Love in South Asia

Love may be a universal feeling, but culture and language play a crucial role in defining it. Idioms of love have a long history, and within every society there is always more than one discourse, be it prescriptive, religious, or gender-specific, available at any given time. This book explores the idioms of love that have developed in South Asia, those words, conceptual clusters, images and stories which have interlocked and grown into repertoires. Including essays by literary scholars, historians, anthropologists, film historians and political theorists, the collection unravels the interconnecting strands in the history of the concept (shringara, ‘ishq, prem and ‘love’) and maps their significance in literary, oral and visual traditions. Each essay examines a particular configuration and meaning of love on the basis of genre, tellers and audiences, and the substantial introduction sets out the main repertoires, presenting the student of South Asia with an important cultural history.

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Love in South Asia

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Love in South Asia

A Cultural History

Edited By

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University of Cambridge
Ad Anna, la mia amica più cara

In memoriam (1964–2004)
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NOTE ON DIACRITICS

In order to avoid filling the pages with diacritical marks, we have confined the use of diacritics to titles of books (but not films), quotations and Sanskrit, Persian, Hindi/Urdu, Bengali and Rajasthani words the first time they appear in each essay.

The system that has been followed is that used in R. S. McGregor, *The Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993) and, for Persian, in F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (various editions).