GLOSSARY

Aachi – Chettiar woman
Adaikirathu – Safe keeping
Adathi – Parent banker
Aduttal – Clerk in Chettiar firm
Ainnurruvar – ‘the five hundred’ – Medieval merchant guild
Amma – Mother/used deferentially for women
Anna/Anne (colloquial) – Elder brother
Citrameli – Medieval organisation of dominant agriculturists
En Suvadi – Arithmetic tables
Hundi – Bill of exchange; mercantile note of credit
Isaikudimanam – Marriage contract
Jatakam – Birth chart
Kadai – Shop
Kaipetti – Wooden box
Kanakkupillai – Accountant
Kattal – One who was appointed to collect interest from interior villages of Burma
Kattupadu – Control
Kazhutthuru – Heavy gold ornament worn by the Chettiar bride at the wedding
Keezhal – Clerk
Kondu vikkarathu – Trade
Kottan – Basket
Maamiyar saaman – Gifts to the mother-in-law
Madam – Religious institution
Magamai/maganmai – Toll given to the temple
Mangu – Lacquer article
Manjal Kani – Turmeric land
Maravar – Fierce warrior clan
Mariyatai – Honour
Melal – Clerk
Mittadars – Owners of Mittas (of land)
Mittas – Parcels
Moi — Gift money
Moippanaedu — Notebook for noting down moi
Mudalali — Proprietor
Nadappu Vatti — Current rate of interest
Nadu — Territorial unit
Nagai — Jewel; in the Chettiar context it means diamond jewellery
Nagaram — Marketing centre
Nagaraviduthi — Community rest house
Padaippu — Yearly offering ceremony for dead ancestor
Palayakkarars — Administrative heads of palayams
Palayam — Region
Pankali — Coparcenery
Panku — Share
Parisamm — Bride price
Perukaradu — Multiplying
Peshkash — Land rent or taxes
Pillai Kootarathu — Adoption (of a son)
Podiyan — A boy employed to run errands in Chettiar firm
Pokkiam/Othi — A kind of lease
Pottiadi payyan — Similar to Podiyan
Pulli — Individual household
Puranam — Ancient history
Rendam Vidu Chettiars — Children born to a nagarattar man and a non-nagarattar woman
Saaman — Things
Saaman Parapparadu — Spreading of things
Samasthanam — Kingdom
Sambala Seettu — Pay slip
Santi kalyanam — The 60th birthday of the married man
Sarrafs/Shroff — Gold or silver merchant; moneychanger
Seedanam — Dowry
Setupati — Traditional rulers of Ramanathapuram Samasthanam
Siir Varisai — Things that are given as part of dowry
Siruvattuppanam — Chettiar woman's small savings
Stridhan – Pre-mortem inheritance given to a daughter
Sumangali – The status of a woman when her husband is alive
Taluk – Administrative division
Teravu – Bridewealth
Thavanai Vatti/Kanakku – Interest rate for fixed deposits
Thonutru Aaru Oor Koottam – Assembly/meeting of 96 villages (in Chettinad)
Vaikkarisi One of the rituals performed at the death of a person. The ritual of placing rice on the mouth of the corpse.
Valavu – Joint household
Varadaksina – Groom fee
Varalaru – History
Vari – Tax
Vatti – Interest
Veedu – House
Veruvaittal – Separating the individual unit from joint household
Vilasam – Address
Zamindar – Landholder