiring land. Moreover, there is an
interesting contrast between these two examples. The manner
of CV (a member of the Kartananti lineage) can be seen to
represent the central character of the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, whereas
KP's father (a member of the Tankalan lineage) reflects its
peripheral and rather independent character. Nonetheless,
since the details of CV's activities will be described in

Chapter 9, here I will discuss what KP's father did, which is summarized in the footnote below[20].

The example of KP's father typically illuminates one of the possible ways through which a Paraiyar can achieve economic betterment. One starts from well-digging work, becomes a buffaloe-breeder and finally acquires land. It is noteworthy that the brokerage of buffaloes is a very effective way for increasing one's property, though talent, such as that of KP's father, is also necessary for realizing this. At first, KP's father made the effort to acquire property, like equipment for well-digging and buffaloes. Then, he succeeded in taking the step toward the wider economic field beyond the village sphere as a contractor of well-digging and as a broker controlling a buffaloes' market. The latter development produced enough profit for acquiring the land. What is interesting is the transformation of property, from buffaloes, more generally livestock, to agricultural land. It is obvious that

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[20]KP's father increased his property as follows: 1) engaging in digging wells as a labourer; 2) being an independent contractor of well-digging; 3) rearing buffaloes for selling and milking, 4) being a *kuttakai* (a fixed rent tenure) tenant of two acres of *puncey tōṭṭam* held by a Kallar family, 5) setting up a brokerage dealing with buffaloes at the village level, 6) establishing the buffaloes' markets in neighbouring towns, 7) taking an *otti* land (2 acres of *puncey tōṭṭam*) in the middle of 1950s, 8) buying 1.4 acres of *puncey kāṭu* in 1969, 9) buying 5 acres of *puncey kāṭu* in 1973. However, KP's father fell ill in 1976 and, after spending more than Rs 25000 on medical expenses, ultimately died. As a result, only the usufruct of two acres of *puncey tōṭṭam* as the *otti* land narrowly remained in the hands of his son, KP.

contrasting properties are found in land and buffaloes. Land
is non-transportable, difficult to purchase, and village-
oriented; whereas buffaloes are transportable, easier to
purchase, and town-oriented. These characteristics of
buffaloes are useful for enabling the Paraiyars to establish
an economic domain rather free from the hierarchical
relations of the village. In this sense, a Tankalan person,
like SK, who is socially less involved in the village
framework, tends to adopt such town-oriented work, compared
with a person of the *Nārpankāḷi*. However, it is noted that
KP's father finally re-invested his gains from the outside
economy into the inside economy, by the acquisition of
village land. This not only provided him with more stable
living conditions, but also, at least in the economic
context, helped him alleviate his socially subordinate
position, due to his being a Paraiyar.

(3) Animal husbandry and the Paraiyars

The above mentioned example suggests that the
relatioship between the Paraiyars and livestock is
economically important. Livestock relations are discussed in
the wider perspective of the village as a whole. Table 6.9
shows the caste-wise distribution of the possession of
livestock.

Table 6.9 Livestock possession

(Note: gr. and av. refer to 'gross' and 'average' respectively)

caste	cow		bull		water-buffaloe		goat		sheep	
	gr.	av.	gr.	av.	gr.	av.	gr.	av.	gr.	av.
Pillai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kallar	23	0.11	60	0.30	58	0.29	61	0.30	249	1.23
Pantaram	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acari	1	0.10	3	0.30	1	0.10	0	0	0	0
Natar	0	0	0	0	9	0.90	0	0	0	0
Vannan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kuravan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paraiyar	21	0.12	16	0.09	80	0.46	59	0.34	13	0.08
total	47	0.12	79	0.19	148	0.36	120	0.29	262	0.64

1) implication of possessing bulls

Possessing a pair of bulls as draft animals is important for an agriculturalist. In this sense, it is natural that the Kallars, as the landlords possess the most bulls[21]. Nonetheless, today six Paraiyar households each own a pair of bulls and one Paraiyar household possesses two pairs of bulls. Although only three out of these seven households hold their own land, owning a pair of bulls is itself useful for all of them. For ploughing work, by using their own bulls, they can expect high reward (for example Rs 35/ day, which is four or five times greater than the usual pay of an agricultural labourer). Apart from their economic

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[21]However, the present ownership of the Kallars (60 bulls) seems to be very small, compared with Dumont's report on drought animals in Tengalpatti (215) [Dumont 1986: 119].

use, bulls have a religious and aesthetic connotation as
well [Dumont 1986: 120].

2) cows and buffaloes for milking

Fewer cows are held than bulls, but it is noted that
the number of cows seems to be gradually increasing, when
the present situation is compared with Dumont's census made
at the end of the 1940s [Dumont 1986: 119]. Dumont points
out that "the near total absence of milk products" [Dumont
1986: 119] characterizes this region. In Kinnimangalam
today, the recent encouragement of milk production by the
government has caused an increase in the number of cows and
buffaloes for milk products. This government scheme is
interconnected with their policy of raising the living
standards of the Harijans, so that this scheme especially
increases the Pariayars' holdings of cows and buffaloes. As
is described in Chapter 10, the increase of buffaloes among
the Paraiyars is doubtlessly partly the result of the former
Milk Society (1967-1972) and of the present Milk Society
(1981-). The government's policy encourages the Harijans to
purchase water buffaloes rather than cows for milking for
two reasons. That is, a buffalo is a little cheaper than a
cow, and buffalo's milk is thicker than cow's milk so that

buffalo-milking is economically more productive than cow-milking[22].

3) goats and sheep

Goats are useful, because they provide manure for agriculture, and milk and meat. In addition, a male goat, especially a young one, is the most popular sacrificial animal. Though Dumont notes that "goats are preferred by the landowners; sheep are preferred by poorer people" [Dumont 1986: 120], this is not the case in Kinnimangalam today where the Kallars have more sheep and the Paraiyars keep more goats.

It has been made clear that the Paraiyars hold a considerable number of livestock today, and that this situation has resulted from the government's scheme of encouraging milk-production. Though there is no doubt that this scheme has directly contributed to the recent increase in livestock, it should not be ignored that animal husbandry is a relatively easy activity for even the poorer Paraiyars to adopt for their economic development, as is shown in SK's strategy. If Table 6.10, which shows the sale prices of the main livestock, is compared with Table 6.1, it is seen that

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[22] 1 litre of buffalo-milk is weakened with 2 litre of water for drinking, whereas 1 litre of cow-milk is diluted with only half a litre of water. The price of buffalo-milk (Rs 3/liter) is thus higher than that of cow-milk (Rs 2.5/liter).

acquiring agricultural land requires more than ten times the capital than is needed for acquiring livestock.

Table 6.10 Selling prices of livestock

kind	price (Rs)		
cow	1000	-	10000
bull	700	-	6000
water-buffaloe	1500	-	5000
goat	250	-	1300
sheep	250	-	1300

6.1.4 The structure of the main occupations of the villagers

Today, the occupations of the villagers are diversifing with the increase in oppotunities for obtaining income from the outside economy. The main occupations of each caste are shown in Table 6.11[23]. Table 6.11 is classified into two main categories, namely, category A (village-based occupations) and category B (town-based occupations), each of which has two sub-categories (A1 and A2, or B1 and B2). Those categories are defined as follows: <A1>: village-based occupations which are primarily closed within the village sphere, <A2>: village-based occupations which expand toward the outside economy, <B1>: town-based occupations which tend to be independent but are less guaranteed, <B2>: town-based occupations which can be

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[23]The total number is greater than the number of households for the following reasons. There are two cases where the heads of the households are engaged in more than one occupation and in addition, other family members may be significant contributors to the household economy.

regarded as being stable employment because of being

affiliated to governmental bodies or big companies (or

associations)

Table 6.11 Main occupations of each caste

(Note: Par., Kal., Pil., Aca., Nat., Van., Pan. and Kur.
refer to Paraiyar, Kallar, Pillai, Acari, Natar, Vannan,
Pantaram and Kuravan respectively)

occupation	Par.	Kal.	Pil.	Aca.	Nat.	Van.	Pan.	Kur.
<A1: village-based occupations which are primarily closed within the village sphere>								
Farm labourer	87	32				6		
Agriculturalist	9	117	2	6	1		1	
Milk society	2	1			1			
Palm-leaf roof maker	2							
Bull-breeding	1							
Labourer-supervision	1	1						
VAO's servant	2							
Bullcart owner		2						
Milk collector		1						
Basket maker								1
Washing						6		
Sweeper								1
Priest							1	
Panchayat driver		1						
Post master		1						
Radio technician			1					
Crop spraying		2						
total (<A1>)	104	154	3	6	2	12	2	2
<A2: village-based occupations which expand toward the outside economy>								
Goat sales		1						
Milk sales		3						
Paddy straw sales		2						
Money lender		1						
Bull sales	1	5						
Kanja sales		1						
Carpenter	1	1		6				
Canal digging	1							
Cotton sales		1						
Tailor	1							
Mason	1	2						
Contractor		2	1					
Lorry-lorder	16	24						
Stone cutter	1	1						

	Par.	Kal.	Pil.	Aca.	Nat.	Van.	Pan.	Kur.
Waste paper collection					3			
total (<A2>)	22	44	1	6	3	0	0	0

<B1: town-based occupations which tend to be independent but are less guaranteed>

	Par.	Kal.	Pil.	Aca.	Nat.	Van.	Pan.	Kur.
Snack sales		3						
Vegetable sales		1						
Repairing					1			
Motor fitting		1						
Likisha	1							
Frame maker		1						
Document writer		1						
Tea stall		1			1			
Grocery shop worker					3			
Shop keeper		3	1					
Weaver		4						
Tailor shop		3			1			
total (<B1>)	1	18	1	0	6	0	0	0

<B2: town-based occupations which are regarded as being stable employment>

	Par.	Kal.	Pil.	Aca.	Nat.	Van.	Pan.	Kur.
Forestry Dept. guard	1							
Lorry conducter		1						
Electricity Board	1	1						
Company worker	2	3						
Bus driver		1						
Govt. jeep driver	1							
Railway worker	1	3						
Policeman		1						
School watcher					1			
University worker	1	1						
School teacher		1						
Accountant	1							
Lawyer	1							
Station master			(1)				1	
Central Gov. clerk			(1)				1	
total (<B2>)	9	12	(2)	0	1	0	2	0

	Par.	Kal.	Pil.	Aca.	Nat.	Van.	Pan.	Kur.
TOTAL	136	232	5+(2)	12	12	12	4	2
unclear/non-worker	55	19	0	4	1	1	0	0

Note: ( ) indicates a person who stays outside of the village.

Let's sum up the points made in this Table.

1) More than 60% of the Paraiyars are engaged in agricultural day-labour, whereas half of the Kallars are basically independent agriculturalists[24]. This contrast indicates that the socio-economic hierarchy between the dominant Kallars and the dominated Paraiyars is still basically maintained. This, needless to say, corresponds with the fact that the land holdings of the Kallars are on average 16 times greater than those of the Paraiyars.

2) The Kallars not only dominate economically within the village but also branch out into the neighbouring town, Chekkanurani (cf. [Dumont 1986: 19]). This is clarified by the number of Kallars classified in category B1 (Table 6.11) and is confirmed by Table 2.2, showing the shopowner's caste in Chekkanurani. Compared with this, the Paraiyars are marked by an almost total absence of occupations in category B1. This contrast suggests that the majority of Paraiyars can not afford to invest in acquiring town-based occupations. In this sense, this point again confirms the differential of economic capital between the Kallars and the Paraiyars.

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[24]However, it is noted that many Kallar youth work as unguaranteed day labourers like agricultural labourers (32), lorry-loaders (24) and stone cutters (1). This occurs partly due to the time lag between the son's earlier independence and the delayed inheritence of lands from his father and partly because the inherited land or property may be insufficient to support the sons' families.

3) Roughly speaking, the distribution of occupations among the Paraiyars is characterized by a 'polarization' between category A1 and category B2. It is remarkable that the extent to which the Paraiyars branch out in category B2 comes close to that of the Kallars. It is very impressive that prestigious independent occupations, like lawyer and accountant, are occupied by the Paraiyars, while some are employees of government bodies, such as the Forestry Department, the Electricity Board, the state government, and the University[25]. There is no doubt that this situation has been to some extent realized under the preferential policies of the government for the Harijans, especially in terms of education and employment. If the absence of occupations in category B1 and the polarization between categories A1 and B2 are jointly taken into account, this does not simply suggest that the village Paraiyars would be by and large still powerless without the help of the government, but also indicates that this government support has enlarged the gap within the Paraiyar community between the majority who are still confined to poverty, and the minority, who are enjoying success and economic privileges.

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[25]The preference for employing Harijans as public servants of the central or of the state governments is one of the important policies for bettering the Harijans. It is, however, pointed out that the employment ratio of senior officers recruited from SC is still low [Oshikawa 1981: 40]. This tendency seems to be valid for the case of the Paraiyars of Kinnimangalam, most of whom are only lower servants in the public sector.

4) The so-called service castes, such as the Pantarams, the Acaris, the Vannans, and the Kuravans still primarily engage in their traditional professions, which are classified into category A1. There is a big economic differential between the former two landholding castes and the latter two landless castes. In this connection, it is notable that the Sanskritized groups, which hold economic power, like the Pillais and the Pantarams, hold the higher status and more stable jobs of category B2. As has already been argued, their property has been consumed in their pursuit of higher education by which such stable occupations are attained. In contrast, the village Natars show a strong connection with category B1. They are active as small merchants in Chekkanurani, as is shown in Table 2.2[26].

6.1.5 Conclusion: government aid as a new form of patronage

The present economic position of the Paraiyars can be understood as follows: there is still generally a decisive economic gap between the dominant Kallars and the dominated Paraiyars, and only a limited number of Paraiyars exceptionally succeed in enjoying a slightly better economic position, due to both their own efforts and the special policies of the government. Since it is difficult for most villagers to make a living only by engaging in traditional

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[26]The connection between the Natars and the town has persisted since the 19th century, when their social rise movement began under British rule [Hardgrave 1969].

occupations based on agriculture (category A) or only within the *jajmānī* relationship, they are forced to seek income from town-based work (category B). For this, it is often necessary to have some capital to invest in branching out beyond the village. This means that property holders can more easily adapt to these economic circumstances by themselves, whereas the poor people, mainly the Paraiyars, have greater difficulty doing so. In this context, the government aid to the villagers, especially to the Harijans, can be regarded as a new type of patronage, by which the traditional patronage of the dominant castes in the *jajmani* relationship has to some extent been replaced. Though there is a fundamental difference between government aid and traditional patronage in terms of how to acquire the right of enjoying this patronage, both commonly contribute to assuring a minimum standard of living for the repressed people, such as the Harijans. It is true that the government's preferential treatment of the Harijans in various aspects, such as education, employment, housing and loans[27], to a certain extent succeeds in raising the socio-

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[27]For example, Oshikawa [1981] and Galanter [1984] deal with the government's preferential policy for the Harijans. The policy consists mainly of a system of reservation and preference in educational, political, and administrative institutions, and of privilege in economic development. Nonetheless, the government's investment for economic development, which is more necessary for the rural Harijans, is still minor, and education has been unchangingly the central target of the policy and occupies more than half of the budget [Oshikawa 1981: 34-40]. The main economic policies for the SC are (a) land redistribution, (b) the promotion of various industries, and

economic position of the Harijans (e.g. their residential
conditions). Nonetheless, there is a serious problem on the
village level in that the government's preferential aid for
them is not equally distributed among the poor Paraiyars,
but rather works to extend the economic differential within
the Paraiyar community. These government schemes tend to
become a most attractive target which the propertied classes
try to exploit, because the rather complex and opaque
procedure for application which is required often results in
an influential and propertied person, who is relatively more
educated, being asked to act as a mediator between the
government's office and the uneducated, poor applicants.
Conspiracy aimed at exploitation is easily undertaken by the
administrators, local politicians and local capitalists
acting in the mediating process. In this sense, such an
influential mediator, who can extract profit from the
government, is a new type of patron, who is compared to the
traditional patron by the poor. This vertical relationship
forms a faction-like group consisting of a rather complex
combination of power relations, new and old (cf. [Béteille
1965: 200]). The problem of the Milk Society described in
Chapter 10 provides a good example which reveals this social
dynamism.

(c) encouragement of the establishment of various
cooperatives [ibid: 41]. It can be seen that the
establishment of Kinnimangalam Milk Cooperative comes under
this policy (c).

6.2 Education

6.2.1 Higher education and the preferential policy[28] for the Harijans

The Paraiyars' acquisition of the occupations of category B2, as mentioned above, has been encouraged by the government's preferential policy. More directly speaking, the reservation system prepared by the government has contributed to this. Not only does higher education provide a step to acquire "economic capital", but it also is part of the independent domain of "cultural capital". This is why education can be dealt with independently here, being separated from the sphere of the economy.

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[28]The expression 'preference policy' is adopted here because, though I basically agree with Galanter's argument on terminology in which he recommends using the term "compensatory discrimination" [Galanter 1984: 2-3], I give priority to ease of understanding here. The core scheme of the preferential policy is the system of reservation, which is laid out for the benefit of the "backward classes", namely, Scheduled Castes (SC) + Scheduled Tribes (ST) + Other Backward Classes (OBC) = "Backward Classes" [Galanter 1984:3]. However, as Oshikawa points out [Oshikawa 1989: 9], the definition of backwardness is still very problematic, especially in terms of OBC, though the criteria of backwardness were given in "Report of the Backward Classes Commission" on Tamil Nadu (1970, 1985). An extensive discussion on the measures of backwardness is found in Chapter 8 of Galanter [1984]. Education is the central domain of the preferential policy to which the government has given its highest priority. The state government is mainly responsible for educational schemes [Oshikawa 1981: 35]. Needless to say, special treatment of outcastes did not only occur after independence, but the policy of the Indian government largely followed on British policy. Policies such as land distribution to outcastes, and providing them with education, were found under British rule, even though their results were very limited [Galanter 1984: Ch.2].

