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The Violence of Devotion
Bhakti, Jains, and the *Periyapurāṇam* in Telling Early Medieval Tamil History (7th to 12th c.)[1]

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The *Periyapurāṇam*, a twelfth-century Tamil hagiography from South India, recounts episodes from the lives of the sixty-three Śaiva poet-saints (*nāyaṉmārs*), who embody the highest ideals of devotion (*bhakti*) to Śiva.[2] A major theme in this work by Cēkkiḻār, a Cōḻa court minister to King Kulōtuṅga II (r. 1130-50), is the expression of devotion to Śiva through violent acts. Two of the earliest and most important poet-saints, Appar (ca. 570-670) and Campantar (ca. 638-54), feature scathing invectives against Jains in many of their hymns (*tamiḻ*), collected in the tenth-century *Tēvāram*. These hymns are still popular today and were an important part of Śaiva temple worship and court poetry in the twelfth century. Appar, as seen in his poetry and Cēkkiḻār's hagiography, was a Jain monk who *re*converted to the Śaivism of his family after being stricken with a severe stomach ailment that only Śiva could cure. Likewise, a key episode in Campantar's life is the conver-

sion of the Pāṇṭiyan king of southernmost India and the resulting impalement of 8,000 Jain monks on stakes as punishment for losing in debate with him.

This essay will examine the role and importance of these anti-Jain polemics and acts of violence to the Tamil Śaiva tradition and to the modern telling of the history of early medieval Tamilnadu. I contend that opposition to Jainism was a central part of the process of identity building for Tamil Śaivas, especially in the royal courts. These Tamil Śaivas sought to establish their tradition as an intimate, natural and unique part of Tamilnadu by portraying the Jains as un-Tamil others. Cēkkiḻār's work presents us with not only a hagiography of devotees who go to great extremes in their single-minded devotion to Śiva, but also a particular way of telling the history of Tamilnadu from the seventh to the twelfth century as the story of establishing Śaivism as *the* religion of Tamilnadu.

A lasting legacy of the *Periyapurāṇam* is that modern scholars have tended to read it as an actual history of the period that accounts for the elimination of Jainism, not only from an influential place in the royal courts but also as a substantial Tamil community, contrary to other literary, archaeological and inscriptional evidence. Another problem with the modern reading of the *Periyapurāṇam*, significant to the study of Jainism, is that it has defined who the pre-modern Jains in Tamilnadu were: an exclusive group of ascetic mendicants beholden to a foreign ideology with suspect influence in royal courts. This was aided by the scholarly belief that lay Jains engaged in religious practices "borrowed" from the temple worship of Śaiva devotees, which amounted to a degeneration of "true" Jainism and therefore not important to the study of that tradition.

This paper is divided into three sections. First I will look at Anne E. Monius's analysis of the *Periyapurāṇam* as a court text. Here, I argue that the context of the *Periyapurāṇam* was such that it glorified acts of violence to show that Śaivism—unlike Jainism—was "in tune" with the goals of Cōḻa kingship. Further, it offered a path to liberation (*mokṣa*) for the king that did not demand that he ultimately needed to renounce kingship to achieve it.

Next, I look at some strategies for creating a Śaiva identity that cast itself as deeply and uniquely Tamil, in direct or indirect opposition to Jainism. First, I argue that the *Tēvāram* hymns tap into the naturalism of Caṅkam poetics, the classical Tamil literature. Likewise, Cēkkiḻār's use of long, ornate accounts of the Tamil countryside in his hagiography indirectly opposed the Jain ideology of transitoriness that inspires worldly renunciation. Secondly, I show that the *nāyaṉmār*s associated Jainism with spiritual and physical sickness, disease and general unhealthiness, illustrated through the stories of Appar's own reconver-

sion and Campantar's conversion of the Pāṇṭiyan king. Such associations further portrayed Jainism as antithetical to Tamil kingship, and more saliently as wasted ascetic effort that denied the Tamil love of the natural world and established the belief that salvation was available only through Śiva's grace. Thirdly, I examine Campantar's charge that Jains did not know the Tamil language, the most direct attack against Jains that cast them as un-Tamil others. Such subtle and overt forms of casting Jains as others were central to the process of creating a Śaiva identity that was intimately Tamil. Fourth, I examine Cēkkiḻār's narrative of Appar's reconversion and Campantar's fateful debate with the Jains, and suggest that these could be read as metaphors for the development of the tradition.

In the final section, I contend with the standard historiography of early medieval Tamilnadu that gives primacy to the *Periyapurāṇam*'s account of the Jains, which fails to regard the text's context as a highly important part of the story it told. By introducing literary, inscriptional, archaeological and art historical evidence of a continuous—if dwindling—Jain presence in Tamilnadu throughout the seventh to twelfth centuries and beyond, and evidence that Jains developed a bhakti tradition in ways that a simple borrowing hypothesis cannot account for, I argue that the context and purpose of the *Periyapurāṇam* must be taken into consideration to bridge the discrepancy between evidence and historiography. The violence in the text, then, is best seen as a court polemic and not as a reliable historical source. I draw from Richard H. Davis a new model for thinking about the position of Jainism in medieval Tamilnadu.

A major part of scholars' tendency to read historical accuracy into the *Periyapurāṇam* rests in the practice of writing "core narrative" histories of dominant traditions, which tends not to account for the impact of minority or marginal groups. I visit this idea throughout the third section and conclude with some thoughts about how to conceive of religious traditions in South Asia to yield more complexity and a fuller understanding of the processes by which religious traditions interact and, thus, can be defined.

Violence in the *Periyapurāṇam*

The *Periyapurāṇam* was written at a time when Śaivism was already the predominant tradition in Tamilnadu. Monius states that about a third of the sixty-three *nāyaṉmārs* use violence as a major trope in expounding their love (*aṉpu*) of Śiva. She discusses the various takes scholars of Tamil Śaivism have on the religious meaning of the violence in the *Periyapurāṇam*. One camp sees the violence of the poet-saints as a "metaphor for the single-minded intensity

of devotion demanded by Śiva."[3]   Hudson, for example, argues that violence has a purifying effect, such that offending body parts or people can be purified through their respective removal or slaughter, though it is unclear whether non-Śaivas so benefit from being slaughtered. What is most pleasing to Śiva is not the violence itself but the intensity of devotion that causes one to act in such ways.[4]   Violence and bloodshed are displays of devotion that disregard even the most important social conventions. The other camp sees the violence of the Tamil poets as part of the Tamil literary tradition. The connection between love and violence was an essential part of the identity of the hero in the classical Caṅkam literature of the first three centuries CE.[5]   In this model, Tamil culture is made manifest in the milieu of nascent bhakti literature.

Monius raises some apt objections to both of these models. In critiquing the first model of bhakti-born violence, she asks why it is not a more prevalent theme in devotional hagiographies throughout India. The second model leaves her puzzled because the period in which this poetry flourished was one of relative peace and calm under the rule of the Cōḻa dynasty, with extensive patronage of Śaiva monastic orders (*maṭam*). In a rare twelfth-century commentary on Cēkkiḻār's work, there is a sense that such "harsh action" is admirable for its reflection of devotion, though distant from the "gentle" expressions of devotion more common to the average Śaiva.[6]   Noting that most Śaiva devotees were probably not overtly violent, my focus here is on the place such rhetoric had in twelfth-century Tamilnadu.

