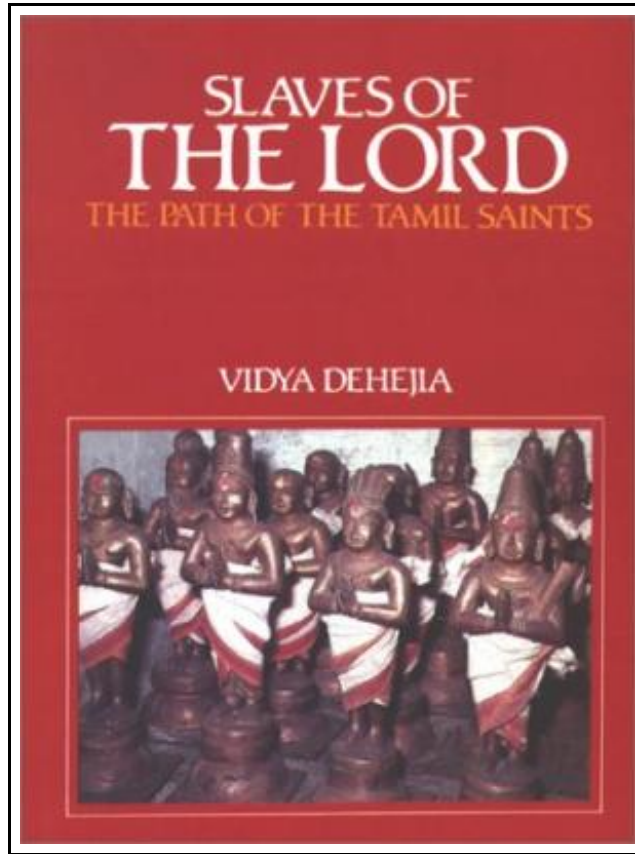# Slaves of The Lord: The Path of The Tamil Saints, Reprint

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SLAVES OF THE LORD: THE PATH OF THE TAMIL SAINTS, REPRINT

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Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 2002. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. 25 cms. 218pp. In the Tamil country of south India, during the last millennium, a powerful cult of saints has been in existence. These saints referred to themselves as adiyar or tondar, both words meaning "slaves" -of the Lord. Although the south Indian saints are lesser known than those of northern India, or of Europe, they are in a manner more significant. For the sacred canon of south India, both of Saivites and Vaishnavas, consists of the poems composed by these saints. Their hymns are chanted daily in the southern temples, and often sung in homes and at festivals. In the field of art too, the saints of south India occupy a unique position. Images of the complete group of saints, sixty-three Nayanmars in the case of Siva and twelve Alvars in the case of Vishnu, are to be seen in every temple in the Tamil country. Placed beside the shrine of the god, the saints are anointed, clothed and worshipped, being an integral part of temple rituals. To view the art forms in their totality and to appreciate the saints and the status accorded to them in the Tamil country, the author introduces their biographical details, the milieu in which they functioned, and includes selected translation of their poems. A complete picture emerges when the strands of poetry and religious history are brought in to highlight a study of the art. This is not simply a book about the images of the saints, but one that will appeal to students of religion and literature. This original and exciting book is of relevance for the history of ideas.

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