Figure 6.1 Education system since 1970s

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 age                    education level
------------|-------------------------------------------------
            |
            |---------------   Ph.D
 22         |  M.Sc./M.Eg.
------------|------------------------- University
 21         |                          (Post-graduate)
 20         |              M.A.
--------    |  B.Sc./B.Eg. ----------------------------------
 19         |
            |              B.A.     College
 17         |
------------|-------------------------------------------------
 16         |  Plus Two               Higher secondary
 15         |  Plus One               School
------------|-------------------------------------------------
 14         |  Grade 10
            |                         High School
 10         |  Grade 6
------------|-------------------------------------------------
  9         |  Grade 5
            |                         Elementary School
  5         |  Grade 1
------------|-------------------------------------------------
  4         |  Upper KG
  3         |  Lower KG               Kindergarten
------------|-------------------------------------------------
```

The education system which has been adopted in India since the 1970s is shown in Figure 6.1. The location of Kinnimangalam is rather convenient for those who want to remain in higher education, because people can easily travel by bus to the Colleges situated in Karumatur or in Madurai, and to the Madurai Kamaraj University, which is located on

the way to Madurai[29]. It is very impressive that, according to Table 6.12, which shows the caste-wise distribution of people educated above Grade 10, the Paraiyars can today be compared to the Kallars. Historically speaking, the Kallars are forerunners, compared with the Paraiyars, because the Kallars were the special target of education under "the 'Kallar Reclamation' policy" [Dumont 1986: 27] of the British government. The present situation indicates that the educational level of the Kallars[30] has rapidly been caught up with by the recent awareness of the Paraiyars of the necessity of education[31]. The improvement in the educational level of the Paraiyars has been doubtlessly encouraged by the reservation system of the government, which is regarded

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[29]In the village, there is an elementary school which developed from the school for the Kallar children founded under the British policy of 'Kallar Reclamation' [Dumont 1986: 27]. It is now open to all castes, including the Harijans. A High school and Higher secondary school are available in Chekkanurani. In this area, there is another type of elementary school, called the 'Panchayat Union Elementary School'.

[30]The Kallars are still classified into the category of 'Other Backward Classes (OBC)', or the category of 'Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC)'. This verifies their slow progress of rehabilitation.

[31]Generally speaking, the educational level of women is much lower than that of men. For example, according to Maps 87 and 88 of the Census Atlas (Census of India 1981, Series 20-Tamil Nadu, Part xii), in 1981 the percentage of enrolment of males (15-24) at matriculation/ secondary, higher secondary and higher levels was almost twice as great as that of females, that is, 11.11% vs. 5.98% in the Madurai District.

as 'compensatory discrimination' (see [Galanter 1984: Introduction and Part One])[32].

Table 6.12 Caste and higher education (1987)

M:male, F:female

caste	G10		Plus 1		Plus 2		BA		MA		total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Pillai			1				1				2	0
Kallar	3	1	2			2	6		1		12	3
Pantaram							2		1		3	0
Acari											0	0
Natar			1				2				3	0
Vannan											0	0
Kuravan											0	0
Paraiyar	3	1	2		1	2	1		1		8	3
total	6	2	6	0	1	4	12	0	3'	0	28	6
	8		6		5		12		3		34	

[32] 'Compensatory discrimination' is realized in the following domains: education, employment, politics, economic development, and health, as shown in Table 6 of Oshikawa [1981: 34]. The number of reserved seats for assemblies, educational institutions, or public employment is basically determined in proportion to the ratio of the population. In Tamil Nadu, for example, a university reserves 18% of its seats exclusively for the Harijans, because the Harijans occupy about 18% of the total population of Tamil Nadu (for example, 18.35% in 1981). Nonetheless, it is still not easy to realize the intentions of the reservation system for various reasons. It sometimes occurs that the reserved seats can not be filled, since the results of the entrance examination are too poor, and even after entering the university, many students drop out due to the inadequacy of their scholarships, their failure to adapt to the new environment, discrimination and so forth [Kirpal 1978], [Oshikawa 1981: 39].

Table 6.13 Father's occupation and landholding and school
          career among the Paraiyars

	boy	girl

Grade 10	* ?
	*Agriculturalist(PK1.25)+
	  Farm labourer
	*Agriculturalist(PT2.00)+
	  Company worker
		*Agriculturalist(PK1.80)+
		  Farm labourer

Plus one	*Electricity Board worker *Poultry faming(PK0.80, NA0.12)	
Plus two	*Farm labourer(PK0.40)	*_talaiyāri_ (goverment servant)(PK0.30) *Railway worker(?)
B.A.	*_talaiyāri_ (government servant)(PK0.30)	
M.A.	*Milk Society(PK4.00)	

6.2.2 The educated youth and the Paraiyar community

Though there is no doubt that, generally speaking, the
importance of education has been, even though very
gradually, recognized by the village Paraiyars, this
awareness still tends to be limited to only part of the
Paraiyar community. The transition process, as a result, has
produced a polarization of the education levels within the
village Paraiyar community (see [Oshikawa 1981: 39-40]).
What kind of conditions make the Paraiyar youth stay in
higher education? The influential Paraiyars tend to
encourage their sons to stay in higher education. Such
people tend to be relatively better off socio-economically,
which helps their children to continue studying longer.

Table 6.13 to some extent verifies this correlation between

a father's economic position (occupation) and his son's

educational level. In this connection, I can mention the

following example which shows the recent awareness of the

Paraiyar youth of the importance of education. A youth of

the Mataiyan, CB, who is a student at the Tamil Polytechnic

at Madurai told me about his experiences:

"My family is a bit complex because my mother got married
twice. My mother had a son and a daughter in her first
marriage and, after her former husband died, she married my
father and had four children, namely, my brother, me, and my
two sisters. My mother died when I was 6 years old and in
Grade 2 and, after that, I was a lazy boy. But one day a
Kallar acquaintance of my family advised me that I should
study harder, otherwise I would not develop in future. This
advice made me change and, after the incident, I began to
study hard. I stayed in the government hostel from Grade 6
(10 years old) to Plus two (16 years old) during which I
experienced various acts of caste discrimination. I have
been provided with a scholarship from Plus one till today.
Though the Polytechnic has fixed, reserved seats (18%) for
the Harijans, I did not use these special seats but entered
by passing the examination of O.C. (Open Competition)[33]. In
future, I would like to work to lift the social position of
the Harijans, though I am now still powerless. For that, I
need a good educational background. I have already begun to
give advice on how education is important for us to the
parents and the children of my community, reminding them
that I was awakened by the Kallar acquaintance's advice."

This example shows that the preferential policy

doubtlessly helped him enter the hostel and get the

scholarship, even though he did not use the reserved seat.

It also clarifies the difficulties of social discrimination

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[33]32% of the total seats is secured for Open
Competition, in which the examinees of all castes equally
compete simply by marks. The rest are reserved for "the
backward classes". Open Competition is conducted prior to
the selection of the reserved seats.

which the Harijan student has to confront and which may

discourage him from continuing his studies[34]. Apart from the

Kallar's advice and his personal excellency, it should not

be overlooked that CB's father, who is a socially active

Paraiyar, influenced him in various ways and that his elder

brothers, who left school at early ages and began to work,

support him financially. Such a family environment has made

it possible for him to continue to study. Therefore, this

example, as is already shown in Table 6.14, confirms that

the difference between the socio-economically well off and

less well off groups of Harijans within the fathers'

generation is reproduced and enlarged in their sons'

generation. The process qualitatively explains why the

spread of education among the Paraiyar community has not

progressed equally, but rather works for enlarging the split

between the educational levels, at least in the transition

phase.

Another interesting fact is made clear by the lineage

composition of the 11 Paraiyars having a school career above

Grade 10, which is shown in Table 6.15. In so far as total

numbers is concerned, such educated persons are only from

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[34]The factors which discourage the Harijan students
can not simply be reduced to caste discrimination, but the
big gap between their 'habitus' acquired in their local and
degraded life, and the new circumstances of school and
dormitory, cause them to suffer from the difficulties of
acculturation. Bourdieu and Passeron clarify this point in
terms of students who are from rural areas [Bourdieu and
Passeron 1970].

contrasting groups, namely, the most central group of the
Kartananti and its affines, the Mataiyan, and the peripheral
group of the Tankalan and its affines, the Manakuli.

Table 6.15 Lineage and school career among the Paraiyars

lineage	G10	Plus 1	Plus 2	BA	MA
Kartananti	0	0	(1)	1	1
Cinnananti	0	0	0	0	0
Mataiyan	0	1	1	0	0
Urkalan	0	0	0	0	0
Tankalan	2+(1)	0	(1)	0	0
Manakuli	1	1	0	0	0

Note: brackets refer to women.

Nonetheless, the social gulf between the *Nārpankāḷi*,
deeply involved in the village caste structure, and the
Tankalan, socially placed in a peripheral position of the
structure, explains the clear difference in terms of the
spread of higher education, found among them. If the ratio
of persons holding a school career over Grade 10 is
calculated, the *Nārpankāḷi*'s ratio is found to be 4.8%
whereas that of the Tankalan and the Manakuli is 12%.
Therefore, it is noted that a sharp split is found between
the very few highly educated families and the still less
educated majority among the *Nārpankāḷi*; whereas there is no
such split within the families of the peripheral lineages.
This suggests that the socially peripheral people are more

conscious of the value of education as a useful method for acquiring a more independent economic basis.

The increase in numbers of educated youth has exerted a considerable influence on the politics of the Paraiyar community. In particular, what should not be overlooked is that the monopoly of CV, the most influential man of the Kartananti, in his community began to be checked by the educated youth, such as CB of the Mataiyan an insider of the *Nārpankāḷi*, and KP of the Tankalan. The appearance of young competitors like CB within the *Nārpankāḷi* has more radical effects than that of KP of the Tankalan. This is because, though KP's challenge to CV tends to be looked upon as a part of the conventional opposition between the Tankalan and the *Nārpankāḷi*, the protest raised by a youth who is an insider of the *Nārpankāḷi*, or from the same lineage, cannot be rephrased by such a conventional framework and has, therefore, strong and direct effects on checking CV's regime (see Chapter 9).

6.2.3 Education as "cultural capital"

So far I have dealt with education as an effective method for producing "economic capital" but, needless to say, the power of education is not exhausted by this. The more fundamental nature of education lies in the value

connected with 'status'[35], which cannot be fully reduced to

'class'. A higher academic career has, to some extent, the

power of overcoming a low ritual status derived from caste

membership. Although it is usually unthinkable for a Harijan

man to formally marry a Kallar woman, there is an example of

such an inter-caste marriage in a neighbouring village. The

Paraiyar husband of this rare couple is the holder of a

master's degree, and is now a high-school teacher. It is

said that the Kallar relatives of his wife grudgingly

accepted him because of his good educational background and

his socially valued job. I do not claim that education

always wins over caste discrimination but education

doubtlessly widens one's choices, as Leach points out in a

different context [Leach 1988: 5]. This example reveals the

positive aspect of the "cultural capital" of education,

which contributes to reforming caste hierarchy. However, it

should be kept in mind that, in so far as education is an

independent type of "capital", it newly sets up its own

hierarchy, which is not attributional in nature but tends to

be 'reproduced' through nurture ('habitus' in Bourdieu's

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[35]As is well known, Srinivas takes 'Western education'
into account when he reconsiders his definition of
'dominance' [Srinivas 1987: 114].

concept)[36], as argued in the previous section (see [Bourdieu 1979]).

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[36]For example, Bourdieu and Passeron deal with the complex configuration of elements for selection in the process of enrolment at higher education in their early work *Les héritiers* [Bourdieu and Passeron 1964]. The argument is developed in *La reproduction* [Bourdieu and Passeron 1970].

CHAPTER 7 FUNERAL RITES

This chapter concerns funeral rites, which can be thought of as ritual responses to death pollution ($t\bar{\imath}ttu$) (cf. [Babb 1975: 91]). First of all, the funeral rites of the Kallars, the dominant caste, are described in order to provide an understanding of the whole structure of the funeral. Then, the ritual processes of the Sanskritized Pillais and of the Paraiyars are reported, in comparison with those of the Kallars[1]. These descriptions will illuminate the features of the Paraiyars' discourse on the funeral. It will be made clear that, on the one hand, there is no fundamental difference between the funerals of the Paraiyars and those of the Kallars, because both share the common basis of the less Sanskritized indigenous culture; but on the other hand, the Paraiyars adopt some elements of the Pillais' funeral, fragmentally, which distinguishes them from the Kallars.

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[1]Firstly, the funerals of the Acaris and of the Pantarams are rather similar to those of the Pillais. Secondly, the Natars' funeral again is similar to the Pillais', but is more simple. The Vannans' funeral can be seen as a simplified form of the Kallars'. These are the reasons that I take up only the cases of the Pillais and of the Kallars for comparison with the cases of the Paraiyars'.

7.1 Funeral Rites of the Kallars

7.1.1 The procedures of the funeral

(1) From death to burial

The following description is mainly based on my direct observation of the funeral rite conducted by the president of A. Kokkulam panchayat, who is one of the richest men in this area, but is generalized by the addition of the description of a funeral in Mavelipatti, and the general statements of informants. An ordinary, complete funeral for a married person will be described here[2].

A funeral rite is called *iḻavu kāriyam* ('funeral-function') which consists of a Tamil word *iḻavu* and a word of Sanskrit origin *kāriyam* (Skt. *kārya*). Death is described as the state that *uyir* ('life') leaves *uṭampu* ('body'). The Kallars, especially the Kallar women, express their feelings of sorrow intensely soon after death (cf. [Dumont 1986: 272])[3]. The corpse is washed by close relatives and clean clothes are put on it. It is then kept in the seated

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[2]Unmarried persons' funerals are limited (incomplete) because, according to Dumont, this funeral type does not satisfy the following two points, "the fact that the mourners are supposed to be younger than the dead person" and "the importance of marriage and alliance" [Dumont 1986: 277].

[3]In contrast, it is said that weeping within about 1.5 hours after the death is prohibited at a Brahman funeral

position facing towards the south, in the hall[4]. A Paraiyar
(*tōṭṭi*) informs the villagers and the relatives of the
death, by beating a drum called *tappu*. Digging the grave and
making the ship-type of bier, called *kappal tēr*[5], are also
assigned to the *tōṭṭi*. The Kallars usually use a decorative
ter rather than a simple *pāṭai*, which it is thought
indicates the poverty of the family. It is notable that, if
a *tēr* is used, the face of the deceased will be shown to the
public because of the seated posture. A temporary hut
(*pantal*) is constructed in front of the house by hired
labourers, and a one meter high *pantal kampu* (a miniature
hut), the legs of which are made of branches of a milk-tree
called *kaḷḷikkampu* (Euphorbia), is installed by the chief

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[4]It is said that the corpse should be kept away from a
pūjā room and a kitchen. After bathing, the corpse has
tiruṉīṟu ('holy ash') for a Saivite or *tirumaṇ* ('holy soil')
for a Vishnavite put on its forehead and on the back of its
hands. A 25 paisa coin, called *neṟṟikkācu*, is put on its
forehead. Sugar cane is stood against the wall on both sides
of the corpse, which is in the seated position. Rose water
is sprinkled, incense is burnt, and coconuts, betel leaves
etc. are offerred. Four *marakkāl* (1 *marakkāl* = about 6.5
liters) of paddy heap, on the top of which *akalvilakku* (a
wide-mouthed clay lamp) is put, is placed near the dead
person, and *kuttuvilakku* (a standing brass lamp) is also
lit.

[5]There are two kinds of biers for carrying the
deceased, namely, *pāṭai* and *tēr*. The former is a simple flat
bier on which the deceased person is laid in a stretched
position, and the latter is a more decorative one in which
the deceased is kept in a seated position. The popular forms
of *ter* are a ship-type, called *kappal tēr*, and a peacock-
form, called *mayil tēr*. It is said that *tēr* must be made of
green (*paccai*) bamboo newly cut down. The reason is unclear
but I guess that the use of fresh bamboo has the same
connotation as the use of earthen containers and leaf plates
on the occasion of death [Khare 1976: 183].

mourner. The necessary white cloths for making such *pantals*
are provided by a washerman. A musical band of the Harijans
is indispensable for the funeral process until the burial
(see [Dumont 1986: 272] and [Good 1978: 464]). In the case
where the deceased was over fifty years old, a group of
dancers called *rājarāṇi āṭṭam* is often in attendance[6].
People are believed to experience the most intense pollution
until the completion of the burial. Thus eating and cooking
activities are prohibited by the mourners during this time
[Khare 1976: 170-171].

The ceremony usually starts in the early afternoon,
when relatives of both the husband and wife, at least the
deceased's sons and their close affines like *tāymāman*, must
gather in the mortuary house. Because burial (or cremation)
should be completed before sunset (see [Babb 1975: 93]). It
is said that, in the case of the death of a woman,
piṟantavīṭu taṇṇi (literally, 'birth-house water', namely,
the water taken from her parents' house) is brought by her
brothers (the chief mourner's affines) for use in the ritual
bathing (*kuḷippāṭṭutal*); whereas on the death of a man, the
water for bathing is drawn from his village well by the

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[6]*Rājarāṇi āṭṭam* consists of only male members who are
recruited from the Harijans. As is indicated by the name
rājarāṇi, one of them disguises himself as a woman (*rāṇi*).
The party, which makes a racket, creates a rather festive
mood, and an early death, where the deceased is aged less
than fifty years, is regarded as too sad an occasion to
tolerate such a mood. See also [Dumont 1986: 272], [Moffatt
1979: 199] and [Srinivas 1978(1952): 97].

classificatory 'daughters' of the deceased, whose number
should be odd. Nonetheless, in the case of the president's
mother, the latter water was also sprinkled on the body.
When a husband dies, his wife cuts her *tāli* (a gold ornament
symbolizing her married state) herself, immediately after
the bathing. In the same bathing place, the chief mourner
causes the corpse to hold *navatāṇiyam* (nine kinds of grains)
in its hand, and the chief mourner's wife then takes it from
the corpse's hands and mixes it with three balls of cowdung.
The balls of cowdung are pasted by her on the wall to which
the corpse has its back, as is described later. A new cloth
is put on the corpse after the ritual bathing which is
compared to *apiṣēkam* (Skt. *abhiṣeka*) (see [Das 1976: 253]).
Following this, a ceremony called *paṭṭam eṭukkiṟatu* ('cloth
lifting-up') is conducted by the chief mourner[7] and other
'sons' (and 'grandsons') of the deceased, who are younger
than the deceased (cf. [Dumont 1986: 274]). Those wearing
garlands and holding *kumpā* (a small bowl) in their right
hands, proceed under a canopy of long white cloth (8
fathoms)[8] to the junction of the village boundary, called

[7]The eldest son becomes the chief mourner for his
mother whereas the youngest son does so for his father, as
Dumont also notes [Dumont 1986: 274]. However, the principle
is not universal among the Tamils because Good reports that
"the eldest S is chief mourner for both parents" [Good 1978:
464, fn.3], and the rule is reversed among the Jaffna Tamils
(the Vellalars) [Sekine 1984: 21].

[8]Ayyavu, a Kallar informant, explains as follows.
These male members are polluting, and they have to be
covered by a canopy of white cloth so as not to pollute the
sun.

kuṭam uṭaikkum iṭam (literally, 'pot-breaking place'). At the top of the procession is a barber as the 'funeral priest' [Dumont 1986: 278], who officiates for this rite. At the junction, the canopy of white cloth is spread on the ground and *kumpā̃s* are put on it. Then, those in the procession prostrate themselves to the north and recite "*corkkalōkam cēr* (reach the heaven)!" three times when the barber indicates that they should, while the barber sprinkles water over them (see [Good 1978: 467]).

When the corpse leaves its former home, before being carried on the *tēr*, it is taken and laid under the *pantal kampu*, where it is said to experience its last sleep in this world[9]. The corpse is set in the sitting position in the *tēr*. A washerman spreads a white cloth in front of the *tēr* and, when the *tēr* passes over the cloth, one *marakkāl* of paddy is dropped on it. The paddy will be taken by the washerman as the last gift from the deceased. The order of the funeral procession is as follows; 1) *tōṭṭi* having a big hatchet (*veṭṭu arivāḷ*) and a firepot (*akkiṇi caṭṭi*), 2) tom-tom beaters and dancers, 3) a barber having a small bowl (*kumpā*) containing *vāykkarici* (raw rice mixed with turmeric)

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[9]It is said that the lying posture, in which the direction of the corpse's head is south and its face is tilted a little toward the east, imitates a baby at the breast. The male members of the deceased's *paṅkāḷi* surround the *pantal kampu* and cry three times "appāṭō appō, āttāṭiyō āttō!". The barber stops this crying by touching the shoulders of the *paṅkāḷi*. Then, margosa leaves are put on the white cloth of the *pantal kampu* and turmeric water is sprinkled on it.

and a small hatchet (*pannarivāl*), and a washerman holding a white towel (*māttutuntu*), 4) male relations, 5) the *tēr* carried by relations and friends (8 persons), 6) female relations. However, female relations are not allowed to go beyond the village border, *kutam utaikkum itam* (cf. [Good 1978: 474]). They must bid farewell to the deceased there, after conducting a small ceremony called *kalikutam utaittal*, in which a woman (the deceased's wife or eldest daughter) plays an important role and is *muntaccēlai* ('a widow's sari') by her brother or by her *tāymāman*. This rite corresponds with that which the chief mourner performs in the burial ground. When the *tēr* leaves the village, women may express their sorrow by crying and beating their breasts (this is called *mār atittal*). Up to the village border the corpse on the *tēr* faces toward the village centre, but from there on its back is turned on the village and it proceeds to the burial ground (cf. [Good 1978: 468]). After leaving the village, the procession speeds up a little. People start tearing the floral decorations of the *ter* off. It is believed that this prevents the beloved one's ghost from returning to the village. Meanwhile, the women go back home and conduct the rite called *cītēvi vānkutal* (to receive the Goddess Laksmi)[10], in which the chief mourner's wife pastes

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[10]According to the Kallars' explanation, if the grain sprouted on the day of *karumāti* (i.e. a week later), it was a good omen and the family would prosper under the protection of the Goddess Laksmi and this would verify that the beloved one had been a person of good conduct. However, if the grain failed to sprout, this would indicate that the

the cowdung balls on the wall and lights *kuttuviḷakku*. This ritual act indicates the wealth and luck of the deceased. It seems to me that the rite typically symbolizes the dynamism of 'death and the regeneration of life' by connecting together death, a woman's reproductive power, and agricultural production.

When the procession reaches the burial ground, the *ter* is revolved clockwise[11] once and put down near the grave, and the corpse is removed from the *tēr* and laid down by the side of the pit. The direction of the head must be south. Immediately, the *tēr* is hacked down by the *tōṭṭi* with a big hatchet. The barber takes the shroud of the corpse off and cuts off any adornment, such as a garland, a waist chain and *tāli*. Further, the barber shaves the chief mourner's head (see [Good 1978: 497]). For this service, the barber has the right to a portion of the shroud taken off from the corpse (see [Dumont 1986:274-275], [Good 1978: 469] and [Raheja 1988: 148]). Giving *vāykkarici* to the corpse is carried out by the male relations in turn. The rice and a 25 paisa coin put on the forehead of the deceased are finally given to the *tōṭṭi*. Further, a 25 paisa coin called *tāyvaḻippaṇam*

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deceased had been a person of bad conduct. The cowdung, regardless, is kept in a pot and is mixed with the grain being sown the following year.

[11]It is noted that the *tēr* itself is always turned around clockwise, whereas the person who conducts *kaḻikuṭam uṭaittal* goes around anti-clockwise. It seems that the view that the corpse is deemed as Siva explains the auspicious turn of the *tēr* [Das 1976: 253].

('maternal-line money') is ritually given to the senior
person (*tēvār*) of the deceased's *paṅkāḷi* by the *tāymāmaṉ* of
the chief mourner. The corpse is then taken down into the
pit. The head is placed south and the face is turned a
little to the east. After the body is covered with a white
cloth, the chief mourner casts soil into the pit with the
back of his right hand. Then the other relaions follow him.
Lastly, the *tōṭṭi* forms the mound and completes the burial
(*putaittal*). *Kaḷikuṭam uṭaittal* ('trickling-pot breaking')
is conducted by the chief mourner and he finally makes a
fire at the head side of the grave[12]. This is accompanied by
a drum being beaten by the *tōṭṭi*, which is called *kaṭaici
koṭṭu* ('last drum'). People put a donation on the cloth,
called *māttutuṇṭu*, which the washerman spreads on the
ground, and then return home. The money collected, which is
called *potupaṇam* ('common-money'), is distributed to the
barber, the washerman and *tōṭṭi* for their services. Those
who are seen to be heavily polluted have to take a bath on
their way back, and then are again purified with water
before entering their houses. Reaching home, the chief
mourner goes to and worships in the place where the body was
installed. He then consults a *tāymāmaṉ* on the date of
karumāti, which is usually chosen from the seventh, nineth
or eleventh day after the death. Another ritual called *koḷḷi*

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[12]As Dumont notes, "the burial ceremonies show little
originality. Many traits show that they are a substitute for
cremation" [Dumont 1986: 274]. The action of making a fire
is one such typical trait. See also Good [1978: 475].

taṇṇi ('fire-water') in which a potful of water and the deceased's favourite items are offerred, is conducted by the chief mourner and his close male relations at the 'pot breaking place' on the night of the same day, in order, it is believed, to appease the soul of the deceased.

The next day, the rite called *pāl ūṟṟutal* ('milk pouring') is held at the burial place. The chief mourner and his close relations pour milk and sow *navatāṉiyam* (nine kinds of grains) on the burial mound. It is said that the aim is the recovery of the fertility of the land (see [Good 1978: 476-7]). In the evening, all the *paṅkāḷi* sit down to a vegetarian meal of one dish, made of millet and beans[13], through which the unity of the *paṅkāḷi* is reinforced. It is expressed as *oṟṟumaiyāka taḷukai cāppiṭutal* ('single offering dining').

(2) *Karumāti*

According to the Tamil Lexicon, *karumāti* is a synonym of *karumantaram* which means the last funeral ceremony (the Tamil lexicon) (cf. [Good 1978: 477]). It is said in the village that *karumāti* is the sons' last duty to their parents. In point of fact, the Kallar people consider

[13]This meal seems to correspond with *kāṉam kañji*, which is a porridge made of rice and beans, in Dumont's description, which is the first dish to be prepared in the deceased person's house. It seems to me that this dining almost corresponds with "a bitter meal", consisting of cooked rice and curd, which Khare mentions [Khare 1976: 171].

karumāti very important, as they tend to think the ceremony in the main enhances the departure of the soul of the dead. This notion corresponds with their recognition of death pollution. It is believed that *tīṭṭu* is substantially reduced by the burial and, further, that it is almost completely removed by *karumāti*, though death pollution remains till the thirtieth day after the death. In the case I observed, *karumāti* started in the afternoon of the seventh day after the death[14]. It is, in general, understood that the relations above all must attend *karumāti*, whether they were on bad terms with the deceased's family or not. At the outset, there is a joint ritual dining at *taḻukai* which is the first preparation of a non-vegetarian meal in the house of the deceased after the death. The male *paṅkāḷi* members eat together sharing one plate, which is placed where the corpse lay in state (see also Khare [1976:172]). Another portion, which is served under the *pantal kampu*, is eaten by the children. It is said that consuming such food guarantees that the departed one's soul will reach heaven, and at the same time ensures that the children will live long lives. On completing this shared meal, the rite of removing *pantal kampu*, called *pantal kampu piṭuṅkutal*, is conducted by the

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[14]The night before *karumāti*, the ritual called *cempum tanniyum vaiccu aḻukkiṟatu* is conducted by women only. Female relations sit around a *cempu* (a small tray) containing water, which is put in the place where the body lay in state, and they weep in order to console the deceased's soul.

tāymāman with the help of the barber[15]. The departure of the deceased is confirmed by this rite.

The central rite of the latter part of *karumāti* is *urumā kaṭṭutal* ('the tying of the turban'). After getting permission to begin *urumā kaṭṭutal* from the people, the *tāymāman* first of all ties *keṉṭai tuṇṭu* (a white towel with silver lines)[16] on the head of the chief mourner and puts *vēṭṭi* (a white sarong for a man) on him. Following this, other *māmā-maccinaṉ* relations perform *urumā kaṭṭutal* for the chief mourner and the *uṭaṉ paṅkāḷi* of the deceased who stand in a row. Then, the deceased's family serves an evening meal to the people of *māmā-maccinaṉ*. The next day, the *māmā-maccinaṉ* relations, namely, the chief mourner's Zs, his FZ, and his affinal relations, jointly buy a goat, prepare a non-vegetarian meal and serve it to the deceased's *paṅkāḷi* (see [Dumont 1986: 276]), after which the chief mourner and his agnates take an oil bath. This ceremonial partaking of a meal is called *ākki pōṭutal* (cooking and serving). After dining, the chief mourner presents a new sari and new vessels to his sisters. This is said to be *ceymuṟai* (a traditional duty).

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[15]The barber pulls the *pantal kampu* out and pours milk into the holes. The *tāymāman* accompanied by the male relations carries the *pantal kampu* and throws it away at the 'pot breaking place'.

[16]It is said that if a towel without silver lines is used, it would be a terrible insult to the chief mourner's *paṅkāḷi*.

Thus, it is very obvious that *karumāti* presents an important opportunity both for reconfirming the unity of the *paṅkāḷi* and for re-affirming affinal relationships. Therefore, people believe that they should attend *karumāti* above all else.

(3) *Muppatām nāḷ* (the thirtieth day ceremony)

Until the thirtieth day after the death, the lamp (*kuttuviḷakku*) that stands where the deceased lay in state, is lit up every morning and evening. On the eve of *muppatām nāḷ*, the rite again called *cempum tanniyum vaiccu aḷukkiṟatu* is held by the close women relatives[17]. In the early morning of the thirtieth day, the mortuary house is cleaned out and old dishes are replaced with new ones. Vegetarian food is prepared and served to the relations. In the evening, the chief mourner visits the favoured temple, such as a Murugan temple, and offers a light called *mōṭcaviḷakku* (a votive light for emancipation). It is believed that death pollution (*tīṭṭu*) vanishes completely with this rite, and all concerned return to ordinary life. As is described later, only in the case of the death of a priest (*pūcāri*) or of a god-dancer (*cāmiāṭi*), in which cremation is adopted, are the

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[17]A woman member of the family puts the deceased's washed cloth (which is the last garment worn by the dead person) in the lying-in-state area and makes a water pot offering. Then the women gather there and wail. According to Dumont, "the pot of rice decorated with sacred ashes" is put there [Dumont 1986: 277].

more elaborate rituals, which the Brahman attend, conducted
at a bank of the Vaigai river (see Dumont [1986: 277]).

The Kallars do not conduct *tivaṣam* (anniversary of
death).

7.1.2 Reflections on the soul and the other world

The reflections of the Kallars on the soul and the
other world are as follows. Death is believed to produce two
existences, namely, the *āvi* (the soul) and the *piṇam* (the
dead body)[18]. It is said that, although the *piṇam* is effaced
by burial, the *āvi* remains with us and wanders through the
world, at most until the thirtieth day after the death[19].
They feel more strongly the existence of the *āvi* before
karumāti. On the thirtieth day, the *āvi* is said to reach the
other world. However, it is believed that an *āvi* of
accidental death often becomes a *pēy* (ghost) and continues
to roam in the world because of its strong attachment to the
world. It is important that it is never thought that an *āvi*
is transformed into a *pitir* (the ancestor's spirit), and
that the term *pitir* itself is almost unknown to the

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[18]The textual understanding of the corpse to be
cremated is much more complex. See, for example, [Das 1976:
253-6]. It seems to me that the contrast between the
Kallars' ideas and the textual understanding is already
expressed by the conceptual difference between the *āvi*, as
an unchanging soul, and the *prētam*, which will be converted
to a *pitir*.

[19]The "pot breaking place", as the ritual boundary, is
the focal place where the *āvi* is said to wander during the
mortuary period.

community. This obviously coincides with the fact that

tivaṣam is unobserved by them. In addition, it also

indicates that their view of the other world is not very

developed, indeed not well structured at all (see also

[Dumont 1986: 278] and [Babb 1975: 91]). Although the

distinction between *corkkam* (heaven) and *narakam* (hell) is

touched on by many Kallars, their answers to questions of

where the other world is, that is, where the *āvi* goes to,

are very vague (see [Good 1978: 495]). The popular reply is

that it goes to the upper level or to the sky[20]. As is

suggested by a Kallar's statement that "We do not know where

our ancestors live. Death is the end of human existence.",

their understanding of the other world is less elaborated

and shows a this worldly tendency. Thus, it seems to me that

'ethicization' (in Obeyesekere's sense) of the Kallars' view

of the other world is half way complete [Obeyesekere 1968:

12-18].

It seems that their ideas of reincanation are also not

very clear (see also [Good 1978: 494-5]). Therefore,

although they to some extent understand the notion of

karmaviṉai (the accumulated result of deeds done in former

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[20]It is noted that no one says an *āvi* goes to the
south but most villagers reply that it goes to the upper
world which is not well structured in their minds. There are
different opinions on the location of hell, different
Kallars seeing it as in the sky, on earth, or in the under
world; whereas heaven is unanimously placed in the sky.
There are also a few persons who deny the existence of both
heaven and hell.

life) in its original sense, the notion interestingly tends to be modified by the interpretation that the actions of the previous generation influence the lives of the present generation. Corresponding with this, the concept *karumam* (Skt. *karman*) tends to be interpreted as negative and inauspicious incidents, like poverty, sin, and death, rather than as actions or deeds causing better or worse reincarnation (cf. [Maloney 1975: 175]). Thus, this again verifies that their image of the world after life is a combination of 'preliterate religion which lacks a theory of reincarnation' and 'preliterate religion which includes a notion of reincarnation' in Obeyesekere's sense [Obeyesekere 1968: 12-18]. At the same time, their understanding shows a secular tendency, in other words, they are not very concerned with abstract religious legitimacy, which they cannot directly confirm. The evidence for such a tendency is also found in their interpretation of *tarumam* (Skt. *dharma*). The Kallars understand *tarumam* as giving food, goods, or money to the poor as charity, rather than as piety (the more mental act) (cf. [Maloney 1975: 175]). Obviously, this interpretation is a reflection of their dominant position in the village.

The less elaborated and secular tendency mentioned above, which is regarded as a basic Tamil cultural trait, doubtlessly deviates from the Hindu textual ideas on various points.

7.1.3 Cases of cremation

Cremation is more a matter for special cases among the Kallars, who are usually buried in the ground. The first special case is unnatural or accidental death, such as suicide, murder, or a traffic accident, where it is believed that the soul of the deceased bears a grudge and is resentful, making people afraid that it may become a *pey* and roam the world indefinitely. It is believed to be necessary that its strong attachment must be cut off by cremation, the burning of the body to ashes (see also [Dumont 1986: 277])[21]. In the second case of the death of a lineage priest (*pūcāri*) and of a god-dancer (*cāmiāṭi*), it is said that they should be cremated because they are equated with gods (see [Dumont 1986: 277]).

When the Kallars' view of cremation is compared with Das' discussion, in which cremation is deemed as a sacrificial act, its meaning is made clearer. According to Das, in cases of sudden death, unnatural death, and an ascetic's death, the body is not allowed to be cremated [Das 1976: 255]; whereas the Kallars of the village which I am investigating claim, in contrast, that cremation is necessary in these cases. Both examples share the common