Monius, quoting from Vamadeva, states that the *nāyaṉmārs*' use of violent love (*vaṉṉaṉpu*) "project[s] [the] kingly role of the ancient and mediaeval Tamil country' onto the lives and deeds of the nayanmar."[7]   Many of the poet-saints who tapped into the classical literary tradition to express the extent of their religious devotion with violent imagery cast themselves as not just religious but also political heroes who upheld Tamil religion—Śaivism—from foreign others with their own blood and devotion. Vamadeva outlines a typology of "violent love" found in Śaiva literature about these poet-saints, including the *Periyapurāṇam*. She identifies killing or maiming oneself, one's relatives and one's non-relatives as six distinct categories of violent expression. All of these function equally as expressions of heroic devotion and seem equally free of any moral or karmic burden. However, the will to inflict violence on others seems quite different from inflicting suffering or violence on oneself or one's family members as an expression of single-minded devotion, since there is little sense that extra-familial violence should evoke personal suffering or breach *varṇāśrama dharma*,[8] especially in the context of a king defending his land.

Contextualizing Violence: The Periyapurāṇam and the Cīvakacintāmaṇi

Monius points out that the violence depicted in the *Periyapurāṇam* is more emphasized and elaborate than previous accounts of the same incidents from earlier times, and accounts for it by "taking seriously" the assertion made by the fourteenth-century Śaiva philosopher, Umāpati, that the purpose of the *Periyapurāṇam* was to "lure king Anapāya Cōḻa away from his addiction to [the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*]."[9] The *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* is a Jain text, written in the ninth century and generally regarded by Tamils of all faiths as one of the "Five Great Epics" of Tamil literature.[10] The glorification of violence in the *Periyapurāṇam* was made for the purpose of gaining exclusive royal patronage for Śaivism by supplanting the Jain text.

In her consideration of how the *Periyapurāṇam* is a response to the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*, Monius compares the graphic violent imagery of Cēkkiḻār to the way the Jain author, Tiruttakkatēvar, uses overly graphic imagery of sex and battlefield violence to evoke disgust (*bibhatsā*) for worldly life. Ryan argues that the purpose of the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* is to "stretch and rupture" the classical poetic mode (*rasa*) of (erotic) love (*śṛṅgāra*) to display the physical excesses of worldly life that lead to the main character's renunciation.[11] The work actually evokes several other *rasa*s, namely disgust (*bibhatsā*), heroism (*vīra*) and, with the main character's renunciation, quiescence (*śānta*). It is also a farce or satire of love, a genre seen in plays by the seventh-century Pallava king Mahendravarman I.[12] Monius argues persuasively that the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*'s ridicule of love in a religious context could easily be read as a polemic against bhakti, which is predicated on love for a transcendent, though immanent, lord who grants salvation through grace (*aruḷ*).[13]

The *Periyapurāṇam* uses the same meter and several other literary devices first used by the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*. Importantly, both the Jain epic and the *Periyapurāṇam* begin with a rich evocation of the Tamil countryside, the grandeur of the royal city and the virtue of the king. Monius suggests that the purpose of the text is to

> recover the idea of love…from the wastebin of sarcasm constructed so subtly by Tiruttakkatēvar…by imagining new expressions of love through the cultivation of a new kind of *rasa* aesthetic: love mixed with *vīra*, the "heroic". In so reconstituting the literary notion of loving devotion, Cēkkiḻār champions a new definition of love, of *aṉpu*, of *bhakti* for the lord that befits a king (such as his royal patron…) who must act decisively in the world.[14]

This mixture of love and heroism grants a place in the Śaiva tradition for the killing of non-relatives as a mark of kingly religious duty; at once displaying his level of devotion and his benevolence—the king is simultaneously an ideal devotee and incarnation of Śiva himself. Inscriptional evidence suggests there was a precedent of the king being identified with Śiva as early as the seventh century.[15] Associating the king with Śiva was a powerful way to demonstrate Śaivism's investment in the wellbeing and prosperity of Tamilnadu.

The *Periyapurāṇam* derives its use of martial heroic imagery directly from the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*. Austerities (*tapas*) were outward acts of service and devotion to evoke Śiva's liberating grace, while the ascetic austerities of the Jain mendicants focused on selfish liberation.[16] This is not merely an admonition that Jainism was not somehow "community-focused," but rather that its soteriological path was antithetical to the kingly duty to protect the kingdom. The main character of the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* had to renounce his kingship to fully participate in the Jain religious life, which is not necessary for a Śaiva.[17]

The theology of Śiva in the *Periyapurāṇam* is likewise rather martial and devoid of erotic imagery, which is conspicuous because erotic imagery is ubiquitous in other Śaiva traditions. Cēkkiḻār draws on four major episodes from Purāṇic[18] mythology to demonstrate Śiva's warrior characteristics. He does not include episodes of Śiva acting out of erotic passion or in defense of others so taken by erotic emotion. Śiva is a paternal figure who grants liberation to his devotees, the *nāyaṉmār*s, protecting them from anyone who would come between the devotee and his or her worship of Śiva.[19] For example, the first story told is of Śiva using Viṣṇu in his Buddha incarnation (*avatāra*) to lure demons away from worshipping him so he can rid the universe of their destructiveness by killing them (save for three who remain steadfast Śaivas).[20] Through such selective use of Purāṇic imagery Cēkkiḻār created a theology of Śiva who models martial violence against non-Śaivas as a paradigmatic way to protect the world. As Monius concludes, a theology of Śiva devoid of erotic imagery is a new mode of Śaiva devotionalism—influenced by the Jain *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*.[21]

In sum, analyzing the *Periyapurāṇam* in light of the text it sought to supplant gives insight into the revivified antagonism toward Jains in the twelfth century that was apparent in the seventh-century *Tēvāram* poetry of Appar and Campantar. Violence against Jains became a central element in establishing Śaivism's Tamil identity: Jains are reconstituted as others who are fundamentally out of step with the worldly obligations of the king. Additionally, Jains are subtly construed as un-Tamil because their soteriological path was not compatible with the obligations of kingship.

Anti-Jain Polemics and Tamil Identity in the *Tēvāram* and *Periyapurāṇam*

To be clear, the *Periyapurāṇam* recounts stories of violence against Jains recorded centuries after the original *nāyaṉmārs'* era. The *Tēvāram* hymns were well known by the twelfth century; images of the sixty-three poet-saints were worshipped in Śiva temples throughout Tamilnadu. However, the poems composed by the first three *nāyaṉmār*s, Appar, Campantar, and Cuntarar, were not compiled into the *Tēvāram* proper until the tenth century by Nampi Āṇṭār Nampī.[22] His own verses on the lives of the *nāyaṉmār*s expand on the gore and violence, and tell for the first time the full story of Campantar's debate and the massacre of the Jains; the *Periyapurāṇam* amplified this violence further for literary and hagiographical effect. Here I examine some identity-building strategies found in the *Tēvāram* that are featured prominently in the *Periyapurāṇam* and are either directly anti-Jain or establish a worldview that is incompatible with Jain ideals.

