About the book

Moving away from a dominant cultural equation of love, desire, and intimacy with marriage, Beyond Desire offers a radical view that reinstates the body as an enduring symbol of desire. Drawing on the works of seven twentieth-century male Tamil writers beginning with K.P. Rajagopalan, this book explores a spectrum of male–female intimacies wherein desire, liberated from the sexual act, acquires its own creative agency. Through a reading of selected works of writers like T. Janakiraman, Karichan Kunju, Mauni, M.V. Venkatram, Dandapani Jeyakantan, and Tanjai Prakash, this book focuses on the category of the sensual that intertwines the sexual and other modes of relating to the world through spirituality, social reform, and artistic labour.

As most of these narratives are articulated through male characters, many of whom are torn between expressing their desire and preserving their religious integrity, the overarching mission remains rooted in discerning the shifts in male perception. The first book in English on modern Tamil literature, it offers alternative readings of sexualities that resist social and sexual definitions, and is a significant contribution to literary scholarship in Tamil.

About the author

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Key Features

- The first book in English on modern Tamil literature
- Draws on the works of seven twentieth-century male Tamil writers: K.P. Rajagopalan, T. Janakiraman, Karichan Kunju, Mauni, M.V. Venkatram, Dandapani Jeyakantan, and Tanjai Prakash