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[21]Since they feel that there is in 'unusual death' a tremendous power which the ordinary treatment of burial can not cope with, an utterly different method, cremation, which is foreign to them, has to be introduced in order to manage such power.

concern that what is perceived as an 'unusual death' must be distinguished from what is perceived as a usual death by the different disposition of the body, though they contrast in when to adopt cremation. This indicates that the significance lies in the actual distinction itself. In the case of the death of *pūcāri* and *cāmiāṭi*, cremation is carried out by the Kallars in the usual cemetery used by the Pillais. In this sense, only *pūcāri* and *cāmiāṭi* are thought to be ritually equatable with the ritually higher caste. In addition, they have an elaborate thirtieth day ceremony officiated at by a Brahman priest (*Aiyar*) on the bank of the Vaigai river[22].

These different and contrasting treatments reflect the distinction made by the Kallars between the negative other worldly (unusual) power represented by *pey* and the positive power of *cuvami* (a god). In sum, their main concern expressed through this funeral method is how to cope with such formidable power, both good and bad. Therefore, it can be concluded that they hold a different viewpoint in which the rather textual explanation Das presents [Das 1976: 253, 255] is not valid.

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[22] In the case of the death of *cāmiāṭi*, after the ceremony of throwing bones and ashes into a river, they endeavour to choose a new *cāmiāṭi* there and then, though the attempt is not always successful. The candidates of the *paṅkāḷi* stand in a row and are perceived to gradually be possessed by gods. The selection will be made if it is confirmed by the others that the right god or goddess has come down to a particular person.

7.1.4 The social position of a widow

The Kallars call a widow *vitavai*, *kaimpoṉṭātti*, or
muṇṭacci; whereas a wife whose husband is in good health is
called *cumaṅkali*, which means a woman having purity. Though
it is certainly said to be undesirable that a widow attend
an auspicious ceremony, there is no special restriction
against remarriage of a widow. In fact, almost all widows
who lose their husbands in the early stages of their lives
do remarry. Related to this, it should be noted that the
Kallars evaluate the custom of *satī* (or a sacrificial death
of a widow) negatively. These views regarding a widow again
indicate that their culture is very different from the
textual or Brahmanical one.

7.2 Funeral Rites of the Pillais

As already explained, the Pillais enjoy the highest
ritual status, and are the most Sanskritized people in the
village. The clearest difference between the Kallars and the
Pillais lies in the fact that the funeral method of the
Pillais is always cremation and therefore their funeral
procedure as a whole comes closer to the Brahmanic ceremony.
In this section, I will describe the funeral rites of the
Pillais by emphasizing the points which differ from those of
the Kallars. The description is based on the data collected
by interviewing S. Balasubramanian and his mother, since I

had no opportunity to directly observe the funeral rites of the Pillais.

7.2.1 Cremation rites

Though I deal in this section with the case of the natural death of a married person, I mention here two modified versions of such funerals. Firstly, in the case of an unusual death, in contrast to Das' case, the village Pillais conduct cremation, as they do in the case of a usual death. The distinction between a usual death and an unusual death is made by minimizing the ceremony. Secondly, there is one exception, in which burial is found, that is, the case of the death of an unmarried youth or a child[23]. It is explained as follows: burial should be adopted so as to avoid the long wait that cremation entails before rebirth because the soul of the deceased child must soon return to the world to complete its life (cf. [Sekine 1984: 20]). This notion is associated with their custom that *karumāti* is not observed on the death of an unmarried person.

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[23]There is no difference in terms of the burial of a child between the Kallars and the Pillais. If a child dies before the thirtieth day after its birth, it is buried in the nearest open space to the house, where its placenta is also buried. In terms of the Kallars, Dumont reports the classification of three stages, namely, "before the seventh day", "up to the age of four or five" and "beyond the age of five", according to which a child is buried in different places [Dumont 1986: 277]. The village Kallars do not make such a distinction. See also [Nicholas 1981: 369-370].

It is said among the Pillais that they should not weep too soon when confronted by death, because they believe that if they do so, this will prevent the soul from reaching heaven. Consequently, they are allowed to weep only after the formal procedures for the enshrinement of the deceased are completed. The corpse is kept on sand and *terpai* (Skt. *darbha*) in the lying position with its head towards the south, or sometimes in the sitting position with its face towards the north. The Pillais attach importance to the sound of a conch-shell being blown several times an hour, by a barber, from the death to the cremation. After conducting the water fetching rites (*nīrmālai etuttal*)[24], the chief mourner encircles the deceased person three times and sprinkles water on the corpse. The bereaved widow sits at the corpse's feet so as to receive these drops of water (cf. [Raheja 1988: 148]). This act symbolizes a ritual bathing. The dressed corpse is laid in state under the *pantal kampu* which is a 4 legged miniature hut or sometimes under a canopy called *paccai pantal*. When the chief mourner, carrying one *marakkāl* of paddy, encircles the body three times, he is followed by his wife, who takes a cowdung ball and puts *navatāṇiyam* (nine kinds of grain) on the ball for each turn. Then she pastes these three cowdung balls on the

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[24]Firstly, the deceased's daughters and granddaughters (who must be an odd number) take a bath, put flowers on their hair and draw water. Then the chief mourner and other sons and grandsons, accompanied by a barber and a washerman, draw water from the well.

wall near the place where the deceased was kept (*cītēvi vāṅkutal*). Before transferring the corpse to the *ter*, the rite called *neypantam piṭittal* ('butter-oil-torch grasping') is held by the grand children as a sign of their respect for the deceased. The women must see the deceased off in the house, and *muṇṭaccēlai* ('a widow's sari') is given to the deceased's wife, lying at the corpse's feet, just before it is carried away[25]. No funeral priest is invited to this ritual stage.

The corpse is taken into the *tēr* (a bier) in the seated position. The funeral procession is accompanied by the blowing of a conch by the barber, which does not occur in the case of the Kallars. In the cremation ground, the *tōṭṭi* have previously placed cowdung cakes in readiness for the cremation. The corpse is laid on the cowdung cakes with its head directed towards the south. Then the corpse is covered with cowdung cakes and paddy straws, and is further concealed by clay, except for three small holes around the head, stomach, and feet. All this work is done by the *tōṭṭi*. During this labour, the chief mourner's head is shaved by the barber. The chief mourner then encircles the clay-covered body three times, carrying a water pot. Each time he reaches the head of the corpse, the barber makes holes in

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[25]This action is called *pukunta iṭattuk kōṭi* ('the husband's side's sari which has just come'). Since a widow is prohibited from wearing a new sari, she uses the sari after it has been wet once.

this water pot. The water pouring from the holes is
sprinkled onto the clay mound. Soon after breaking the pot,
the chief mourner starts a fire in the hole near the head of
the corpse. He then, accompanied by the others, starts on
his way home. Only the *tōṭṭi* remains there, to watch the
cremation (cf. [Good 1978: 476] and [Sekine 1984: 22]).

The next day, *pāl ūṟṟutal* (a rite of pouring milk) is
conducted which it is believed cools down the cremation
ground. Before going to the cemetery, some offerings such as
cooked rice made of *paccaiarici* (raw rice), one boiled green
banana[26], seven *vaṭais* (a fried snack) most probably as
*piṇṭam*s (Skt. *piṇḍa*s)[27] and other items are temporarily
placed under the *pantal kampu*, and the female relations wail
there. It is said that wailing at the *pantal kampu* is deemed
as an act of *tīṭṭu*. Afterwards, these offerings and the oil

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[26]It is said that the cooking should be done outside
the house. The male members make the cooked rice and the
boiled banana, both of which must be made of *paccai*
('fresh', 'green' or 'raw') materials. The boiled green
banana is ultimately given to the barber. It can possibly be
seen as the transfer of inauspiciousness or pollution to the
barber, as Raheja emphasizes [Raheja 1988: 161], or as the
digestion of the deceased's sins [Parry 1985: 614, 616-617].
See also [Good 1978: 476].

[27]The *vaṭais*, which are made by a widow, are usually
made of black-gram powder, but on this occasion are made of
raw rice powder and sugar. The *vaṭais* are made into seven
balls (*uruṇṭai*). It seems to me that the *vaṭais* can be
thought of as *piṇṭam*s which are connected with the seven
generational ancestors forming *sapiṇḍa* [Nicholas 1981;
375,377], although the Pillais themselves do not give this
explanation. It is significant that a fried snack is found
in the offerings to the dead in this village, because this
contradicts Khare's statement that "no frying in any form is
done during this period" [Khare 1976: 172].

used for making the *vaṭai* are taken to the cemetery. At the cemetry, cow's milk and other items are poured onto the site where the body was cremated. It is believed that these substances purify the site. The bones and ashes are then collected from the eleven parts of the body by the chief mourner and other sons. Then, the site is cultivated and *navatāṉiyam* is sown there. It is said that this action signifies the recovery of the land's fertility. The bones and ashes which have been collected are thrown into a river either on the same day or on the fifteenth day after the death. After this, the chief mourner and others return home and worship at the place where the corpse was kept. Then they eat vegetarian food which is cooked using the hearth of the deceased's house.

Until the thirtieth day after the death, a lamp is lit every evening at 6 o'clock. Until *karumāti*, namely, the sixteenth day, the women of the deceased's family wail ritually every morning at around 4 o'clock. On the third, eighth and fifteenth days, a consolation rite called *kiḻamai vaittal* ('connection creating') is repeatedly conducted, mainly by the close women relations and the whole cost of *kiḻamai*s are born by the deceased's 'daughter' relations. The first *kiḻamai*, held on the third day, is associated with the rite of removing the *pantal kampu* (*pantal kampu piṭuṅkutal*), and is conducted by the barber. In the case of the death of a husband, the *tāli* is taken off from the neck

of the deceased's wife on the night of the fifteenth day,
i.e. the night prior to *karumāti*. This rite, called *tāli
aruttal*, starts from midnight and finishes before dawn[28]. At
the end of the rite, she receives a new sari from her
brothers. Then she has a bath just before dawn, and sees the
day of *karumāti* in.

7.2.2 *Karumāti* and after

Karumāti of the Pillais is ideally held on the
sixteenth day after the death. It is completely different
from that of the Kallars in so far as the Pillais invite a
Brahman priest to officiate. A member of the family draws a
square boundary with four gates in a particular place near
the bank of the eastern tank. Within this sacred place a
Brahman sits facing north and the chief mourner sits on his
right. Paddy husks, three kinds of firewood (mango, banyan
and bo) and a *kumpam* (a decorated pot symbolizing Siva) are
prepared in front of the Brahman. The Brahman builds a fire
using the paddy husks and firewood and recites *mantras* while
pouring ghee (liquid butter) into the fire. Then, four

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[28]Around midnight, all the gathered women wail. A
little after this, one widow draws a *nīrkkōlam* (an
ornamental figure drawn on the floor with water) on which
cooked rice and *cāmpār* (a kind of savoury dish) served on a
banana leaf is placed. Soon after the deceased's wife
touches the food, it is taken away. Then the women continue
to wail up to around 4 a.m.. Widows must form a separate
group. Before dawn, the bereaved wife sits facing a suitable
direction depending on the day of the week, and one widow
cuts the *tāli* and puts it into the milk in the pot, which
was prepared by another widow. Only widows should attend the
scene of cutting the *tāli*.

*piṇṭam*s (balls of rice flour mixed with green-gram, ghee,
honey, sesame oil and so on) are made by the Brahman. It is
said that one separate *piṇṭam* is for the crows and the other
three are for the deceased, his father and his grandfather
respectively[29]. The combination of these *piṇṭam*s symbolizes
the unification of the deceased's soul with his ancestors.
This ritual act can be seen as *capiṇṭīkaraṇam* (Skt.
sapiṇḍikaraṇa, 'making a *sapiṇḍa*') which indicates a
complete conversion from *preta* to *pitṛ* [Nicholas 1981: 375]
(see also [Parry 1985: 614-616, 621-624]). Finally, the
Brahman chants a *mantra* to the *kumpam*, identified with Siva,
to ensure that the soul reaches heaven and acquires peace at
Siva's feet. Then, the sons of the deceased go to the tank
and bath 108 times. They change their wet clothes for new
*vēṭṭi*s and *tuṇṭu*s which are given from the Brahman by their
tāymāmaṉ, and return home immediately. On entering their
house, their feet are washed and purified by the women of
the family. Finally, the chief mourner lights a lamp at the
place where the corpse was laid and worships there. The
ritual finishes with a feast served by the bereaved

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[29]According to the Brahmanic and textual
interpretation, one out of four *piṇṭam*s is the deceased's
preta-piṇḍa and the other three are regarded as the *pitṛ-
piṇḍa*s of his F, his FF, and his FFF, as Nicholas or Parry,
for example, explain [Nicholas 1981: 376][Parry 1985: 622].
The local interpretations are often modified in various
ways. For instance, the Jaffna Vellalars give a different
view that the single *piṇṭam* represents Siva and the three
are the deceased, his F and his FF. Further, they believe
that the crow is an incarnation of an ancestral spirit
[Sekine 1984: 25-6]. See also [Gough 1976: 256].

family[30]. Though *karumāti* reduces *tīṭṭu* substantially, it is nevertheless said to remain until the thirtieth day. The thirtieth day does not involve any elabolate rite. The family just goes to a temple to light a lamp (*mōṭcaviḷakku*).

Only in the first year after a death is there a mourning ceremony for the deceased, eight days before *Āṭi amāvācai*[31], on the day of *Tīpāvaḷi* (the festival of offering a fire at the end of November), and on the day of *Tāipoṅkal* (the harvest festival in mid-January when ancestral spirits are believed to visit the world). In addition, an annual anniversary commemorating the death, called *niṉaivunāḷ* ('remembrance day') or *tivaṣam* (Skt. *divasa*), is held by the Pillais, at least on the first anniversary, until which the widow must observe a restricted life-style, having but one meal and a light snack per day.

It has been made clear that the expression of kinship unity, which is emphasized during Kallar funerals, is not as prominent during Pillai funerals. Instead, concern for the ancestral world is increasingly demonstrated during the rituals based on Hindu orthodoxy.

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[30]There is no doubt that the *karumāti* of the Pillais which I have described here contains a combined but much simplified form of the repeated *antyēṣṭi* ('the last sacrifice') and *śrāddha* in a textual sense (see [Nicholas 1981:374] and [Kane 1973: Vol.IV, 179-551]).

[31]On *Āṭi amāvācai*, the new moon day of the month *Āṭi*; it is said that male ancestors come down to this world.

7.2.3 Outlook on the soul and the next world

As is indicated by their practice of *ninaivunāl*, the Pillais have a relatively clearer consciousness about ancestral spirits than do the Kallars. It is, however, also true that the Pillais' recognition of the next world still has a certain vagueness when compared with the knowledge of Hindu texts which is embodied in the funerals of the Aiyars, as can be seen from the comparison in Table 7.1 (vide infra). This is, for example, made obvious by their use of the word *āvi* rather than *pitir* for the soul of the dead, even after the *capiṇṭīkaraṇam* rite (cf. [Gough 1959: 256]), despite the fact that they know the word *pitir* because they have heard it in the chanting of the Brahmans. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that their ritual position is much more Sanskritized than that of the Kallars. For instance, according to the Pillais, *karma* means action in the neutral sense, and they also define *dharma* not only as the giving of the alms, but also as performing a moral duty. Such answers obviously come closer to a textual knowledge than do those of the Kallars. A similar tendency is found in their outlook on rebirth.

Lastly, let us mention their outlook on widows, called *kaimpeṇ*. The Pillais tend to more strongly regard a widow as inauspicious and, moreover, as radiating a feeling of

$t\bar{\imath}\underset{.}{t}\underset{.}{t}u$[32], than do the Kallars. The custom of *satī* is rather positively accepted by the Pillais, with the condition that she has no child. Among the Pillais, a widow's remarriage is not desirable and she must give up her enjoyments as a woman and follow various restrictions[33]. Generally speaking, the Pillais tend to underestimate the status and the ability of women, compared with that of men, whereas the Kallars, in contrast, accept ultimately the equality between men and women. This demonstrates yet again that the Pillais are more Sanskritized than are the Kallars. In this connection, it can be interestingly noted that consolation rites for the bereaved wife as a widow are emphasized much more in the Pillais' funeral rites than in the case of the Kallars. Thus, it seems that the Sanskritized Pillais regard women as lesser beings, to be protected; whereas the less Sanskritized Kallars accept the ability of women as approximating that of men (see [Allen 1982: 18]).

7.3 Funeral Rites of the Paraiyars (the Harijans)

The funeral I describe here is that carried out by a relatively rich Paraiyar family. A funeral ceremony carried out by a poorer family would be a simplified form of what I

[32]The Pillais tend to strongly believe that the appearance of a widow makes them unhappy, especially when they start a long journey or when they conduct an auspicious ceremony.

[33]She cannot wear a coloured sari or ornaments and cannot put *kuṅkumam* (rouge), but only holy ash, on her forehead.

describe below. It is useful to examine the case of an elaborate and expressive funeral ceremony, which more clearly discloses what the Paraiyars seek, in order to compare the funeral rites of the Paraiyars with those of the Kallars and the Pillais.

Since the Paraiyars basically share similar procedures with the Kallars, I will mainly emphasise their differences. The ritual parts which I ignore may be taken as being the same as those of the Kallars. The following description is mainly based on the funeral of Ganesan's mother[34], which I observed in the neighouring village of Periyankulam, and on my interviews with Mokkaiyan and Cinnan, both of whom are influential Paraiyars.

7.3.1 From death to burial

The news of death is spread not only by the co-operation of relations and friends but also by a hired messenger, who is paid Rs.100. The relatives of the mortuary family arrange the workers necessary for the funeral, such as Harijan musicians and dancers called *rājarāṇi āṭṭam* (who are paid Rs.400), *tēr*-makers (who are paid Rs.200), flower-

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[34]Ganesan is a low status worker, *pune*, at Madurai Kamaraj University. Though his salary is low, his economic condition is rather stable compared with that of other Paraiyars, who are mostly engaged as agricultural labourers. Therefore, he could afford to pay for his mother's funeral, which was more elaborate than the average Paraiyar one. He said that it cost about Rs.2500 in total, which is equal to nearly 5 times his monthly salary.

decorators (who are paid Rs.150), *pantal*-makers (who are
paid Rs.100), the Potaravannan (who are paid Rs.20) and
several labourers (who are paid Rs.50). Nowadays, these
workers are often hired from Madurai city. *Pantal kampu* is
made by the *māmā-maccinan* side. The *pantal kampu* that I
observed was a triangular form with three legs, whereas the
Kallars always make a square shape of *pantal kampu* with two
or four legs. Only the Potaravannans are the service caste
for the Paraiyars and they play the roles of both barber and
washerman, which are indispensable for the funeral.

The Paraiyars follow the same procedures as the
Kallars do from death to the enshrinement of the deceased.
The Paraiyars, however, believe that ideally one should not
cry too soon after death. If this is taken at its face
value, it comes closer to the behaviour of the Pillais than
to that of the Kallars. However, the overall atmosphere of
Paraiyars' funerals is rather clamorous and is similar to
that of the Kallars, so that it is very doubtful that they
actually practise this claim. The sons' generation of the
deceased conducts the rite of *nīrmālai iruttal*, under the
guidance of the Potaravannan. One of the notable points,
which differs from the Kallars' case, is that they each wear
a *pūṇūl* ('sacred string') after bathing at the well, which
is located outside their residential cluster. Another point
is that they conduct the rite of *pattam eṭukkiṟatu* ('cloth
lifting-up'), as part of the *nīrmālai iruttal*, on their way

back home, at a place just outside the village boundary (see [Good 1978: 472-3]).

In the case of the death of a husband, a wife removes her *tāli* when the corpse is carried into the *tēr*, whereas in the case of the wife's death, her *tāli* is taken off before burial[35]. In the procession to the cemetery, a fire-pot is carried by the chief mourner himself, not by the *tōṭṭi*. A major difference is that the roles carried out by the service castes in the funeral rites of the Kallars are to a considerable extent played by *māmā-maccinaṉ* relations in the case of Paraiyars' funerals. That is, not only is the grave dug by members of *māmā-maccinaṉ*, but also the completion of the internment is the responsibility of the *māmā-maccinaṉ* along with the Potaravannan. The Paraiyars usually adopt burial, but, as with the Kallars, a *pūcāri* and a *cāmiāṭi* are cremated. Accidental death also results in cremation. The rite *kolli taṉṉi* ('fire-water') is held during the night of the burial day.

On the third day after the death, the mortuary family cook horse-gram, maize and rice, and the deceased's *paṅkāli* eat the meal, which must be "a bitter meal" [Khare 1976:

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[35]According to Good, in the funeral of a Paraiyar or PaLLar, a wife of TiNDa VaNNar goes to the burial place and assists her husband and son there. He further notes that in the PaLLar funeral he attended the deceased woman's elder sister came to the cemetry and took the jewellery off the body [Good 1978: 374]. This is not the case in Kinnimangalam, where all women are strictly prohibited from going beyond the village boundary during the funeral rites.

171] and which is said to symbolize the body of the deceased
[Parry 1985: 617]. After eating this "bitter" meal, the
removal of *pantal kampu* by the *tāymāman* and the rite of *pāl
ūṛṛutal* ('milk-pouring') are conducted[36]. It is claimed by
some Paraiyars that they call the Valluvan priest to the
burial ground for officiating at the *pāl ūṛṛutal*. However,
in practice this is not the case for most village Paraiyars.

7.3.2 *Karumāti*

It is especially mentioned that *Karumāti*[37] is held on
the sixteenth day, as in the case of the Pillais, although
its content is basically similar to that of the Kallars. The
procedure of *karumāti*, which consists of the *paṅkāḷi*'s
dining from one plate[38] and the tying of *urumā*, is exactly
the same as that in the case of the Kallars. Evening meals
(vegetarian dishes) on the *karumāti* day are served to the
māmā-macciṉaṉ by the deceased's family. The following day,

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[36]Good also reports that the Paraiyars and the PaLLars
conduct *tī āṭṭutal* on the third day [Good 1978: 477], which
is compared to the second day ceremony of the Acaris. It
seems to me that the Paraiyars are faithful to orthodoxy
because there are many reports in which the collection of
bones and ashes is held on the third day (see [Babb 1975:
94] and [Chitty 1872: 119]).

[37]Good notes, "the Scheduled Castes do not carry out
the *karumāti* rite" [Good 1978: 485], but he also points out,
"there is an attenuated rite on the 16th day, which the
PaLLar call *urimaikkaTTu*" [ibid.: 486]. In Kinnimangalam,
the term *karumāti* is shared by all villagers, although its
content is not the same when carried out by the different
castes.

[38]It is claimed that they prepare vegetarian food for
this. This is different from the case of the Kallars.

conversely, a feast (non-vegetarian dishes) provided by the *māmā-maccinaṉ*, which is called *kāycci ūrrutal* ('making food and pouring'), is given to the deceased's *paṅkāḻi*.

Some Paraiyars say that *tīṭṭu* dissipates on the sixteenth day of *karumāti*, but others maintain that *tittu* remains until the thirtieth day[39]. Among the latter people, there are a few who claim that a Valluvan priest is invited along to purify their house on the thirtieth day, although most others dismiss this idea. It is, however, true that the ceremony on the thirtieth day by the river side, which is officiated at by the Valluvan priest, assumes importance on the death of a *pūcāri* or a *cāmiāṭi*.

The Paraiyars do not observe the anniversary of death called *tivaṣam*. Nonetheless, I had an interesting experience as follows. When I met Ganesan one year after the death of his mother, he told me that he would have the *tivaṣam* for his mother on 10th of August and invited me along to the ceremony. Despite my questioning his invitation, I went to his house at the appointed time, and found there was indeed no ceremony! It would seem that this was not just a simple lie but an attempt to show off and the experience further

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[39]Among the Paraiyars, the children can take meals provided by the deceased's house (*tukkavīṭu*) after the sixteenth day, but a *kāriyakāraṉ*, a *pūcāri*, a *cāmiāṭi*, the people following *bakti*, and other persons engaged in village services like *tōṭṭi* and *mataiyaṉ* should not until the thirtieth day. Ordinary people thus stand between the children and the people engaged in the latter work.

suggests that the Paraiyars enjoying relatively higher economic conditions tend to put on the airs of the higher status castes. In this respect, it can be noted that he would prefer to follow the ways of the Pillais than those of the Kallars.

7.3.3 Outlook on the soul and the next world

The Paraiyars' outlook on the deceased's soul is basically not different from that of the Kallars. It is often said among them that a person who is well-behaved in his life time becomes a good *āvi*, whereas a badly-behaved one becomes a bad *āvi*, namely, a *pēy* (an evil spirit or a ghost)[40]. This is possibly linked with their dichotomous view of the upper-world (*mēlōkam*) and the lower-world (*kīlōkam*). They describe the *mēlōkam* as *corkkam* (a heaven or a paradise) to which a deceased's soul goes, and then they paradoxically describe the world on earth as a *kīlōkam* comparable to *narakam* (a hell). In this connection, they also talk about reincarnation where good conduct in a previous life results in happiness during the present life or where if someone killed a person he would be reborn as an animal in the next life, but their real attitude seems to be found in their thinking of *karumam* as a synonym for difficulties or sufferings on earth. As this view is shared with the Kallars, their understanding of *tarumam* (*dharma*)

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[40]Other people comment that if an *āvi* surprised a person, the *āvi* would be called a *pēy*.

and of *mōṭcam* (*mokṣa*) is almost the same as that of the Kallars. This contradicts Maloney's claim [Maloney 1975: 175]. Thus, if Obeyesekere's argument (see footnote 61) is applied, the Paraiyars' eschatological beliefs are fundamentally similar to the Kallars', in which 'ethicization' is not very advanced.

7.3.4 On widows

The Paraiyars say that a widow is never connected with *tittu* (pollution) but is nevertheless an unhappy creature. There are no restrictions among them concerning her remarriage, though it is claimed that remarriage of a widow is very difficult. It is, nonetheless, said that a widow needs the control of some male, i.e. her deceased husband's relatives or a *tāymāman*. These rather contradictory notions reflect the ambiguity of a situation where there is a difference between actual practices and expressed ideals in terms of women[41].

7.4 Comparison of Castes: the strategy of the Paraiyars

In order to compare and extract the features common to or different from the various castes, Table 7.1 has been devised. It shows aspects of the funeral processes, the

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[41]Paraiyar wives, generally speaking, have to be active and indeed go out to work, mainly as agricultural labourers, but their husbands usually claim that a wife should obey her husband and preferably stay at home taking care of the house and family.

outlook on the next world and so on. The reason that Brahman funerals are added to this Table is that they provide a starting point for measuring the degree of Sanskritization of the other three castes. Although this Table can be read from various standpoints, I will focus here especially on the Paraiyars, as the present aim is the elucidation of their actual ideological discourse.

Table 7.1 Components of funeral ceremonies: comparison among castes

caste name	AYYAR vegetarian	PILLAI vegetarian	KALLAR non-vegetarian	HARIJAN non-vegetarian
expression of funerals	amarākkirikai	īmakkiriyai	iḻavukāriyam	īmaccaṭaṅkukaḷ
weeping soon after death	no	no	yes	no in theory yes in reality
posture of the dead	lying	lying/sitting	sitting	sitting
priest (1st day)	ayyar	no	no	no
cītevī vāṅkutal	no	3 cowdungs before proce.	3 cowdungs during proce.	3 cowdungs during proce.

farewell of women	house	house	pot breaking place	pot breaking place
procession	no music	drum conch(barber)	drum no conch	drum no conch
bier	ēṉippāṭai lying	tēr sitting	tēr sitting	tēr sitting
rājarāni	no	yes	yes	yes
dirty cloth taken by	vannan	vannan	vannan	potaravannan
messenger	?	tōṭṭi	tōṭṭi	self
digging	*****	*****	tōṭṭi	māmā-macciṉaṉ
bier making	Ampattan	tōṭṭi	tōṭṭi	cakkiliyar
pantal kambu making	*****	tōṭṭi/maṭaiyaṉ	chief mourner	tāymāmaṉ (māmā-macciṉaṉ)
nīrmālai iruttal (guide)	*****	vannan	vannan	potaravannan
firepot	chief mourner	tōṭṭi	tōṭṭi	chief mourner
watcher in cemetry	tōṭṭi/barber	tōṭṭi/barber	tōṭṭi/barber	self/potara-vannan
cemetry	Aiyar only/ Caste Hindu	Caste Hindu	Caste Hindu	Harijan only
expression for cemetry	mayāṉam/rudra-pūmi	mayāṉam cuṭukāḍu	iṭukāḍu/mayāṉa karai/cuṭukāḍu	?

natural death	cremation	cremation	burial	burial
unnatural death	cremation	cremation	cremation	cremation
burial case	under 6 months	unmarried	general	general
cremation	general	general	pūcāri/cāmiāṭi /unnatural	pūcāri/cāmiāṭi /unnatural
shaving of chief mourner	moustache only hair(before Upanayana)	hair	hair	hair
a part of white cloth covered	Aiyar cut (water pot)	barber cut no	barber cut (head of c.m.)	potaravannan cut (head of c.m.)
priest(2nd or 3rd day)	Aiyar	no(self)	no(self)	Valluvan(?)
bone & ash throwing	bone:river/ash :pintaputapati	river(2nd/15th) cultivation	***** cultivation	***** cultivation
mantra or weeping light	mantra 3rd ~ 9th ~11th	kiḻamai by D 3rd,8th,11th ~30th	vaiccu aḻutal 29th ~30th	vaiccu aḻutal 15th ?
karumāti	10th AM 4 piṇṭams	16th AM 7 piṇṭams	7th or 9th or 11th PM	16th PM
pantal kambu	no kirikaippantal	yes(rectangle) 3rd remove	yes(rectangle) 7th remove	yes(triangle) 3rd remove

pantalkambu removing	*****	barber	barber tāymāman	tāymāman
priest in karumati (place)	Aiyar (karumantaram)	kurukkaḷ/aiyar (karumantaram)	no (house)	no (house)
pañcāṅkam	use	use	not use	not use
urumā-kaṭṭutal	no	yes(sons only)	yes (uṭan-paṅkāḷi)	yes (uṭan-paṅkāḷi)
tāli remove: death of hus death of ego	10th(?) before cremate	15th before cremate	1st(bathig) before burial	1st day before burial
ceymurai(kāy cci uḷḷutal)	no	no	8th by māmā	17th by māmā (3rd)
period of tīṭṭu	10 days	30 days (16)	30 days (7,9,11)	30 days (16)
30th day ceremony (ordinary people)	*****	for widow mōṭcaviḷakku	purification mōṭcaviḷakku	purification mōṭcaviḷakku Valluvan(house) in theory
30th day ceremony (pūcāri/cāmi āṭi)	*****	for widow mōṭcaviḷakku	Aiyar(river bank)	Valluvan(river bank) 7 rivers sacred string
tivaṣam (anniversary)	yes pitir:ancestor	yes:niṉaivunāḷ āvi 6 piṇḍams	no	no(yes in theory)

corpse	pirētam(<Skt)	piṇam/ cavam(<Skt)	piṇam	piṇam
soul of the dead	ātman	āvi	āvi	āvi=pēy
where soul goes	Sivalōkam	heaven	upper	upper
the other world	Sivalōkam	heaven(corkkam) & hell(narakam)	heaven & hell/ heaven/ not believe	heaven/ not believe
segregation of widow	strong separation	strong separation	weak separation	weak separation
remarriage of widow	no	no/yes	yes	yes
expression of widow	amaṅkali(Skt)	kaimpeṉ	vitavai/ muṉṭacci(<Skt) /kaimpoṉṭāṭṭi	kaimpeṉ
a custom of satī	agreeable	ok, if without children	not good	not good(now) good(old)
karma	action	action good or bad	difficulty/sin poverty/action	poverty/diffi- culty/action
dharma	moral duty	charity moral duty	charity	charity
patrilinial-group	tāyātikaḷ natikaḷ	kōttiram	paṅkāḷi	paṅkāḷi

7.4.1 Features common to the mortuary rites of the Kallars
and the Paraiyars

Table 7.1 shows that the Kallars' and Paraiyars'
mortuary rites share the following features.

(1) The deceased is enshrined in a seated position.

(2) The regulation that one should not weep until the
completion of the enshrinement of the deceased is often
disregarded in actual practice.

(3) The female relations send off the funeral procession at
the village border.

(4) The procession is preceded only by funeral drummers and
there is no blowing of the conch.

(5) Burial is the usual method in the case of the natural
death of ordinary people. Cremation is adopted in two cases,
the case of unnatural death and that of the death of a
pūcāri and a *cāmiāti*.

(6) One of the central rites of *karumāti* is *urumā kaṭṭutal*.
This rite is not officiated at by a priest but requires the
active participation of the *māmā-maccinan* side.

(7) The unity of *paṅkāḷi* (a patrilineal descent group) is
consistently emphasized in *karumāti*.

(8) The feast of non-vegetarian food provided by the *māmā-
maccinan* side is seen as the reconfirmation of the alliance
between the deceased's *paṅkāḷi* and their *māmā-maccinan*.

(9) *Mōṭcavilakku* is offered in the temple on the thirtieth
day after the death.

(10) There is a great difference between ordinary people's

funerals and those of *pūcāri* and *cāmiāṭi*.

(11) A widow is not accorded special treatment. In practice, women, in general, are not very degraded by men.

(12) A corpse is called by the pure Tamil word, *piṇam*.

(13) It is, generally speaking, said that the soul of the deceased goes to the upper-world (*mēlōkam*). This indicates that their view of the next world is not very clear and is poorly developed.

Furthermore, these common points can be integrated into four features as follows: 1) Both clearly lay much importance on kinship relationships, by stressing the unity of *paṅkāḷi* ('kin') and the alliance with the *māmā-maccinaṉ* ('affines'). 2) Their cosmological view and the ritual processes consistently show a non-idealistic and tangible tendency. 3) The social bias against women is not strong. 4)Their ritual actions and ideas containing the above-mentioned points seem to be deeply rooted rather in the non-Brahmanical cultural basis, namely, "the basic Tamil cultural tendency" in my sense. Thus, by means of the analysis of the funeral processes, we can conclude that: both the dominant Kallars, who are, however, regarded as a ritually low caste from the Brahmanical cultural viewpoint, and the dominated Paraiyars, who are placed on the bottom rung of the village society, basically share a common less-Sanskritized cultural tendency rooted in basic Tamil culture, in which the unity of kinship, including reciprocal

affinal relations, and tangible and non-abstract thinking, are pre-eminent.

7.4.2 Features differing between the mortuary rites of the Kallars and the Paraiyars

Next, I mention the features that differ between Kallar and Paraiyar funeral rites.

(1) The Paraiyars tend to profess to prohibit weeping until the completion of the deceased's enshrinement, even though they do not always practise this. This prohibition appears to be actually observed by the Pillais.

(2) The Paraiyars verbally insist that virginity is important for marriage, that a wife must obey her husband, that divorce should be avoided and that the remarriage of a widow is difficult, but these opinions which seem to reflect the Pillais' ideology are not necessarilly practised.

(3) Most of the duties taken charge of by the Harijans at the Kallars' funerals, are conducted by the *māmā-maccinan*'s side at the Paraiyars' funerals, although only the Potaravannans work as a service caste for the Paraiyars. Apart from this, the Paraiyars will hire additional workers for cash from a town or other villages, if they can afford to do so.

(4) The cemetery of the Paraiyars is separated from that of the Caste Hindus.

(5) The Paraiyars enjoy the services of a separate priest, the Valluvans, and of a separate barber and concurrently

washerman, the Potaravannans. The Caste Hindus do not use the Valluvan priest or the Potaravannans, though the Valluvan does visit their houses as an astrologer.

(6) The date of *karumāti* is the sixteenth day for both the Paraiyars and the Pillais, though its contents are not the same in both cases.

(7) The Paraiyars' *pantal kampu* has a triangular shape and is supported by three legs. It is different from the square form of the Kallars'. The *pantal kampu* is removed on the third day in the cases of both the Paraiyars and the Pillais.

(8) Though the Paraiyars do not have *tivaṣam* (an anniversary of death), some people verbally claim that they observe it.

We can extract three summarized features found in the practices of the Paraiyars, from the above points.

1) A discrepancy between professed statements and actual practices or intentions is often found in the processes of their funerals. Though they tend to profess the adoption of Brahmanical cultural elements fragmentally, they do no more than 'replicate' the practice of the Pillais superficially, and the truth is that their practices show considerable similarity to those of the Kallars. In this sense, this discrepancy seems to be a result of their manner of self-assertion.

2) The Paraiyars have to depend much more strongly on kinship relations than do the Kallars, because they, as the

dominated caste, can not place themselves at the centre of

inter-caste relations. If they intended to more closely

approximate the funerals of the dominant castes and could

afford to do so, they would need to hire workers for various

services from outside the village.

3) It is obvious that the Paraiyars are discriminated

against in the absolute sense and are confined to a life

space separately allotted to them. This is apparent from the

facts that they cannot enjoy the services of the Brahmans or

the Vannans who are specialists to the Caste Hindus and that

they have to bury their dead in a separate cemetery.

7.5 Discussion and Conclusion

In order to understand correctly what is meant by the

several features extracted from the Paraiyars' ritual

behaviour, it is useful and necessary to introduce