Indira V. Peterson sees these polemics in the tradition of competition between Vedic-Brāhmaṇic religion and the *śramaṇa* (anti-Brāhmaṇic; Jain, Buddhist, etc.) traditions, stemming from the Gupta dynasty (fourth-sixth century CE). She argues that the "negative representation of the Jains was an important part of a process of self-definition and consolidation of power for the Tamil Śaiva sect," as part of a larger project to fashion "a communal identity for Tamils, based on the celebration of Śaiva sectarian ideals and the exclusion of non-Śaiva ones." The *Tēvāram* and *Periyapurāṇam*, like many bhakti texts, "are notable for the readiness with which they reveal their affiliation with *particular places, local events, and regional society and culture.*"[23] The *Tēvāram* poets and Cēkkiḻār were deeply interested in localizing Śaivism to gain exclusivity, and accomplished this by casting Jains and Buddhists as alien, degenerative forces within Tamilnadu.

These two seventh-century *nāyaṉmār*s criticized Buddhist monks with rather banal remarks about their ochre robes and their false doctrines. Their most creative and concentrated invective, however, was levied against Jain mendicants. Jains are physically and ritually dirty, shameless (i.e. go naked or wear mats), convert by deception, eat standing up, and are *camaṇar*s (Skt., *śrāmaṇa*; 'striver'), referring to their 'useless' self-mortifying ascetic practices.[24] While the Śaivas' chief doctrinal concern was the *śramaṇa*s' failure to accord Śiva his proper place as Sadāśiva, the preeminent being, the thrust of their invectives concern the Jains' social acceptability and engagement with the Tamil culture.[25] Buddhists seem somewhat socially acceptable to the *nāyaṉmārs* despite their

heretical views. The Jains, however, are wholly unacceptable for reasons I will discuss in the following section.

Naturalism, Wellbeing, and Language: Casting Jains as Others

An important and rather overlooked aspect of the *Tēvāram* is its affirmation of the Tamil landscape and nature. The early Caṅkam literature, according to Yocum and Flood, expressed the range of poetic emotional evocations (*rasa*s) in terms of the landscape and corresponding flowers, crops and animals. For example, the various experiences of love—intimacy, longing, and separation— are associated with mountains and flowers, the seashore and fishermen, the desert and desert flowers.[26] Over half of the 696 hymns (*tamiḻ*, also *pattu*, 'decad') by Appar and Campantar are about the images in the various temples to which they traveled and most include extensive discussion of the landscape. They simultaneously characterized the landscape surrounding the temple as part of the religious encounter with Śiva.[27]

This naturalism functions as an indirect polemic in that Jain asceticism is deemed antithetical to the love of nature and the sensory world, which Śaivas affirmed as Śiva's manifestation and creation. The manifestation of Śiva in the Tamil landscape casts Jainism as uninterested in Tamilnadu. Jain ascetic practice was useless self-mortification that denied Śiva's primacy by denying the beauty of the Tamil landscape. It strikes me that this strong naturalism, so heavily rooted in classical Tamil poetics, served to connect the Śaivas both with the sophisticated court poetry and to create an imagined Tamilnadu unified by Śaivism. Śaivas characterized the Jain ascetic ethos as world denying, making it rhetorically impossible for Jains to be as intimately involved with Tamilnadu's wellbeing.[28]

Sickness is also a common theme of the characterizations of the Jains. Appar's stomach ailment is central to his reconversion to Śaivism, and Śiva's miraculous cure punctuates many of his poems that discuss Jain hygienic habits of not bathing or cleaning their teeth. A key story in the *Periyapurāṇam* that characterizes Jains as sickly, unhealthful people is Campantar's restoring the hunchbacked Pāṇṭiya Jain king to health, completing his conversion to Śaivism. Most importantly, viewed in a Brāhmaṇic culture of ritual purity that includes bathing as a prerequisite to engaging in rituals, not bathing is an extreme act of cultural and religious defiance.[29]

One of Campantar's most common charges against the Jains is that they did not know "good Tamil" and defamed Sanskrit by "loudly declaiming in the corrupt Prakrit tongue."[30] As a Brāhmaṇ, Campantar may have been keen to

make a strong association between Sanskrit and Tamil. This linguistic association effectively solidified the alliance between Vedic-Brāhmaṇic and Tamil cultures at the expense of the Jains who were made the immanent others.[31]

Appar, Campantar and the Agenda of the Periyapurāṇam

I do not wish to challenge the historicity of these two figures, but rather view the roughly five centuries that separate their lives and Cēkkiḻār's hagiography as enough time to mythologize the events of their lives. The *Periyapurāṇam* drew on their lives as a major component for establishing the Tamil Śaiva ethos. Reading their lives as part of the creation myth of the tradition itself would shed new light on the early attitudes of Śaivas toward Jains. To wit, Appar's life exemplifies *re*conversion from Jainism back to 'original' Śaivism; Campantar's story of authorizing the impaling of 8,000 Jain ascetics upon converting the Pāṇṭiyan king stresses that Jains were un-Tamil others to be eradicated from royal court and countryside alike.

Appar: The Reconverted Śaiva

There are actually three conversions central to Appar's life—two of his own and one of the Pallava king, Mahendravarman I (c. 571-630), the earliest temple patron from whom we have an inscription. Rabe argues that the inscriptions show Mahendravarman self-identified with Śiva in the temples he commissioned. In sometimes bawdy and challenging language, the king does such things as associate his control of the Kaveri River with Śiva bringing the Gaṅgā (Ganges River) to earth, and declares that his faith in Śiva assures the lord's presence at a particular nearby mountain. In his strongest language, the king declares that he should be known as *liṅgin*, meaning one who possesses or is "modified by Śiva's…icon."[32] While not mentioned by name in the *Periyapurāṇam* or *Tēvāram*, he is traditionally understood to be the king who subjected Appar to various tortures on behalf of the Jains in his court, only to be converted by Appar's miracles, effectively becoming the first Śaiva *bhakta* king.

Appar was born into a Śaiva family and converted to Jainism, becoming the head of his order.[33] Afflicted with a stomach ailment that Jain medicine could not cure he turned to his sister, who was distraught over his apostasy. She recommended that he seek out Śiva. He was cured by the ash and mantra of Śiva (*nāmaḥ Śivāya*), effecting his reconversion. Śiva intentionally afflicted Appar to bring him back to his family's faith; other versions claim he was afflicted by

Śiva due to his sister's constant worry. Many of Appar's hymns in the *Tēvāram* feature a lament for having been part of the "base, deluded" Jain tradition.[34]

The Jains of Appar's order saw his desertion as a serious breach that could not go unpunished. Here the popular tradition claims Mahendravarman I was the Jain king who agreed to execute him, subjecting him to several torturous execution methods. Appar emerged from each attempt unscathed due to his single-minded devotion to Śiva. Frustrated—and trampled by an elephant— the Jains gave up. Mahendravarman was so moved by the miraculous events that he too converted to Śaivism. His first act of devotion was to destroy the "pagodas of the Jains and buil[d] a temple for Lord Śiva."[35] The first *nāyaṉmār* converted the Pallava king, effectively claiming that political realignment began at the outset of the tradition. It also established an ideal of Śaiva kingship based on temple patronage and included destruction of Jain religious sites. Appar's life in the broader context of the *Tēvāram* hymns' disparagement and othering of Jains created a model for Tamils to "re-"convert to Śaivism: Jainism need not be a lifelong affliction.

