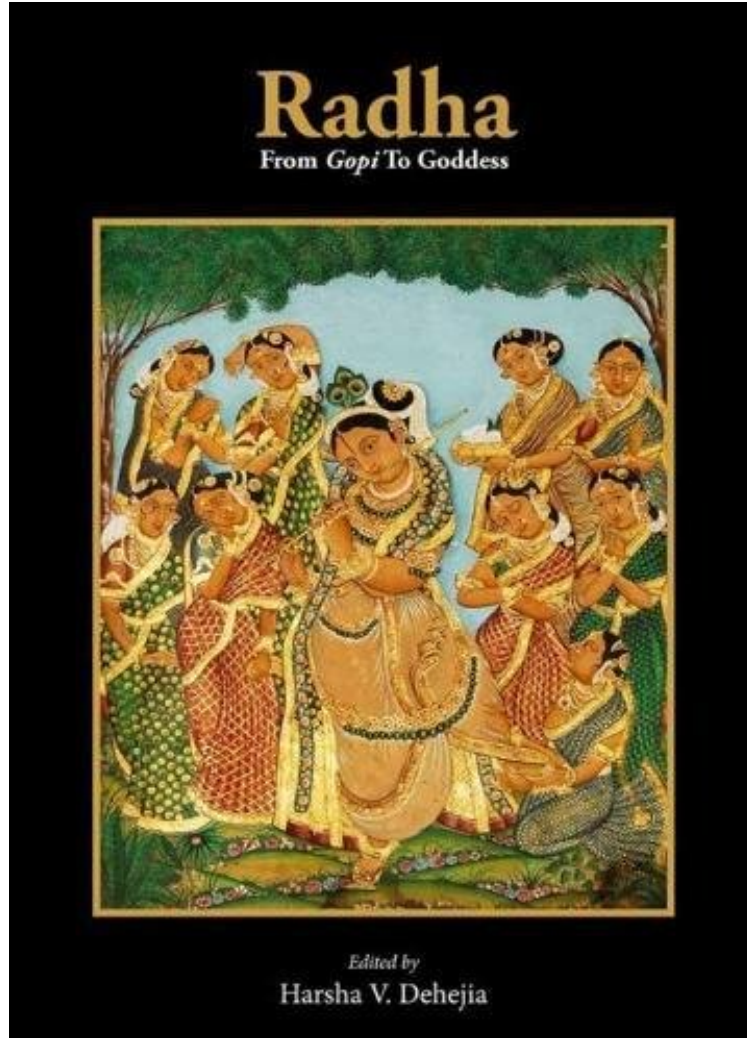


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Harsha V. Dehejia

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Radha occupies a space which moves from the aesthetics of shringara rasa to the theology of shringara bhakti, from the madhurya of Pushtimarg Vaishnavism to the prema of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, taking in its stride the philosophies of Advaita and Dvaita, the traditions of Shakti and Shakta, she takes us from the devotional poetry of Bhaktikal to the courtly poetry of Ritikal and even beyond to the modern poetry of Adhunikkal. Radha is both kamini and ramani, desirable and beautiful, she is both a gopi and a nayika and through her we feel the presence of Krishna in Vrindavana

and the opulence of the Vaishnava Rajput courts, she is a devi in the temples of the Gaudiyas and through her we are able to worship Krishna, and finally she is even a kalankini or the defiled one and through her we are privy to the folk literature of Bengal and modern middle class psychology of the bhadrak.