background information on their evaluation of caste ranking.

This is shown in Table 7.2, which also includes the opinions

of the Caste Hindus.

According to this Table, we find a striking and

interesting difference between the evaluations of the

Paraiyars and the Caste Hindus. Not only the Kallars

themselves, but also other Caste Hindus regard the Pillais

as a higher caste than the Kallars; whereas the Paraiyars'

evaluation is that the Kallars are higher than the Pillais.

Another notable point is that the Paraiyars do not rank

themselves at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Rather, they tend to see the Vannans and the Kuravans, who strongly depend upon the dominant castes, and who have no practical interaction with the Paraiyars in everyday life, as lower than themselves.

Table 7.2 Evaluation of caste ranking

	evaluated castes	Aiyar	Pillai	Acari	Kallar	Pantaram	Natar	Vannan	Kuravan	Paraiyar
evaluator	[Caste Hindus]									
	Pillai	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	8
	Acari	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	8
	Kallar 1	2	1	5	3	*	4	6	*	7
	Kallar 2	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
	Kallar 3	1	2	6	4	3	5	9	8	7
	Natar	1	2	5	4	6	3	7	9	8
	Vannan	1	2	6	4	3	5	6	7	8
	[Harijan]									
	Paraiyar 1	*	2	*	i	6	4	3	6	5
	Paraiyar 2	1	3	4	2	3	5	6	7	6
	Paraiyar 3	1	3	5	2	4	6	8	9	7
	Paraiyar 4	1	3	5	2	6	4	9	8	7

I prepared cards on which caste names were written and asked villagers to line these cards up in descending order from the 'socially' highest caste, without suggesting any standard to measure social ranking[42]. I also aimed to

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[42]I only provided them with the vague expression of 'social' hierarchical ranking. How the expression 'social' is understood is totally dependent upon the solvers.

discover what kind of standard or criteria adopted by them could be extracted from their answers. As a result, I found three kinds of criteria from Table 7.2. One criterion is religious or next-worldly power, which is the so-called power associated with ritual status. This criterion is especially stressed by the Pillais who attach importance to vegetarianism and Vedic knowledge. The second is politico-economic and this-worldly power, from the viewpoint of which the degree of independency is highly evaluated[43]. The third, which should not be overlooked, is the quantity and quality of interaction, because it had an important influence on their evaluations. The aspect of quantity implies the frequency or density of contacts in everyday life. This means that villagers tend to underestimate the castes with whom they have less connection. The aspect of quality is apparent in rivalry relations, which are basically found among the castes who are adjacent to each other in their social rank. Such a competing caste claims its own superiority over that of its rival castes.

After understanding these three criteria, let us reconsider the results of the caste evaluation of the Paraiyars so as to understand the features of the Paraiyars' ritual behaviour. The Paraiyars' placing of the Kallars on a

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[43]This criterion explains why the Kallars place the Pillais in a higher position than the Brahmans. They regard the Brahman priest as a labourer who depends on a landlord like the Pillais.

higher rank than the Pillais indicates that they place more importance on secular power (the second criterion) and the density of direct interaction (the third criterion), than they do upon ritual power (the first criterion). In fact, most of the village Paraiyars have had unavoidable contact with the Kallars as agricultural labourers working under the latter's control. This economic dependence upon the Kallars has forced the Paraiyars to endure ill-treatment by the Kallars. The Paraiyars' fear of the Kallars is reflected in their opinion of them. In sum, their rather harsh everyday experiences under the Kallars have led the Paraiyars to form this ranking of the castes, which differs from the Caste Hindus' view.

The problem to be answered is why the Paraiyars replicate, even if superficially and fragmentally, some elements of the Pillais' funerals, despite the fundamental ritual structure of the Paraiyars' funerals being the same as that of the Kallars. As is demonstrated by the fact that their replications are often limited to merely verbal assertions, it is suggested that their purpose is to avoid or reject their full subordination to their domination by the Kallars, by means of adding different ideological elements to their rituals. The Sanskritized village Pillais become the most suitable model for the Paraiyars to borrow such elements from. It is obvious that the Brahmans' culture could provide the most powerful model for refuting Kallar

ideology, but, in practice, the Brahmans are too remote for
the Paraiyars to emulate their customs, though they do know
that Brahmanic customs enjoy the highest ritual value[44]. In
this sense, the village Pillais, who are the most
Sanskritized caste in this village, and with whom the
Paraiyars have everyday contact become the useful reference
by which the monopoly of the Kallars' domination is checked,
even slightly. It is important here that the Paraiyars
replicate the Pillais' Sanskritic elements not because they
seriously believe in them, but rather due to their strategic
action in the given social conditions (see also [Gough 1959:
255]). The Paraiyars adopt these Sanskritic elements as the
means by which they pit their identity against the
overwelming dominance of the Kallars. Thus the Paraiyars
wittingly or unwittingly aim to differentiate themselves
from the Kallars ("dissimilation") by instead of simply
replicating the practices of the Kallars ("assimilation"),
adopting elements of the practices of the Pillais ("over-
assimilation"). Moffatt fails to investigate this point
[Moffatt 1979]. The Kallars' rather crude authority which is
mainly dependent on their politico-economic power and

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[44]As to the Brahmans (Aiyars), the Paraiyars appear to
show an ambivalent attitude towards them. On the one hand,
the Paraiyars state that the Aiyars are a people of a
different world and they make fun of them saying that the
Brahmans should be walking on clouds in the sky. On the
other hand, some Paraiyars have a myth which claims that the
Paraiyars and the Aiyars were originally brothers (see
Appendix A). In my view, this myth is nowadays not regarded
seriously by them.

numerical predominance, results in the Paraiyars more strongly experiencing the effects of the Kallars' dominance than of the Pillais' more indirect, sophisticated dominance. The Pillais, as the ritually highest caste in the village, influence the Paraiyars by offering them an ideology from which the Paraiyars can borrow elements to use in their struggle to differentiate their ideology from that of the dominant Kallars. This enables the Paraiyars to distance themselves in some respects from the dominant Kallars and to experience some self-fulfillment in this ideological space.

Thus, a comparative analysis of funeral ceremonies results in the following conclusion concerning the practices of the Paraiyars. Although the Paraiyars primarily share the same cultural basis, called "the basic Tamil culture", with the Kallars, the Paraiyars attempt to replicate Brahmanic cultural elements through the mediation of the Pillais, even if fragmentally and superficially, so as to shift their ceremonies away from an imperfect replication of the Kallars' funerals. This is seen as one of their practical and strategic challenges for seeking their own identity, which is not simply reduced to the hierarchically subordinate "subject", even under the Kallars' overwhelming domination. In this sense, the funeral ceremony provides one of the arenas of the Paraiyars' discourse, even a humble one, which is penetrated by their strategic attitude of seeking self-development.

CHAPTER 8 LINEAGE DEITIES AND THEIR FESTIVALS

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the lineage deities, called
kulateyvam (see section 4.2.2), and their festivals, as
important practices in village life. This chapter aims to
elucidate the social implications of the festive activities
of the Paraiyars. The 'performative'[1] meanings of the
Paraiyars' festive activities are discussed, being compared
with those of the Caste Hindus.

The Paraiyars' understanding of lineage deities, which
is to a considerable extent shared by the Kallars, is based
on "the basic Tamil culture" in my sense. Their
understanding is characterized by the significance of 1)
Goddess worship and blood sacrifice, 2) the strong influence
of locality on lineage segmentation, 3) the important role
of affinal relations and 4) the communicative character of
deities, embodied by *cāmiāṭi* (a possessed dancer).

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[1]The concept 'performative', which is usually
contrasted with 'constative', is borrowed from Austin's work
on the speech act [Austin 1970: 233-252]. Tambiah 's work
entitled "A Performative Approach to Ritual" [Tambiah 1985:
Ch.4] is also useful.

The rituals of the lineage deities and their
interpretation can be understood in two ways, namely, the
sacred (religious) and the secular (social)[2]. Firstly,
related to the sacred aspect, the lineage festival provides
the members of a lineage with the shared experience of a
mythological trip toward their roots, in which they can
communicate with their lineage deities and reinforce
(reconfirm) their identity as members of the lineage. This
is an essential part of the religious festivity. The
performance of lineage festivals also has a social (secular)
connotation. The festivals mirror social hierarchy found
both in inter-caste relations, which is made most clear by a
comparison between the Kallars and the Paraiyars, and in
intra-caste ones, such as the differential between the
Nārpaṅkāḷi (Four-lineages) and the Tankalan lineage.
Therefore, it will be claimed that such festive activities
tend to reinforce or reproduce the conventinal social
structure.

Though it is true that the ceremony works as such an
encapsulating force, it should not be disregarded that the
festival reflects the contests in the meshes woven by inter-
caste and intra-caste relations. In other words, it provides

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[2]The usage of the sacred and the secular here is
basically derived from Bataille's dualistic concepts
"l'ordre intime" and "l'ordre réel" (see section 1.2.1).
This distinction also seems to correspond with that of
Tambiah, namely, the sacred as an aspect of symbolic or
iconic meaning and the secular as that of indexical meaning
[Tambiah 1985 (1981)].

an opportunity of socially displaying each lineage's identity competitively. It is notable that intense competition and strife are found within the lineage and this often results in the split of the festival unit. This tendency has been strengthened by modernization, because the necessity of lineage cooperation is diminishing today. Most of the villagers are involved in various wider social networks, beyond traditional village relationships, under the progress of modernization. Nonetheless, it cannot be overlooked that there remains an earnest wish for carrying out the lineage festival among the Paraiyars. In this sense, as is suggested by the increase of strife within a lineage, the lineage fetival tends to be used as a means of self-assertion by the more individualized members who live in the wider social space. This suggests that it is necessary to investigate not only the rather closed system of the ritual process but also the Paraiyars' everyday activities in the wider social context, namely their 'non-ritual' practices (see Ch.9).

Lineage festivals are developed especially among the Kallars and the Paraiyars in the village, though all castes have lineage deities, as has been shown in Table 2.11. This is because several lineages of both these castes have enough numbers of households within the village to conduct the festivals. In contrast, the Pillais and other Caste Hindus, who are numerically minor groups in the village, cannot

maintain an extended festival. The more fundamental reason lies in the fact that the unity of a lineage (*vakaiyarā*) is of course based on agnatic relations, but at the same time the actual unit of aggregation is rather segmented in the local group (see [Dumont 1986: 186]). That is, since a lineage festival is conducted mainly by lineage members living in the same village, it would be difficult for a widely dispersed lineage to maintain the elaborate festival. Thus, the Kallars and the Paraiyars occupy the main part of the following description.

8.2 Lineage Cults of the Dominant Castes

8.2.1 The Pillais

The Pillai households of Kinnimangalam belong to Kiravan *kūṭṭam* of Kanicamar *kōttiram* (Skt. *gōtra*)[3]. They believe in 21 lineage deities[4], of whom the goddess Ankalaisvari is the main deity. The village Pillais regard Angalaisvari as *cuttamuka teyvam* (a deity rejecting blood

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[3]Though *kūṭṭam* is a sub-category of *kōttiram*, *kūṭṭam* rather corresponds to *vakaiyara* of the Kallars in size. Their account of *kōttiram* suggests the Sanskritized tendency of the Pillais.

[4]The present generation of Pillai families can identify only five deities out of twenty-one, namely, Ankalaisvari, Virapattirar, Latacanyaci, Kannimarkal and Kavalkarakaruppu. The identification of the deities' names is not very important for them, but the number 21 itself holds a significant connotation. Dumont explains that the number 21 itself is important for them because it has the value of totality. Not only 21 but also 18, 24, or 108 hold the same connotation [Dumont 1986: 166].

sacrifice) because of Siva's wife (see [Dumont 1986: 433-4]). As the members of Kiravan *kūṭṭam*, they also attach special importance to the goddess Puvayammal, who is, nonetheless, not included in their lineage deities. It can be confirmed that goddess worship is dominant in the lineage cult. Though the legends of the lineage deities usually not only tell of the origins of these deities but also touch on the migration history of the *kūṭṭam*, the legend held by the village Pillais is much concerned with Puvayammal and pays little attention to the lineage deities[5]. The legend includes the following information on their migration route. The ancestor, as the *karṇam*, originally lived in Purvikam,

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[5]The legend of Puvayammal is as follows: Their ancestor, as the *karṇam* (a village accountant), lived in the village Purvikam, near Vettalam, North Arcot. One day his daughter was combing her hair on the upstairs veranda. The Nayaka king passed by and saw her. The king fell in love with her at first sight. Her father, the *karṇam*, soon noticed the king's feelings and decided to leave the village because he was afraid that the king would take his daughter to the palace (the Pillai family is ritually higher than the Nayaka king). Though the *karṇam*'s family left the village at night, the soldiers of the king chased them by horse. The family reached a river bank, but they were worried when they noticed that there was no way to cross the river. They soon noticed a small shrine of the goddess Puvayammal and a big Baniyan tree on the other side of the river. The *karṇam* prayed to Puvayammal, "Please topple the Baniyan tree so as to make a bridge". Suddenly, what he asked was realized, and they crossed the river safely. Again he asked the goddess, "Please raise the tree". The tree stood as it was before. Thus, the family could escape from the king's chase. The *karṇam* swore to the goddess that the eldest child of his descendents would always be named after the goddess. Since then, the family and its descendents have worshipped Puvayammal and have observed their promise by naming their eldest sons Puvannanatam or Puvattapillai, and their eldest daughters Puvayammal. This is the ceremonial name for them, the registered name is often different from it.

near Vattalam, North Arcot, but his family migrated down
toward the south and reached Punkankulam, 10 kilometers
north-west of Tirumangalam, where they settled down and
built the temple of Angalaisvari. After they moved several
times around Tirumangalam, they finally came to
Kinnimangalam, but their lineage temple, whose main deity is
Angalaisvari, was built near to Cattankuti, 6 kilometers
west of Tirumangalam. Since then, their lineage festival was
held there until the present family head's great-
grandfather's generation, even though the festival was
observed only by close relations. It is said that the
grandfather consciously stopped conducting the lineage
festival because he thought of the blood sacrifice and non-
vegetarian offerings found in the ceremony as sinful acts.
Up to that time, a pregnant goat (*cinai vellāṭu*) or a
pregnant pig (*cinai panri*) was sacrificed to the god
Kavalkarakaruppu (*tuṭiyāna teyvam* or a deity accepting blood
sacrifice), one of the 21 lineage deities and then a rice
ball called *cōrru uruṇṭai*, which was mixed with the meat of
the victim, was thrown into the air by the *pūcāri*. It is
said that the ball never returns to earth because the gods
in the sky take it (cf. [Hoek 1979: 123]). This was
conducted behind the temple. These acts were judged by the
grandfather as blaspheming against the gods. As two
generations have passed since the lineage festival was

stopped, the procedures of the festival are unclear today[6].
All that is done today is that each Pillai family
individually conducts a special *pūjā* to the lineage deities
in a worshipping room on the day of *Makācivarattiri* ('Siva's
night') (see [Mayer 1960: 188]). The grandfather's decision
seems to be clear evidence for the drastic Sanskritization
of the Pillais, which took place at that time. It seems that
Sanskritization is rather in inverse proportion to
enthusiasm for the lineage festival. This is verified, from
the other side, by the Kallars, who keenly carry out their
lineage festivals.

8.2.2 The Kallars

Though the Pillais gave up their lineage festival, the
Kallars are in contrast very keen on conducting theirs. I
will describe here mainly the lineage festival of the
Kecavan lineage, which I directly observed and, in addition,
the case of the Kamanan lineage, which was explained to me
by the lineage *pūcāri*, will be comparatively touched upon.
As already noted (in Chapter 2), both the Kecavan and the
Kamanan occupy the head of the village system of "Two-*Tēvārs*

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[6]It is believed that unless the ritual is "properly"
conducted, it would be harmful for them. It is, therefore,
difficult to revive the lineage festival, since the detail
of its procedures are obscure. Balasubramanian's father once
told his sons, "If the Goddess appeared in a dream and told
you how to do the ceremony, we could have the festival
again", but this has not yet occurred.

and Four-*Paṅkāḷis*"[7], so that these examples are useful for the present discussion.

(1) Lineage deities

The Kecavan people are said to have originally lived in Marutur, 35 km east of Madurai city, where their honorific title was *Ampalam*. Their ancestor is believed to have migrated to the west and settled down in Cellampatti, near Karumatur (see [Dumont 1986: 175]). This shift from the eastern side of Madurai to its western side made them change their title to *Tēvār*. Their ancestors had worshipped the God Visnu, called Malaicami, as their main lineage god in Marutur, but after settling down in Cellampatti the god Kottamantaikaruppacami ('fort-residing black-god'), whose temple is located in Karumatur, was newly adopted as their main lineage deity, because he was thought of as an incarnation of Visnu. The Kecavan lineage which holds Visnu as its main deity is rather exceptional in this area where Siva-worship is dominant. Kottamantaikaruppacami is, in this

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[7]It is said that the Kamanan ancestors who migrated from Ariyapatti were asked to settle down in Kinnimangalam by the Kecavan people. The Kamanan people agreed to the invitation on condition that the Kecavan gave them house plots and fields for cultivation. Moreover, the Kamanan lineage was also given the privilege of receiving the *mutanmai* (the order of honour) next to *karnam* and *nāṭṭānmai* in the village. Therefore, the order of *mutanmai* found today, namely the system of "Two-*Tēvārs* and Four-*Paṅkāḷis*" was fixed at that time. The order is this: 1) *karnam*, 2) *nāṭṭānmai*, 3) the Kamanan lineage, 4) the Kecavan lineage, 5) the Acaris, 6) *tōṭṭi* and *mataiyan*, and 7) *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi* (the Harijans).

sense, *cuttamuka teyvam*, rejecting blood sacrifice. Although Dumont 'objectively' touches upon the priesthood assigned to Kesan [Dumont 1986: 368], according to Tangaraj, the Kecavan people hold a myth reflecting their 'subjective' view, which explains the special relationship between Kottamantai-karuppacami and them[8]. Besides Kottamantaikaruppacami, two other gods, Mayanticami and Muttaiyacami, and the goddess Cilaikari are regarded as especially important deities for the Kecavan lineage. Therefore, the attendance of these four deities' *cāmiāṭis* (possessed dancers) is indispensable to the lineage festival.

Mayanticami is a deified person and it is believed his sacrificial death saved the Kecavan lineage from its

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[8]The myth I heard is this: The place (*mantai*) where Kottamantaikaruppacami resides was originally the fort of the notorious lord called Tanappamutali (who probably took over Nayakkar's rule [Dumont 1986: 366-67]). The people suffered a lot under the evil rule of the lord, and the God Siva, of the Kaluvanatarcami temple, became angry and commanded the god Karuppacami, as the incarnation of Visnu, to 'go' and destroy the lord. Karuppacami went to the fort and killed the lord. Karuppacami did not return, but remained there, because Siva told him only to 'go' and did not command him to 'go and come back'. The local people asked Karuppacami to return to the Kaluvanatarcami temple but he did not do so. When the Kecavan people entreated him by touching his feet, he replied, "I stay here and protect your lineage people." Since then, Karuppacami began to be called Kottamantaikaruppacami, and became the main lineage deity of the Kecavan.

crisis[9]. He is a member of the Kattaiyan lineage and a *cakaraṇ* of the Kecavan people. The story which explains why the Kecavan people worship Mayanticami as one of their lineage deities partly illustrates their migration from Cellampatti through Cettikulam to Kinnimangalam. According to Tangaraj, the migration was caused by discord between them and the Paricapuli lineage (cf. [Dumont 1986: 175]) about the proprietary rights of the Kottamantaikaruppacammi temple. However, as Dumont describes in detail, it seems that the withdrawal of the Kecavan lineage from Karumatur area may have been more fundamentally due to the rivalry between the three main lineages of Karumatur, namely, the Kecavan, the Madavanai and the Kurumban [Dumont 1986: 175-76][10].

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[9]The following myth is held. After the Kecavan people settled down in Cettikulam, they went one day to Karumatur and worshipped the gods there. The Paricapuli people found them and got angry. The Kecavan people soon returned to Cettikulam in order to avoid an attack by the Paricapuli people but, finally, they were cornered by the Paricapuli in Cettikulam. Fortunately, a man named Mayanticami rushed to the scene to help them. Thanks to his help, the Kecavan narrowly escaped to Kinnimangalam, but Mayanticami lost his life in the fight. In compensation for his sacrificial death, the Kecavan people gave the Kattaiyan lineage their land in Cettikulam and the Ellappacami temple, in which the beloved man was deified as the god Mayanticami. The Kecavan people also began to worship Mayanticami as one of their lineage deities.

[10]Such discord seems not to be settled completely even today. I realised this clearly when Tangaraj suggested to me that I should stop asking about the history of Kottamantai-karuppacami during my stay in Karumatur to observe the festival.

Another important god, Muttaiyacami (*tuṭiyāṉa teyvam*),
was originally the lineage god of an Acari caste family but
has been given the position of one of the Kecavan lineage's
deities since the following incident, which is said to have
occurred near the Kottamantaikaruppacami temple. One day, a
young couple of the Acari caste passed by the temple on
their journey, and decided to stay there because it was
already evening and the wife was going to have a baby. That
night she had her baby, but she passed away, and the husband
also died three days later. The baby was fortunately picked
up by the Kecavan. Later the Kecavan people felt a special
affection for the baby, having learnt that the Acari couple
had migrated from the eastern side of Madurai as they had
done. Not only did they rear the baby with care, but they
also adopted Muttaiyacami as their lineage god in token of
the brotherhood between them, or their pseudo-*Paṅkāḷi*
relationship[11]. In Karumatur, the guardian deity
Kottalakaruppu, whose shrine is in front of Kottamantai-
karuppacami, is identified with Muttaiyacami.

It is said that the goddess Cilaikari was once reared
as a human child but after reaching puberty she committed
suicide, by which it was verified she was a goddess. The
term Cilaikari itself, which is said to mean 'a woman who
has a *cīlai* (a piece of cloth which remains unburnt after

[11]The pseudo-*Paṅkāḷi* relationship between the Kecavan
lineage and the Acari family's descendents has continued to
the present time. They may provide meals for each other.

suicide by fire)', indicates that her miraculous suicide is the evidence of her divinity (see [Dumont 1986: 364]). Tangaraj claims that Cilaikari is a reincarnation of Kannaki, a heroine of Cirapatikaram and is a *caktiyulla teyvam* (a deity possessing strong sacred power, *śakti*) (see [ibid.: 364, 372]). This claim obviously contradicts with the former story in which Cilaikari is a virgin goddess, *kaṇṇi* in Tamil. An important point is that the Cilaikari is strongly connected with the locality of Kinnimangalam, or the inside of the village. This contrasts with Kottamantaikaruppacami, residing outside the village. There is a complementarity between them, and she occupies the position of the vice-chief lineage deity. *Cāmiāṭi*s of both the Kottamantaikaruppacami and the Cilaikari are selected from the insiders (the members of the Kecavan lineage), though other secondary *cāmiāṭi*s come from outside the village and also from other lineages or castes. Furthermore, the Cilaikari's *cāmiāṭi* is from the first *vāricu*, whereas the *cāmiāṭi* of the chief deity is from the second *vāricu*. The significance of the goddess should not be underestimated, even if a god is the head of the lineage deities.

Before proceeding to a discussion of their lineage festivals, I sum up the features of the Kallars' lineage deities. For this, I also take into account the case of the Kamanan lineage, adding to that of the Kecavan lineage

discussed above. (i) It is believed that just as the Kecavan did due to their strife with other lineages, the Kamanan ancestors also left their original village because of the conflict between sublineages (*vāricus*). (ii) As is exemplified by the Kamanan lineage, the transfer of the *putimaṇ* of the original temple is the most usual method of setting up a new temple, though the Kecavan are said not to have done so. (iii) Both the Kamanan and the Kecavan lineages hold an intramural temple for storing a *cāmipeṭṭi* inside *ūr* (their quarter), besides the temple-in-the-field (see Figure 4.1). It is an important feature of the Kallar lineage cult that each lineage holds two temples, an inner and an outer, and their festival is conducted by moving between them. (iv) Both lineages have 21 lineage deities, though all their names are not made clear. Nonetheless, the essential point lies in the complementary relationship between *cuttamuka teyvam* and *tuṭiyāṇa teyvam*. In other words, the presence of *tuṭiyāṇa teyvam* is indispensable for the cult of lineage deities[12]. (v) In both lineages, importance is attached to the goddess, who is a deified virgin, as the main deity who rejects blood sacrifice – either as the chief deity or as the sub-chief deity.

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[12]The Kamanan lineage especially holds active *tuṭiyāṇa teyvams*. The Cinnacami (a god) is famous for the fact that the deity's *cāmiāṭi* drinks the blood of a sacrificed goat. Another god Kalyanikaruppu is said to be too violent to be controlled by the Kamanan *pūcāri*, so that they have had to give up conducting a *pūjā* for the god.

(2) Lineage festivals

A lineage festival (*kulateyvam tiruvilā*) is doubtlessly a highly visible discourse, as a lineage-based practice in which complex socio-cultural elements are strongly reflected. As in the case in village temple festivals, a lineage festival also bridges over both religious experience and social institutions. In this sense, the lineage festival again shows the mystificatory power of legitimating existing authority under the umbrella of the gods' unchallengeable power. Apart from this rather conservative and harmonious aspect, the lineage festival also holds a challenging or competitive aspect. It can be pointed out that the competitive aspect is found more frequently and more explicitly in the lineage festival than in the village temple festival for several reasons.

Firstly, a village is an inclusive unit in the village sphere, whereas there are plural lineages within the same caste in the village, and competition between lineages takes place. Secondly, a lineage basically maintains egalitarian values, whereas a village is structured by hierarchical values. Perceived imbalance within a lineage easily causes discord between the *vāricus* (sub-lineages) or between families, but conflict between castes is usually repressed by the vertical power relations of the village. Thirdly, generally speaking, the leadership within a lineage is more fluid than that of a village. More specifically speaking,

the ritual roles at the village level are rather fixed and specialized, but in the lineage there is more room to replace the bearers of ritual roles. This difference is based on the more rapid growth of sub-lineages, compared with changes in village composition. These arguments become the analytical point of view for the following description of the lineage festival.

The Kallars' lineage festivals are conducted during *Makācivarattiri*. The festival is not held every year. The average frequency among the Kallars' lineages is twice or three times in ten years. This is slightly higher than that of the Paraiyars, which is once or twice in ten years. The reasons which make it difficult to hold the festival are financial difficulty, mourning due to the death of a lineage member, and discord between *vāricus*. The Kecavan lineage festival which I observed was conducted in February 1989, and was previously held in 1987. The Kecavan and the Kamanan tend to hold lineage festivals more frequently than other Kallar lineages do[13]. Since they enjoy high honour as pioneers among the Kallars, conducting the lineage festival is symbolically important for maintaining their status. This suggests that practicing the festival itself is a social demonstration of the power of the lineage concerned.

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[13]In 1989, I heard that both the Kecavan and the Catayi lineages would conduct lineage festivals, but only the Kecavan did so.

Before starting the description of the lineage festival, let's look at the distribution of ritual roles, which is often a source of dispute between sub-lineages. The Kecavan lineage consists of 23 families, which are divided into two *vāricu*s. Six hereditary posts (tasks), including ritual roles, are equally shared by the two *vāricu*s as follows: the *pūcāri* (a lineage priest), the Cilaikari *cāmiāṭi*, and *taṇṭal* (a hereditary watchman of the village) are chosen from the first *vāricu*; whereas the second *vāricu* holds the privilege of selecting the Kottamantaikaruppacami *cāmiāṭi*, *tēvārpaṭṭam* (a representative of the lineage) and *mēlāḷar* (a temple manager). For comparison, the case of the Kamanan lineage is useful, because they have a quarrel between *vāricu*s. Their division of ritual roles or privileges is this: 1) the first *vāricu*: *pūcāri*, Rakkaciyamman *cāmiāṭi*, the right of carrying the *cāmipeṭṭi* (a sacred chest) and *tāmpāḷam* (an offering plate) in the lineage festival, 2) the second *vāricu*: *Tēvār* (the representative of the lineage), Ankalaisvari *cāmiāṭi*, Cinnacami *cāmiāṭi*, the right of making a *poṅkal* in the lineage festival, 3) the third *vāricu*: Virapattiran *cāmiāṭi*, the right of letting loose the first bull in the bull-racing called *jallikkaṭṭu* (literally, 'tying the medals'). It is not an easy task to divide such ritual roles equally among multiple *vāricu*s. The list in the Kamanan's case does not necessarily look equal. It seems that the third *vāricu* has the least power of the three. However, there is in fact an

unsettled problem between the first and the second *vāricus*.
When the elder of the first *vāricu*, who was assigned to
carry *tāmpāḷam*, died, the second *vāricu* began to claim that
the bearer of *tāmpāḷam* should be selected from the second
vāricu. Because of this problem, they have failed to hold
their lineage festival for six years[14].

[Preparation]

In front of the intramural temple, the members of the
lineage hold a gathering, called *patiṉaintu nāl kumpal*
('fifteenth day meeting'), on the day of the fullmoon,
fifteen days before *Civarattiri*. There, they reconfirm their
decision to hold the festival, and decide on the amount to
be collected from each household. In the case of the 1989
festival, it is reported that the total expenses were about
Rs.3600, and that each household paid Rs.30[15]. The rest of
the cost was met by *uṇṭiyal* (donations to the temple) during
the festival. From this day till the end of the festival,
the *pūcāri* and *cāmiāṭi*s have to abstain from eating meat,
having sexual intercourse and taking meals in other people's
houses. In this respect, I would like to confirm the
following point. Although Dumont points out "the

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[14]The death of a member of the lineage is also raised
as a reason for the lineage festival being suspended in
1989.

[15]The dependence upon *uṇṭiyal* is very high. The
Kecavans' exceptional dependence on *uṇṭiyal* is possible
since their lineage temple has a public aspect as one of the
nad (*nāṭu*) temples of Karumatur.

contradiction of the priest of a meat-eating god abstaining from meat" [Dumont 1986: 380], it seems to me that this can be judged as an inappropriate question from the viewpoint of "pollution-sacredness", which has been clarified in Part Two.

[The first day]

From late morning the god's ornaments and weapons etc.[16], which are kept in the sacred storeroom, are cleaned. The cleaned ornaments are taken to Karumatur to decorate the main deity, and the sacred chest and other items are kept on a flat stone called *ampalakkal* ('assembly stone') in front of the sacred storeroom. In the afternoon the sacred chest is washed and decorated. Two kinds of garlands, *marikkoḻuntumālai* (a tendril garland) and *mallikaippūmālai* (a jasmine-flower garland), are placed on the chest. The Kecavan *pūcāri* along with, if necessary, someone to help him, arrives from Kottaiyur, at around 6 p.m.[17], and then the festival starts. The start is indicated by the loud

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[16]The god's weapons, belongings and ornaments etc. are these: *muttukkuṭai* (a big umbrella), *iṭuppu maṇi* (a waist bell), *cilampu* (bangles), *parivaṭṭam* (a headband), *kilukiluppai* (a kind of musical instrument), *arivāḷ* (a hatchet), *pirampu* (a knife), *karuṅkālikkampu* (a kind of weapon), and several facial ornaments such as *puruvam* (eyebrows), *kaṇṇaṭakkam* (eyes), *mīcai* (a moustache), *rāmaṉ* (a forehead mark of the Visnavite) and *neṟṟikkirīṭam* (a forehead decoration). Musical instruments and weapons, particularly, have sesame oil applied to them.

[17]In the case I observed, since the *pūcāri* was very old, his grandson carried the sacred chest to Karumatur.

sound of the Harijan band[18]. *Tēvārpaṭṭam* (the lineage
representative) gives the *pūcāri* a new *vēṭṭi* (cloth).
Wearing this the *pūcāri* begins a *pūjā* to the sacred chest as
the god. After the *pūjā*, four *cāmiāṭis* form a line, in the
order of 1) Kottamantaikaruppacami, 2) Cilaikari, 3)
Mayanticami and 4) Muttaityacami, to receive holy ash from
the *pūcāri* and a garland from the *Tēvārpaṭṭam*, and they are
also given particular items to carry[19]. Then they start to
dance and soon each is believed to become possessed by their
own deity. The first *kuṟicollutal* ('sign-telling'), in which
problems or sufferings which people ask to be solved are
answered by these possessed *cāmiāṭis*, is held in the
following order; Kottamantaikaruppacami, Mayanticami, and
Muttaiyacami (see [Moffatt 1979: 230-1]).

Just before the procession starts, *kāṇikkai* (a
voluntary money offering) is collected from the Kecavan
people and presented to the Conaikamatci lineage as a
pūrvīkaccontam (a hereditary affinal relation). The sacred

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[18]The band consisted of six Harijan musicians (4
drummers and 2 clarinetists) on the occasion I observed. Two
of them are Paraiyars of Kinnimangalam, namely, a member of
the Kartananti lineage and one of the Mataiyan lineage. The
other two are from neighbouring villages.

[19]Kottamantaikaruppacami's *cāmiāṭi* and Muttaiyacami's
cāmiāṭi are given *arivāḷ* (a hatchet) and *karuṅkālikkampu* (a
weapon); Cilaikari's *cāmiāṭi* is given *kilukiluppai* (a
musical instrument) and *pāḻaikiri* (coco-palm flower); and
Mayanticami's *cāmiāṭi* is given *pirampu* (a knife). Besides
important guests, the *aṭimaikāraṉ* of the Kecavan lineage and
the Harijan musicians are given garlands and sacred ashes as
well. In this stage, I myself was also given both, as a
special guest.

chest is carried on the head of the *pūcāri* (actually his grandson in the observed case), and the procession leaves for Karumatur. It stops for a short time in front of the Ekanatarcuvami temple and at the *ūr* boundary near the tomb of their ancestor Palanicamitevar[20]. At the *ūr* boundary Cilaikari's *cāmiāṭi* leaves the procession because it is believed that the goddess, as a *vīṭṭukkāval teyvam* ('house-protection deity'), should not go beyond the village boundary. The procession proceeds through Cettikulam to Kottaiyur, and finally reaches the Kottamantaikaruppacami temple at midnight. On the way the sacred chest is put down on the *mantai* (a raised mound for a village gathering) of each village and people worship there. The journey from Kinnimangalam to Karumatur can be seen as the retroactive trip of their migration history.

The sacred chest is kept on the right side of the statue of Kottamandaikaruppacami. Not only the Kecavan people and their relatives but also other people come to worship at the temple through the night, because the temple

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[20]It is said that Palanicamitevar, who lived three generation ago, was an outstandingly influential man. The memorial stone is put on his burial place, for which the *ūr* boundary was especially chosen. This burial style called *camātiaṭi* is adopted only for a man of high repute. There the garland taken from the chest is put on the tomb. It seems strange that the Kallars who do not clearly recognize *pitr* (an ancestral soul), do worship their ancestor's tomb. In this sense, it is important that he was buried at the village boundary because this means that people understand the ancestor in the this worldly spatial framework, rather than this being so-called ancestor worship.

is located on the way to the Kaluvanatarcami (Siva) temple,
where a huge crowd gathers in the celebration of
Makācivarattiri. This indicates the dual character of the
god Kottamantaikaruppacami, namely as a lineage god and as a
nad god [Dumont 1986: 367, *Inf.*I].

[The second day]

Before dawn (around 4 a.m.) the *pūcāri*, with a mask
made of a banana leaves, conducts a *pūjā* by offering
talukais[21] to the main deity Kottamantaikaruppacami, next to
the guardian deity Kottalakaruppu (Muttaiyacami), enshrined
in front of the temple of the main deity. After the *pūjā*,
mutanmai (the idea of precedence) is practised, that is,
tīrttam (sacred water), *piracātam* (a part of the offerings
like *ponkal*, banana and coconut) and holy ash are
distributed in the following order: 1) *pūcāri*, 2) *cāmiātis*,