Campantar's Debate

The debate that transpired in Madurai, the Pāṇṭiyan capital, suggests that argu- ing doctrinal differences was less important to Cēkkiḻār's account of the com- petition between Śaivas and Jains than Campantar's ability to influence kings and effect widespread conversion of Tamil people to Śaivism. Rather than a debate in the typical sense—a composed comparison of the logic of tenets and positions—the very fecundity of the traditions was compared through super- natural means: miracles and magic.[36] Cēkkiḻār seems less interested in show- ing the twelfth-century Tamil Śaiva court that Śaivism was somehow a more rational, sensible or logical tradition than Jainism, but rather that Śaivism was *real*, in opposition to the Jains, who despite their influence in the courts of Campantar's day, practiced a false and ineffectual religion.

The Jain monks in the Pāṇṭiyan court try to dispose of Campantar through "black magic" before the debate begins by burning down the building in which he was sleeping. Campantar responds with a hymn that transfers the fire to the king in the form of an intense fever. The Jain efforts to alleviate the fever only make it worse. Finally, the queen and chief minister, both Pallava Śaivas, bring Campantar before the king to "bestow his grace" and ameliorate the fever.[37] Campantar's personal power as a devotee outmatched the Jains'.

The debate then proceeded from personal to doctrinal power. Thrown into fire and then water, the Śaiva scriptures proved durable, withstanding both

unscathed. The Jain texts did not fare as well, which effectively established the superiority of the Śaiva doctrine. Finally, popular tradition maintains that the king was a hunchback and was cured by the sight and touch of the child saint—as a conduit of Śiva's power. However, it is unclear from either the *Tēvāram* or *Periyapurāṇam* that this was so, only that the king "rose tall" upon his conversion. His conversion effected the conversion of his subjects; the queen tells Campantar in an earlier episode that his subjects had followed him after his conversion to Jainism, following the maxim that "as the king is, so too his subjects."[38] The number of Jains impaled is traditionally said to be 8,000, though there is no number specified in the *Periyapurāṇam*. The lack of any inscriptions or other record of such a massacre seems conspicuous, and so it is more likely that the number became set at mythic proportions as the story of Campantar's debate grew in mythological stature. Hudson mentions that murals of this scene are still common in Śiva temples in South India.

Phyllis Granoff discusses the roles of divine intervention, divine sanction, and black magic in Vedānta debates recounted in hagiographies. She shows that the relative abilities of the humans exchanging doctrinal positions rarely prove conclusive, and that frequently debaters resort to supernatural means to gain the edge. The result is a victory won on both the human and supramundane levels, establishing the power of the tradition as a whole.[39] For all intents and purposes, Campantar's job is to establish the reality of Śiva and demonstrate the superior power of the bhakta who acts with the powers accumulated through devotion to him. Further, "black magic" plays a central role in this debate. The relative ineffectiveness of the Jains' sorcery against Campantar's proves the overall superiority of the Śaiva path. The king's restoration to full health confirms that the debate was won honestly. The king's first act as a Śaiva is to display his own *vaṇṇaṉpu* by ordering the impaling of the 8,000 Jain monks.

One question remains: why is Campantar so strongly opposed to the Jains? Other *nāyaṉmār*s do not seem as concerned with destroying the Jains and focus instead on cultivating devotion to Śiva without concern for the *śramaṇa* traditions. In seeking to answer this question, C.V. Narayana Ayyar examines Campantar's repeated claims that the Jains condemn the Vedas and Vedic ritual.[40] If we read his life as a metaphor for the tradition, his Brahmin identity combined with his status as a devotee would be a metaphor for the Brāhmaṇic alliance with "respectable cultivating groups"—the Vellalas—that rose to power with the Pallavas in the Kaveri River delta.[41] Campantar's story would give mythological legitimacy to the Cōḻas' continued effort to consolidate power across Tamilnadu in Cēkkiḻār's time. Cēkkiḻār's hagiography appropriated the

Tēvāram ideologies and images for the purpose of having an authoritative source for the "segmentary state" in which the Cōḻas would maintain power in Tamilnadu by granting relative autonomy to localities while maintaining a "religious hegemony."[42] The widespread worship of the poet-saints in the form of temple images in the twelfth century suggests that the *Periyapurāṇam* accessed immense popular power in establishing that legitimacy.[43]

Telling the History of Early Medieval Tamilnadu

Richard H. Davis points to a "standard narrative" from which many modern scholars draw and concomitantly reify in discussing the development of bhakti traditions in Tamil history, which is typically understood to be the same as the history of the Tamil Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava traditions.[44] I will present it here briefly and then discuss some issues to be taken up with this standard model.

Glenn Yocum presents a concise version of the standard historiography: Tamil bhakti emerged from indigenous Tamil religious traditions that became a widespread single tradition through the incorporation of Sanskritic cultural elements. Beginning with the early Caṅkam literature and religion of the first centuries CE, which he characterizes as "pre-Āryan," he notices an "increasing of 'Āryanization' of Tamil literature and religion," meaning an increasing influence of northern Indian culture and traditions that were brought in with the southern migration of Buddhism and Jainism. The "religio-cultural forces" of Jainism and Buddhism, he argues, dominated Tamil literature in the fourth through seventh centuries. Two epics, which he characterizes as "late Caṅkam texts, punctuate this period: the Jain *Cilappatikāram* and the Buddhist *Maṇimēkalai*. The actual authorship of the *Cilappatikāram* is uncertain, but is thought to be Jain because a Jain nun plays a key role in it. The text discusses many religious traditions, however, and does not feature any final conversion story or sectarian moralization. Yocum calls these centuries a "dark period" for South Indian political power, marked by the unstable rule of the Kalabhras who patronized Buddhism and Jainism. This accounts for the resulting antagonism the bhakti poets show toward the *śramaṇa* traditions.[45]

The bhakti works of the seventh through ninth centuries indicate to Yocum a "revival, a reassertion of distinctively Tamil elements that may have been suppressed during a period of Jain and Buddhist cultural hegemony." He is careful to note that the revival does not mean a reproduction of the "*status quo ante*," but rather a syncretism of indigenous Tamil deities and rituals with Brahmanical gods from the north, namely Śiva and Viṣṇu.[46] The religious expression of the devotional poets however, is distinctly Tamil. He further claims that the

lyric poetry of the Tamil bhaktas is accessible to the population at large: "[t]he language is fairly simple and direct, accessible to ordinary people." Since almost half of the poet-saints of the *Periyapurāṇam* were non-Brahmin, he sees this movement as an emergence of indigenous Tamil traditions within Brahmanical theism. Finally, he states that "unlike the monastic tendencies of Jainism and Buddhism[, b]hakti was compatible with the everyday tasks of the common villager," meaning that one needs only devotion and not the intellectual, monastic life to have access to liberation.[47] Other sources are more overt in characterizing Buddhism and especially Jainism as world-denying, pessimistic traditions and argue that they were fundamentally out of step with the Tamil ethos characterized by the naturalism of the Caṅkam poetry, and that they denied salvation to their laity.[48] However, to accept such assertions that Śaivism was simply a reemergence of the indigenous Tamil identity suppressed by the Buddhists and Jains is to accept uncritically the specific strategic claims made by the Śaivas and to reify a notion of a "natural" regional identity that exists beyond historical vicissitudes.[49]

