

COLLECTION INDOLOGIE – 124

Mapping the Chronology of Bhakti

Milestones, Stepping Stones, and Stumbling Stones

Proceedings of a workshop held in honour of
Paṇḍit R. Varadadesikan

edited by
Valérie GILLET

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS DE PONDICHÉRY
ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE D'EXTRÊME-ORIENT

Comité Editorial / Advisory Board

Diwakar ACHARYA (Kyoto University),
Nalini BALBIR (Université de Paris III et École Pratique des Hautes Études),
Peter BISSCHOP (Leiden University),
R. CHAMPAKALAKSHMI (Jawaharlal Nehru University, retired),
Alexander DUBIANSKI (Moscow State University),
Arlo GRIFFITHS (École française d'Extrême-Orient),
François GROS (École Pratique des Hautes Études, retired),
Pascale HAAG (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales),
Oskar von HINÜBER (Universität Freiburg im Breisgau),
Jan E.M. HOUBEN (École Pratique des Hautes Études),
Padma KAIMAL (Colgate University),
Kei KATAOKA (Kyushu University),
Vempati KUTUMBA SASTRY (Banaras Hindu University),
R. NAGASWAMY (Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology, retired),
Leslie ORR (Concordia University),
Aloka PARASHER-SEN (University of Hyderabad),
Pierre PICHARD (École française d'Extrême-Orient),
Herman TIEKEN (Leiden University).

Comité de Lecture / Evaluation

Les membres du comité éditorial font appel à des spécialistes de leur choix / The members of the advisory board call on experts of their choice.

© Institut Français de Pondichéry, 2014 (ISBN 978–81–8470–199–9)

© École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2014 (ISBN 978–2–85539–138–0)

Typeset by: Sathi Patel

Cover photo: Garuḍa on the roof of the temple at Neṇmeli (Tiruttani taluk, Tiruvallūr district) by Valérie Gillet

Cover design: Niral Shah, Pondicherry

Printed at Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry

Jīvakacintāmaṇi's Contribution to Periyapurāṇam

*Late T.S. Gangadharan**

1. Preamble

Umāpati Śivam composed the *Cēkkiḷārpurāṇam*. He was not contemporary with Cēkkiḷār, the author of the *Periyapurāṇam* but lived in a later period. As an author of this narrative poem, pregnant with various details of the *Periyapurāṇam*, he was obliged to disclose the reason why Cēkkiḷār indited the great opus *Periyapurāṇam*. The 21st verse of the *Cēkkiḷārpurāṇam* points out the reason which is as follows:

“The Cōḷa king Aṇapāyaṇ spent his leisure time indulging in the literary taste of *Jīvakacintāmaṇi*, a false fabrication of the thievish attitude of the rude Jains—*kunṭu aman puratṭu tiruṭṭuc cintāmaṇik katayai*. Beholding the king's bent of mind, Cēkkiḷār changed his mind to immerse himself in the biographies of Lord Śiva's servitors which alone would lead him to the virtuous path to attain the main objective of the superior human birth. (As per his request Cēkkiḷār authored the *Periyapurāṇam* which comprises the life histories of 63 individual servitors and 9 groups of servitors.)”

In the above Tamil compound attributing the *Jīvakacintāmaṇi*, the epithets *puraṭṭu* and *tiruṭṭu* may be ascribed either to the Jain people or to the epic poem *Jīvakacintāmaṇi* [hereafter *Jīvaka*]. In the first instance, it would mean that the Jains are of a lying nature with thievish qualities; in the second, the epic poem

* T.S. Gangadharan passed away before I could work on this article with him. In order not to alter his thoughts and style, I have opted for publishing this article as it was when he submitted it to me. I have simply standardised the writing of the titles and names (*Periya-purāṇam* to *Periyapurāṇam*, etc.), and rectified some typos. I am particularly thankful to his sister, Ms. Kamalambal, who has typed the article which T.S. Gangadharan gave to me hand-written. In homage to his memory, I am publishing here a page of the original manuscript that he handed over to me.