3) the Kurumpattevar lineage, 4) the Matayanai lineage, 5)
the Kecavan lineage, 6) the Kakkuviran lineage, 7) the
Cinnautaiyan lineage, and 8) the Parucapuli lineage. This

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[21]Around three a.m. the *pūcāri*'s wife begins to boil a
sort of gram (*tuvaraipayaru*) and to cook a *ponkal*. The
talukai includes *ponkal*, boiled gram, and *māvupanai* (raw
rice power mixed with jaggery). Besides the *talukai*, *ilanīr*
(tender coconut juice), *karumpu* (sugarcane), *verrilai pākku*
(betel and arecanut) and bananas are also offered. Two
talukais, five bunches of banana and five coconuts are
offered to the main god; whereas one *talukai*, two bunches of
bananas and two coconuts are offered to the guardian deity.
After the *pūjā*, the former two *talukais* are taken by the
pūcāri and the Kottamantaikaruppacami's *cāmiāti*
respectively, and the latter *talukai* is given to the
Muttaiyacami's *cāmiāti*.

order clearly reflects the traditional social system of the Karumatur area, namely, of the original Kallar *nad*, as Dumont clarifies. According to Dumont, the former three lineages are supported by the latter three lineages [Dumont 1986: 175]. After the *pūjā*, the *pūcāri* begins to accept offerings from general visitors to the temple. In particular, the Kecavan lineage people, any *cāmiāṭi*s and people who make vows are given garlands.

Around 8 a.m. a second simplified *pūjā* in which only bananas, coconuts, coco-juice, betel and arecanut are offered is held. From then until about one a.m., *kuṟicollutal* is practiced by three *cāmiāṭi*s (Kottamantaikaruppacami, Mayanticami, and Muttaiyacani) standing in a line in front of the main temple[22]. Most people consult the *cāmiāṭi* of the main deity, Kottamantaikaruppacami.

[The third day]

The third *pūjā* is carried out at around 4 a.m.. The highlight of the third day is the blood sacrifice. For this,

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[22]The *pūcāri* put holy ash on each *cāmiāṭi* and they are soon possessed by their respective deities. They lapse into an unconscious state of trance called *aruḷ*, which can be distinguished from conscious possession (*maruḷ*). A distressed person offers *veṟrilai pākku* (betel and arecanut) to the *cāmiāṭi* and prostrates himself or herself. Then it is believed that the *cāmiāṭi* correctly guesses his or her problem, and makes suggestions about how to solve it. Lastly, a promise of help is made by the *cāmiāṭi*. Moffatt provides an example of the dialogue between the *cāmiāṭi* and the client [Moffatt 1979: 238-39].

the *Tēvārpaṭṭam*'s wife brings a *poṅkal* vessel and a bundle
of firewood from Kinnimangalam to Karumatur. She is followed
by Kecavan people carrying a goat, and women who also want
to make *poṅkals*. As soon as they reach the temple, they
begin to prepare the *poṅkals*[23]. At about 11 a.m., the *pūcāri*
starts a *pūjā* to the main deity, and he then shifts to the
Kottalakaruppu temple and does a *pūjā* to the guardian deity.
There the blood sacrifice is conducted. The *pūcāri* pours the
water used to wash the rice for the *poṅkal* onto the goat's
head and body, and puts holy ash on its forehead. If the
goat shakes its body (*kulukkutal*), this action is regarded
as a sign that the god (Brahmā) has come into its head and
accepted the conducting of the sacrifice. A Conaikamatci
person, the Kecavan's affine, cuts the goat's head off and
further cuts off its right leg. The head holding the leg in
its mouth, which is called *Viṛumā kapāla* ('Brahmā skull), is
put in front of Kottalakaruppu, and *kapāla pūcai* ('skull-
pūjā') is conducted by the *pūcāri*. The *piracātam* (an
offering withdrawn) is distributed as *mutaṇmai* in the same
order as the case of the first *pūjā*. This final ceremony at
Karumatur is then over, and people prepare to return to

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[23]The materials of *ponkal* are as follows; *paccarici*
(raw rice), *pacumpāl* (cow's milk), *pacuney* (cow's butter),
pacipparuppu (broken greengram), *muntiriparuppu* (cashews),
ēlam (cardamom), *cukku* (ginger), *kismispaḷam* (raisins),
tāvara eṇṇey (vegetable oil) and *vallam* (sugar).

Kinnimangalam[24]. They go back along the same route by which

they came. Reaching Kinnimangalam, the procession stops at

the Pattattaraciyamman temple, where the Kecavan *pūcāri* gets

holy ash from the Kauntar *pūcāri* of the goddess. When the

sacred chest passes the Paraiyars' colony, the Paraiyars

gather and worship the Kecavan gods by blowing *kulavai* and

by offering garlands and *kāṇikkai* (a money offering). The

Tēvār gives holy ash to these Paraiyar worshippers. After a

brief stop at the Ekanatarcami temple to receive a garland

from the Ekanatarcami *pūcāri*, the Caste Hindus (the *ūr*

people) also gather and worship the Kecavan gods near the

Muttalamman temple. The Catayi people give garlands and

money when the procession passes by the Catayi temple.

Finally, the sacred chest and other items are put on the

ampalaikkal. Then the last *pūjā*, called *maṟupūcai* ('re-

pula'), is held at this auspicious time by offering three

bunches of bananas and three coconuts etc. The order of

mutaṉmai in this case is this: 1) *pūcāri*, 2) four *cāmiāṭis*,

3) two *tēvārs* (the Kamanan and the Kecavan), 4) V.A.O.

(traditionally, *karṇam* and *nāṭṭāṉmai*), 5) the Conaikamatci

lineage, 6) the Catayi lineage, 7) the Panniyan lineage, 8)

the Cuntaravalliyamman lineage, 9) the Kattapinnai lineage,

10) the Acaris, 11) *tōṭṭi* and *maṭaiyaṉ*, 12) the Four-

lineages of the Paraiyars (*Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*), and 13) others. This

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[24]The beheaded goat is taken back to Kinnimangalam,
though only the head of the victim is given to the *pūcāri*.
The *pūcāri* takes four garlands from the main god and puts
one on himself and the other three on the *cāmiāṭis*.

order of *mutanmai* shows clearly the careful consideration given, firstly, to the village power structure, 1) - 4) and 10) - 12); secondly, to the affinal lineages, 5) - 8); and, thirdly, to agnatic relations (*muraikkupankāḷi*), 9).

After everything is put back into the storeroom, the *pūcāri* and the *cāmiāṭis* are served non-vegetarian meals in the *tēvār*'s house. This marks the end of their temporal pure state (*cuttam*). The *aṭimaikāran* (house servants) and the Paraiyar musicians are also served meals in the yard of the Kecavan house. After the meal, only the Kecavan people gather in front of the storeroom and share the remaining bananas. At this time, one or two bananas are given to women who left the Kecavan through marriage.

8.3 Lineage Cults of the Paraiyars

The Kinnimangalam Paraiyar community mainly consists of the *Nārpankāḷi* ('Four-lineages'), who occupy the central position in the community, and the Tankalan lineage, deemed as the socially marginal[25], as has already been noted (see section 2.4 and Ch.6). It is notable that the *Nārpankāḷi* themselves are structured by the complementarity between the first settlers, the Kartananati-Cinnananti lineages, and their affines, the Mataiyan lineage and the Urkalan lineage.

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[25]The Tankalan's marginal character is clearly indicated by the fact that they are not included in the *mutanmai* order which is repeatedly expressed in the village temple festivals and in the lineage festivals.

Attention will be paid to this community structure, which reflects their history of migration, in the following comparative discussion.

8.3.1 The Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages

Although today the Kartananti and the Cinnananti are regarded as independent lineages, they still worship common lineage deities and jointly celebrate the lineage festival. In this sense, they can be regarded as *vakaiyarās* ('lineages'), but in so far as they worship the same god they retain the character of *vāricu* (sub-lineage)[26].

(1) Lineage deities

It is believed that the common ancestor of both lineages originally lived in Uruvatti, near Sivaganga, 30 km east of Madurai city, but they were forced to leave Uruvatti in the socially chaotic period called *paṭaiveṭṭukālam* (see section 2.1.2). When they left Uruvatti, they took *putimaṇ* (a handful of earth) from the lineage temple where the goddesses Periyanatcci and Ariyanatcci, who are deified

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[26]The usual ramification of a lineage, namely, the change from *vāricu* to *vakaiyarā*, is caused by an increase in the members of a *vāricu*, and the change is marked by an independent lineage festival. It seems that their case being an exception is partly due to their small increase in population.

sisters, were enshrined as the main deities[27]. The present

lineage temple, located in *Paṟaiya vīṭu* (cluster II), was

set up after placing the *putimaṇ* on the site. As shown in

Figure 8.1, the main deities are said to be in the small

temple building where there is no image other than the

sacred chest, made of palm-leaf (*ōlai-peṭṭi*)[28], and other

subordinate deities are symbolized by the stones installed

in front of the temple. They also claim that there are 21

lineage deities, though they can identify only 12 deities,

as shown in Table 8.1. This table shows the character of

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[27]According to the legend, which lineage members
apparently confirmed in Uruvatti four years ago,
Periyanatcci and Ariyanatcci were the sisters of the
ancestor of the Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages. One day a
quarrel between their neighbours took place. Periyanatcci
and Ariyanatcci arbitrated between them, but the dispute was
unsettled, and finally they went to the panchayat court.
Periyanatcci and Ariyanatcci took the witness stand, but,
since one party would not accept their witness, the sisters
came to the end of their patience and warned the opposing
party. They said, "If we told a lie, our lineage will
disappear but if we were right, your lineage should end."
They also commanded another party who accepted the witness,
"Your lineage people should go out of the village, but they
should live within three miles of it because you must attend
the festival to worship us." The lineage of the opposing
party soon vanished, and the people of the 8 lineages living
within 3 miles of Uruvatti started to worship the deified
sisters. It is noted that the goddesses were originally
enshrined not only as their lineage deities, but also as
local deities.

[28]In the chest, the following things are placed: *mani*
(bell), *tīpārātaṉaittaṭṭu* (lamp-stand), *caṅku* (conch),
cēkaṇṭi (a kind of gong), *vipūtikkopparai* (pot of holy ash),
parivaṭṭam (dresses of the possessed dancers), and
tūpakkālam (incense-vessel). The *ōlai-peṭṭi* is often renewed
because it is easily dameged. It contrasts with the strong
wooden chest of the Kallars.

Figure 8.1 Temple of the Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages
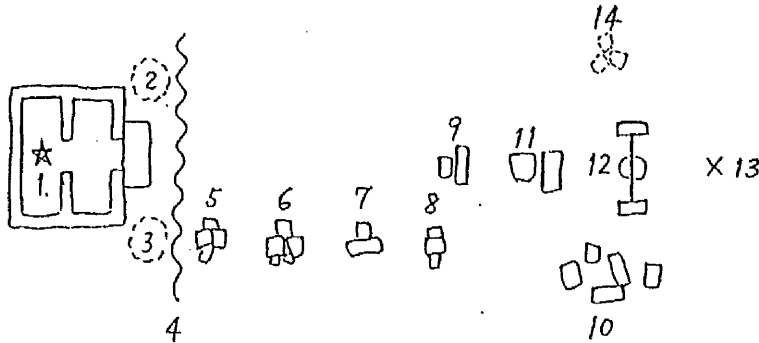
1. *karakam* only during a festival
2. Ariyanatcci during a festival
3. Periyanatcci during a festival
4. blindfold during an animal sacrifice
5. Virapattiracuvami   5'. Periyakaruppacuvami)
6. Periyakaruppacuvami   6'. Muttukkaruppacuvami)
7. Muttukkaruppacuvami   7'. Conaicuvami)
8. Cankilikaruppacuvami   8'. Cankilikaruppacuvami
9. Cinnakaruppacuvami   9'. Cinnakaruppacuvami
10.Conaicuvami   10'.none
11.place for offering a light
12.bell
13.place for an animal sacrifice
14.hearth for cooking a *ponkal*

Table 8.1 12 deities out of 21 lineage deities of the
　　　　　Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages

deity's name	sex (F/M)	C/T	lineage of *cāmiāṭi*	sex of *cāmiāṭi*
Periyanatcci	F	C	Cinnananti	F
Ariyanatcci	F	C	Cinnananti	F
Periyakaruppacuvami	M	T	Kartananti	M
Virapattiracuvami	M	C	Kartananti	M
Mayanticuvami	M	C	Cinnananti	M
Muttukkaruppacuvami	M	T	Kartananti	M
Conaicuvami	M	T	Kartananti	M
Cinnakkaruppacuvami	M	T	Cinnananti	M
Rakkacciyamman	F	T	---	---
Pattacuvami	M	T	Cinnananti	M
Latatannacicuvami	M	C	Kartananti	M
Cankilicuvami	M	T	Kartananti	M

(note) C: *cuttamuka teyvam*, T: *tuṭiyāṉa teyvam*

each deity (*cuttamuka teyvam* or *tutiyāṉa teyvam*), and the lineage to which each deity's *cāmiāṭi* belongs (Kartananti or Cinnananti). According to it, six *cāmiāṭis* are chosen from the Kartananti, whereas five *cāmiāṭis* belong to the Cinnananti[29]. Since the *pūcāri* is from the Cinnananti, the 12 ritual roles are after all divided equally among the two lineages. It is clear that they consciously pay attention to the balance between the two lineages.

The lineage festival is held in *Paṅkuṉi* (March-April), one month after *Māci* (February-March) when the Caste Hindu's lineage festivals should be conducted. Their last festival was held eight years ago. Since then they have failed to hold a lineage festival. According to them, this is mainly because of the dispute between the Kartananti and the Cinnananti concerning the right of one house plot, rather than for economic reasons. However, it seems to me that the financial aspect is also significant. I estimate the total amount needed to cover the festival's expenses is about Rs.2500. Members of the Kartananti and Cinnananti lineages

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[29]Though this seems to be a type of traditional device for creating balance between two lineages, they believe that the main deities, Periyanatcci and Ariyanatcci, definitely possess a Cinnananti person, whereas the head of the guardian deities, Periyakaruppacami, always possesses a Kartananti person. It is interesting that the main deities are said to have come to the Cinnananti through the younger brother's line, because this reflects the prevailing notion that the younger is superior to the elder (see also Appendix A).

at first claimed that their last festival cost nearly
Rs.10000, and that at least Rs.5000 is now necessary for
conducting this festival[30]. Even if it only cost about
Rs.2500 and the donations during the festival covered one
third of the total costs, each household would have to pay
about Rs.40, since the expenses are shared by about 44
households. The amount is not very large, but not small for
the ordinary Paraiyar household which has to manage on a
cash income of about Rs.200-300/month. It is said that the
dispute between the two lineages is so serious that they are
about to split into completely separate lineages, each
conducting their own festival.

(2) Lineage festival

I had no opportunity to observe any lineage festival
of the Paraiyars because no festival was held during the
period of my fieldwork, from 1985 to 1989. Therefore, I
reconstruct the process of the festival from the data of
several Paraiyar informants of both Kartananti-Cinnananti
lineages.

Two weeks before the festival, the lineage members
gather in front of their lineage temple and formally fix the

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[30]It seems to me that the amount Rs.2500 sounds
reasonable when it is compared with the cost of the
Kecavan's case, Rs.3600. The big disparity between what they
claim verbally and what they actually do is deemed as
further evidence of their overconsciousness about their
inferior position.

date of the festival and its budget. After fixing the date, they move to the Urkkaval temple, one of the village temples (see Chapter 4) in order to obtain the god's permission[31]. Interestingly, it is said that the role of obtaining permission must be carried out by their affinal relations, i.e. by members of the Mataiyan and of the Urkalan lineages. After this, *pūcāris* and *cāmiāṭis* start to follow a disciplined life, in which they take a bath every day and eat neither non-vegetarian food nor meals provided by others, so as to acquire the pure (*cuttam*) body and mind believed to be necessary for the festival.

[The first day]

The festival starts in the evening (around 5 p.m.). The sacred chest (*cāmipeṭṭi*) of Periyanatcci-Ariyanatcci is brought to the eastern tank, where it is washed and decorated. The lineage priest (*pūcāri*) and the possessed dancers (*cāmiāṭis*) take a bath and wear new clothes. Then they form a procession, accompanied by drumming[32], to Sikkanpatti in order to receive the *karakam* (a decorated pot

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[31]In those days the festivals of the Urkkavalcami temple and of the Kartananti-Cinnananti lineage were held on the same day. One year, the start of their lineage festival was delayed so that it was believed that their lineage deities appeared in the Urkkavalcami temple. Since then, it is said that they have to get permission from Urkkavalcami for conducting their festival.

[32]It is notable that the possessed dancer of the god Cinnacami rides on the shoulders of a Mataiyan person in the procession. This provides an example of the contribution of their affinal lineage to their festival.

full of water), which a potter has been asked to make, and which represents their main goddesses. The priest carries it on his head, through the back way, and it is installed in the temple. Flour lamps (*māvilakku*) are dedicated to the main goddesses by women. The priest, who puts on a mask of banana leaves, conducts a *pūjā* by praying 21 times for the 21 lineage deities. After this, *kuricollutal* ('sign-telling') is performed.

[The second day]

On the morning of the second day, the priest's wife cooks a *poṅkal*. At around ten a.m., the priest conducts a *pūjā* by offering the *poṅkal* in advance of the animal sacrifice. New cloths, garlands, donations called *pātakāṇikkai* etc. are presented to the Kavuntar priest of the Urkkaval temple. The prestations again show the special connection between their main deities and the god Urkkaval. Though the procedure of the animal sacrifice is the same as that in the Kallar's case, the decisive difference lies in the fact that the role of cutting off the head of the goat is not undertaken by an affinal relation, but by two Tevars (a Kecavan person and a Kamanan person), who are invited as honoured guests. However, the strong connection with affines is emphasized in different ways. For example, the music during the sacrifice is played by the Mataiyan people and a possessed dancer of the Cinnacami lineage is again carried by a Mataiyan person in this scene. The main deities, as

cuttamuka teyvam, are hidden by a curtain during the blood sacrifice. The order of *mutanmai* (the idea of precedence) after the sacrifice is as follows: 1) the Kartananti-Cinnananti lineage, 2) the Tankalan lineage, 3) the Matayan lineage and 4) the Urkalan lineage. It is noteworthy that a higher priorty is given to the Tankalan rather than to their affines, and this seems to reflect their diplomatic judgement on the balance of power within the Paraiyar community[33]. At around 8 p.m. only the possessed dancers gather in front of the temple, and a special *pūjā* is then conducted to the guardian deities by sacrificing a hen and offering a bottle of arrack (300 ml). After the *pūjā*, they have a feast, consuming their offerings. With this ceremonial feast, the festival is substantially over.

[The third day]

In the morning the final ceremony is conducted. The priest brings the *karakam* to the tank and throws it into the water. The priest and the possessed dancers soon bath three times and then return home.

Lastly, it should be emphasized that the centrality of the Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages within the Paraiyar

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[33]As the Tankalan people claim, there is consensus among five lineages of the Paraiyar community that the Tankalan also can receive *mutanmai*, but the order of *mutanmai* is not always agreed upon by them. The Mataiyan and the Urkalan people do not accept this order in which the Tankalan come before them.

community is reflected in the contents of their lineage
festival. Their lineage festival appears as a festival of
the whole Paraiyar community, as if the Muttalamman festival
is the main village festival of Kinnimangalam[34]. In
contrast, they point out the peripherality of the Tankalan
lineage. For example, according to them, two Tevars have the
urimai (right and duty) of killing the goat in the lineage
festivals of *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, but this is not the case in those
of the Tankalan lineage, although this claim is denied by
Tankalan people.

8.3.2 The Mataiyan lineage

It is said that the Mataiyan lineage was invited to
Kinnimangalam by the Kartananti-Cinnananti people[35]. The
Mataitan lineage was treated as an affine and was given
three rights by the latter people. These rights are 1) the
position of *maṭaiyan* (caretaker of the sluice of the village
tank), 2) the management of the Mataikaruppucami temple, and

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[34]Interestingly, two points are common to their
lineage festival and the Muttalamman festival. Both
festivals are held in *Paṅkuṉi* (March-April); and in both
cases the symbol of the main goddess(es), i.e. a statue or a
karakam, is prepared by a potter living in Sikkanpatti.

[35]It is said that the Mataiyan ancestors are
originally from the Sivaganga area. Though they progressed
after settling down in Vatavaranji, just west of Madurai
city, one *vāricu* was picked on by other *vāricus* in their
lineage festival. This *vāricu*, therefore, decided to leave
the village, and they happened to meet Kartananti-Cinnananti
people on their migration. The present Mataiyan lineage of
Kinnimangalam consists of two *vāricus*, i.e. a first *vāricu*
called Meiyan, and a second *vāricu* called Vettaiyan.

3) a half of *māṉiyam* (lands given to village servants). The
Mataiyan people also worship 21 deities, among whom
Meyyanamurtti is the main god, but it is notable that they
attach importance not only to the 21 deities, but also to
the goddess Marattiyamman in their lineage festival. The
main scene of the festival consists of processions of two
sacred-chests, i.e. the procession of the Meyyanamurtti's
chest from Sameyanarur near the Vaigai river where the
priest stays[36] and that of the Marattiyamman's from
Katalanpur, east of Madurai city. It is believed that the
goddess Marattiyamman is a deified Kallar woman who fell in
love with one of the ancestors of the Mataiyan lineage and
committed suicide. This case is regarded as the worst
possible combination for a relationship, and is never
allowed by the Kallars (see section 5.2). It is believed
that though her Mataiyan lover was killed by her brothers,
other ancestors of the Mataiyan lineage escaped from being
massacred thanks to her advance notice. Since then, they
have worshipped her as a goddess. It is noteworthy that the
connection between the Kallars and them is emphasized by the
Marattiyamman-worship found in the lineage festival[37].

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[36]Because it is said that the main god, Meyyanamurtti,
who dislikes dry areas requested the Mataiyan people to keep
the sacred-chest near the river.

[37]Besides the lineage festival, the goddess
Marattiyamman has an independent festival in *Āṭi* (July-
August).

Nonetheless, they have failed to conduct a festival for the past seven years.

8.3.3 The Urkalan lineage

It is believed that the ancestors of the Urkalan lineage were forced to leave Ariyapatti during the time of *paṭaiveṭṭukālam*. According to legend, a Kamanan person met a Urkalan boy who had lost his parents, and invited him to Kinnimangalam. He was introduced to the Muslim Jamindar and was engaged in servant work at the Jamindar's house. As already described in footnote 9 of 2.1.2, this Urkalan boy played a key role in the Kamanan's undertaking of killing the Muslim Jamindar. The Kamanan people told the boy that they would grant his wish. The boy requested them 1) to give him a position as a village servant, 2) to give him the right to obtain a bride from the Kartananti-Cinnananti lineages, and 3) to give him the right of getting the thigh of the right foreleg of slaughtered cattle. The Kamanan people asked the Kartananti-Cinnananti people to fulfill these requests, and they did so. When the boy had a wife and a baby, the Kartananti-Cinnananti people felt sympathy for the family because they had no god to worship, and gave the god Urkalan (Urkavalcami) to him. Then, the family started to worship the 21 deities, including the main god Urkalan. However, it should be noted that they worship not only 21

lineage deities but also the goddess Cilaikari[38], which is
equated with Marattiyamman for the Mataiyan people.

The strong connection between the Kamanan lineage and
the Urkalan lineage, which has been explained by this
legend, still holds today. The Urkalan people enjoy special
privileges[39] in the Kamanan lineage festival, while, in
turn, the Kamanan people are regarded as the most important
guests in the lineage festival of the Urkalan. The Urkalan
lineage festival has not been conducted for ten years for
financial reasons.

8.3.4 The Tankalan lineage

Cutakkuti, a village near Melur, is the Tankalan's
home village. According to legend, their ancestors moved to
Kutiraikuti, where they were engaged in breeding the
buffaloes of the Kallars and of the Konars. The great-
grandfather of the present head of the family had two sons,
Periyamuttukumaran and Cinnamuttukumaran, who are the
originators of the present two *vāricus*. It is said that the
great-grandfather was, by chance, involved in an affair, in
which he murdered a king in order to help a Kallar thief,
Veriyatevar. Thus he and his family decided to leave

[38]The annual *pūjā* to the goddess Cilaikari is
regularly conducted in *Āti* (July-August), even though the
lineage festival is not held.

[39]The Urkalan people are given *parivaṭṭam* (a decorated
headband) as a token of the right/duty of *aṭimaikāran*,
garlands and *piracātam* (an offering withdrawn) as *mutaṉmai*.

Kutiraikuti for Patti, which was Veriyatevar's village, at
Veriyatevar's invitation[40]. On the way to Patti, the great-
grandfather's family decided to settle down in
Kinnimangalam, due to the villagers' good treatment of them.
After several years, he happened to again see Veriyatevar in
the bull-baiting festival (*Erutukattu*) held at Kokkulam.
Veriyatevar again invited the great-grandfather to live in
his village, Patti, but the great-grandfather explained that
he lived comfortably in Kinnmangalam and did not want to
move. Veriyatevar understood the situation. In order to
guarantee the more stable position of the great-
grandfather's family, he contacted Two Tevars and Four-
*Pankāli*s in Kinnimangalam and asked them not to threaten the
family in any circumstances, and to give *mutanmai* to them
during their festival. The position of *tankalān* was also set
up and given as a sort of *nanrikkatan* ('thanksgiving
prestation) to the great-grandfather by Veriyatevar. The

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[40]The legend is as follows. Veriyatevar committed
theft in the palace of the local king. The king himself
chased the thief on horseback. The thief came across the
great-grandfather (GGF) resting under a tree and asked him
for help. GGF judged it was *dharma* to help him, since GGF
did not know that the man was a thief, and GGF hid him in a
drove of cattle. Soon after this, the king came and asked
GGF whether he had seen the thief. GGF thought if he replied
honestly, the thief would be killed, and if he told a lie
and the thief was found later, he himself would be killed.
So, GGF suddenly snatched a spear from the hands of the king
and struck the king and the horse with the spear. GGF urged
the thief to return to his village, but the thief asked GGF
to come to his villge, Patti, since GGF and his family could
not live in Kutiraikuti any longer. The thief told GGF, "Ask
someone where Veriyatevar's house is, when you reach my
village". Sometime later, GGF and his family left for Patti.

role of *taṅkaḻāṉ* is to be a witness to various occasions in
the Paraiyar community such as engagements, and divorces.

Though their main lineage god is Muttaiyacuvami, their
special preference for the God Murugan can be noted[41]. For
example, this is indicated by the fact that most of the male
members of the Tankalan lineage have Murugan's names, like
Palani, Arumugan, and Vel. Therefore, the *pūjā* to Murugan,
which is conducted during the annual festival of
Tirupparankunram in *Paṅkuṉi*, is regularly practiced by them.

Before describing the festival itself, it is necessary
to mention the discord between two *vāricu*s, i.e.
Perityamuttukumaran *vāricu* (the first) and Cinnamuttukumaran
vāricu (the second), which has continued since 1961, when
the last lineage festival carried out with the cooperation
of both *vāricu*s was held. The strife is said to have
originated over dissatisfaction with the distribution of

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[41]The migration story includes an episode which shows
the special connection between Murugan and the Tankalan
people. On the way to Patti, the great-grandfather (GGF) and
his family stayed in the Murugan temple of
Tirupparankuntram. When GGF saw people urinating near the
temple, he said that the place was nasty. Hearing his words,
the God Murugan became angry and made him blind as a
punishment. He regretted his words, and prayed to the God
with all his might, and his sight was restored. On the
following day, they proceeded to Tanakkankulam. There he
suddenly noticed that he had forgotten his wallet under a
wheel of the festival cart. When he was at a loss, having
lost his money, the God Murugan appeared and told him,
"Don't worry. Your money will be found". After doing a *pūjā*
to the God, he returned to Tirupparankunram and found his
wallet as the God had predicted.

rights and positions between the two *varicus*[42], making it impossible to have a united festival. In 1965, they started to hold their lineage festivals separately. Their separate festivals have not been held since 1982, mainly, according to them, for economic reasons. After the split, both *varicus* selected their own *pūcāri* (priest) and *cāmiāṭis* (possessed dancers), and each used different temples for their festivals. The first *vāricu* uses a storeroom for keeping the sacred-chest as their temple; whereas the second *varicu* occupies the Muttaiya temple in Pottampatti, about 20 km west of Kinnimangalam.

The lineage festival I describe here is that held before the split occurred. It is interesting that there are several differences between the Tankalan lineage and the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi* (Four-lineages). Firstly, the festival month of the Tankalan lineage is *Vaikāci* (May-June), which differs from the festival month of the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*, *Paṅkuṉi* (March-April). Secondly, the Tankalan people claim that the period prior to the festival when the priest and possessed dancers must observe a disciplined life is a month, which is twice

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[42]Periyamuttukumaran (PMK) *vāricu* has the right of receiving *mutaṉmai* on various occasions as the representative of the Tankalan lineage, whereas the position of *taṅkalāṉ* belongs to the Cinnamuttukumaran (CMK) *vāricu*. This is the traditionally approved distribution. Nonetheless, the PMK *vāricu* began to claim that the role of *taṅkalāṉ* should be carried out by the PMK. Of course, the CMK rejected this claim. According to the CMK's explanation, the PMK claims such a demand because the PMK regard the role of *taṅkalāṉ* as being more remunerative than the right of receiving *mutaṉmai*.

as long as the purification period commonly practised not only by the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi* but also by the Kallars. Thirdly, the Tankalan festival is characterized by a round trip between Kinnimangalam (the inside temple: the storeroom) and Pottampatti (the outside temple)[43]. In this sense, their festival is similar to that of the Kallars rather that of the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*, in which only one temple is used. Fourthly, the Tankalan people are ardent devotees of Murugan as *kaṭavuḷ*, whereas the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi* people are more keen on worshipping *teyvams*.

As has been noted, though the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi* people deny the attendance of the Two Tevars at the Tankalan festival, the Tankalan people insist that those who should be invited to their lineage festival are as follows: the Two Tevars; a descendent of Veriyatevar; four representatives of the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*; and a person of the Manakuli lineage, as an important affine. According to them, the Two Tevars play the role of cutting off the head of the victim in the blood sacrifice.

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[43]The sacred-chest leaves the storeroom for Pottampatti at around 7 a.m. On the way, the procession must call at Sikkampatti because there they show their respect to Peyatevar who donated the land at Pottampatti for the building of the Muttaiya temple. In the early afternoon, the *pūjā* to Muttaiyacuvami and other lineage deities is conducted, and then *mutaṉmai* is given. In the night, possessed dancers do *kuṟicollutal*. A goat sacrifice, as the climax of the festival, is performed in the early afternoon of the second day. Cutting off the victim's head is followed by *kapāla pūcai* and *mutaṉmai*. After the sacrifice, the sacred-chest is brought back to Kinnimangalam.

8.4 Conclusion: the Paraiyars' strategies concerning lineage cults

The following points have been made clear through the comparison of the cases of the dominant castes (the Pillais and the Kallars) and those of the dominated caste (the Paraiyars), and, furthermore, through the comparison of the lineages of the Paraiyar community.

(1) Both the Kallars and the Paraiyars share a common basis, called "the basic Tamil culture" in my sense, on which their lineage cults are practised. This means that both the Kallars and the Paraiyars, as the actors performing the lineage cults, are commonly 'interpellated' by "pollution" ideology, which is the primary ideology of "the basic Tamil culture".

The structure of the festival process is basically shared by the Kallars and the Paraiyars. Though the characteristics of "the basic Tamil culture" have been already highlighted in the discussion on the cults of the village deities (Chapter 4), they can be confirmed again here. That is, the lineage cult basically attaches importance to the following key traits: 1) a blood sacrifice, 2) an affinal relationship, 3) *teyvam* and a goddess. Firstly, a blood sacrifice is indispensable for the lineage festivals both of the Kallars and of the Paraiyars, even though the main deity is said not to accept blood sacrifice. This means that the relationship between the main

deity and the other guardian deities is the same as that
clarified in my discussion on the structure of the village
deities (see section 4.4.2). In sum, the relationship
between the main deity and the guardian deities should not
be interpreted as the dualism of "purity-impurity", but as
the dynamism from "generation" to "conservation". That is,
the ambiguous sacred power which is "generated" by the blood
sacrifice, which is officially dedicated to the guardian
deities (as *tuṭiyāṉa teyvam*), is controlled and "maintained"
by the main deities (as *cuttamuka teyvam*)[44]. Secondly, the
importance of affinal relationship is evident in both the
cases of the Kallars and the Paraiyars. The significant role
of cutting off the head of the sacrificial victim is played
by an affine in the case of the Kallars. Although, in the
case of the Paraiyars, the role is played by the Two-Tevars,
this does not reduce the significance of the affinal
relationship, because attention is always paid to the
attendance of the affines, and is particularly emphasized in
the scene of *mutaṉmai*. Thirdly, generally speaking, their
lineage deities are classified into the category of *teyvam*
rather than the category of *kaṭavuḷ*. This means that the
relationship between lineage deities as *teyvams* and lineage

[44]From this point of view, I cannot accept Moffatt's
statement that "As a group, the lineage gods are almost
uniformly low in nature, ... " [Moffatt 1979: 229]. I do not
believe that the villagers of Kinnimangalam rank their
lineage deities in this hierarchical ladder of the pantheon
as is shown in Figure 6-1 provided by Moffatt [ibid: 232].
This point has already been argued in Part I.

members is rather friendly and communicative[45]. In other
words, their faith in lineage deities usually anticipates
practical grace from the deities, as is indicated by their
migration stories. Though the main deity is not always a
goddess, a goddess, who is usually a defied woman after her
sacrificial death, like Cilaikari, Ankalaisvari, or
Marattiyamman, is certainly worshipped as one of the
important deities in the lineage festival.

(2) Their enthusiasm for the lineage festival is
derived from the fact that the lineage festival provides an
opportunity for reconfirming their identity, or reforming
their "subjects", in the 'ritual' setting[46]. They can be
seen to be reactivated through the transcendental religious
experience ('l'ordre intime') based on "pollution" ideology,
in which death is united with life, and the mythological
world is fused with the present practical world. People are
equal in this transcendental sphere. Especially in lineage
cults, this egalitarianism in front of gods is further
supported by horizontal segmentation, like lineages and sub-

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[45]For example, the people can give or take a lineage
deity to or from other lineages and they can easily build a
new temple using putiman taken from the former temple site.
This reveals that the deities not only require people's
faith, but also are controlled by people's will.

[46]I have learnt much from Bloch [Bloch 1986] in terms
of the usage of the concept 'ritual'. That is, a 'ritual'
act is non-discursive and, therefore, there is little room
for accepting everyday thought. Furthermore, the important
'ideological' effect of a 'ritual' is derived from its
symbolic devaluation of this life by introducing the still
transcendent [Bloch 1986: 195][Bloch 1989: 407].

lineages. Thus a "subject" formed in this situation could be called, the 'ritually' egalitarian "subject". This statement is exemplified in practice especially by the conduct of the animal sacrifice, and by the procession of the sacred-chest symbolizing the retrospective trip. The blood sacrifice is the ritual act directly symbolizing the unification of death and life, while the procession through which historical incidents are traced provides the lineage members an opportunity of participating in their mythological world, where they not only confirm their roots, but also have their faith in their lineage deities aroused. This suggests that kinship and cosmology are strongly linked (cf. [Barnard and Good 1984: 154-6]).

(3) The above mentioned reconfirmation of identity in the 'ritual' setting, or in a religious context, is necessarily associated with the social order of hierarchy and interdependence, as most explicitly shown by the custom of *mutanmai*. The hierarchical gap between the Kallars and the Paraiyars is not only directly indicated by *mutanmai*, but is also more clearly revealed by a systematic comparison between both their festivals, as is shown Table 8.2. In this sense, the people's practice of the lineage festival wittingly or unwittingly contributes to their acceptance of the conventional social order. This is the ideological effect of the lineage festival as a 'ritual' in Bloch's sense. In other words, they are inevitably 'interpellated'

by the ideology legitimizing the hierarchical entity, which includes interdependent relationships between the dominant caste and the dominated caste. It could be claimed that this interpellation forms the 'ritually' hierarchical "subject", which is not simply hierarchical and interdependent but is mystified by the cosmological and ritual notion.

Table 8.2 Comparison between the Kallars' and the Paraiyars' lineage festivals

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1) The Kallars ask their affines to cut off the head of the goat in their sacrifice, whereas the Paraiyars give this important role to the Two Tevars. The Two Tevars are invited as guests to the Paraiyars' festival, but, in contrast, the Paraiyars attend the Kallars' festival as servants, like musicians.
2) The blood sacrifice is conducted on the third day among the Kallars, whereas it is held on the second day in the case of the Paraiyars, because the latter's festival lasts only two days.
3) The Paraiyars can not conduct their lineage festival in *Maci*, when the Kallars conduct their lineage festivals. One month later, in *Paṅkuṇi*, the *Nārpaṅkāḷi* celebrate their festivals, and the Tankalan hold it in *Vaikāci*, three months after *Māci*.