Burton Stein presented what Davis called the "most satisfying version of the standard narrative."[50] Therein, Stein creates a model of a "Kalabhra interregnum" in which this Jain-patronizing warrior clan from the Tamil highlands attempted to dominate the plains people, abusing the local Brāhmaṇ population. The Pallavas, also Jains, were a competing dynasty that sought to create a "Brāhmaṇ-peasant alliance" by forcibly settling Brāhmaṇs among the high status Vellala peasants. Jainism presented a way for ruling parties to gain access to "Āryan" status without identifying with the peasant population, which was increasingly following a syncretic Brāhmaṇic-indigenous tradition as a result of this "alliance". Local deities, such as Murukaṉ, were incorporated into the Brahmanic pantheons of Śiva and Viṣṇu. When the Pallavas rose to power, their devotional, temple-based religious system displaced Jainism and Buddhism, and even superseded the high Brāhmaṇic sacrifice rituals (*yajña*).[51] Stein writes elsewhere that the "bhakti ideology and devotional forms reinforced the constitution of communities through worship."[52] The Pallavas used Śaivism to further their political goal of unifying Tamilnadu under their control by incorporating it under one religious tradition.

By way of a cursory critique of this model, I must point out three things. The first is the characterization of the fourth through seventh centuries as a time when the *śramaṇa* traditions gained access to Tamilnadu on the back of a malevolent empire. Art historical evidence shows that Jainism and Buddhism had been present in the farthest reaches of South India, in the Pāṇṭiya region, since the second century BCE. Secondly, whatever ascendancy or hegemony

was gained by these traditions in the "dark" Kalabhra period, it must be qualified that these traditions remained part of the supposedly exclusively Brāhmaṇic succeeding dynasties, if in a less exclusive capacity. Further, three centuries is a long time to suppress popular traditions completely, without some contact between traditions. Finally, there is no space for devotionalism to have arisen in Jainism (or Buddhism); he assumes that no Jainism exists outside the mendicant orders tied to royal courts. It is also presumed that the poet-saints wrote popular poetry for a widespread Śaiva tradition participated in by royalty and laity alike, while any Jain devotional tradition was simply borrowed from Tamil Hindu bhakti as a later accretion, and hence would not factor importantly in this discussion.

Challenging the "Standard Narrative"

Davis argues that the *Periyapurāṇam* establishes its own very specific history of Tamilnadu in the early medieval period that characterizes the Tamil Śaiva polemic against Jains from the seventh through ninth centuries as a time of Śaiva revival against supposedly foreign Jain influences. As we saw, this characterization has remained a powerful frame of reference that modern scholars have used in writing the social, political and religious history of medieval Tamilnadu, which other evidence suggests is oversimplified. Surely any tradition, especially a minority tradition with a substantially smaller contingency than the dominant one, could not stand up to widespread persecution for long, let alone for over five centuries. Leslie C. Orr argues that the issue with this historiography is that the discrete categories of "Hindu" and "Jain" create a polarized view of the conflict between these groups, and limits the possibility of seeing the religious landscape of this period in more nuanced ways.[53] By examining archaeological, literary and inscriptional evidence, the ways that the Jain community may have conceptualized their Jain-ness can be brought to light, most importantly for this essay by examining the long history of the Jains' own bhakti traditions.

Some 530 Jain inscriptions have been found in Tamilnadu; 350 of these date from the eighth to thirteenth centuries. The earliest are concentrated in the Pāṇṭiyan south, but after the tenth century they are predominantly in the north.[54] Additionally, Vēluppiḷḷai notes that the Jain communities appear to have been comprised of three elite caste groups, Brāhmaṇs, traders, and cultivators, and hailed from Kāñcipuram in the north to the Cōḻa capital Thanjavur, and to Madurai further south.[55] As Orr shows, the inscriptions continue through the thirteenth century, though diminishing substantially after the

ninth, and bespeak of a community of religious leaders that patronized temples. Rather than sharply defining themselves as Digambara[56] Jain or Śaiva, the people in the inscriptions note the institutions—Jain *paḷḷi*s or Śaiva *maṭhas*—that supported them. They do not delineate whether they are laypersons or mendicants. Additionally, the Jain inscriptions were mainly found with Jina or *yakṣi*[57] images, indicating image worship was a well-established part of the tradition. The "religious women" and men of her inquiry are neither wandering ascetics nor exactly laypeople, blurring the definitions of each category for this historical period.[58]

Archaeological evidence shows that freestanding temples began to be built in the fifth or early sixth century in Madhya Pradesh and slowly migrated southward.[59] Desai examines inscriptions and archaeological evidence to show that *yakṣī*s were worshipped alongside Jina images in Tamilnadu as early as the second century CE. Goddesses appeared in temples around 550 CE, suggesting that a finely tuned, fully aware lay Jain tradition that engaged in temple worship (forbidden to mendicants) was thriving there. The Tamil cults uniquely incorporated the goddesses Ambikā—associated with the Jina Nēminātha—and Siddhāyikā—associated with Mahāvīra—while the most popular Jain goddess in other regions is Padmāvatī, associated with Parśva.[60] This suggests that Jain devotionalism developed on its own in Tamilnadu.

Robert Zydenbos shows that a complex mythology arose around each Jina's associated deities, predicated on the original story of Mahāvīra's birth in which Indra leads the whole pantheon to bathe the newborn Jina, establishing the gods as the protectors of Jainism.[61] Guardian deities were worshipped for more mundane, earthly benefits, rather than as part of the soteriological path exemplified by the Jinas. Scholars have construed the inclusion of deities to be a compromise with or borrowing from Hinduism as a strategy to draw people to Jainism—a popular accretion or degeneration of an originally pure tradition.[62]

Orr argues that Jain bhakti forces us to cast new light on medieval Jainism in Tamilnadu. Orr challenges the notion that Jain bhakti was simply an outgrowth or response to Hindu bhakti, termed the "borrowing hypothesis."[63] A.L. Basham gives us an example of this notion:

> The chief gods of the Hindu pantheon found their way into Jaina temples in subordinate positions, and though there was no real compromise with theism the sect easily fitted into the Hindu order, its members forming distinct castes. [64]

The challenge we must raise to this hypothesis is that it maintains the aforementioned polarized view of traditions, in this case "ascetic Jainism" versus "devotional Hinduism," which fails to consider that these traditions may have been highly permeable religious systems that engaged a pervasive religiosity. Such a polarized view assumes that all goddesses are Hindu goddesses, missing the more complex pattern of goddess traditions that developed. Additionally, it assumes a fundamental separation between lay and mendicant Jain communities that simply cannot hold up since mendicants advise laity on commissioning images and take part in their consecration. Moreover, a viable mendicant community would have relied on lay Jain families for new initiates.

