



EMERGING SCHOLARS IN JAIN STUDIES

INAUGURAL (VIRTUAL) LECTURE

Departments of Religious Studies at UC Davis and UC Riverside
Friday, February 25, 2022 | 9:00 - 10:20am PST

Southern Mathura: Madurai as an Early Center of Jainism in South India
Julie A. Hanlon, University of Chicago

The city of Madurai in Tamil Nadu was once host to some of the earliest Jain monastic communities in India and continued to be a prominent center of Jainism until c. 10th century. We know from classical Tamil poetry that the city was formerly known as Kudal. This shift in identity from Kudal to Madurai roughly coincides with the proliferation of Jain monasteries and temples inside and outside of the city, including a constellation of Jain hill sites known as the Eight Great Hills. In addition to the Jain archaeological heritage associated with the city, within Tamil literature Madurai is also depicted as host to Jain monastic communities. Inscriptions referring to the city as “Southern Mathura” signal its identity as a counterpart to the Jain center of Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. This lecture will discuss the history of Jainism in Madurai, from the early Jain caves bearing Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions to the stone temples and Jain relief images of the 8th-9th centuries. Through a combination of archaeological, epigraphic, and literary evidence, it will show how a small group of itinerant Jain monks traveling along trade routes connecting north and south India grew into a large network of Jain monastic communities with Madurai as their center.



Julie A. Hanlon's research examines the history of Jainism in south India and is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach. She holds an MPhil in Archaeology from the University of Cambridge and a joint PhD in Anthropology and South Asian Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago. She has participated in archaeological excavations across north and south India and spent several years in Tamil Nadu researching classical Tamil literature and epigraphy. Dr. Hanlon's recent work examines the materiality of texts and inscriptions and the ways in which the preservation, destruction, and reuse of literature and landscape figured in the formation of religious identities in first millennium south India. She currently serves as the Associate Director of Learning Design for University of Chicago Professional Education (UCPE).

REGISTER ON ZOOM

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you have any questions, please contact: abajzelj@ucr.edu. This event series is co-sponsored by the Mohini Jain Presidential Chair in Jain Studies (UC Davis) and the Shrimad Rajchandra Endowed Chair in Jain Studies (UC Riverside).

Image: Pechchi Pallam at Samanar Malai, courtesy of Julie A. Hanlon