

ABSTRACT

Research Theme: Literary culture in post - medieval Tamil Nadu

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I investigate the literary culture in post medieval Tamil Nadu – a culture which engendered works ranging from new grammars of the Tamil language to ballad-like narrative poems on the lives of poor farm laborers. Rather than engaging in a debate on the quality of this extraordinarily diverse corpus of literature, I seek to understand how literature was understood to have been constituted and how it was produced in different environments, the transmission of texts between these different literary environments, and the nature of overlap between literary and other cultural domains. By choosing this set of questions, I hope to provide a critical understanding of certain literary trends that we now identify as post medieval, came into being.