John E. Cort works from Orr's apt challenge to conceive of new ways to distinguish and conceptualize the various traditions. He critiques the borrowing model by stating that "when a scholar argues that because a practice…has been borrowed from another tradition its role in the borrowing tradition is therefore of negligible importance, the scholar is making a fundamental error of judging the data by standards inappropriate to any form of objective scholarship."[65] Examining the process by which such borrowings occur is an important dimension of scholarship denied by such reasoning. As an alternative, Cort argues that any tradition that has used the term bhakti contributes to the definition of the term. Bhakti is both tradition-specific and "Indian-wide, Indian-specific discourse."[66] He also notes the *Paümacariya* (Skt., *Padmacarita*, the Jain Rāmāyaṇa) shows image worship was well established in the Jain community by the fifth century CE, effectively establishing that Jain communities would have engaged in bhakti-style image worship and probably would not have appeared markedly different from Śaiva temple worship. Though he is careful not to equate image worship with bhakti per se, the Śaiva bhakti at interest in this essay is also characterized in large part by temple image worship. In this light, we see that the *Periyapurāṇam* levels its attack against the mendicant community exclusively, not because they were the only Jains in Tamilnadu, but rather because they embodied the Jain ideology of ascetic values antithetical to Tamil Śaivism. Appar and Campantar criticize only the mendicants of the Jain community, and while Cēkkiḻār is interested in telling the history of how Tamilnadu became Śaiva (again) by disabusing itself of the Jains, his opponents are only those Jains who were found in the royal courts—mendicants.

If we accept Cort's assertion that bhakti has been part of the Jain tradition from its earliest formation, then the reading of the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* that Monius offers seems at first problematic. Does Tiruttakkatēvar's critique of love as a motivating factor of religious practice show a fundamental divide within the Jain tradition between ascetic mendicants and a laity that engages in a Jain

bhakti tradition? Monius' reading requires us to push at the concept of love further still.[67] Cort asserts that bhakti has been a major factor for inspiring asceticism.[68] We should then read the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* in light of Jain values of self-restraint, controlled passions and ascetic ideals as a criticism of the kind of love inspired by worldly, sensory experiences and emotional excesses that characterize the *Tēvāram* bhaktas. Love in the broadest context of bhakti should be understood as a central motivating factor inspiring adherence to the values of each particular tradition. Love for a deity because of its ability to bestow salvation motivates one to be a devotee in the Hindu traditions. Similarly, love for the Jain soteriology and its exemplars (the Jinas) inspire asceticism as a distinctly Jain devotional form. The notion that bhakti was merely an accretion to Jainism as an effort to counter the attack leveled by the Śaiva (and Vaiṣṇava) bhaktas must be rejected.

Finally, Davis sets up a new model for conceptualizing the Jain experience in medieval Tamilnadu in light of the evidence presented here. Instead of a Hindu "revival," we see a new type of devotional religion, combining Tamil image worship to local deities with the Brāhmaṇic pantheon, values and authority. Such a view contends that changes in the religious landscape of Tamilnadu took place over a long stretch of time, allowing for the sustained, productive presence of Jainism through the sixteenth century as evidence strongly suggests.[69] It also allows us to see how Tamil Śaivism was engaged with the Jains, eliminating the notion that Jains were un-Tamil others who had no impact on the culture around them. We must then see the Śaiva anti-Jain polemics of the *Tēvāram* and *Periyapurāṇam* in a more politicized context. Such a model will allow the complexities of interaction between religious traditions to enrich our view of the religions of India and resist the tendency to essentialize and polarize traditions.

Conclusion: The Politics of Devotion and the Writing of History

This essay casts a critical reflection on the use of the *Periyapurāṇam* as an historical source for the rise of Śaiva devotionalism in medieval Tamilnadu. It begs that the context of the twelfth century be examined more closely to understand why the *nāyaṉmārs* were important to invoke at the height of Cōḻa South India. As hagiography, we see that the emphasis on *vaṉṉaṉpu* ("violent love") is strong, evident in about a third of the *nāyaṉmārs'* stories. In the context of the remainder of the work, we see an overall strategy of claiming Śaivism as *the* religion of Tamilnadu. The stories of Appar and Campantar cast the Jains as the ideal other, a central strategy in establishing the Tamil-ness of Śaivism.

We see in several places that the *Periyapurāṇam* drew upon the worldview of the *Tēvāram*, which was exactly the opposite of the Jain ethos, to cast Jains as un-Tamil others. Jain ascetic values demonstrated their disinterest in Tamilnadu. Further, Jains were considered diseased, unhealthy people, not the kinds with whom royal figures would want to associate. Jain soteriology was likewise antithetical to kingship, requiring renunciation for salvation. Finally, Jains did not know Sanskrit or Tamil. By critiquing and acting against the Jains, they wanted to demonstrate, in Peterson's words, that[70]

> [t]he language, aesthetic, and the cultural practices of the Tamil Śaivas are the natural flowering and consummation of a Tamil culture that includes and encompasses Vedic religion. The only way to participate in this synthetic culture, to be Tamil in the fullest sense, is to practice Śiva *bhakti*. The Jains…are inimical to Tamil culture itself.

All of these efforts seem most powerful and persuasive when viewed in the context of ongoing competition between Śaivas and Jains for royal patronage in the twelfth century, rather than a history of Tamils freeing themselves from the now-vanquished Jains. It may be more fruitful to see these polemics in this more limited, politicized context, while examining further the evidence for lay religious life that freely moved between these traditions. The simple Jain-Śaiva dichotomy of the *Periyapurāṇam* does not appear to be descriptive of medieval religiosity in light of other evidence. The efflorescence of Śaiva culture evidenced in the numerous temples scattered across the countryside bespeak of a long, glacial change whereby the devotional Śaivism became established and intimately associated with being Tamil.[71]

The worldview of the *Tēvāram* poet-saints was engaged at the height of the Cōḻa dynasty in Cēkkiḻār's hagiography. Accepting Stein's theory that the Cōḻas sought to create a segmentary state linked by Śaivism, we see a clear political agenda for the *Periyapurāṇam*.[72] Cēkkiḻār's strategy included casting Jains as un-Tamil, nefarious others in order to establish the Tamil authenticity of the Śaiva tradition. A major tactic in this part of his strategy was to invoke the lives of the deified poet-saints who struggled against the Jains centuries before. The problem with reading this agenda as an objective history is that the Jains remained an important and influential part of Tamilnadu into the sixteenth century, evidenced by their continued contributions to learned society and continued temple construction.[73] The commentary on the *Periyapurāṇam* suggests that the anti-Jain polemic was more focused in the political arena than on a plan for eradicating Jainism from the Tamil countryside.