4) Generally speaking, the Kallars' lineages hold their lineage festivals more frequently than the Paraiyars' lineages do.
5) With the exception of the Tankalan, the *Nārpaṅkāḷi* have only one temple. This contrasts with the Kallars' case, in which two temples are used.
6) The lineage festival of the Kallars is open to the village community as a whole, because they are the dominant caste, whereas the Paraiyars' festival is basically closed within their community.

Although it appears contradictory that the dominated Paraiyars accept this subordinate "subject", the matter is not so simple. The point is that, though they are unambiguously dominated in actual secular life, they also

appreciate the dominating aspect in the imaginary 'ritual' world by accepting the hierarchical, but interdependent, order, in which they undertake to play a humiliating role[47]. In other words, they can enjoy the 'victory' of the cosmological, and at the same time the social, order by participating in the festival, even if they are given a negative position[48]. In this sense, this 'ritually' hierarchical "subject" is also part of their identity, which urges the Paraiyars to replicate the culture of the dominant castes. I understand that Moffatt emphasizes this aspect [Moffatt 1979].

(4) Though I have dealt with the Paraiyars inclusively, it is very important to focus on the subtle differences between the lineage festivals of the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, as the central lineage, and that of the Tankalan, as the peripheral lineage, when we consider the dynamic formation of the "subject" of the Paraiyars. Compared with the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, the Tankalan people are more conscious of their "subject" formation and their attitude seems to predict the *Nārpaṅkāḷi*'s future. It is obvious that these differences

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[47]This point is clarified by Paraiyar people legitimating their social position by stressing their strong connection (interdependence) with a particular Kallar lineage or person.

[48]In this connection, Bloch's argument on the women's position in the circumcision ritual of Merina society is suggestive [Bloch 1986: 173-4]. I think, if the women were replaced by the Paraiyars in this argument, Bloch's interpretation would be valid for the present discussion.

come from the Tankalan's ambivalent social position, in which they enjoy their independency but at the same time have alienated feelings due to their social setting being less involved in the village structure.

Though the principal structure of the festival is shared by the Paraiyars, the difference derives from the given social positions which are reflected in the details of the festival[49]. 1) The Tankalan lineage has a lineage festival in *Vaikāci*; whereas the *Nārpaṅkāḷi* have it in *Paṅkuṉi*. 2) The Tankalan's festival is held between two temples, inside and outside, as is that of the Kallars; the *Nārpaṅkāḷi* have only one temple, which is built inside the colony. 3) Only the Tankalan lineage claims a one month purification period before the festival, which is twice the period the Kallars and the *Nārpaṅkāḷi* people observe. 4) It should be mentioned that the Tankalan people are devout worshippers of the God Murugan, apart from their lineage cult. The point lies in their enthusiasm for this *kaṭavuḷ*, compared with the *Nārpaṅkāḷi* who are satisfied with the cult of *teyvam*. 5) The Tankalan's festival makes clear their special connection with the outside Kallars living in other villages, who helped establish their social position in Kinnimangalam. In this sense, they contrast with the

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[49]Though Bloch focuses on the stability of the ritual [Bloch 1989: 405], it is also possible and important to throw light on the subtle differences found in the details of the ritual.

Nāṟpaṅkāḷi who are deeply involved in the power of the
inside or village Kallars.

This comparison evidently shows the Tankalan's
'overassimilation', compared to the case of the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*.
If it is taken into consideration that there is no
difference in terms of life style (cultural settings)
between the Tankalan and the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*, such differences
can be regarded as a reflection of the Tankalan people's
conscious manipulations for seeking self-assertion. In this
sense, such manipulations aim at the 'differentiation' of
them wittingly from the *Nāṟpaṅkāḷi*, and perhaps unwittingly
from the Kallars as the dominating power, through which
rivalry or resistance is expressed. We can read from their
attempt at differentiation that they are ambivalent, split
between a desire to be involved in the village system and a
desire to maintain their spirit of self-independence. This
split results from their socially peripheral position. It is
interesting that the Tankalan people seem to use as a model
the more theological cultural components found in the
broader social sphere than those available within the
village. As suggested in the previous Chapter, the Pillai
people embody this Sanskritised cultural tendency but, since
the Pillais have stopped holding their lineage festival,
there is no doubt that the Tankalan replicate generally
circulating Hindu knowledge.

The Paraiyars today use both knowledge available in the village and widely circulating knowledge for their strategies of self-development. That is, the models of replication are not necessarily confined to the village sphere. It is notable that the peripheral section of the village Paraiyars is more actively involved in such wider replication. The Tankalan lineage may be the *avant garde* for the Paraiyar community as a whole, to be ultimately followed by the other more central lineages in the near future. I think that this social process can be described as the paradox of "dissimilation by over-assimilation". Namely, conscious assimilation or replication does not aim at ideological subordination, but seeks independent self-development or self-assertive dissimilation. Over-assimilation by adopting wider knowledge and values, or those not confined to the village sphere, can be seen as a more explicit and radical statement of their desire for defiance and challenge. Thus, the Tankalan's behaviour works as a sort of magnifying glass for looking at the modern, self-assertive and 'non-ritual'[50] aspect of the "subject" of

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[50]Bloch distinguishes non-discursive 'ritual communication' from discursive 'non-ritual communication' found in the knowledge of the everyday world [Bloch 1986: 182-189]. The usage in the present context is this. It is usually true that, though in their everyday thinking the Paraiyar people consciously reject hierarchical discrimination, their lineage festivals, as 'ritual communication', do not reflect this practical knowledge of defiance. Nonetheless, the Tankalan lineage's attempt at dissimilation, namely, their deviation from the *Nārpankāḷi* in their lineage festival, provides an example of the

the Paraiyars, which challenges the closed reproductive circle[51] of 'ritual communication' embodied by the 'ritually' hierarchical "subject".

As a corollary of the above arguments, it is suggested that ideological difference (what they actually believe) should not be confounded with strategical difference (how they behave), which is strongly determined by socio-economic conditions. This claim is exemplified by the contrasts between the *Nārpankāḷi* and the Tankalan lineage, such as the socially central vs. the socially peripheral (degraded), and the economically dependent vs. the economically independent. The adoption of different cultural components *per se* does not imply an actual ideological difference. This point is a fundamental criticism of Moffatt, but it also reveals the defect often found in disjunction theories that the distinction between the level of ideology and the level of strategy is blurred.

Though I have focused on ritual practices in Chapters 7 and 8, it was made clear that the analysis of ritual practices is limited as a methodology for disclosing social reality in its full sense. Therefore, the focus of my

reflection of non-ritual knowledge, like socio-economic conditions, upon ritual knowledge [Bloch 1989: 398,406].

[51]The closed circle of reproduction of ideology is the general puzzle of Althusser's model of ideology in that there is no exit from which an individual can escape from the interpellation by "Subject". For example, Imamura, Yamazaki and Takahei describe this puzzle [Tanabe 1989: 123-175].

discussion will shift from the ritual practices themselves to non-ritual everyday practices in the next chapter, where light will be thrown upon the self-assertive and 'non-ritual' aspect of "subject".

CHAPTER 9 THE POLITICS OF THE STRATEGIZING PARAIYARS: THE PROBLEM OF THE COOPERATIVE SOCIETY OF MILK PRODUCERS

9.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to an investigation of the political behaviour of the village Paraiyars, particularly by dealing with the ongoing problems which have emerged around the activities of the village cooperative society of milk producers (hereafter, the milk society).

There are three main reasons why I deal with the problems of the milk society. Firstly, the activities of the milk society involve many village Paraiyars, so that a study of its activities provides a good opportunity to comprehensively understand the Paraiyars' behaviour. The milk society was established originally at the suggestion of the village Paraiyars and is now almost monopolized by them. The problems concerning the milk society since its inception have thus involved most of the village Paraiyars. This problem-oriented investigation makes it possible to vividly observe the Paraiyars' fundamental attitudes which sustain their everyday practices. Secondly, the difficulties of the milk society not only concern the Paraiyars, but also directly involve part of the Kallar community, and

indirectly affect other members of the Caste Hindus. As a
result, faction-like groups cutting across caste boundaries
have been formed. This study will provide a good chance to
examine the relationship between the Paraiyars and the Caste
Hindus. The third reason is that, since the milk society is
one of the state government's schemes, an investigation of
its activities or problems will, to some extent, disclose
the connection between village politics, especially the
politics of the Paraiyar community, and party politics at
the state level.

Through an analysis of the present problems of the
milk society, the following points are revealed.

(1) There has not been a significant change in the
decisive differential between the economic status of the
Kallars and that of the Paraiyars, even after the progress
of modernization. Economic improvement is doubtlessly an
urgent concern of the Paraiyar people, and they therefore
expect government preferential schemes to be provided for
the Harijans. The milk society scheme which I deal with here
is a typical example which shows how a government scheme
works at the village level. The problem is that the profits
from such schemes are not evenly distributed so that these
schemes tend to create an economic-based hierarchy within
the Paraiyar community. This causes many problems for the
Paraiyars.

(2) A study of the problems associated with the milk
society indicates the Paraiyars' individualistic and
strategic methods of pursuing their own interests. Their
active leaders adopt different types of strategies according
to their source of power. At least three different types of
strategies, and thus of leaders, can be identified, namely,
the "traditional", the "mediating" and the "independent".
Among these types, the "mediating" type of strategy is most
effective at present under the conditions of the "gift-
politics" (*vide infra*) of the state government, and the
"mediating" type of leader tends to become a new type of
patron for the poor Paraiyars. This also means that the
politico-economic monopoly of such "mediating" type of
leader causes various difficulties within the Paraiyar
community.

(3) Such internal difficulties and conflicts of the
Paraiyar community play the role of contributing to their
ideological shift from 'caste' ideology to 'class' ideology
in practice, although these problems may appear as the
repeated reproduction of the various tensions associated
with their conventional social relationships (the inter-
caste relationships, the inter- and the intra-lineage
relationships, and family relationships). In this sense,
these difficulties can be regarded as labour pains for the
penetration of 'class' ideology, based on individualism, or
ultimately as a challenge to "caste culture" [Barnett 1975:

151]. Although such internal conflict contributes to the devaluation of the caste hierarchy, it does not work for the removal of "class" hierarchy, but rather reinforces it. This means that the "subject" interpellated by 'class' ideology has been formed or reinforced through internal competition for seeking self-interests. Moreover, it is noted that the Paraiyars want economic power not simply to lift their standard of living, but rather to compensate for their degraded status which is determined by birth. This deep motivation for seeking the symbolic power of money is more clearly observed in the attitude of the leading Paraiyars who are able to finance their basic living expenses. Many Paraiyars believe that economic power will save them. However, there is an irony in that this acute desire for a rise in economic status rather encourages the penetration of "class" hierarchy, even among the Paraiyars, most of whom will, in reality, be again socially confined to the bottom of the new hierarchy.

(4) The above outline makes clear the limitations of Moffatt's arguments, in which the Harijans' replication is naively emphasised. He is indifferent 1) to the ideological (reproductive) process, through which the Paraiyar's strategies for seeking self-development ultimately and ironically result in their being encapsulated by the dominant ideology, and 2) to social change in which

domination of "caste" ideology has been eroded by "class" ideology.

9.2 The Harijans under "gift-politics"

9.2.1 The milk society as one of the preferential schemes

The argument here in fact follows that which I summarized under the title of 'the government aids as a new patronage' in section 6.1.5. As shown below and as many writers point out, the politics of the Tamil Nadu state government after Independence have been aimed at being easily understood by the ordinary people. This political line has been adopted especially by the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) and AIADMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) governments [Barnett 1976: 295][1]. As a result, the governments have tended to work out inconsistent and *ad hoc* policies [Gough 1989: 161], such as direct cash-distribution to the suffering people[2]. The state government provides the various subsidy loans for buying land, houses or domestic animals, or for supporting agriculture, which

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[1]After independence, Congress first ruled Tamil Nadu for nearly 20 years after 1946. Dravida Nationalism reduced Congress' power, and finally DMK came in power in 1967. In 1972, DMK was split into two parties, DMK of Karunanidhi and AIADMK of M.G.Ramachandran (MGR). AIADMK became more popular and ultimately gained power in 1977. The AIADMK government ended with MGR's death in 1987 and was again replaced by the DMK.

[2]The political attitude of the AIADMK (ADMK) is typically found in their "ten point plan" to uplift the poor, which was stated in the campaign of the State Assembly elections of May 1980 [Gough 1989: 162].

are issued through the Panchayat Union or through the village co-operative society such as the village co-operative agricultural credit society and the village co-operative society for milk producers. These subsidy loans can doubtlessly be regarded as important aspects of such politics and, therefore, have not been often fully returned by the debtors. Having the loans, therefore, means partly enjoying a cash-gift from the state government[3]. I call this sort of politics "gift-politics". This characteristic of present Tamil Nadu politics which increases people's dependency on the government seems to invite corruption or bribery (*lañcam* or *kaiyūṭṭu*).

In these political circumstances, the Kinnimangalam Co-operative Society of Milk Producers (*Kiṇṇimaṅkalam kūṭṭuṟavu pāl uṟpattiyāṉarkaḷ caṅkam*) was formed in 1982, as a link in the chain of the preferential policy of the state government. The chief purpose of the scheme is to raise the economic conditions of the Harijans through the benefits of buffalo milk production. The Harijans are treated better than the Caste Hindus in the scheme. The state government makes loans to the members of the cooperative society in order to enable them to buy water buffaloes (Rs 2500 per member). The loans are given through the society from the

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[3]The repayment of loans is supervised by the Panchayat Union or the co-operative societies, but the debtors very often delay their return.

Kanara Bank[4]. Harijan members pay back only half of their
loans to the bank, through the society, by the production of
milk; whereas members of the Caste Hindus must return two
thirds of their loans. Therefore, it is more beneficial for
the Paraiyars to participate in the milk society. The scheme
is also attractive for the Paraiyars because it does not
require any special conditions, so that propertyless
Paraiyars can apply to it. This point is made clearer by
comparing the scheme to the village co-operative
agricultural credit society (the agricultural society) which
provides loans only to land-holders[5].

The milk society scheme for helping the poor Harijans
may at first glance look good and appear to have no
problems, but this is not in practice the case. The problems
do not lie in the contents of the scheme but in the
procedure through which such government schemes actually are
set up in the village. Setting up the milk society in the
village was not an easy matter for the ordinary Harijans,
requiring various abilities such as filling in application

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[4]The Kanara Bank is one of the nationalized banks. The
Kanara Bank was chosen as the society's bank because it has
a branch in Chekkanurani, the nearest town.

[5]The Agricultural society which the Kinnimangalam
people join was established in 1958. The present number of
members is 890 from seven villages, which includes 172
Harijan members. Though even a landless person can obtain
membership, a borrower must have land. At present, there are
240 members who have taken loans out of the 890 members (106
borrowers from Kinnimangalam), of whom only eight (four from
Kinnimangalam) are Harijans. The society uses MDCCB (Madurai
District Central Co-operative Bank) for its activities.

forms, negotiating with administrative officers, obtaining permission from the higher castes, and reaching a consensus among the Paraiyars themselves. Thus a talented member of the village Paraiyars, such as CV, had to act as a leader in order to facilitate the co-operation of both concerned villagers and the administrators. CV, who is the main founder of the present village milk society, is not only knowledgeable, but also has political connections, as an old member of the Congress party. In the situation of a particular person leading the powerless, it is obviously easy for that person to monopolise the management of the society. CV's monopoly of the milk society causes ongoing problems for the society. These problems deepen the divide within the Paraiyar community and have some repercussions on the Caste Hindus. This is because an undertaking as big as the milk society is invaluable for the villagers, especially for the Paraiyars, who in the village situation find it difficult to have opportunities for making a profit and most of whom are suffering from poverty. As was pointed out in section 6.1.5, such government subsidy schemes as the preferential policy, generally speaking, tend to be regarded as good opportunities for gain by shrewd villagers.

Villagers are thus interested in politics and they are very concerned about political parties. This suggests that it is useful for a better understanding of people's behaviour to clarify the political consciousness of the

villagers, and of the Paraiyars, and to more clearly
appreciate the characteristics of Tamil Nadu politics,
before proceeding to the details of the problems of the milk
society.

9.2.2 Political parties and the village Paraiyars

As Béteille points out [Béteille 1965: 221], there is
no doubt today that politics (power in Béteille's sense)
forms a relatively independent domain apart from caste and
class. This is, for example, suggested by the fact that any
political party cannot ignore, and must take into account,
the Harijans as the "dominated majority"[6]. This means that
it is crucial for a political party to respond to the urgent
needs of the Harijans in order to have a chance of winning
an election. It is a historical fact that all the parties
which have ruled Tamil Nadu, such as Congress, DMK and
AIADMK, have stressed the necessity of a rise in the socio-
economic conditions of the Harijans. As I noted at the
outset, the tendency towards concrete and more readily
understandable politics has increased through the DMK and
AIADMK governments. It is mainly the AIADMK government which
introduces *ad hoc* policies like the direct supply of cash to
the social sector suffering from poverty. The socially

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[6]The Brahmans are sometimes called the "dominant
minority" [Nair 1969: xiii]. In contrast, it seems that the
Harijans (SC and ST) who occupy 19.5% (SC:18.4%, ST:1.1%) of
the total population of Tamil Nadu (about 48.41 million in
1981) can be called the "dominated majority" [Government of
India 1988].

repressed people rather welcome such policies, because they believe that only political power can overcome the haughty and inefficient bureaucracy with which they are disgusted and cannnot cope[7]. It is said that M.G.Ramachandran, an outstanding charismatic leader of AIADMK [Barnett 1976: 296-7], especially responded to these demands of the people[8]. This, to some extent, explains the villagers' relatively great concern with politics, which is concretely expressed as their preferences for particular political parties. The interdependent link between the poor seeking quick welfare, and the political party seeking supporters, which generally characterizes recent Tamil Nadu's politics, is called "gift-politics" by me[9]. This also explains that a person with political connections has more influential power than villagers lacking such connections, as Beteille also points out [Béteille 1965: 200].

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[7]This attitude corresponds with the case studies done by Barnett. Five case subjects of various castes, including two Adi-Dravidas, agreed with the idea that a few strong leaders would do more for the country than all the laws and talk [Barnett 1976: 167-185].

[8]For example, Mathur notes, "AIADMK's attitude generally and MGR's particularly towards the bureaucracy was calculatedly hostile" [Mathur 1988: 126] and, furthermore, "MGR introduced certain administrative innovations and welfare schemes for the poor and the down-trodden and pushed them through despite all odds" [ibid.]

[9]As Béteille states, mobility of power is relatively higher than that of class or of caste [Béteille 1965: 221]. Due to its quick and radical nature, politics is expected to provide quick and effective solutions by the socially repressed people.

Generally speaking, who the supporters of a particular
party are, is a well-known fact among the villagers. This
implies that politics is actually part of their life. The
selection of a party to support is one of the important
means of people's self-expression today. Table 9.1 shows the
caste-wise distribution of support for a party. Though the
survey was conducted only in terms of the head of household,
most of whom are men, it is possible to claim that its

Table 9.1 Caste-wise distribution of support for a party

No.: number of party member
No.: number of supporter
(p): party president at a village level
(S): party secretary at a village level

party caste	AIADMK	CONG- RESS	DMK	FB	JANATA	CPI(M)	others	TOTAL
Pillai	0	0	1	0	1+ 0 (p)	0	1	3
Kallar	27+19 (p)	8+ 5	10+ 3	26+ 2 (p,s)	5+ 0	1+ 0	96 (47.5%)	202
Pantaram	0	1+ 0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Acari	1+ 2	1+ 0	1+ 0	0	1+ 0	0	4	10
Natar	1+ 1	2+ 2	1+ 1 (s)	0	1	0	1	10
Vannan	4	0	1+ 0	0	0	0	2	7
Kuravan	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Paraiyar	1+16	14+10	5+10	0	2+ 1	1	114 (65.5%)	174
TOTAL	34+38 72	26+17 43	18+15 33	26+ 2 28	9+ 2 11	1+ 1 2	219	408

Table 9.2 Lineage-wise distribution of support for a party
(the Kallars)

No.: party member, No.: party supporter

party lineage	AIA-DMK	CONG-RESS	DMK	FB	JANATA	CPI(M)	DK	TOTAL
Kecavan(23)	4+1	1+0	3+1	1+0	1+0	0	0	12
Kamanan(21)	2+2	1+0	3+1	3+0	1+0	0	0	13
Cattayi(28)	3+1	4+3	1+0	3+0	3+0	0	0	18
Panniyan(65)	8+4	0	1+0	*13+0	0	0	0	26
Katta.(18)	*5+4	1	0	0	0	0	0	10
CuntraI(17)	3+3	0	1	1+1	0	0	0	9
CuntraII(4)	0	1+0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Conai.(9)	0	1	1+0	1+1	0	0	0	4
Kanni(3)	0	0	1+0	2+0	0	0	0	3
others(14)	2+4	1+0	0	2+0	0	1+0	1	11
total(202)	27+19	8+5	18+3	26+2	5+0	1+0	1	107
	46	13	13	28	5	1	1	

(note: Mark * indicates a party president at village level)

Table 9.3 Lineage-wise distribution of support for a party
(the Paraiyars)

No.: party member, No.: party supporter

party lineage	AIA-DMK	CONG-RESS	DMK	FB	JANATA	CPI(M)	DK	TOTAL
Kartananti(29)	4	5+0	1	0	0	0	0	10
Cinnananti(15)	1	3+1	3	0	1	0	0	9
Mataiyan(41)	5	2+0	1	0	0	0	0	8
Urkalan(19)	3	1+0	1+0	0	1+0	0	0	6
Tankalan(44)	1+0	5	3+1	0	1+0	1	0	12
Manakuli(6)	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Cappatai.(3)	2	1+0	0	0	0	0	0	3
others(17)	1	2+1	1+3	0	0	0	0	8
total(174)	1+16	14+10	5+10	0	2+1	1	0	60
	17	24	15	0	3	1	0	

findings, as shown in the Table, represent the villagers' general tendency, because a wife tends to vote for the same party as her husband (or she follows her father or brother when she has no husband), as Gough points out [Gough 1981: 141].

It is impressive that more than half of the Kallars clearly support particular parties, whereas about two-thirds of the Paraiyars do not specify their preferred parties. The difference is also made clear by the ratio of numbers of party members to numbers of supporters (72% in the Kallars' case vs. 36% in the Paraiyars' case). This difference seems to indicate the relative backwardness of the Paraiyars in terms of social consciousness, which is a result of their long history of social repression. Even though this difference is found, it is also true that certain leading Paraiyars very consciously concern themselves with politics.

Table 9.1, furthermore, indicates several features of village politics in the wider framework of Tamil Nadu politics. The following discussion aims at elucidating the significance of politics for the Paraiyar community today. For the discussion, more detailed information, namely, the lineage-wise distribution of suporters in terms of the Kallars and the Paraiyars, is shown in Tables 9.2 and 9.3.

Generally speaking, it is natural that AIADMK, the present party-in-government, enjoys the largest number of supporters. The AIADMK, moreover, has the characteristic that its supporters are from various castes and lineages, as is shown in Tables 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 (see [Gough 1989: 343]). The distribution of DMK[10] supporters shows almost the same tendency as that of AIADMK, but support for the DMK is less than that for the AIADMK. That is, DMK support was eroded by AIADMK because both draw on the same type of supporters[11]. It is an important feature that Congress is less supported by the village Kallars, with the notable exception of the Catayi lineage (see Table 9.2). Another remarkable feature

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[10]DMK was established by C.N.Annadurai in 1949. DMK is a political party which was derived from the long stream of anti-Brahman movements, such as the Justice Party (1916), the Self-Respect Movement (1927) and Dravida Kazhagam (1944), which was led by E.V.Ramaswamy (Periyar) [Perumal and Padmanabhan 1986: 431]. DMK successfully obtained the support of the Non-Brahman masses, particularly that of the Backward Classes, in the wave of Dravida Nationalism.

[11]Since this Kallar area, a part of the southern part of the state, was among the weakest areas of DMK influence, AIADMK could obtain considerable suppport by using the good-image of MGR [Barnett 1976: 298]. Barnett also analyses the shift in power from Karunanidhi to MGR. That is, the people chose a charismatic leader, or 'some sort of benevolent dictator' [Barnett 1976: 173] like Annadurai and MGR, rather than a strong organizer like Karunanidhi [Barnett 1976:302][Mathur 1988: 123]. More objectively, DMK had faced political difficulty due to its factionalism and narrow nationalism [ibid. 310], which invited the Emergency (1975-7) imposed by Mrs Gandhi [Gough 1989: 149-154].

is that the FB (Forward Bloc)[12] still gains strong support from the Kallars, especially the Panniyan lineage (see Table 9.2)[13].

The distribution of supporters in the Paraiyar community shows almost the opposite tendency of the Kallars'. First of all, Congress is ranked in the top position, even if narrowly. The contrast between the Kallars and the Paraiyars can be made clearer if attention is paid to the numbers of party members, that is, if the ratio of Congress members to members of AIADMK and DMK was compared among both castes (7:37 in the case of the Kallars and 13:6 in the case of the Paraiyars). Thus, while the Kallars support AIADMK, DMK and FB; the Pariayars tend to support Congress.

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[12]The FB is said to have been originally a separate stream of Congress whose active base is Bengal, but it has a radical tendency of resorting to violence beyond its parliamentary activities. In Tamil Nadu, since the FB was founded in 1939 and has been almost monopolized by *Mukkulattōr* (Kallar, Maravar and Akampatiyar), it has basically tended to be hostile to the Harijans and not to hide its feelings of caste discrimination.

[13]It is not strange that Congress, which is mainly dependent on the Brahman community, is not very popular among the Kallars, as one of the Backward Classes. However, it is a notable feature of this area that the FB has checked not only Congress' development, but also later the advance of the DMK [Barnett 1976: 91,298].

The unpopularity of CPI(M)[14] among the villagers is also obvious. The situation is very different from that of Tanjore, where the Communist party is popular among the Harijans [Gough 1981; 1989]. This clearly indicates that ideological consistency is not given importance by the villagers in general. Although Janata is a minor party in Tamil Nadu, several party members are found in Kinnimangalam due to the personal influence of BS, a Pillai leader who is the village president of the party[15].

The significant feature to note is that Congress is the most popular party among the village Paraiyars even today (cf. [Béteille 1965: 218], [Gough 1989: 343]). In so far as Kinnimangalam is concerned, as mentioned above, the

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[14]CPI(M) was formed by the leftists within CPI in 1964 because the rightists of the CPI cooperated with Congress. Although the history of the communist party prior to independence is one of internal splits and of suppression by the governing power, after independence they have by and large participated in the parliamentary system. The communists of Tamil Nadu draw their support chiefly from the urban labourers and from the agricultural labourers of Tanjore [Padmanabhan 1987: 234]. During my fieldwork, members of CPI(M) sometimes came to the village and agitated for the reformation of agriculture and labourers' conditions, but not many villagers gathered to listen, and they did not intently respond to their ideological assertions.

[15]Janata is a new party which was formed by an alliance between the left wing of Congress (the Congress(O)), the Socialist Party and so on, in the 1977 elections for the central government. In this election, Janata defeated Congress(I), and was in power until 1980. Janata is estranged from the Tamil masses not only due to it being a nation-wide party, based mainly in northern India, but also because of its upright image. Therefore, Janata tends to be supported mainly by the socially higher intellectuals.

DMK and AIADMK have failed to establish a firm basis among the Paraiyars. It should be pointed out that, although the Dravida movement has doubtlessly involved the Paraiyar people as well, this means that the movement did not make the Paraiyars change to become opponents of Congress[16]. According to Barnett, the frustrated non-Brahman youth, rather than the Harijans, led the vanguard of the anti-Congress campaign, especially at its beginning stages [Barnett 1976: 153-155][Béteille 1965: 218]. Secondly, since the ecological setting of this area is very different from that of Tanjore, and the area lacks a class of dominant Brahman landlords ruling over Paraiyar agricultural labourers, the anti-Congress campaign did not have as great an impact on the Paraiyars of this area (cf. [Gough 1981] and [Gough 1989]). Thirdly, it is said that the Harijans were better treated and more protected in Congress' ruling period [Béteille 1965: 218] than under the DMK government. Since there is no significant difference in policy towards Harijan affairs between Congress, DMK and AIADMK [Gough 1989: 475], the difference between them depends upon executive ability. This was because in the Congress ministry, led by Kamaraj, there were two Adi-Dravida

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[16]The political streams of the Dravida movement are not simple. For example, there was a 1954 incident in which the DK led by E.V.Ramasami supported the "Kamaraj Congress" against DMK [Barnett 1976: 91]. This is because "DMK ideology had been assimilated into the political culture" beyond party boundaries, as is clearly shown in case study B of Barnett's survey [Barnett 1976: 171-176].

ministers, P. Kakkan for Harijan affairs and Jothi
Venkatachalem for health. Kakkan was especially powerful[17].
On the other hand, the DMK government had only one Adi-
Dravida representative, Satyiavani Muthu, who was thought of
as a person lacking executive ability [Barnett 1976: 263-4].
According to Barnett, since DMK took power, the gap between
the non-Brahman Caste Hindus and the Harijans has been
rather widened [Barnett 1976: 300]. This generally proves
that the political line is quicker and more effective than
the administrative line and specifically explains why
Congress members of the village Paraiyar community were
influential in Kinnimangalam. The central figure of the Milk
society, CV, is a typical example. His personal connections
with the Congress party were his "social capital", which he
mainly used to enable his social rise[18]. In this sense, CV
himself verifies that politics forms an independent domain
in which a social rise can be realized, apart from caste or
class [Béteille 1965: 202-3].

Apart from this general situation, several local
factors specific to the Paraiyars of Kinnimangalam should be
taken into account in order to explain the dominance of

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[17]Barnett cites K.V.S.Mani's statement that "The
villagers were afraid of Kakkan. They thought if they did
anything, Kakkan would come and so they were afraid."
[Barnett 1976: 263]

[18]It is said that CV has good connections with a
Sittan who is a MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) of
Tamil Nadu and a member of the Congress party.

Congress among the Paraiyar community. One is the fact that Congress greatly contributed to the awakening of the village Harijans through its policies of modernization. For example, one of the middle-aged village Paraiyars, CB's father, SP (Mataiyan lineage) told me his own striking experience as follows:

"It was Congress' ruling time (around 1960). One day, in Chekkanurani I was taking lunch in a restaurant. I was sitting on the floor, as usual. At that time a higher caste man came into the restaurant and stepped on the banana-leaf on which my meal was put. So I said, "Please pay attention. I am eating here". Suddenly, he took my meal and threw it away, and said to me, "Why do you eat on the floor? You sit on a chair and eat! I will pay for it". He furthermore continued, "We are now under Congress government. We don't mind your sitting on a chair even if you are a Harijan". However, I still hesitated to do so because of my fear. Then, since the Kallar owner of the restaurant kindly urged me, "All right, you can eat sitting at the table", I did so. This was my first experience of eating at a table in a restaurant."

SP confessed that he had naively regarded himself as 'ugly and unclean' (*acinkam* and *acuttam*)[19] thinking that a god would be angry if he entered a temple, until he experienced this incident. This example well conveys the contribution of Congress to the reformation of the Harijans' social conditions.

Another example showing Congress' support of the Harijans, which is well-known and rather unforgettable among the village Paraiyars, is the series of incidents caused by

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[19]The reason I translate the term as 'unclean' is that SP emphasizes mainly his physical dirtiness and his unsophisticated manners in those days. This interpretation given by him already reflects his modernized attitude.

the violent clash between the Kallars and the Harijans in
the village of Ramanathapuram, called Mutukulattur, in
1957[20]. Since the village was the birthplace of
Mutturamalingatevar (a Maravar), a charismatic leader of the
FB of Tamil Nadu, the clash was politicized and soon ·
developed into an all-out confrontation between the Congress
government and the FB. Though Mutturamalingatevar was
arrested, the Kallars, instigated by FB, began to attack the
Harijans' colonies in the Ramanathapuram and Madurai
regions[21], in retaliation for the Congress government's
(actually Kakkan's) drastic action of executing seven
Kallars of Mutukulattur for their violence against the
Harijans. Kinnimangalam was also influenced by the troubles.
My Pillai informant, SB, adopting an 'objective' stance,
relates what happened in the village.

The Kallars supporting FB, particularly the Panniyan
lineage[22], attacked the Paraiyars and the Natars[23]. In the

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[20]It is said that in the village an untouchable Pallar
man called Immanuvel was killed by the Kallars and this
triggered the clashes between the Pallars and the Kallars,
in which many people died.

[21]The extreme southeastern Mukkulattor area is the
only area in which the Kamaraj Congress did not have stable
support, because the area was dominated by FB, even though
the Harijans did support Congress [Barnett 1976: 91,94,152].
The trouble spread readily in this area.

[22]As Table 9.2 shows, the strong connection between
the Panniyan lineage and FB is still maintained today.
Nearly half of the supporters of FB are from the Panniyan
lineage and, moreover, all are party members, including the
local president.

case of Kinnimangalam, the situation was rather complicated because anti-Panniyan Kallars rather supported the Paraiyars' side. The attacks continued for about two years, during which the powerless Paraiyars suffered enormous damage. The Paraiyars could not directly resist the Kallars, so some Paraiyars adopted a rather indirect means of resistance. For example, they themselves set their houses alight and then complained to the police that the Kallars were responsible[24]. Fortunately, after this harsh experience, there were no other terrible disturbances in the village. However, the Paraiyars still hold feelings of hatred and fear toward the Kallars, especially toward the Panniyan lineage[25].

This incident again provides an example in which Congress took the Harijan's side. The incident, which includes three levels of conflict, namely the Kallars vs. the Paraiyars, FB vs. Congress, and the Panniyan group vs. the anti-Panniyan group, suggests that politics tends to cross boundaries of caste.

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[23] The reason the Natars were also attcked by supporters of FB is that the chief minister of the Congress government, K.Kamaraj was from the Natar community. In Kinnimangalam, it is said that a Panniyan broke a mud pot filled with faeces and urine in front of a Natar house.