Jivaka. is full of false narration which too is not the author's own invention but simply copied from some other's fabrication.

Umāpati Śivam's odium against the Jains may of course be tolerable given the characteristic attitude of Śaivites during his period. But the charge levelled against their great epic *Jivaka*. gains no approbation of ours. It stands to be refuted altogether. The *Jivaka*. is strongly founded on the doctrines of Jainism established in the original works which its author chose to follow in his secondary work. The style and presentation of occurrences in this epic are highly individualistic which paved the way as a role model to later epic compositions.

Ironically enough the *Jivakacintāmaṇi* has guided the *Periyapurāṇam* in some instances both externally and internally unawares and our topic highlights those happenings.

2. The *Jivakacintāmaṇi*'s contribution to the *Periyapurāṇam*, unawares

The religion Jainism has been prevailing in our ancient country since the Vedic period. There are hundreds of treatises pertaining to Jainism in Prākṛit, Sanskrit and Kaṇṇaṭam. Comparatively they are of less number in Tamil. In the *Ārhatamahāpurāṇam*, in the subdivision of *Uttarapurāṇam*, the history of the hero Jivakaṇ finds place, based on which, in Sanskrit, were composed the *Kṣatracūḍāmaṇi* and the *Gadyacūḍāmaṇi*. Adapting these two Sanskrit works, the poet Tiruttakka Dēvar indited the treatise *Jivakacintāmaṇi*. This Tamil work excelled in so many ways the original Sanskrit works.

Among the rulers of the Tamil Country, the Pāṇḍya kings, there were followers of the Vaiṣṇavism and Jainism; all the Cēra kings were Śaivites. It was Rājarāja I who released all the ten *Tirumurai*—Śaiva scriptures—from some hidden treasure, with the help of the great Śaiva devotee and poet, Nampi Āṇṭār Nampi. The Cōla kings were endowed with the nature of religious tolerance. Kōcceaṇkaṭcōlaṇ built a shrine for Viṣṇu at Tirunaṛaiyūr. Rājarāja I granted the village of Āṇaimaṅkalam of cultivable paddy fields taxfree for the maintenance of the Buddhist shrine at Nākappaṭṭiṇam.

Quite before the composition of the *Periyapurāṇam*, in this Tamil Country, the *Jivakacintāmaṇi* and the *Cūḍāmaṇi* were the two great Jain treatises (composed in *viruttam* metre) in Tamil literature, more popularly celebrated by the learned. Some treatises pertaining to Vaiṣṇavism, learnt with much religious fervour, were the *Bhāratam* by Peruntēvaṇār, the *Pārataveṇpā* and the *Rāmāyaṇam* in the *ācīriyam* metre. But we are unaware of the availability of any book based on Śaivism. In order to avert the deficiency, complying with the request of the Cōla king Kulotuṅga II, Saint Cēkkiḷār composed the *Periyapurāṇam*, seasoned with much religious fervour.

After the appearance of this *Periyapurāṇam*, the great commentators of Tamil literature who lived in later periods were Aṭiyārkkunallār, Parimēlaḷakar and

Nacciṇārkkkiṇiyar of whom Parimēlaḷakar was a Vaiṣṇavite while the others were Śaivites. In the commentaries of Aṭiyārkkkunallār and Nacciṇārkkkiṇiyar Lord Śiva is indicated not by any other proper name except by the term *Iraivaṇ* which means “the Head of gods”. Of these two, Nacciṇārkkkiṇiyar is attributed as “the very embodiment of the pure Śaivism”—*tūya civaccuṭar tāṇē ākiya taṇmaiyaḷaṇ*. He had written an excellent commentary on the *Jivakacintāmaṇi*, depicting his great scholarly endeavour. Aṭiyārkkkunallār in his commentary on the *Cilappatikāram* illustrated many citations from the *Jivakacintāmaṇi*. Parimēlaḷakar in his commentary on the *Tirukkuraḷ* cited many references from the same. Cāmināta Dēcīkar, who derided the *Jivaka.*, in his commentary on the *Ilakkaṇakkottu* never forgot to quote lines from the *Jivaka.* as illustrative examples to establish his stand. In his elaborate commentary on the first *sūtra* of the section on *Eluttu* (Orthography), the great Śaivite scholar and poet Śivāṇāmuṇivar utilised stanzas venerating this Jain opus *Jivaka.* even prior to and after the period of this *Periyapurāṇam*.