That scholars have tended until recently to ignore the lay traditions, especially of the deep past, is predicated not on limited information but on a notion that the further we go into the past the more a religious tradition should resemble its canonical texts, specifically its earliest ones. Jains, as Nandi points out, did not distinguish themselves greatly from Brāhmaṇical culture—maintaining a caste system, sacred thread and even fire sacrifice rites, doing *pūjā*-like rituals in temples—nor did they strictly follow the prescriptions of their own religious texts when they created monasteries.[74] The messiness of lay religious life seems to have made scholars speak of lay practices as impure or degenerative forms of religion, measured against the ideals established in canonical texts. Notions of pure religion and privileging canonical texts still determine how many scholars write about religious traditions. In challenging the Hindu-Jain dichotomy, we must also challenge other such dichotomies as the lay-mendicant, and elite-popular distinctions I have used herein. Any polarized pairing breaks down on analysis; the distinction between Hindu and Jain breaks down by examining lay and popular practices, which has been particularly useful herein to problematize the standard narrative of medieval Tamil history.

In his most inspiring critique of the very conception by which we think of religious traditions as separate entities, Cort calls for a definition of Jainism that includes all modes of religious expression done by those who call themselves Jain, effectively eliminating the notion that a religious tradition is a reified ideological core made manifest. Instead, by according a place to the cumulative practices throughout time, we arrive at a more complete understanding of religion as a phenomenon. This aids our discussion of the Śaiva encounter with the Jains by according the *Periyapurāṇam* its proper place in the Śaiva tradition and the historiography of early medieval Tamilnadu. We must contextualize its purpose as a twelfth century, highly politicized hagiography, not as an accurate historical account of the declining population of Tamil Jains due to the emancipation of Tamil culture in the form of Śaivism. Rather, it is a contribution to Śaiva ideology that was of particular importance for self-definition that drew upon several mythologized narratives of Śaiva poet-saints. This view does not preclude our gaining historical insights from the text, but rather prevents it from telling a normative account of Tamil history that contradicts remaining evidence. Finally, it forces us to challenge our own predisposition to read history into such texts, and read out of them the possible strategies and agendas that the text served at the time of its composition. The *Periyapurāṇam* as religious text is important in revealing how twelfth-century Śaiva Tamils imagined and recapitulated the ascendancy of Tamil Śaivism from the time

of the *Tēvāram nāyaṉmār*s. It cannot, however, reliably inform us about the entirety of medieval Tamilnadu.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Professor Anne Monius and James McHugh of Harvard University for their input and suggestions on earlier drafts of this essay.

2 In this essay *bhakti* would translate as love, devotion, devotional, or devotionalism; a *bhakta* is a devotee. The term indexes the mode of religious expression developed in the centuries under investigation herein. Hereafter I will use "bhakti" (without italics) instead of an English equivalent to reference the devotional style of religious expression central to the essay. For a concise account of the rise of devotionalism in South India, see Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). "Śaiva" and "Śaivism" refer to the devotees and worship of the Hindu god Śiva, respectively.

3 Anne E. Monius, "Love, Violence and the Aesthetics of Disgust: Śaivas and Jains in Medieval South India," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32 (2004): 122.

4 Dennis D. Hudson, "Violent and Fanatical Devotion Among the Nāyanārs: A Study in the Periya Purāṇam of Cēkkilār," in *Criminal Gods and Demon Devotees: Essays on the Guardians of Popular Hinduism*, ed. Alf Hiltebeitel, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 373-75, 388, 390-91.

5 Glenn Yocam, *Hymns to the Dancing Śiva* (Columbia, MO: South Asia Books, 1982), 33.

6 Monius, "Love, Violence," 124-25.

7 Monius, "Love Violence," 122. Quoted from: Chanraleka Vamadeva, *The Concept of* Vaṉṉaṉpu, *'Violent Love', in Tamil Śaivism, with Special Reference to* Periyapurāṇam. Uppsala Studies in the History of Religions 1 (Uppsala: Uppsala University, Religious Studies, 1995), 12.

8 The standards of *varṇāśrama* ("caste and stage-of-life") *dharma*—prescribed roles of familial, ritual and social conduct for the three "twice-born" classes [*brāhmaṇ, kṣatriya* and *vaiśya*], dependent upon one's class and stage in life—are designated in the *Manusmṛti*. While I am reluctant to ascribe too much importance to a text's ability to direct behavior, especially for a whole society, the standards laid forth in this text are more or less *brāhmaṇical* ideals that were valued, if not strictly adhered to as "laws" per se. For a translation of this text, see *The Laws of Manu*, trans. Wendy Doniger and Brian K. Smith (London: Penguin Books, 1991).

9 Monius, "Love, Violence." See also James Ryan, "The Local and the Traditional in the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*," in *Approaches to Jaina Studies: Philosophy, Logic, Rituals and Symbols*, ed. N.K. Wagle and Olle Qvarnström (Toronto: University of Toronto Centre for South Asian Studies, 1999), 360.

10 James Ryan, "Erotic Excess and Sexual Danger in the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*," in *Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Cultures in Indian History*, ed. John E. Cort (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 67.

11 Ryan, "Erotic Excess," 79. Monius, "Love, Violence," 130-31.

12 Michael D. Rabe, "Royal Temple Dedications," in *Religions of India in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

13 Monius, "Love, Violence," 133.

14 Ibid., 139-40.

15 Rabe, "Royal Temple Dedications."

16 Ibid., 155.

17 Hudson, "Violent and Fanatical Devotion," 397.

18 The Purāṇas are a body of mythological texts dealing with the *deva*s, gods, of the Hindu pantheon.

19 Monius, "Love, Violence." Anne E. Monius, "Śiva as Heroic Father: Theology and Hagiography in Medieval South India," *Harvard Theological Review* 97 (2004): 165-197.

20 Monius, "Śiva as Heroic Father," 186-88.

21 Monius, "Love, Violence."

22 It is interesting to note that Nampi Āṇṭār Nampī said he "recovered" an older written collection of the *Tēvāram* hymns that had been stored away in a temple; the ones that we have today were saved from white ants. See: M.A. Dorai Rangaswamy, *The Religion and Philosophy of Tēvāram*, 2nd. Ed. (Madras: University of Madras, 1990 [1958]), 21.

23 Indira V. Peterson, "Śramaṇas Against the Tamil Way: Jains as Others in Tamil Śaiva Literature," in *Open Boundaries* (see note 10), 164-65 (emphasis mine).

24 Indira V. Peterson, *Poems to Śiva: The Hymns of the Tamil Saints* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989).

25 Peterson, "Śramaṇas Against the Tamil Way," 171.

26 Yocam, *Hymns*. Flood, *An Introduction*, 129-31.

27 Peterson, *Poems to Śiva*, Part II, Ch.3. Peterson, "Śramaṇas." Flood, 168.

28 I am not implying here that the purpose of natural imagery in the *Tēvāram* was solely to be a polemic, but rather that the overall strategy of establishing a Śaiva worldview was in direct opposition to Jain doctrines, which further strengthened their claims for Śaivism and against Jainism as the Tamil religion.

