NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Gender: I use the term “policemen” and not “police personnel” throughout this book. Although women began entering the police force in some parts of the country in the first half of the twentieth century, police personnel in the region I study were all men. The capital city of Madras established a Women’s Wing in 1964; district offices began recruiting female personnel only in 1973. Policing was gendered power, and the use of the term “policeman” is a reminder of one manifestation of this power. The Tamil Nadu police significantly corrected its gender imbalance toward the end of the twentieth century through initiatives like the establishment of all-women police stations.

Place names: The region I study lies in a southern Indian province that was known as the Madras Presidency for most of the colonial period and was renamed Madras Province in 1937. The truncated province formed after the 1956 linguistic reorganization of states was called Madras State. Madras State was renamed Tamil Nadu in 1969. The book uses both Madras and Tamil Nadu to refer to the province, depending on the period being discussed.

Transliteration: For ease of readability, I have restricted transliteration from the Tamil to direct quotations and book titles, where I use the University of Madras Lexicon scheme. For the rest, including place names and caste names, I use the most common spelling, e.g. Madurai, not Maturai. Nouns are pluralized with an s, e.g., Pallars. Caste names appear unitali-cized but other non-English terms that appear less frequently are italicized, e.g., talayari. Translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.