The author St. Cēkkiḷār in his yeoman effort to compose this *Periyapurāṇam* chose the *Jivaka.* as his prime guide-line in the composition of stanzas in *viruttam* metre. In the intricate subject-matter also of the narration of history of Śaivite devotees (called Servitors), this Jain *opus* did play a good role in providing opportunities to follow its model considerably. That is to say, the *Jivaka.* contributed a lot to the *Periyapurāṇam*, quite unawares. Let us enumerate such instances in this paper.

The Jain epic *Jivaka.* elaborately narrates the history of the soul which deserves to enjoy salvation in its last birth as a man leading the domestic life, renouncing the same, indulging in penance as an ascetic and then getting rid of this bondage of births and deaths, gaining the status of salvation to enjoy an eternal bliss not to be reborn. Although the *Jivaka.* narrates eight-fold marriage which bounds the hero in his connubial life, it reiterates frequently the transience of the physical body, youthhood, joy and wealth and the exaltedness of divine worship and explains thoroughly how this human life is intended only to obtain the eternal bliss through penance, gaining wisdom.

The *Periyapurāṇam* also depicts the various histories of the human lives born to play the last role before attaining salvation at the feet of the Almighty Lord Śiva. The grammatical treatise on Figures of speech viz., *Daṇḍiyalaṅkāram*, which specifically defines the characteristics of an epic poem had not made its appearance before the advent of this *Periyapurāṇam*. Therefore it was quite probable that the author St. Cēkkiḷār followed the role-model of the *Jivaka.* which was evidently revered by the learned as an epic poem *par excellence*.

First let us dwell on the external similarities between these two epics. Only in the *Jivaka.*, as the first among epic poems, do we find the invocation stanza of the Almighty God, the apology and the stanzas dealing with the contents line by line, namely “*patikam*”—all these placed respectively.

1) The first stanza of “invocation of the Almighty” [*kaṭavuḷ vālttu*] in the *Jivaka.* is composed in *vaṇṇam*, a rhythmic cadence, each line comprising 14 letters (where

the consonants, the guttural, the shortened i and the shortened u are not reckoned), beginning with *nēr* syllable:

mūvā mutalā ulakammoru mūnrum ētta

In this stanza of 4 lines, each line, composed of 5 metrical feet, has 14 letters excluding those mentioned above [the consonants, the guttural, the shortened i and the shortened u].

In the *Periyapurāṇam*, the first invocation stanza of 4 lines is also of such *vaṇṇam*, each comprising 12 letters:

ulakelām uṇarntōtarkariyaṇ

Each line has only 4 metrical feet.

The later epic poem *Kantapurāṇam* also follows suit with the same *vaṇṇam*, comprising 12 letters in each line:

tikaṭa cakkarac cemmukam aintuḷāṇ

2) Although “the apology” which is *avai-y-aṭakkiyal* is defined in the *Tolkāppiyam* (*Poruḷ* 425), it is only the *Yāpparuṅkalakkārikai*, a prosodic Grammar treatise and the *Jīvaka*. an epic poem in literature that strictly followed the above rule. Following the foot prints of the *Jīvaka*. whose appeal of apology is:

munniṇṇiṇṇi piraṇṇa pavalattoṭu caṇku muttum

[...]

innīra eṇcor paḷutāyinuṇṇu kolpa aṇṇē

poynnīra allāp poruḷāḷvīṇ pukutum eṇpār

Although my verses may be defective in their verbal nature, those who desire the Heavenly bliss will accept them because of their conveyance of “the truth”.