29 Peterson, "Śramaṇas," 171.

30 Peterson, *Poems*, 278. "Prakrit" is a catch-all term for middle Indic languages, such as Pāli, Ardha-Māgadhī, etc. in which the earliest Jain texts are composed.

31 C.V. Narayana Ayyar, *Origin and Early History of Śaivism in South India* (Madras: University of Madrass Press, 1936).

32 Rabe, 237-39. Desai mentions an inscription that attests to Mahendravarman being a Jain early in his life, though Nagaswamy claims no such inscription has been found. See P.B. Desai, *Jainism in South India and Some Jaina Epigraphs* (Sholapur: Jaina Saṁskṛti Saṁrakshaka Sangha, 1957); and R. Nagaswamy, "Jaina Art and Architecture Under the Pallavas," in *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, ed. U.P. Shah and M.A.Dhaky (Amedabad: Navajivan, 1975).

33 For the hagiographical account of Appar's life I am drawing mainly from T.N. Ramachandran, trans., *St. Sekkizhar's Periya Puranam*, Part I, (Thanjavur [Tanjore]: Tamil University, 1990). Additional information is drawn from Peterson, *Poems*, and Richard H. Davis, "The Story of the Disappearing Jains: Retelling the Śaiva-Jain Encounter in Medieval South India," *Open Boundaries*, 213-224 (see note 10).

34 Peterson, *Poems*, 283-96.

35 Ramachandran, *St. Sekkizhar's Periya Puranam*, xci.

36 The basis of this account is drawn mainly from G. Vanmikanathan, *Periya Puranam: A Tamil Classic on the great Saiva Saints of South India by Sekkizhar*, Condensed English Version (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1985), 229-262. Additional information is drawn from Peterson's summary in *Poems to Śiva*.

37 Hudson.

38 Vanmikanathan, *Periya Puranam*, 229.

39 Phyllis Granoff, "Scholars and Wonder-Workers: Some Remarks on the Role of the Supernatural in Philosophical Contests in Vedanta Hagiographies," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105 (1985): 459-467.

40 *Origin and Early History of Śaivism*.

41 Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), 72.

42 Stein, *Peasant State and Society*, 341-43. Peterson, "Śramaṇas Against the Tamil Way," 178.

43 Monius, "Love, Violence."

44 Davis, "The Story," 215. "Vaiṣṇava" refers, like Śaivism, to the worship of the god Viṣṇu.

45 Yocam, *Hymns*, 35-40, 191. For further information on the *Cilappatikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai*, see Anne E. Monius, *Imagining a Place for Buddhism: Literary Culture and Religious Community in Tamil-speaking South India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

46 Yocam, *Hymns*, 37.

47 Ibid., 38. Anne Monius (personal communication) seems to suggest otherwise, that there are many levels at which the *Tēvāram* poetry can be appreciated, and non-educated people may not have understood these hymns.

48 Leslie C. Orr, "Jain and Hindu 'Religious Women' in Early Medieval Tamilnadu," in *Open Boundaries* (see note 10), 187-88. Jains maintain that after the death of the most recent Jina, Mahāvīra, and his direct disciples, no person would be able to attain liberation (*mokṣa*), due to the impurity of the Era.

49 Many of the older sources I reviewed strongly held this bias. For examples, see Narayana Ayyar; A.L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India: A Survey of the Indian Subcontinent Before the Coming of the Muslims* (New York: Grove Press, 1954); K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Culture and History of the Tamils* (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1964); Hellmuth von Glasenapp, *Jainism: An Indian Religion of Salvation*, trans. Shridhar B. Shrotri (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999 [1925]).

50 Davis, 215.

51 Stein, *Peasant State and Society*, 76-86.

52 Burton Stein, "The Politicized Temples of Southern India," in *The Sacred Centre as the Focus of Political Interest*, ed. Hans Bakker (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1992).

53 Leslie C. Orr, "Jain Worship in Medieval Tamilnadu," in *Approaches to Jaina Studies: Philosophy, Logic, Rituals and Symbols* 250-274, ed. N.K. Wagle and Olle Qvarnström (Toronto: University of Toronto Centre for South Asian Studies, 1999).

54 Orr, "Jain and Hindu Religious Women." E. Ekambaranathan, *Jainism in Tamilnadu: Art and Archaeology* (Mississauga, Ontario: Jain Humanities Press, 1996).

55 Āḻvāppiḷḷai Vēluppiḷḷai, "Jainism in Tamiḻ Inscriptions," in *Jainism and Early Buddhism: Essays in Honor of Padmanabh S. Jaini* , ed. Olle Qvarnström (Fremont, California: Asian Humanities Press, 2003).

56 The Jain tradition is split into two major divisions, the Śvetāmbara, whose mendicants wear white and include women as fully-ordained nuns (*sādhvī*), and the Digāmbara, whose monks go naked and, for this reason, excludes women as fully ordained nuns. For an introduction to the Jain traditions, see Paul Dundas, *The Jains*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2002 [1992]).

57 *Yakṣas* (masc.) and *yakṣīs* (fem.) are semi-divine, immortal nature spirits commonly seen in Jain and Buddhist art and architecture. They are closely related with the still common worship of autochthonous deities, and tend to see seen as signs of luck, fortune, and earthly well-being. See John E. Cort, *Jains in the World: Religious Values and Ideology in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 94-95.

58 Orr, "Jain and Hindu Religious Women."

59 Roy C. Craven, *Indian Art: A Concise History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976). J.C. Harle, *The Art and Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

60 See Paul Dundas, *The Jains*, 2nd ed. Mahāvīra, Parśva, and Neminātha are the three most recent Jinas, or founders of Jainism. There are twenty-four such founders in each World Age (*Kalpa*). Mahāvīra, the final Jina, was a slightly older contemporary of the Buddha. His traditional Śvetāmbara dating is 599-527 BCE, though the scholarly consensus places his death at 425 BCE (Śākyamuni Buddha's death is generally accepted as happening sometime around 400 BCE). Parśva's historicity is in question, but is generally thought to have lived in the 8th or 7th century BCE. Mahāvīra's parents were apparently devotees of his and Mahāvīra renounced in his lineage. See Dundas, *The Jains*, 24ff.

61 Robert J. Zydenbos, "The Jaina Goddess Padmavati," in *Contacts Between Cultures*, Vol. 2: South Asia, ed. K.I. Koppedrayer (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992).

62 Desai, *Jainism in South India*. Dundas, *The Jains*.

63 Orr, "Jain Worship in Medieval Tamilnadu," 251.

64 Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, 293.

65 John E. Cort, "Bhakti in the Early Jain Tradition: Understanding Devotional Religion in South Asia," *History of Religions* 42 (2002): 60.

66 Ibid., 62.

67 Monius, "Love, Violence."

68. Cort, "Bhakti," 66.

69 Orr, "Jain and Hindu Religious Women."

70 Peterson, "Śramaṇas Against The Tamil Way," 172.

71 Davis, "The Story of the Disappearing Jains."

72 Stein, *Peasant State and Society*.

73 Orr, "Jain and Hindu Religious Women."

74 Ramendra Nath Nandi, *Social Roots of Religion in Ancient India* (Calcutta: K.P. Bagchi & Co., 1986), 130-37.