[24] It should be recalled that there is the special police for the abolition of Untouchability (see section 2.3) and the police worked to some extent effectively under the power of Kakkan. If not for the presence of a person like Kakkan, this tactic of the Paraiyars would not have been successful.

[25] The Paraiyars' hatred against the Panniyan lineage is confirmed by them. When I asked several Paraiyars about their image of each lineage of the Kallars, their impressions of the Panniyan lineage were constantly the worst. There is a short story which the Paraiyar people often cite for illustrating what they see as the bad and violent nature of the Panniyan people: "When the Kallar people were catching fish, they started to compete with themselves for fish. A Panniyan person snapped at another Kallar's nose and took it off." So it is said that the Panniyan people are "those who bite other people's noses".

Table 9.4 The Paraiyars who enjoyed government housing
schemes and their present support for a party

(1) Congress' housing scheme (1961)

party \ lineage	AIADMK	CONGRESS	not specified	TOTAL
Kartananti	0	3+0	3	6
Cinnananti	0	1+1	1	3
Mataiyan	0	0	2	2
Manakuli	0	2	1	3
others	1	1+0	1	3
total	1	5+3	8	17

(2) DMK's housing scheme (1974-5)

party \ lineage	AIADMK	CONGRESS	DMK	JANATA	not specified	TOTAL
Kartananti					2	2
Cinnananti				1	2	3
Mataiyan					3	3
Urkalan	1+0	1+0				2
Tankalan	1		1+0		4	6
others					1	1
total	1+1	1+0	1+0	1	12	17

(3) AIADMK's housing scheme (1981-2)

party \ lineage	AIADMK	CONGRESS	DMK	JANATA	not specified	TOTAL
Kartananti		1+0			2	3
Cinnananti			1			1
Mataiyan	1		1		8	10
Urkalan				1+0	2	3
Tankalan		3	1+0		4	8
Manakuli					1	1
others			1+2		2	5
total	1	1+3	2+4	1+0	19	31

The most visible and concrete benefits which the Congress government provided for the village Paraiyars were the free-supply of house plots and houses to them under the housing scheme in 1961. This housing scheme formed the basis of Cluster III, and greatly improved the Paraiyars' housing conditions. Of course, the DMK and AIADMK governments also successively have made great efforts to supply better houses to the Harijans. Table 9.4 shows that only the initial housing scheme carried out by the Congress government is, even today, clearly connected with the Congress-support of the people who enjoyed its benefits (see Table 9.4-(1)). This is not always the case with the second housing scheme (the free-supply of houses and plots) carried out by the DMK government in 1974-5 (see Table 9.4-(2)), and in the preferential scheme of housing loans for the Harijans, carried out in 1981 and 1982 under the AIADMK government (see Table 9.4-(3)). There is no doubt that those who received the benefits have been the core group of Congress supporters, as Party members. Moreover, the Kartananti lineage and its brother lineage, the Cinnananti lineage, benefited much from the scheme (9 houses out of 17). Why has this taken place? The main reason lies in the activity of CV, whose lineage is the Kartananti. KP, a Tankalan who is an opponent of CV in the difficulties of the milk society, describes CV, as follows.

At that time, there was no person among the village Paraiyars who could negotiate with the administrative

officers, except CV, who was educated, even though only at a
primary level. All official matters were left to him. When
the Congress government introduced the housing scheme for
the Harijans, CV became the general agent of the Paraiyar
community for negotiating with the authorities concerned. It
is significant that, since CV was active as a party member
of Congress, his monopoly not only is due to his being
literate, but also depended on his personal connections with
Harijan politicians of the Congress party, who work under
the influence of Kakkan. At any rate, CV fully used the
scheme for his own money-making, by himself dealing with all
tenders for house construction. Other Paraiyar people
believed in him, and they were at his beck and call. For
example, CV required those who applied for the housing
scheme to pay Rs.20 each, claiming that this money was
necessary for obtaining the cooperation of the officers. In
this way, he often collected money from the Paraiyars on
distorted pretexts.

It is necessary to deal carefully with this

observation from KP's point of view, but the first portion

of KP's statement is objectively true according to my cross-

checking. There is no doubt that CV did in fact contribute

to the introduction of the housing scheme in the village

through his political connections. CV gave first priority to

his own relatives among the Kartananti in the distribution

of the benefits of the scheme. By this means, he probably

elicited or increased their support for the Congress party.

By citing these examples, I have demonstrated why

Congress has maintained its popularity and has enjoyed the

most stable support among the Paraiyar community in this

village. The last example most clearly suggests that

politics (power in Béteille's sense) as "social capital"

provides the landless and propertyless Paraiyars a chance of

establishing their socio-economic position in a wider social

network. CV is a typical Harijan who has accumulated his

social power by mediating between the state level of

politics and the everyday activities of his community.

However, the community has changed in the past 30 years.

This is verified by the ongoing problems of the milk society

which appears to be CV's other big undertaking to make money

for himself. The current social situation is not the same as

that of the early 1960s, in which CV's authority was simply

accepted. His attempt to monopolize the milk socity has not

been easily accomplished and his social power has been

challenged by other active Paraiyars (see section 6.2.2). In

this sense, the problems of the milk society, which are

discussed in the next section, are regarded as an epitome of

the social dynamism of the Paraiyar community today. It will

also be shown that government schemes provide opportunities

for exploitation.

9.3 The Problems of the Milk Society and the Paraiyars' strategies

9.3.1 The Milk Society and its difficulties

Poverty is doubtlessly the enemy of the village

Paraiyars. This leads us to the simple but important fact

that the village Paraiyars are always struggling to earn

their livelihood. Therefore, they naturally show interest in

opportunities to make money. The pressure of poverty forms

the basic social environment in which the difficulties of

the milk society take place.

My concern here is to clarify the political attitudes of the Paraiyar people. Though so far I have rather fragmentally dealt with the behaviour of several individuals, such as KP, SK (KP's father), CB, SP(CB's father) and CV, the on-going difficulties of the milk society, which involve most of the influential persons of the Paraiyar community, are useful for disclosing the dynamic interactions between these Paraiyar leaders and their strategic attitudes.

CV (the Kartananti lineage, in his 50s) is consistently the focal person of the problems. As has already been explained in the previous section, social conditions today are not the same as those of the 1960s. Several educated young leaders, like KP (the Tankalan lineage, in his 30s), have begun to voice their opinions in the Paraiyar community and therefore CV's monopoly has begun to be checked. According to KP, he himself is the first person who openly opposed CV[26]. This is confirmed by several other villagers. The problems of the milk society have two stages so far, that is, the first stage in which KP opposed CV, and the second stage in which RJ (a former Kallar

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[26]In addition to his monopoly over the housing scheme, CV has allegedly attempted to sell without permission public land given to the Harijans by the government. There were various problems within the Paraiyar community even before the problems of the milk society. KP, a graduate of ITI, has played a leading part in checking CV.

director of the milk society) and TK (the leader of the Cinnananti lineage) jointly have opposed CV.

It was necessary to gain the all-out support of the Paraiyars and the Kallar's cooperation in order to found the milk society. At first, CV had to persuade the young leader KP who was basically opposed to him. CV narrowly gained KP's support by giving him the position of the first director of the milk society and, then, gained the Kallars' cooperation through RJ, who was given the seat of the vice-president of the society. The milk society started with a governing body which consisted of the following persons: 1) the president VM, CV's eldest son (a Paraiyar, the Kartananti lineage); 2) the vice-president RJ (a Kallar, the Kecavan lineage); and three directors, 3) KP (a Paraiyar, the Tankalan lineage), 4) SP (a Paraiyar, the Mataiyan lineage) and 5) ST (a Kallar, the Cuntravalliyamman (II) lineage). It is obvious that CV manipulates his son, the president VM. Each member of the society purchased buffaloes, and the society's activities progressed well for a while. After some time, however, trouble began. This was the start of the stage in which KP actively opposed VM and CV. KP explains:

One day VM asked the milk society to pay Rs 3000, which was claimed to be expenses incurred by the activities of the milk society. This demand was refused by the other directors including me. After this incident, I began to check the account book every day in order to prevent VM from embezzling the profits of the society. CV and VM plotted to

drive out me from the society through trickery[27]. However, their trickery failed, and they began to rather openly usurp money by various crooked schemes, such as watering milk, altering the account book etc.. An actual example is this. When the society sold milk for Rs 3.5/liter, VM wrote down Rs 3.0/liter on the account book and he pocketed the difference. Despite the warnings of other directors and me, he repeatedly did such crooked things. So the other directors and I appealed to the Superintendent of the Milk Society, at the Madurai District Office, to send an inspector to investigate. However, since VM had revised the account correctly by bribing the members of the society before the inspector came, I failed to catch VM out. It became known later that the inspector of the milk society had taken a bribe from VM and advised him to revise the account beforehand. This incident finally made me leave the milk society because I was fed up with not only the corruption of VM but also the injustices of administration[28].

After KP left the society, the vice-president and

other directors still maintained a working relationship.

However, it is alleged that CV, VM and their families more

and more insolently attempted to extract profits from the

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[27]According to KP, VM himself put clay into the milk and VM reported to the police that KP did it. However, the trick was disclosed, since VM's cousin dealing with milk cans honestly witnessed that KP did not do this deed. VM was warned by the police that he would be punished if he did it again.

[28]KP was also fed up with the other directors' selfish behaviour. For example, KP once prepared a petition accusing CV's family of monopolising the milk society and calling for the reformation of the society. Three other directors, including RJ, signed the petition. The petition was submitted to the agricultural minister and the chief secretary of the milk society scheme. They promised to send an officer to inspect the society's activities. As a countermeasure, CV's party made a different petition, claiming that what KP wrote was untrue. Astonishingly, CV's petition also carried three directors' signatures. As a result, KP was accused by the inspecting officer.

milk society[29]. In time, another Kallar director, ST, also left the society. Then, the trouble in the milk society entered the second stage.

It is claimed that CV's group saw the other directors as obstacles in their attempt to monopolize the milk society. They thus planned to reorganize the governing body of the society by holding an election. The election, which it is claimed was manipulated high-handedly by VM and CV, caused the spread of the trouble outside the society. The vice-president, RJ, who had co-operated with VM and CV before this incident, became a strong opponent of them after the election. He criticises CV as follows:

CV's aim of conducting the election was to expel all the Caste Hindus and the Paraiyar members who were opposed to him, from the milk society. Though the election was not necessary, CV persuaded the superintendent of the milk society to grant permission for the election by saying that it was impossible to fill two vacant directors' posts through negotiation among the members. In order to achieve their purpose, VM and CV remade the voters' list, so that it consisted only of members supporting them, by imposing new criteria[30] of qualification for a voter. As a result, VM

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[29]In this stage, it was already claimed by villagers that CV and VM often pocketed loans for buying buffaloes and the profits of the milk society. SP, a former director, commented that CV and his family had rapidly achieved their economic-rise through the activities of the milk society.

[30]According to RJ, the new criteria they imposed required 1) a voter to have given the milk society more than 300 ml of milk during the past four months and 2) to have never failed to pay proceeds to the society in the past. But SP told me another criterion: that the right to vote was reserved for only members who registered after 1985.

reported that only 38 members out of the 210 members[31] of the society satisfied the qualifications for a voter. RJ and one of the directors, SP, were ommitted from the voters' list[32]. Since it was obvious that the criteria were arbitrarily applied so as to retain only the supporters of CV on the list, not only the Caste Hindus but also the Paraiyar members expelled from the society got angry with VM's and CV's absurd ways. The Paraiyars held a community gathering which all the heads of household had to attend, which is called *makā-cavai*. It is said that about 75% of all the household heads of the Paraiyar community actually attended this gathering. The gathering decided that the president VM, the puppet of CV, should resign. However this decision was not upheld, being simply turned down by VM and CV. Moreover, CV organized an excursion to Kuttularam for the 38 Paraiyars who remained on the list, in order to obtain their continued support. The election was held and the intentions of VM and CV were achieved, that is to say, the privatization of the milk society by them was realized. Those opposed to the privatization, including both Paraiyars and Caste Hindus, claimed the invalidity of the corrupt election. The opposing group, led mainly by a Kallar, RJ, and a Paraiyar, TK, are preparing to file a suit against CV in the District Cooperative Assistant Registrar Office's Court which is specialized for suits relating to the activities of the cooperative societies; CV's family is trying to block this suit in various ways.

The focus of the second stage is the problematic reorganization of the milk society, which it is claimed was carried out high-handedly by CV's family, and the preparation of the suit by their opponents. RJ explained to me that he aims to have the election declared invalid by the court, and the election re-held. According to him, the series of unlawful acts carried out by CV and VM, like their

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[31]Before the election, the society had 177 members from the Kinnimangalam panchayat village, which consisted of 109 members from the Kinnimangalam hamlet and 68 from other hamlets. Of these 109 members, 80 were Paraiyars, 22 were Kallars, 4 were Natars and 3 were Acaris.

[32]KP explains that driving out RJ from the milk society was one of the main aims of the election, because CV knew that RJ was seeking the post of the president.

usurpation and corruption, is not the point at issue in this suit. This suggests that villagers are currently less concerned with the ethical aspects and more concerned with more practical aspects, reflecting their self-interest. This corresponds with the shift of the leadership of the opponents of CV from KP in the first stage, to RJ in the second stage. This difference is confirmed by KP's opinion that while he for the time being supports the people preparing the suit, this does not mean that he trusts RJ, whom he regards as having committed corruption with CV. RJ himself does not deny what he did, so that he knows that he can not raise the issue of CV's corruption in the court. Although RJ did tell me that he was resolved to use the law to defeat CV, even if his bribery was discovered and he was arrested.

Why has TK, who is not a member of the milk society, been deeply involved in this trouble? According to TK, RJ came and explained to him the problems of the milk society just after the election. TK sided with RJ, and decided to attend the preparation of the suit. TK has his own motivation. He was angry to know that his lineage (the Cinnananti) members who had been members of the milk society were ommitted from the voters' list. Moreover, according to RJ, TK has been opposed to CV because TK regards CV as responsible for many of the problems within the Paraiyar

community[33]. Since TK himself has not been involved in the alleged unlawful acts associated with the society's activities, his attitude toward the suit is a little different from RJ's. TK tends to place stress on stopping the selfish acts of CV's family, rather than on seeking for the election to be re-held. This shows that one's attitude is much determined by one's social position or the condition in which one is placed.

9.3.2 Four levels of confrontation distinguished

There is no doubt that various levels of social relationship are complexly entangled in this problem. At least four levels of confrontation can be distinguished, although my ultimate concern is to clarify the patterns of the Paraiyars' social attitudes.

(1) The level of inter-caste relations

Table 9.5, which shows the caste-wise distribution of the supporters and opponents of VM (and thus also CV), indicates that their supporters are found only among the Paraiyars, whereas Caste Hindus either stand on the opposing side or have no interest. However, this does not imply a

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[33]For example, CV allegedly converted common land given to the Paraiyar people by the government to private land, and gave it as an *otti* land to a particular Paraiyar (CV's affinal lineage). This caused a confrontation between the Kartananti lineage and the Cinnananti lineage, which is still unresolved. There are other problems concerning the common land, CV being actively implicated in most of them.

simple confrontation between the Paraiyars and the Caste

Hindus, because a considerable number of Paraiyars oppose

the president. There are two ways in which the general

Table 9.5 Caste-wise distribution of the supporters and
                opponents of VM

caste	supporter	neutral position	opponent	unclear	total
Pillai	0	0	1	2	3
Kallar	0	0	31	171	202
Pantaram	0	1	0	0	1
Acari	0	0	3	7	10
Natar	0	0	3	7	10
Vannan	0	0	0	7	7
Kuravan	0	0	0	1	1
Paraiyar	32	1	31	110	174
total	32	2	69	305	408

opposition between the Paraiyars and the Kallars influences

the present specific problem. One is found on CV's side,

which tends to use conversely people's stereotyped view that

the Kallars often bully the Paraiyars in order to weaken the

Kallar opponents' criticism of CV. This is a kind of

technique to make a particular personal problem appear to be

a more general inter-caste problem. Another is on the

Kallars' side. It cannot be denied that the Kallars'

discrimination against the Paraiyars works to strengthen

their repulsion of CV, as was indicated by RJ's attitude

mentioned above. Thus, even though the present problem does

not directly have an inter-caste character, the basic

hostility between the Paraiyars and the Kallars seems to

influence the present escalation of the problem indirectly. This makes us understand that the joint struggle of a Kallar, RJ, and a Paraiyar, TK, against CV does not necessarily indicate the cooperation of RJ and TK, but rather can be seen as a convenient means of achieving their respective aims. In other words, though RJ and TK have their own strategies, their contingent cooperation is due to their sharing the common purpose of wanting to defeat CV.

It is notable that TK, who tends to adhere to a traditional life-style, cooperates with the Kallars. TK could be called a "traditional" type of influential man (*kāriyakāraṇ*), because his life-basis is still much embedded in the traditional village framework. TK, as a servant (*paṇṇaikāraṇ*), has a strong connection with the Catayi lineage of the Kallars and also engages in agricultural labour. In addition, he is very religious and has played an important role as a 'god-possessor' (*cāmiāṭi*) at functions. I am not implying that TK is simply subordinate to the dominant caste[34], but that his cooperation with the Kallars is part of his conscious strategy, taking into account his actual social situation which is deeply involved in the conventional village system. Because TK lacks both 'economic capital' and 'cultural capital', he can only manipulate the

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[34]It is evident that TK has a conscious and critical mind about the caste hierarchy. For example, he refused to answer when I asked him to tell me the conventional caste order or the myths on the origin of the Paraiyars.

'social capital' of his confined personal network, namely, his traditional connection with his Kallar patrons and with his lineage (the Cinnananti) members.

(2) The level of inter-lineage relations

The confrontation between CV and TK is certainly regarded as an inter-lineage conflict between the Kartananti and the Cinnananti. However, since both lineages are close enough to share the same lineage deities, the confrontation is almost an internal competition within the same lineage. Another strong opponent of CV is KP, a member of the Tankalan lineage, who has blamed CV from the time the milk society was set up. Table 9.6, which shows the lineage-wise distribution of the supporters and opponents of VM, makes it clear that the opponents mainly consist of the Cinnananti lineage and the Tankalan lineage, while the Mataiyan lineage is split, and the Urkalan lineage backs the president.

Table 9.6 Lineage-wise distribution of the supporters and opponents of VM (the Paraiyars only)

lineage	supporters	opponents	unclear	total
Kartannanti	12	0	17	29
Cinnananti	0	6	9	15
Mataiyan	7	7	27	41
Urkalan	5	2	12	19
Tankalan	5	10	29	44
Cappataiyan	0	1	2	3
Manakuli	0	1	5	6
Necavan	0	0	1	1
others			16	16
total	29	27	118	174

This result well reflects the internal structure of the Paraiyar community. The affinal lineages of the Kartananti, such as the Mataiyan and the Urkalan, tend to support, even if not fully, VM as their affine[35]. In contrast, the lineages which are prohibited from having marriage relations (*paṅkāḷi muṟai*) with the Kartananti for different reasons, such as the Cinnananti and the Tankalan, openly oppose VM. The contrast can be to some extent explained by the alleged distribution of the profits that CV's family acquired from the government schemes like the milk society. There are various opportunities for the exchange of property between affinal relations, so that the property of one party flows into its affinal party in the course of time. This is, however, not the case between *paṅkāḷi muṟai*. At this juncture, it is understandable that TK, as a *uṭaṉ paṅkāḷi*[36] of the Kartananti lineage, strongly complains of CV's selfish monopolizing of the profits, rather than of CV's injustice in an ethical sense. The Tankalan people, who are placed in a peripheral social position, originally had no possibility of sharing the benefits of CV's undertaking. Therefore, they behave more

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[35]The reason why the Mataiyan has more opponents than the Urkalan can be explained by the scale of the lineage. It is natural that the bigger Mataiyan lineage (41 households) can hold more independent positions than can the Urkalan lineage (19 households).

[36]TK thinks that the relationship between CV and himself is very close and that it is thus a matter of course to share the profits among both the Kartananti and the Cinnananti.

independently towards the Kartananti people than other lineages do. This is typically represented by KP's straightforward attitude to CV. Here again, it is possible to point out that an individual's behaviour wittingly or unwittingly reflects his social position, like his kinship relations within the Paraiyar community.

(3) The level of intra-lineage relations

As shown in Table 9.6, though nearly half of the Kartananti people express their support for VM, it should not be overlooked that more than half of the lineage members reserve their judgement. In this sense, CV's family is far from enjoying the all-out support of their lineage members. This suggests that being a member of the Kartananti lineage does not automatically make one a supporter of VM, but whether one supports him or not is dependent on one's individual judgement[37]. In this sense, the evident monopoly of CV's family would cause more serious friction even within the Kartananti lineage, if CV's family failed to distribute their profits properly among the Kartananti lineage members.

(4) The level of family

I have often heard in the village that it is not unusual for there to be tension between a father and his

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[37]One youth of the Kartananti lineage claims to have witnessed VM putting clay into the milk. This independent manner shown by him supports what I am saying.

first son. It is rumoured that there is conflict between CV and his first son VM, which is still rather suppressed. VM who is now around thirty years old is said to want to seek independence from his father's domination. Even though VM is nominally the president of the milk society, everybody knows and talks of VM as being the puppet of CV. Therefore, VM is not regarded as a *kāriyakāran* among the Paraiyar community, even though he is the president. It is said that VM began to feel frustration about this situation and saw the recent election as a chance of taking an initiative by himself. Nonetheless, the situation after the election is not much different from that prior to the election. There is no doubt that this supressed tension between the father, CV, and his first son, VM, is a potential source of further conflict between them.

The description of these four levels of confrontation clearly show that today's Paraiyars behave strategically according to their individual judgement. Moreover, the variety of their behaviour can be to a considerable extent explained by their respective social circumstances, like caste, lineage and family. This does not mean that their attitudes are unambiguously determined by the given social conditions, but rather means that they consciously manipulate the 'capital' available to them in their given social positions for seeking "self-development".

9.4 Conclusion: The Paraiyar Community as an Arena

(1) The economic split among the Paraiyars

It has already been made clear in Chapter 6 that there is a decisive difference between the Paraiyars and the Kallars in terms of the possession of agricultural land. Moreover, this difference in 'economic capital', based on land, between them tends to have been preserved even since the modernization and urbanization of the 1950s, because generally only capital possessors can invest in taking advantage of a new situation. There are two ways for maintaining higher social status in the new situation, that is, 1) to invest in establishing modernized agriculture and 2) to invest in higher education so as to facilitate engagement in urban employment. A weak group, like the village Paraiyars, are obviously blocked from both ways without the aid of the government. Though it is true that the preferential schemes of the government have worked to help the Paraiyars (for example, see section 6.2), these schemes do not help them sufficiently. At the present stage, the aid of the government has rather enhanced hierarchical distinctions within the Paraiyar community. Most of the village Paraiyars remain at the bottom of the hierarchy, unchangingly suffering from poverty. It is natural that one of their greatest concerns is to find a way to make money. This was the general circumstance when the milk society was introduced, and it has remained so. Rather than contributing

to assisting the poor Harijans to raise their living standards as a whole, the milk society has increased the differentials within the Harijan community. The analysis of the troubles of the milk society has disclosed the split between the leading Paraiyars who are relatively richer, and the passive, poor Paraiyars.

(2) Patterns of leadership and state politics

The main Paraiyar actors in the troubles of the milk society are CV, VM, KP and TK, though SP can also be taken into account. The reason that I mention CV, KP and TK especially is that they seem to represent three possible patterns of leadership within the Paraiyar community. I attempt here to clarify these patterns, by briefly illustrateing the characteristics of the behaviour of these three people. Not only will this confirm their strategic attitudes for seeking self-development, but it will also suggest the strong impact of state politics, discussed in section 9.1, upon the village social sphere.

KV (KP's father) achieved his social-rise economically. His economic success enabled his son, KP, to obtain higher education (KP is a graduate of ITI), and helped establish his current leadership in the Paraiyar community. KP's economic basis is outside the village, so that he is less involved in the village economic structure, as was his father. Such independence from the village

structure is the general tendency of the peripheral Tankalan lineage, and KP typically represents this tendency and the "independent" type of leadership. There is no doubt that his straightforward attitude, as shown by his accusation against VM and his father CV, is possible due to his independent and peripheral socio-economic position. KP can afford to keep his distance from the troubles of the milk society, though he led the accusations against CV in the first stage of its troubles.

CV has also succeeded in economic accumulation, but the means he adopted were very different from those of KV. CV has profited from his ability to make connections between the village Paraiyar community and the politico-administrative sphere. His abilities are mainly due to his personal connections in the political field, which were cultivated through his activities as a member of the Congress party. It is said that for his money-making, CV has consistently used the preferential schemes of the government, such as the housing scheme for the Harijans and the scheme of the milk society. CV's undertakings have been successful because the poor Harijans have participated due to their strong desire for profit-making. As his monopoly of the milk society shows, it is possible to say that CV has probably exploited the poor village Paraiyars. It should be noted that this strategy is made possible not only by his personal ability, but also by his membership of the

Kartananti lineage, which is the most central lineage of the Paraiyar community. His deep links with other Paraiyars, especially with the people of the Four-lineages (*Narpankali*) is the basic 'social capital' of his undertaking. Thus, CV's strategy can be called a "mediating' type of leadership. Though VM tries to follow the ways of his father (CV), so far it is difficult to say that he has succeeded in establishing such leadership.

There is a third type of leadership, namely, the "traditional" type, which is represented by TK. TK has a much more traditional life-style than KP or CV. He still attaches importance to conventional social institutions, such as socio-economic dependence on the dominant castes and the unity of the lineage, because he himself profits from this dependence. Though TK's social position is not very different to that of CV, TK has probably chosen his conservative strategy due to his personality, his religious beliefs, his lower education etc. This tendency is clearly verified by his manner of accepting cooperation with a Kallar, RJ, in order to defeat his *paṅkāḷi* ('brother'), CV, whose apparent selfishness violates the unity of the lineage.

It is important to note the common features in the strategic behaviours of these leading Paraiyars. The different types of leadership can be regarded as reflecting the differences in the social positions of the individuals,

and of the qualitative and quantitative differences in their capital-holding. The feature common to all these types of leadership is the attitude of aiming to aggrandize one's social power by effectively manipulating one's accessible capital under given social conditions. The "mediating" type of leadership is by necessity the most influential in the village Paraiyar community, at least in the present village situation. This is because the government's preferential schemes in fact become opportunities for money-making. The mediator who introduces the scheme into the village can be compared to a new type of patron (*jajmān*), who exploits people, but at the same time distributes profits to them. There is a tendency for the present state politics, formulated as "gift-politics", to encourage the "mediating" type of leadership at the village level. This political feature may encourage 'social evils' like corruption and usurpation.

(3) The penetration of 'class' ideology and the
    reproduction of hierarchy among the Paraiyars

The troubles of the milk society have revealed the individualistic and strategic behaviours of the village Paraiyars. Though they are not sufficiently free from conventional social relationships such as the *jajmani*-like and inter- and intra-lineage ties, it is also true that their behaviour can not be explained adequately only by such conventional social idioms. This was made clear by the

description of the four levels of confrontation. The
strategic manoeuvrings around the milk society are not
simply determined by traditional, collective groupings, like
caste, lineage and sub-lineage, though they do to some
extent reflect these conventional social categories. In
these manoeuvrings, an individual's self-interest tends to
take precedence over the collective-interest. On the one
hand, this individualistic behaviour to some extent appears
to reproduce the conventional relationships. On the other
hand, it also works to change, and moreover, dismember
conventional "caste culture" [Barnett 1975: 151].

I pointed out that the ethical aspect of the
accusation of corruption in the case of the milk society has
been reduced in the course of time. The point at issue has
been shifted to the more practical purpose of stopping CV's
monopoly and seeking to share the profits. This change is
impressive, and, in a sense, natural for those who are
suffering from poverty. This suggests that most of the
Paraiyars tend to engage in short-sighted struggles to make
a profit. The leadership found among the Paraiyars must be
understood in terms of this background situation and
atmosphere. Therefore, it is natural that the "mediating"
type of leader, who can obtain sanction for government
schemes in reply to the demands of the poor Harijans, most
attracts the Paraiyars in general. In practice, the
"mediating" leader may initiate such projects in order to

take advantage of them for his own purposes, and it is
possible for him to do so because of the acute needs of the
Paraiyars. These short-sighted competitive struggles among
the Paraiyars, exemplified by the milk society problems,
ultimately contribute to the penetration of "class" ideology
into the Paraiyar community. The milk society problems show
that the internal conflicts within the Paraiyar community
are extremely intense, so that most of the energy of the
Paraiyars is consumed competing with their nearest rivals,
as Burghart suggests in a different context [Burghart 1983:
641]. Since economic improvement is the goal of their
competition, there is no doubt that the "subject"
interpellated by individualistic "class" ideology is formed
through these struggles. The "subject" can be seen as
secular and self-assertive, and at the same time,
hierarchical. Although "class" ideology appears democratic
because "class" is not determined by birth and therefore
enables open competition, it should not be overlooked that
"class" ideology is penetrated by hierarchical values. Thus,
we have the irony that the acute struggles of the Paraiyars,
who aim at economic improvement in a minimum sense, deviate
from or negate the "caste" hierarchy of the conventional
frameworks, based on caste and lineage, but finally serve to
place the Paraiyars within a "class" hierarchy. This irony
clearly illustrates the trap into which most Paraiyars would
fall if they naively believed that their economic
improvement would solve their repression, as many Paraiyars

told me. For, as is verified by the fact that the economic differential among the Paraiyars has recently widened, it is also obvious that only a limited number of Paraiyars can enjoy the beneficial aspects of "class" ideology, and that the majority will remain at the bottom of the ladder of the "class" hierarchy (see also [Gough 1989]).

Although this is a reality, the Paraiyars' statement that the economy will save them should be accepted in its deep sense. In its deep dimension, their insight about the symbolic power of money (economy) should be paid attention to. They may know intuitively that money has the power to compensate them for their degraded status, which is fixed by birth. It seems to me that the symbolic power of money, in this context, is related to something defined as 'the superiority of the giver' in anthropological arguments. Economic power will never erase caste boundaries, but its symbolic power can reduce the gap in social status in practice[38]. In this context, it is also possible to regard CV's activity as an ironical example in which the Paraiyars' radical (maybe selfish) challenge against "caste" ideology is attempted through the introduction of a "class" ideology.

Though it is not easy to break this irony, it is an urgent task to solve in order that modernization can

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[38]The success of the social rise of the Natars provides a good example [Hardgrave 1969]. Their economic improvement provided a firm basis for their climb up the caste ladder.

properly work to enhance the social position of the
Harijans.

CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSION: "POLLUTION" IDEOLOGY AND THE STRATEGIZING PARAIYARS

In order to overcome the limitations of the conventional research attitude found in studies on caste society, the methodological standpoint of this thesis has been characterized as the "other-worldly", "bottom-up" and "dynamic (generative, interpretative)" approach.

In Part Two, the concept of pollution or impurity was re-examined in the Tamil village context, in the light of the review discussion of section 1.2.1. It was vital to examine the concept of pollution in order to break the strong spell of the Dumontian understanding of Hindu society. My basic claim is that, though the villagers (both Caste Hindus and Paraiyars) to some extent accept the "pure-impure" ideology, the value in which they truly believe is "pollution" ideology in the sense in which I distinguished it from the Dumontian "pure-impure" ideology. In Part Three, the village Paraiyars' practices were analyzed from the theoretical perspective discussed in section 1.2.2. It was revealed that the Paraiyars' practices can be regarded as strategies for seeking their self-development, based on an interpretative understanding, which goes beyond the static

and unproductive dispute between the disjunction and consensus theorists.

10.1 The Findings: Strategy based on "pollution" ideology

(1) "pollution" and "impurity": an interpretative distinction