The *Periyapurāṇam* marks its apology thus:

ceppalurra poruḷiṇ ciṇṇappiṇāl

apporuṭkurai yāvaruṇṇu kolvarāl;

ipporuṭkeṇ uraiciṇṇi tāyinuṇṇu

meypporuṭkuri yārkoḷvar mēṇmaiṇāl

Because of the significance of the subject-matter conveyed, the learned in this assembly will never fail to accept this work presented. Although my verses may be insignificant and even inadequate, the learned, due to the exaltedness of the content, will listen to it as acceptable.

3) The *Jīvaka*. in its “patikam” gives a summary of the poem’s contents chapter-wise. The *Periyapurāṇam* has the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai* as its “patikam” and every chapter thereof is named by the first metrical foot (or feet) of all the 11 stanzas of the *Tiruttoṇṭattokai*. The introducing foot (or feet) of all the stanzas of the

Tiruttonṭattokai take place as the names of the 11 chapters of the *Periyapurāṇam* such as *Tillaivāl antaṇar carukkam* and *Ilaimalinta carukkam*; with those 11, the introductory chapter was named *Tirumalai-c-carukkam* and the final one *Vellāṇai-c-carukkam* and all these 13 form as chapters. The *Jivaka*. also consists of 13 chapters to begin with *Nāmakal-ilampakam* and to end with *Mutti-ilampakam*—a rare coincidence in number! Resembling the last chapter *Mutti-ilampakam* which describes how the hero of the poem *Jivakan* enjoyed eternal bliss at the end, the chapter *Vellāṇai-c-carukkam* details how the hero of the great epic *Periyapurāṇam*, Cuntarar, after having completed the mission of his “avatār” on the earth, reached the Heavenly abode of Lord Śiva at the Kailāsa Mountain.

4) Resembling the *Jivaka*., wherein the hero's history continues throughout all the chapters, in the *Periyapurāṇam* too, with the idea that the life of the hero should dominate the whole treatise, the birth of the hero, Cuntarar, is mentioned at the beginning of the *Taṭuttāṭkoṇṭapurāṇam* (in the second chapter viz. *Tillaivāl-antaṇar-carukkam*), which itself ends with how he was enslaved by Lord Śiva as His devotee, causing obstruction to his imminent matrimony with the lady settled on by his parents; this happened at the marriage performance itself. The life history of Cuntarar, continuing in the *Ēyarkōṇ-Kalikkāma-Nāyaṇār* and *Cēramāṇ-perumāḷ-Nāyaṇār purāṇams*, reaches its completion at the last chapter, *Vellāṇai-c-carukkam*.

5) When the usurper-king *Kaṭṭiyaṅkāraṇ*, in the *Jivaka*., was to be killed in the battle, foreboding his tragic end, some evil presages took place and on the previous night his harem ladies dreamt an evil dream.

*pōka makalir valakkaṇ tuṭitta; pollāk kaṇākkāṇṭār;
ākam maṇṇar koḷimaluṅkirru; aṇcat takka kuraliṇāl
kūkai koyir pakarkuḷara, korramuracam pāṭavintu
mākam neyrtōr corinteṅkum; maṇṇum viṇṇum atirntaṇavē* (2182)

The right eyes of the harem damsels quivered. They had an evil dream. The physical lustre of the king became dimmed. Even in the palace during daytime big owls hooted, causing fear. The war-drums, even when beaten, remained soundless. The clouds rained blood-like. Both the earth and the sky quaked.

In the *Periyapurāṇam*, the author St. Cēkkilār treats very elaborately of the evil presages and dreams that occurred to the Jain monks at Madurai foreboding their utter ruin, as the great servitor *Tiruṇāṇacampantar* entered the city, invited by the Pāṇḍya king.

