

Preface

Emotions have a history. And emotions are defined, theorised and practised in different ways by different cultures and subcultures. This short monograph is based on this idea. It adopts an approach that is standard in the History of Emotions, a vivid young and growing subdiscipline in scholarship on emotion.

The author of this monograph believes that emotion theories as they were developed in premodern (11th to 17th century) Tamil-speaking South India is a field that should be integrated into global historical research on emotions. Indeed, comparative studies on emotion may well profit from non-Western Indological perspectives. This systematic study on emotion knowledge of premodern Tamil treatises across time may provide a valuable case in point. It offers a chance for readers to familiarise themselves with theoretical developments in emotion knowledge in premodern Tamil India that until now were unavailable in a concise and structured form of this type.

This study has deliberately abstained from addressing how theories of literary emotion were applied in poetic composition. However, the present study can nonetheless serve as a meaningful guide to how emotion treatises established emotion rules or norms, and how the emotion concepts as prescribed in these treatises provide models for emotion practices.

This monograph has been an attempt to interpret the sources through the eyes of the period that produced them. The study also responds to today's scholarly debates and interests within the field of the history of emotion, as well as in the wider intellectual world, albeit such comments are only found in footnotes (see, e.g., ch. 1, n. 93). Furthermore, the study attempts to show that although the close interaction and interpellation of Sanskrit (an Indo-European language) and Tamil (a Dravidian language) cannot and must not be denied, the Tamil scholiasts' theorisation is nevertheless to be taken seriously on its own terms.

The reader will note that the volume's structure is the inverse of the more usual order, namely, that of presenting an investigation and then offering a conclusion. This unusual structure has a straightforward reason. The first chapter makes the Tamil material available to non-specialist readers who do not read Tamil (or to those who do read Tamil, but have no experience with the rather complicated language of medieval scholastic literature). Through this, it is hoped that this volume can also be attractive to such readers. For historians of emotions in Western or Chinese cultures who wish to go further afield and look into non-Western/non-Chinese cultures of the past, chapter 1 provides a survey of key areas in current Tamil emotion research, enabling an understanding of Tamil premodern theoretical emotion knowledge and how this culture theorised emotions. Equally, it allows the reader to see what Tamil thinkers *did*

not engage with. The second chapter is mainly for readers who are specialists in the field of Indology.

For the Tamil texts, the transcription system and diacritic marks of the *Tamil Lexicon* have been used; for Sanskrit terms, the transcriptions are those found in the Monier Williams *Sanskrit–English Dictionary*. Non-English texts are italicised, and plurals of terms are indicated by the addition of the English ‘s’. The English translations of passages from non-English works cited in the bibliography are, unless specified otherwise, my own. Also any brackets [] used within citations are mine, if not stated to the contrary.

This volume was developed during my research as Principal Investigator on pre-modern community-based and honour-related emotions. It is an extension and by-product of that research. Generous funding was received from the DFG German Research Council, for which I am very grateful.

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This short monograph was completed in the summer of 2020 and it has not undergone any changes since then. Two scholars were particularly influential for me. Ideas from the early work of the historian of Western medieval emotions Professor Barbara Rosenwein contributed significantly to the research direction of this volume. This is equally true for the Sanskritist Professor Sheldon Pollock, the author of *A Rasa Reader*, to whom I owe my inspiration for the volume’s structure.

I must also express my thanks to the two peer-reviewers for their comments and enthusiasm. At Heidelberg Asian Studies Publishing, Nicole Merkel-Hilf assisted me with a wide range of advice during the printing process. I value her patience and guidance. Finally, a ‘thank you’ goes to Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek, who corrected the English text. It goes without saying that any mistakes in this study are entirely my own responsibility.