It was firstly made clear that the nature of pollution (*tīṭṭu*) is a subjective feeling of the "menace of death (destruction of an inner order)". Pollution tends to be avoided or suppressed because it appears destructive. A knowledge of 1) the deep connection between the life crises, accompanied by rites of passage, and the generation of pollution, and of 2) the villagers' ardent worship of village deities and of lineage deities, in which blood sacrifice is indispensable, clearly indicates that pollution is positively accepted and used in order to acquire newly increased life-energy. Thus there are two ways of interpreting pollution, according to the different attitudes toward pollution. One is the *rejective* manner of shutting out and degrading pollution due to its fearful connotation. The other is the *affirmative* manner, in which the destruction of the existing order is positively accepted and used as an opportunity for reconstructing a new order. The rejective manner toward pollution invites the unambiguously negative implication of pollution, which is dominant in the shallow conscious level of the villagers' minds. Since this negative aspect obviously works to define the ritual

hierarchical distinctions, this aspect can be called "impurity" as the opposite pole of "purity" and represents the Dumontian sense of pollution. The affirmative attitude toward pollution reveals the creative aspect of pollution, which embodies the dynamic process of 'death and the regeneration of life' (the logic of sacrifice). This aspect of pollution is suitable to be called "pollution" because the ambiguity of pollution is accepted as it is.

On the basis of the distinction between "pollution" and "impurity", it is possible to distinguish "pollution-sacredness" from "purity-sacredness". This distinction is typically found in the discussion of the relationship between village goddesses and village gods. Both types of deity are necessary in villagers' lives because the goddesses who embody "pollution-sacredness", create *cakti* (Skt. *śakti*), and the gods who embody "purity-sacredness" maintain it. This dynamic relationship can be described as the complementary cycle between "the intimate order (*l'ordre intime*)" and "the real order (*l'ordre réel*)", in Bataille's sense.

This basic finding leads us to clearly formulate the dimension of "pollution" ideology which has been hidden by the "pure-impure" ideology and has become mixed up with the latter. It is necessary to realise that "pollution" ideology has opposite connotations to "pure-impure" ideology. The clear distinction of "pollution" ideology from "pure-impure"

ideology illuminates the contrasting characters between
Dumontian "pure-impure" ideology, which reflects the
conservative attitude preserving (justifying) the existing
secular and hierarchical order - making boundaries, and
"pollution" ideology, which reflects the creative
(generative) attitude based on religious egalitarianism -
breaking boundaries down. This is my systematic
understanding of the concept of pollution which
comprehensively explains the relationship between Dumontian
theory and mine[1]. I wish to emphasize here that the
distinction between "impurity" and "pollution" has been made
using an _interpretative_ approach. In other words, pollution
can not be defined unambiguously or objectively, but must be

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[1]The recognition of the distinction between
"pollution" and "impurity" corresponds with the change in
paradigms of anthropological approaches from the
structuralist to the post-structuralist. The interpretation
of "impurity" reflects the perspective of a system-builder,
namely, the dominant viewpoint. Structuralists, whose view
tends to overlap the perspective of a system-builder,
explain the concept of pollution as follows: firstly a
binary opposition of two categories such as "purity"
(insider) and "non-purity" (outsider) is set up and next an
ambiguous mediator between the two is introduced and
negatively labelled as "impurity" (anomalous in- and out-
sider). In contrast, the interpretation of "pollution"
reflects the inner view of the socially peripheral being
which is spoken of as an ambiguous mediator by the system-
builder or the structuralists. However, it is soon noticed
that this inner view is commonly shared by everyone, as was
argued in Chapter 3. In this sense, this emphasis of the
aspect of "pollution" can be seen as part of a post-
structuralist attempt which aims at undermining the one-
sidedness of the structuralists' top-down understanding of
the caste system. This is parallel with Bourdieu's criticism
of the structuralist approach as unwittingly leading to an
ethnographer's 'privileged' standpoint [Bourdieu 1987:
Ch.1].

interpretatively determined according to subjective attitudes toward pollution. This confirms that the "other worldly", "bottom-up", and "dynamic (interpretative, generative)" approach is indispensable for properly elucidating the deep level of consciousness and the viewpoint of the socially oppressed people.

(2) Ideological configuration in the village setting

Although "pure-impure" ideology appears to objectively (actually, from the dominant view) define the caste hierarchy, the villagers' primary ideology is "pollution" ideology, which attaches importance to "productive power" rather than to "purity". "Pollution" ideology is basically shared by both Caste Hindus and Paraiyars in the village.

On the basis of the primary value of "pollution" ideology, "pure-impure" ideology is consciously manipulated as a means of domination by the dominant castes. This manipulation is made possible by the general tendency that, even after the decline in dominance of the Brahmans, as a result of the Tamil Nationalist movement, Brahmanical values, namely the "pure-impure" ideology, are still believed to be useful for raising one's status. Nonetheless, there are some differences among the dominant castes in terms of how the "pure-impure" ideology is manipulated, depending upon their socio-cultural conditions. The Pillais, the dominant minority in Kinnimangalam, who are the ritually

highest caste in the village, are relatively more keen on following the "pure-impure" ideology in all aspects of their activities, whereas the Kallars, who are ritually low but socio-economically dominant, believe half-heartedly in this ideology but emphasize it chiefly for maintaining the vertical distinction between Caste Hindus and Harijans [Deliège 1992: 166]. This difference suggests that one's adoption of "pure-impure" ideology does not simply indicate one's true belief in it.

Besides the above-mentioned configuration of "pollution" ideology and "pure-impure" ideology, it is necessary today to take into account the change in politico-economic conditions associated with modernization, especially since Independence. The strong pressures of the market economy on village life have made the villagers give more importance to the economy. This tendency is formulated as the penetration of "class" ideology. Not only does the "class" hierarchy hold important social connotations today, but it tends to form an independent domain separated from the ritual hierarchy, based on "pure-impure" ideology. This change is typically exemplified by the new landowners. The increase in the importance of "class" ideology is not only imposed by modernization, but is also fundamentally enhanced by the mentality of "pollution" ideology, which attaches importance to "productive power". The concern with "productive power" penetrates both the desire for economic

power ("class" ideology) and "pollution" ideology, even
though the former is secular (this-worldly) and the latter
is other-worldly. These are the general socio-cultural
circumstances in which both Caste Hindus and Paraiyars are
placed today.

(3) The fundamental value of the Paraiyars: "productivity"

My task has been to answer questions regarding the
present value system (the cultural situation) and actual
practices of the village Paraiyars in their socially
repressed situation. It is also pointed out that this task
is naturally led by the above-mentioned argument on the
distinction between "pollution" and "pure-impure"
ideologies.

The Paraiyars share with Caste Hindus the above-
mentioned ideological configuration, in which "pollution"
ideology is primarily important for them. However, the
difference between Caste Hindus and Paraiyars lies
particularly in their attitudes toward the ritual
hierarchical ideology. There is no doubt that the social
hierarchical barrier between the Caste Hindus and the
Paraiyars labelled as "impure" remains strong in the village
sphere. However, today the Paraiyars refute and deny this
ritual hierarchy (the social hierarchy based on "pure-
impure" ideology), at least on a conscious level, and they
thus tend to explain the social hierarchy as an economic

differential between the dominant castes and themselves, as is also reported by other writers ([Freeman 1979] and [Vincentnathan 1987])[2]. This claim is not baseless but is based on the social reality that today the Paraiyars are not always confined to the traditional village system associated with the ritual hierarchy, but that they can (or must) live in the wider social framework beyond the village system, where "class" ideology is more prevalent. The government's preferential schemes, which work as a form of new patronage, especially for the Harijans, tend to encourage this attitude of the Paraiyars. Its validity is supported by the fact that the differential between the Paraiyars and the dominant castes, in terms of everyday life circumstances, has been changed from a qualitative to a quantitative one. This has been exemplified by the recent improvement in housing conditions among the village Paraiyars, due to the government housing schemes. Therefore, politics is significant for the Paraiyars who lack the ability to help themselves. This explains why they worship powerful political leaders, like MGR, as if they were incarnations of gods.

This attitude of the Paraiyars, in which the ritual hierarchy is re-interpreted by the economic hierarchy [Delìege 1992: 166], however, is not only motivated by their

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[2]This attitude can be categorized as a 'counter-cultural' model (see section 1.2.2).

feelings against the imposed "pure-impure" ideology, but is
naturally derived from "pollution" ideology which attaches
importance to "productivity". This point can be made clear
by their subjective understanding of caste boundaries. While
it looks contradictory that on the one hand, the Paraiyars
deny caste hierarchy based on "pure-impure" ideology, but on
the other hand, tend to preserve their caste boundaries, as
do Caste Hindus, from their subjective viewpoint this is not
contradictory. The reason for wanting to preserve caste
boundaries does not lie in the "pure-impure" ideology, but
in the Paraiyars' subjective understanding that the
violation of a caste boundary invites danger leading to
social disorder and threatens their idendity[3]. In other
words, their fear of inter-caste mixing is connected with
the possibility (anxiety) of decreasing the "productive
power" of their own caste by losing their own property
("flower"), as is evident in their attitude toward inter-
caste marriage (see section 5.3).[4] In this sense, their
subjective understanding is again based on the value of
"productivity", which is the primary value of "pollution"
ideology. Similarly, it is noted that the Paraiyars follow
the "pure-impure" ideology in the religious context because

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[3]This anxiety does not seem to be unfounded, and it
may result from their actual harsh experiences, in that
inter-caste mixing has caused trouble in practice.

[4]Therefore, it is difficult to extract the substance-
code theory, based on "pure-impure" ideology, from their
attitude toward caste barriers.

they think that the "pure" state of worshippers is necessary

for obtaining gods' grace, such as security and

productivity[5]. For them, there is no contradiction between

this notion and the conduct of blood sacrifice, embodying

"pollution" ideology. In other words, their religious

behaviour, which objectively appears to be an acceptance of

"pure-impure" ideology, can be seen to be subjectively based

on the logic of "pollution" or "pollution-sacredness". It is

added that they never think of their usual state as

"impure". There is thus no difference in terms of the

fundamental value system between the dominant castes and the

Paraiyars. "Self-development through productivity" is the

basic value of the Paraiyars, as it is of the Caste Hindus,

though, in the case of the Pillais, this basic value is much

repressed by Brahmanical values. As already mentioned, such

materialistic values are the foundation on which "class"

ideology is introduced.

(4) The Paraiyars' subjective interpretations and strategies

　　　As has been suggested, we must be conscious of the

disparity between what the Paraiyars do and what the

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[5] In this connection, I am reminded of Dumont's
question as to why people stop eating meat to see the meat-
eating deity [Dumont 1986: 380 fn.8]. It seems to me that
this question is posed because Dumont strongly adheres to
the dichotomous notion of "purity-impurity". The confusion
lies in his misleading term, a meat-eating god, because the
essential nature of animal sacrifice is not eating meat but
the sacrificial act itself. (Though I do not fully agree
with Fuller's argument [Fuller 1988], he doubtlessly points
out this problem of Dumont.)

Paraiyars believe. For instance, the custom of *mutanmai* (priority) conducted in the village or lineage festivals in which the Paraiyars are the last recipients of *piracatam* appears problematic for them because it works as an ideological device to legitimate the conventinal social hierarchical order in the name of god. In practice, the Paraiyars do not take the *mutanmai* order seriously, but accept it as part of the necessary ritual procedure in order to achieve their primary purpose of enjoying god's grace. This suggests that they sometimes, despite not believing in it, accept or utilise the "pure-impure" ideology as a means for seeking their "self-development".

This suggestion of their strategic viewpoint is further confirmed by other examples. The Paraiyars have primarily replicated aspects of the culture of the Kallars, as the dominant caste, in order to establish more satisfying cultural styles (for example, those of rites of passage and of lineage festivals), if they can afford to do so. In addition, as was shown by the comparative analysis of the funeral ceremonies of the Pillais, Kallars and Paraiyars, elements of the Pillais' ceremonies, which are much Sanskritized, are also fragmentarily replicated by the Paraiyars. This "over-replication (over-assimilation)" can be thought of as a manoeuvre for asserting their respectability or autonomous identity [Deliège 1992: 167], by using ritually higher values. This replication and

sometimes over-replication do not appear to result from their true beliefs in what is replicated or from their subordination to the dominant castes, but can be rather regarded as aspects of their strategies for seeking self-development.

(5) The Paraiyar community as an arena and their various strategies

The kinds of strategies which are adopted by the Paraiyars are influenced by two types of social relationships, inter-caste relationships and intra-caste ones, both of which Vincentnathan takes into account in her argument dealing with social strategies for self-esteem management [Vincentnathan 1987: Chs.IV,V,VI] (see section 1.2.2). Both types of social relationships are important, but my observations suggest that the Paraiyar community itself is rather the main arena where rivalry is intensely present.

Though the village Paraiyars still observe their traditional duties (*tolil*s) as menial village servants, their main contact with the dominant castes is found in the fields, where they work as agricultural labourers. Generally speaking, the Paraiyars cope with the rather crude dominance of the Kallars by limiting contacts to necessary business, which can be described as "avoidance and withdrawal" in Vincentnathan's terms. The Paraiyars know well that their oppressed situation is unlikely to change, even if they

resort to "defiance" or "escape" by conversion to another religion. They also have no hope in terms of "positive transactions"[6]. Therefore, as discussed in Ch.9, they tend to seek a way out by using politics and the economy connected with the wider social environment, which are conceptualized as "political movements and protests" and "non-caste-based status" by Vincentnathan. In sum, their concerns are found mainly in the sphere beyond the village caste system, rather than in the sphere of inter-caste relationships within the village.

This tendency of extending beyond the village sphere is also reflected in intra-caste relationships. Through an investigation of the milk society's problems, three types of Paraiyar leader can be recognised. It was also made clear that each kind of leadership tends to be defined by different socio-economic conditions. Firstly, the "independent" type of leadership is represented by the leader of the Tankalan lineage which is socially peripheral. He tends to show the combined attitude of "disassociation" (in Vincentnathan's terms) and 'straightforwardness' due to his economic independence from, and his social peripherality in, the village system (see Ch.6 and Ch.8). He is

[6]As examples of "positive transactions" Vincentnathan mentions the Aiyappan *pūjā* and pilgrimage, Praha shakti cult, friendship, intercaste marriages and so forth. In sum, "positive transactions" imply the degraded Harijans' positive attempts to overcome caste discrimination and enjoy an atmosphere free from caste restrictions by mixing with higher caste people [Vincentnathan 1987: 210-229].

influential and admired by many of the youth of his
community, but he ultimately avoids becoming too deeply
involved in community matters, as was shown in Ch.9. He
adopts "optimal" strategies, like "disassociation" and
"exemplary behaviour" in Vincentnathan's (or originally
Marriott's) terms. In contrast, the "traditional" type of
leader, who is still connected with the conservative aspect
of the *jajmānī* relationship, and makes a profit from the
conventional village institutions, tends to act relatively
more in concert with the dominant castes. He is an ardent
follower of the village level of deities. He, being less
economically active, but more religiously active, seems to
adopt the "minimal", but in a sense "optimal", strategy. The
"mediating" type of leader, who bridges the politico-
administrative sphere and the village sphere, is most
influential. Because the politics of the state government
have begun to work as a new type of patronage, instead of
the traditional *jajmānī* relationships, the mediater plays
the role of a new patron for the village Paraiyars. The
Paraiyars' strategic attitude is rather exaggeratedly
exemplified by a "mediating" type of leader like CV, who
seeks self-aggrandizement, even by exploiting his own
community. This "mediating" type of leader represents the
innovative aspect of *Nārpaṅkāḷi*, and his strategy, fully
dependent on political power, is typically the "optimal and
maximal" but, at the same time, "pessimal", due to his
deviant behaviour.

Although the three types of leader engage in different strategies, their common purpose is self-development. These scheming and calculating individuals sometimes come into conflict with each other. As the problems of the milk society showed, the competition or conflict within the Paraiyar community forms a significant portion of their everyday concerns. This intra-caste conflict appears to be more energy-consuming in their everyday life than are inter-caste relationships. It was also suggested that the social unit of competition tends to be 'dismembered' to a family or to an individual, and this minimal unit attempts to strategically manipulate various social boundaries, like sub-lineage, lineage, caste and village, for its self-development.

(6) The ideological shifts and "subject" formation

The actual situation is that these rather short-sighted struggles for seeking profit within the arena of the Paraiyar community have contributed partly to enhancing the replication of the upper castes' culture and, moreover, to the penetration of "class" ideology into the Paraiyar community. "Class" ideology provides the illusion of egalitarian values to the Paraiyar people because it appears to break the ritual hierarchy from which the Paraiyars have suffered. However, ultimately most of the Paraiyars are again placed at the bottom of the ladder of the "class" hierarchy. In other words, the village Paraiyars are on the

way from the "happiness of slavery" to the "sufferings of independence".

In sum, although "pure-impure" ideology, "pollution" ideology and "class" ideology can be objectively distinguished, these ideologies are consistently interpreted from the Paraiyars' subjective point of view, namely, their desire for seeking "self-development through productivity", which originates from "pollution" ideology. The Paraiyars' behaviour must be understood as part of their strategy. Moreover, their programs for self-development or self-release can not be separated from the ongoing ideological shifts from the ritual to the non-ritual (secular), from the collective to the individual, and from the hierarchical to the egalitarian (in theory). If such ideological shifts are translated into the formation of "subject", they would appear as follows. The "ritually egalitarian subject" accompanied by the "ritually hierarchical subject" in the traditional stage has been replaced by the "self-assertive and secularly hierarchical subject", which embodies a contradiction between equality and hierarchy. This new "subject", interpellated by "class" ideology, is a new trap for the Paraiyars. I will return this point below (section 10.3).

10.2 The Theoretical Contribution to the Study of Harijans

The findings of this thesis lead us to the following
conclusion, in terms of the polemical argument on Harijan
culture. It should not be essential to ask whether the
Harijans hold the same culture as the higher dominating
castes or hold a different culture (or subculture) from
them. This is the fundamental premise of my criticism of
both disjunction and consensus theorists. My criticism
derives from two key findings in terms of the comparison
between the dominant castes and the Harijans, namely, 1)
cultural consensus based on "pollution" ideology and 2)
disjunction in the interpretative or strategic dimension.

It seems to me that both disjunction and consensus
theorists share a common tendency to place Brahmanic culture
at the centre of their arguments, though there is a
difference in whether it is overestimated or underestimated.
In this sense, their investigations of local cultural values
(ideologies) seems to be inadequate. The naive and
superficial dispute as to whether the Harijans' culture is
the same as the culture of the upper castes fails to take
into account the depth of the local culture, which is
elucidated by the distinction between "pollution" and
"impurity". "Pollution" ideology, as the deeper dimension of
culture, is basically shared among all the castes, high and
low, in the village. In this sense, it can be claimed that
there is a cultural consensus between the dominant castes

and the Paraiyars, but my claim is not the same as Moffatt's. Cultural consensus in my sense does not lie in "pure-impure" ideology but in "pollution" ideology, as the key value of the shared basic Tamil culture. This point should be firmly kept in mind. Thus, I agree with Moffatt's claim of cultural unity, but can not accept his assertion that this cultural consensus is realized by the Harijans' replication of the higher castes' culture. My disagreement with Moffatt does not imply my denial of the Harijans' replicatory acts, but such acts should not be simply seen as the Harijans' true acceptance of "pure-impure" ideology. We have to be wary of a Moffatt-like "non-interpretative" viewpoint. This naturally leads us to a second aspect of the "interpretative" approach.

The interpretative viewpoint not only highlights the difference between the Harijans' actions and their real beliefs, but also reveals that it is misleading to think that there is a one-to-one correspondence between a particular ideology and a particular social group. Though "pollution" ideology is a primary cultural value shared by all castes, at least in the village which I have studied, it is objectively true that several ideologies, such as "purity-impurity", "pollution" and "class", co-exist in the village social sphere, and each is manipulated by each social group, including the Harijans. Moreover, such manipulations or interpretations are motivated by their

desire for seeking self-development. In other words, their
strategic behaviours are diversifying in appearance, but
they are integrated under the ultimate goal of self-
development enhancing productivity. For example, the custom
of meat-eating is sometimes hidden from outsiders, and is
sometimes positively claimed by the Harijans. Such responses
appear contradictory but reflect the desire for self-esteem,
an aspect of self-improvement. In sum, their rather
diversified behaviour, such as replication, denial,
disregard, etc. (passing, positive transactions, defiance,
escape, avoidance in Vincentnathan's terms), should be
regarded as part of their strategies for self-development.

From this point of view, the Harijans' "subculture"
which the disjunction theorists assert, must be carefully
reconsidered. For instance, if the Paraiyars' subcultural
components listed by Deliege [Deliège 1988: 115] were
checked, it would be soon made clear that most of them are
shared by the Kallars, the dominant caste in Kinnimangalam,
with the exception of eating dead animals, beef-eating and
restrictions of dress and study (which is now abolished).
Therefore, it is difficult to claim that the Harijans
exclusively hold a separate subculture, though there is a
difference between the Brahmanical culture and the non-
Brahmanical one. It should be again pointed out that the
level of ideologies should not be mixed up with the level of
social groups. The difference between the Caste Hindus and

the Harijans rather lies in the strategic behaviour which strongly reflects their social positions. Compared with the Caste Hindus, the Harijans' manipulation of the available ideologies is very much limited and complicated by their socially constrained situation, such as abject poverty, menial duties, degraded status, physical labour, and various restrictions on their way of life (see, for example, [Vincentnathan 1987: 176-178], [Moffatt 1979: 51]). Therefore, it seems to be problematic to naively describe the Harijans as if they lived in a sort of self-contained world, without taking into consideration their socio-historical background. Disjunction theorists fail to sufficiently investigate the Harijans' standpoint and their theories unwittingly adopt (or repeat) the Caste Hindus' view which wants to distinguish the Harijans' culture from their own culture. However, I highly evaluate the attempt of the disjunction theorists to make it clear that the Harijans are not incompetent subordinates, but are rather conscious interpreters. In addition, the notion that different strategies derive from different social conditions can explain the variety of strategies among the Harijans, ranging from the strategy of the educated, active, urban Harijans to that of the illiterate, passive, rural Harijans.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Harijans' culture does not form a separate world, but is doubtlessly a part of the village culture, which is penetrated by "pollution"

ideology, though there is disjunction at the behavioural
level, reflecting the Harijans' socio-economic and
historical background.

10.3 Final Remarks: beyond the trap of the "class" ideology

Strategies are not constructed free from outside
influences and are not determined only from the Harijans'
point of view, but they are made and remade in the course of
social interaction with the higher castes and with their
fellows (namely, through communication with others' views).
Therefore, it is necessary to take into account both
internal and external conditions. Though it is doubtlessly
true that the Harijans' position has been strongly
restricted by social power relationships, there is room,
even if limited, for free choice, by which their strategies
are constructed. In other words, there is freedom under
social compulsion among the Harijans, as Freeman makes clear
by means of the life history method [Freeman 1979]. In this
sense, the progress of modernization, or the penetration of
"class" ideology, has provided the illusion of broadening
the free space in which the Harijans can voluntarily
practise their strategies for self-improvement. However,
this remains only an illusion for most of the propertyless
Harijans. Therefore, it is necessary that the effects of
government schemes reach the disadvantaged Harijans placed
at the bottom of the social hierarchy. This becomes crucial
in linking the spread of "class" ideology with the

development of the whole Harijan community. Nonetheless, the actual situation is limited and problematic. Only a limited number of Harijans have succeeded in effectively using such opportunities, as is exemplified by the problems of the milk society. Though it is true that the social framework in which the Harijans are placed has been enlarged, the fact is that the Harijans, most of whom lack the ability to help themselves, still remain at the bottom of the social ladder. It has even been reported that the general economic conditions of the Harijans have deteriorated in recent years (eg. Gough [1989]). While there is no doubt that the Harijans have been, in a sense, released from the ritual hierarchy due to the decline of the *jajmānī* relationships, it is also true that they are being caught in the ironical trap of the "class" hierarchy. This blocked situation invites the phenomenon of an outstanding political leader being worshipped like a god or a goddess by the poor people, including the Harijans. This suggests that the cultural idiom traditionally fostered in the *jajmānī* relationship, namely, 'the dependence upon the *jajmān*', is still alive in the new enlarged social system.

The Harijans' rather short-sighted struggles for seeking self development, within the context of limited freedom, have encouraged a shift from ritual hierarchy, where they suffered the effects of discrimination, to class hierarchy, where most of the Harijans are again placed at

the bottom of the hierarchy. However, there is an irony here that their individualistic struggles for self-improvement on the basis of modern egalitarian values reproduce and reinforce a social hierarchy based on "class", in which most of them fail to be upwardly mobile, and as a result preserve the traditional cultural idiom of dependence on a 'big man'.

Nonetheless, this ironical trap which the Harijans experience today can be seen as the beginning of a change for their improving their social situation, because their short-sighted individualistic struggles can be seen as 'practice' (*pratique*) in Bourdieu's sense, which is based on '*habitus*'. That is, on the one hand their practices may contribute to the reproduction of the social hierarchy but, on the other hand, their dynamic 'sense of practice' (*le sens pratique*) [Bourdieu 1980] may unwittingly challenge the institution which absurdly confines them, and may ultimately transform it. In this context, the ideological analyses of the Harijans' position and practices which has been attempted in this thesis can be regarded as an anthropological 'practice' which encourages the oppressed to break through the above-mentioned ironical situation.

APPENDIX A: THE MYTHS OF THE ORIGIN OF THE PARAIYARS

[Note] It is noteworthy that there is a common pattern among the various versions of the Paraiyar myths which are reported by Moffatt [Moffatt 1979: 120-127] and which I myself have collected. It is not difficult to find from their myths the message that the greediness and stupidity of the Paraiyars resulted in their social fall, as Moffatt points out [ibid: 124]. It is very clear that what they wish to most emphasize is that the Paraiyars originally enjoyed high status, similar to that of the Aiyars, though they are at the bottom of the hierarchy today. It is in a sense verified by the fact that the core part of the myth, the story of the brother relationship between the Paraiyars and the Aiyars, has been well preserved, even though other parts have been changed often, partly due to lapses of memory.

(1) A Tankalan man in his 40s

[Myth] Once upon a time, an elder brother, Aiyan, and a younger brother, Paraiyan, worked together under a landlord. They engaged in cattle rearing there. One day, they were as usual in the pastureland for feeding cattle. The landlord came to them and, pointing at the cattle, he asked the two the following: "If I give you these cattle, which would you want the standing cattle or the lying ones." The brothers looked at the cattle and found that most cattle were lying except a few ones. The younger brother replied that he preferred the lying cattle, while then the elder brother said he preferred the standing ones. According to their requests, the landlord gave his cattle to them respectively. Since then, it has been said that Paraiyan

means 'a lying person' and Aiyan signifies 'a standing person'.

[Comment] As the myth tells, Aiyan (the Brahmans) and Paraiyan (the Paraiyars) were originally brothers. Thus, whenever we the Paraiyars have a ceremony we used to invite the Aiyars and give *piracātam* (Skt. *prasāda*) to them, but as time passed, the Aiyars began to reject our invitation and the acceptance of our *piracātam*.

(2) A Mataiyan man in his 50s

[Myth] Once upon a time, there were two brothers who reared cattle in co-operation. At length, the time for division of their property came. For this, they went to a pastureland and the younger brother asked to his elder brother, "Which cattle do you want to take the standing or the lying?". The elder brother replied that he would take the ones lying down because he saw that all the cattle except one were lying. However, he no sooner answered than the standing cattle suddenly fell down, and the lying cattle stood up all together. As a result, the elder brother took the single dead cow, and all other ones belonged to the younger brother. Since then, the younger brother began to call himself Aiyan and his elder brother Paraiayyan, which is an original form of Paraiyan.

[Comment] It should not be overlooked that our (the Paraiyars') ancestor was originally a brother of the Aiyar

(the Brahmans), although only the Aiyar are socially given importance. The story of the origin of caste names seems to be clear evidence for this. I heard such a myth from my grandfather.

APPENDIX B: CHEKKANURANI TOWN
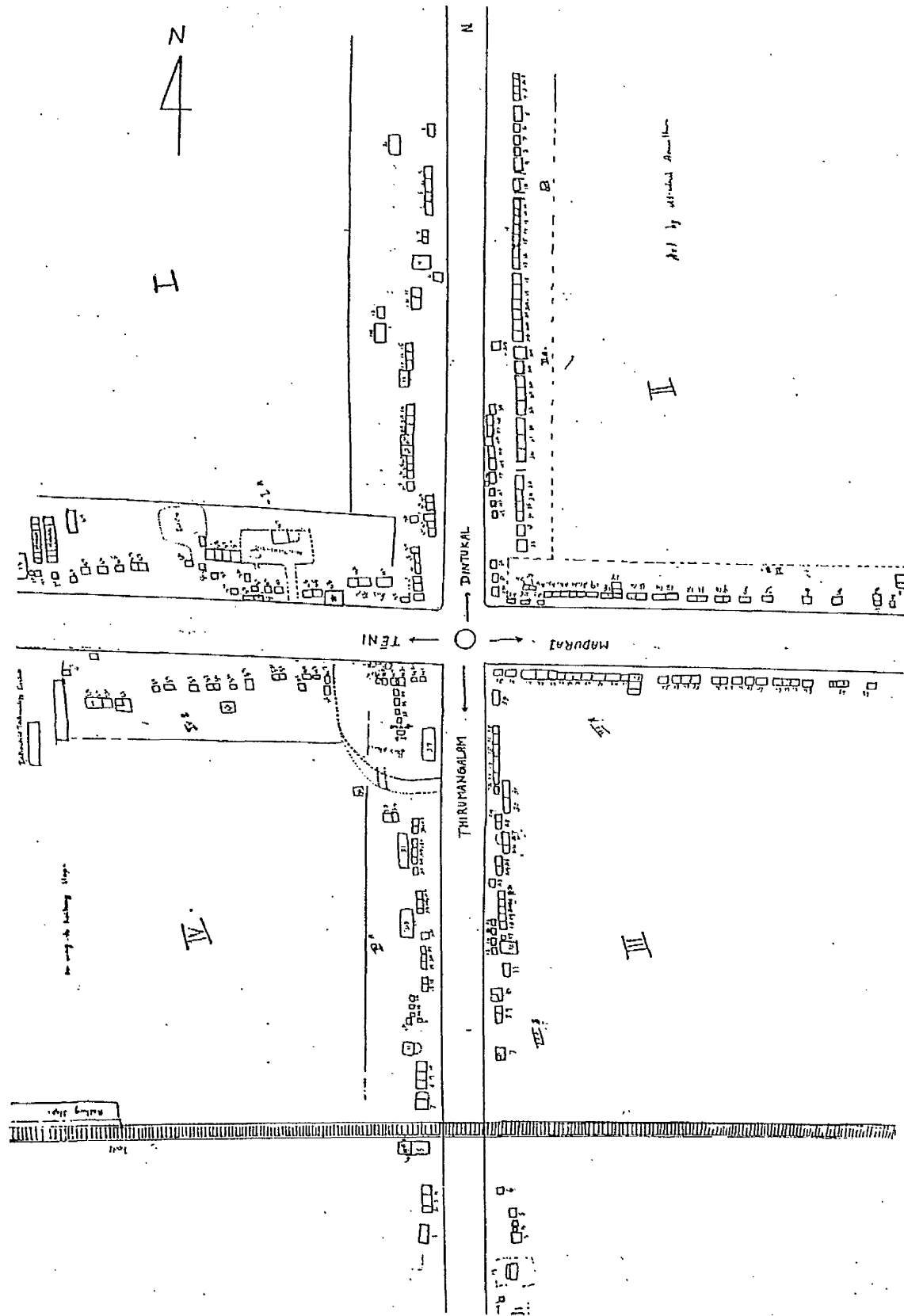
GLOSSARY

The important Tamil words referred to in the main text, except caste names and proper names for places, temples, kingdoms and persons, have been included below. The words are listed in English alphabetical order with the added condition that the short vowels take precedence over long vowels.

aciṅkam: ugly, unsightly

acuttam: impure, unclean

ammaṉ: goddess

aṉṉaṉ-tampi: literally, elder brother-younger brother; ego's parallel relatives between whom inter-marriage is prohibited.

aṉṉiyam: non-relatives

apiṣēkam (Skt. *abhiṣeka*): libation on an idol

aṭimai/aṭimaikāraṉ: slave or tied labourer

cakalaṉ: the relations between sisters' husbands; an ego-centred group of male parallel relatives

cakti/catti (Skt. *śakti*): divine power or energy

camāti (Skt. *samādhi*): a tomb; the ultimate state attained through deep meditation

caṉṉiyāci: religious renouncer or mendicant

caṭaṅku: religious ceremony; a rite associated with puberty

cuttamuka teyvam: a Sanskritized deity rejecting blood

sacrifice

cuṭukāṭu: graveyard or cremation ground

cuvāmi/cāmi: god; a common term of address of a superior by
an inferior

cāmiāṭi/cuvāmiyāṭi: a god-dancer; a person possessed by a
god or a goddess

cāmipeṭṭi: a sacred chest which symbolizes a god

cēri: the older term for a residential quarter inhabited
uniquely by Untouchable castes

iṉām (from Arabic): tax-free grants of land by rulers to
subjects

jajmānī (from Hindi): a village system of customary payments
in kind at harvest time, from landowning patrons to
clients who perform services for them

jamīṉtār: zamindar, a person with dominant rights over land,
usually a large tract including several villages

kamalai: a device for raising water from a well

karai: the traditional right and duty of marriage preference

karakam: a flower-decked water-filled brass pot representing
a goddess

karṇam: a village land-accountant

karumāti: final obsequies; a funeral ceremony for sending
the spirit of the dead to heaven or the ancestral world;
a purificatory rite which ends a funeral rite

kaṭavuḷ: God; a great Hindu god who is unseeable by
villagers

kirāmam (Skt. *grāma*): a village, the term tending to be used
in an administrative sense

kulateyvam: a lineage deity

kummi: girl's dance accompanied by clapping

kuravai/kulavai: an ululating cry made by women to mark
auspicious transition points in ritual

kurukkaḷ: Brahman temple priests; a subcaste of Brahman
priests in Saivite temples

kuṭimakaṉ: lower status people who engage in services

kāriyakkāraṉ: an influential person who is regarded as an opinion leader in the traditional village community

kāval: protection

kōṭāṅki: exorcist; soothsayer who carries the hour-glass hand drum

kōṭṭiram (Skt. *gotra*): patrilineal exogamous grouping which is comparable to clan

kōvil/kōyil: a Hindu temple

kūliyāl: a daily wage labourer

mantai: a raised platform for men's gatherings; a traditional gathering or court of the village panchayat

mantiram (Skt. *mantra*): a sacred utterance

mantiravāti: sorcerer; a person who uses *mantras* for black magic

marakkāl: dry measure, usually of paddy, about 6.5 liters

maṭaiyaṉ: one of the village menial offices carried out by Untouchables; a caretaker of the sluice of the village tank

moy: presents or donations given on special occasions like a life-crisis rite

mukkai: three handful of grain as part of prestation at harvest time

mukti/mutti (Skt. *mukti*): stage in salvation

muṉi: the most powerful evil being or deified being, who resides under an old tree

muṟaikkupaṅkāḷi: a group of patrilineal lineages who can not marry each other because they believe they are brothers

mutaṉmai: primary importance; the order of honour which is indicated by the order of distribution of consecrated leftovers

māmā(ṉ)-maccinaṉ: ego's cross relatives with whom marriage occur

māṉiyam: land the usufruct of which is associated with an office

nañcey: irrigated 'wet' land drawn water from a
tank or a river

narakam: hell

nāṭṭāṉmai (*kirama muncif*): a village headman; a village
official who could try suits brought by the ryots of the
village

nāṭu: a state; a country

otti: an institution whereby people transfer the usufruct of
their property, such as land and houses, as a mortgage
for the loan of money

pakti/bakti (Skt. *bhakti*): devotion to god, piety

pali (Skt. bali): offering given to gods, manes etc., in
sacrifice

pañchāyattu: a panchayat; a council; a body of villagers
which settles disputes according to custom and god
conscience

paṅkāḷi: a group of brothers and other male parallel
relatives; shareholders of property

paṇṇaikāraṉ/paṇṇaiyāḷ: farm labourer; contracted farm
labourer in Kinnimangalam

pantal: a temporary shed with a roof made of plaited coconut
leaves or cloth for a function, purpose, etc.

piracātam (Skt. *prasāda*): consecrated leftovers; sacred
offering to deity distributed to devotees

poṅkal: ceremonially-boiled rice, cooked at a temple

puñcey: unirrigated 'dry' land

puṉitam: sacredness

purōkitar (Skt. *purohita*): a Brahman priest who officiates
at marriage and other rituals

pēy: an evil being, usually the spirit of a human who died
unhappily

pūcai/pūjai (Skt. *pūjā*): worship; adoration of the gods with
proper ceremonies

pūcāri: a non-Brahman priest for local deities or lineage
deities at the village level

ratta uṟavu: blood relations

talaiyāri: village watchman and policeman appointed by the government to assist the village headman

taḷukai: meals offered to the gods

teyvam: deity, a local deity who is seeable by villagers

toḷil: traditional service or occupation to which a given caste's identity and rank is referred and which is usually rewarded in kind

tuṭiyāṉa teyvam: a fearful (and active) deity who requires blood sacrifice

tāymāmaṉ: mother's brother

tēr: a temple car; a funeral bier

tīṇṭāmai: untouchability

tīṭṭu: pollution, impurity

tōṭṭam: a garden; land with well-irrigation

tōṭṭi: one of menial offices carried out by Untouchables; a funeral messenger or a grave-digger; a sanitary worker; a sweeper

urimai: a right associated with a duty

utaṉpaṅkāḷi: a group of people the relationships of whom can be actually traced patrilineally

ūr: a village the territory of which is defined contextually from an ego-centred viewpoint

vakaiyaṟā: a patrilineal lineage

vāstu: site or the tutelary deity of the house site

vēlai: work or individual occupation which is often rewarded in cash

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