6) In the *Jivaka*. such petty conflicts as those that took place during the redemption of cattle from the hunters by *Jivakan* and his triumph over petty kings who rose up to fight *Jivakan*, being jealous of his having won the hand of the celestial damsel, *Gāndarvatattai*, and being instigated by *Kaṭṭiyaṅkāraṇ*, leading to a mighty warfare with the usurper-king, find place. In the *Periyapurāṇam* too, petty fights and regular warfare take place in the episodes of *Iyarpakai*, *Ēṇāti*, *Kaṇṇappar*, *Kōṭṭpuli* and in that of *Pukaḷccōḷar* respectively.

Evidently in the description of the battle-field the former would have made an impact on the latter. For instance, note the similarity which is as follows:

In the battle-field, even in the killing warfare, righteous code was adhered to by the warriors. When Vipulaṇ fought against warriors of Kaṭṭiyaṅkāraṇ, he set free from his murderous darts of weapons the solitary elephants without warriors, the soldiers wounded by others' weapons and those that were either too young or too old.

vīriṇmaiṇ vīlaṅkāmeṇa matavēlamum eṇiyāṇ (2270)

In the *Periyapurāṇam* also, in the episode of Kaṇṇappa Nāyaṇār, the militant young hunters accompanying the hero Tiṇṇaṇār, in their professional act of hunting animals followed certain righteous principles. They never chose to hurt such animals as elephant-calves, young ones recently whelped and their mother-beasts, pregnant ones with toddling tiresome gait, etc.

tuṭiyaṭiyaṇa maṭiceviyaṇa tuṟukayamuṇi toṭarār (Kaṇṇappa. 06)

7) In Caṅkam literature only such verses are to be found where the hero on beholding the heroine at his first glance feels doubtful whether she is a divine damsel having landed on the earth. Not a single poem is available where the heroine at her first sight feels doubtful whether he is the one from the heavens to the earth. This forms a peculiar rule in the love-theme and the *Tolkāppiyam* enunciates:

ciraṇtuḷi aiyam cuṭṭalāṇa. (Poruḷ 94)
uyarmolik kuriya āṭūwīr kurittē (238)

When the doubt arises in him, the hero is knowledgeable enough to ascertain in the very next moment itself that she is not divine but only human. On the other hand, the heroine, since she lacks that intelligence to immediately wipe out her suspicion, she would be only fear-struck on the advent of a celestial male form.

We find in the *Jīvaka*. instances where the amorous love-struck ladies on beholding the hero Jivakaṇ, at their first sight suspect him as the godly form of Lord Murukaṇ or some Vidyādharaṇ or the celestial of love, Maṇmataṇ.

miṇṇiṇ niḷkaṭam piṇṇeṭu vēḷkolō?
maṇṇum aiṅkaṇai vārcilai maintaṇō? (1956)
vaṇaṅku nōṇcilai vārkaṇaik kāmaṇō?
maṇaṅkoḷ pūmicai maivarai maintaṇō? (1318)

The commentator Nacciṇārkkīṇiyar makes it clear that the doubt dawned in the heroine's mind because of her meeting with the hero, is not attributed as clandestine union and she could get rid of her doubt by the extraordinary wisdom endowed on her. This explanation holds good in the case of the lady-love in the *Periyapurāṇam* also.

In the *Periyapurāṇam*, on beholding Cuntarar, Paravainācciyār at her first glance nurses a doubt whether he is a celestial form—either Lord Murukaṇ or Maṇmataṇ or some Vidyādharaṇ or one rare human endowed with the true grace of Lord Śiva.

munñēvan tetirtōṇṇum murukaṇō, perukoḷiyāl? (Taṭuttāṭkoṇṭa. 144)

8) "Anything can be illegally achieved during the rule of 'the base' by means of sheer bribe." This universal fact is portrayed in the *Jīvaka*. through the words of Kantukkaṭaṇ (1124) and of Curamañcari's father (910, 912) in various chapters.

