PREFACE

I got interested in the present theme accidentally. My actual interest was in the land system of the early medieval Kerala. Absence of indications in the epigraphs of Kerala as to the formative aspects of the land system prompted me to look into the records of the adjacent Tamil areas for clues. Though I could not find any direct pointers to the problem of Kerala in them they turned to be useful for a study of the land system of their own area. This led me to the study of the Pandya region which comprised roughly the modern districts of Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram and Madurai.

The present study is an attempt at understanding the economic process and the socio-political ideas and institutions of the social formation of the Pandya region during the period from circa A.D. 600 to 1000. The rationale for treating c. A.D. 600 as the lower time limit is that by the time the dissolution of the ancient social formation into a new one was more or less complete. The institutional and organisational aspects of the new social formation underwent restructuring at the close of the tenth century. Politically the region lost its independence and became part of the Cōla domain. Hence c. A.D. 1000 as the upper time limit.

Most of the views expressed in the thesis are different from those of conventional historiography of South India. So
it was not possible always to state them as opposed to conventional views. I crave the indulgence of the readers for the narrative portions in the thesis recounting the details of the data.

If the study has come out a useful historical piece my debt is entirely to Dr. Champakalakshmi who supervised it. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Romila Thapar for conceptual guidance. For all my humble achievements in the subject I am indebted to Dr. M.G.S. Narayanan who initiated me in the field of historical researches.

I express my thanks to Dr. Harbans Mukhia, Dr. Sher-een Ratnagar and Dr. Suvira Jaiswal for their help in the form of discussions on certain aspects of the study.

I thank Dr. S. Gopal, Dr. Bipin Chandra and Dr. K.N. Panicker for their kind help in various ways. I am thankful to the Centre for Historical Studies of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, which gave me a teacher fellowship of the U.G.C., and provided the facilities for the study.

I am grateful to Dr. K.V. Ramesh, the Chief Epigraphist of India, Mysore for allowing me to consult the unpublished transcripts in his office. I am equally grateful to Dr. K.G. Krishnan, retired Chief Epigraphist, Mysore for guidance in epigraphy.

I acknowledge the help given by Dr. Y. Subbarayalu with new data. Himself and Mr. Vethachalam of the Tirumalai Nayakkar Mahal Museum, Madurai, gave me guidance in my field studies. Mr. Raghava Varier of the Calicut University, Mr. Veluthat Kesavan of the Mangalore University and Miss. Sumathi of the Pennsylvania University
deserve my appreciative thanks for their help in the form of discussions.

I thank Mr. Venkat Raghotham of the Hawaii University who provided me with certain important secondary works which are not available in India.

I express my gratitude to Mr. Ramakrishnan, Statistical Officer, Madras and Mrs. Indira Ramakrishnan for their kind help as my host during the period of my work in Madras.

I have my sincere words of thanks to Mr. D.D. Namboodiri and Mr. Raju Thadikkaran of the Jawaharlal Nehru University for the multidimensional help rendered by them.

I thank Prof. E. Narayanan Nambiar of the Union Christian college who was kind enough to suggest corrections in my expressions. My thanks are due to the Management of the Union Christian College for granting me study leave.

I am thankful to Miss. C. Sumangala, Miss. Bindu Menon and Mrs. Jalaja Rajan for their clerical assistance. I am also thankful to Mr. Jose of the Union Christian College who typed out the draft.

Alwaye, October, 1984.          RAJAN GURUKKAL.