In the *Periyapurāṇam* too, a similar expression is found. The Pallava king ordered his ministers to go to his place in order to bring Dharmaśēṇar into his presence.

teruḷkoṇṭōr ivarkoḷḷa tīyōṇaic ceruvataṛkup
poruḷkoṇṭu viṭātu, eṇpāl koṭuvārum. (Tirunāvukkaracar. 90)

"In order to punish that wicked one whom our Jain monks have accused, not yielding to his bribe, fetch him here" was the king's order.

The very fact that the base officials, in the machinery of any government, have occasions to receive bribes from citizens for the purpose of liberating them from any impending punishment, has been explicitly registered in both treatises.

9) There are some more relevant parallels to be drawn. Due to brevity of time let me point out only one, the vital proof:

Ēṇātinātar, as decided by his inimical rival Aticūraṇ to fight a duel with sword, reached the specified solitary spot. During the fight, when the latter was about to fall prey to the servitor's sword as already planned, he moved the shield which so far was hiding his face smeared with holy ash, so that the servitor beheld the holy ash on the foe's forehead. He at once realised his own sinful act of fighting a true Śaivite devotee. He was about to disarm himself by dropping down the sword and the shield but never chose to do so, fearing that the holy ash-smeared foreheaded servitor should sin in killing his enemy when the latter stood unarmed. Having the weapons in his hands, the true servitor stood, only to be slain by the false one's sword.

kaivā ḷuṭaṇpalakai nikkak karutiyatu (Ēṇāti. 39)

The reason why the true servitor, Ēṇātinātar, first thought of throwing down the murderous weapons was not stated in the *Periyapurāṇam* and stands to be inferred only from the Jain epic, *Jivakacintāmaṇi*:

The queen Vijayamādevi, on the very day she bore a son for him, told her consort Caccantaṇ her dreadful dream. He came to realise the fruit of her dream and became sure of his end within a year. From that day onwards, the king indulged in a philosophical way of life, placing his physical frame in the sun and soul in the shade. He spent his time in imparting to his consort religious preaching and political strategies. Although he was cocksure about his imminent end, he never thought that his most reliable minister Kaṭṭiyaṅkāraṇ would be the agent to bring about his disaster. When on one day the treacherous Kaṭṭiyaṅkāraṇ besieged the palace with the aid of the royal army, the piece of advice that Caccantaṇ gave to his consort reveals the purity of his heart. He sent her to fly in the air by means of the aircraft designed like a peacock and having armed himself faired forth to fight the traitor and dismembered

many of his foes. At length having lost all his might, he became languid and came to be aware of his utter helplessness. Instantly he let fall his bow and arrows as well as shield and sword. He was fully confident of the power of destiny, that one's failings and gains are the effects of one's previous "karmā", and became convinced that destiny played its role in handling the treacherous Kaṭṭiyaṅkāraṇ as its instrument to gain its end. And so he made his heart pure, vacating all his hostile thoughts against the traitor. He meditated on the feet of his Lord Arhaṇ and pronounced *mantras* and entered Heaven as a stranger to be entertained by celestials.

*pālaruwi tiṅkaḷtōy mutta mālai
 palippil neṭuṅkuṭaikkilp pāypari māntērk
 kōlaruvi veñcilaiyāṇ, kūrvāḷōṭu
 maṇikkē ṭakamum maṇamum māṛri,
 vālaruvi vāmaṇaṭit tāma raimalar
 kūṭi, man tirameṇ cāntu pūci,
 vēlaruvik kaṇṇinār meykāp pōmpa,
 vēntaṇpōy viṇṇōr virun tāyināṇē. (291)*

"When the soul departs from the body in the battle-field, for the purity of the physical body, one has to be deprived of murderous weapons from one's body." Despite this specific righteous doctrine for a warrior in the battle-field, in order to save the foe in guise of a Śiva's devotee from the blemish that he killed an unarmed warrior, the true servitor Ēṇātinātar never chose to disarm himself and stood before the false one only to fall prey to his sword, the next moment.

This is one internal proof, depicting the similarity between these two different religious epic poems.