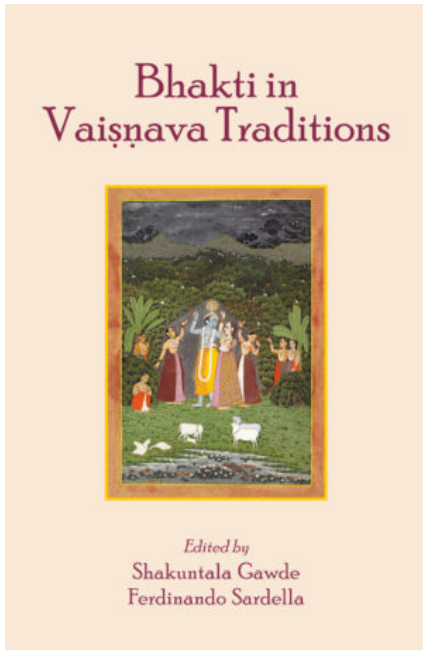


Bhakti in Vaisnava Traditions



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About the Book

The book "Bhakti in Vaisnava Traditions" explores various dimensions of bhakti in Vaisnavism. Vaisnavism, a cornerstone of India's spiritual traditions, is deeply entrenched in the fertile grounds of bhakti, representing intense devotion and love towards the divine. This exploration delves into the intricate realm of Vaisnavism, spotlighting its historical trajectory and philosophical bedrock, all harmonized by the resonant theme of bhakti. The book is organized into three parts: Bhagavata Purana and Bhagavad Gita, Bhakti in Vedanta, and Regional Traditions. The first part elucidates the essence of bhakti as reflected in Bhagavata Purana and Bhagavad Gita, which are known as pivotal texts of bhakti. These sacred scriptures bring to light the profound bond between individual consciousness, and the indwelling Lord. Bhakti, in its radiant form, serves as the beacon guiding this relationship. Enriched by tales of Krishna and the teachings of dharma, these texts unravel the transformative essence of steadfast devotion. It delves into themes such as the nature of divine love, devotional Aesthetics and commentator's role in interpretation of bhakti texts. The second part understands the concept of Vaisnava-bhakti as seen in Krishna Vedanta and its further development in Vedantic texts of Ramanuja, Sriminaryana, Nimbarka and Madhusudana Sarasvati. This section offers a nuanced understanding of how bhakti is conceptualized within diverse Vedantic traditions, adding complexity to the exploration and showcasing varied perspectives within the broader Vaisnava framework. The final section deals with regional variations, highlighting diverse cultural expressions of Bhakti within Vaisnavism. It captures the dazzling variety of regional Vaisnava traditions including Vrkar traditions, Caitanya Vaisnavism and Braj Vaisnavism. Each regional hue paints the canvas of Vaisnava bhakti traditions, enriching its spectrum.

About the Author

Shakuntala Gawde is the Head and Assistant Professor in the Department of Sanskrit at the University of Mumbai. Her areas of interest include Vedanta, Religious studies, Purāṇa studies, and Aesthetics. She completed her Ph.D. on 'Eschatology in Vedic Literature compared with Western Philosophy from the University of Mumbai. She was invited as a 'Visiting Fellow' by Kelaniya University, Sri Lanka in 2017. She was awarded a Doctoral fellowship by the Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, and the Sir Dorabaji Tata Trust. She successfully completed a research project titled 'Govardhanamahātmya in Texts and Tradition: Sociological and Philosophical Exegesis' under the auspices of a Minor Research Project Grant from the University of Mumbai (2019-2020). With over 40 publications, including books, articles in national and international journals, and chapters in books, as well as encyclopedias, 13 articles are published in the Encyclopaedia of Hinduism and Tribal Religion by Springer. In September 2021, she received the Academisthan Best Teacher of the Year award. She is the author of the book 'Narrative Analysis of Bhagavata Purana' (2023) and the co-editor of the book 'Myths of Creation' (2023).

Ferdinando Sardella (Ph.D. 2010, University of Gothenburg, Sweden) is Associate Professor at the Department of Ethnology, History of Religions and Gender Studies at Stockholm University. He is the co-director of the project Bengal Vaishnavism in the Modern Period at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, where he is a permanent research fellow. His field is South Asian studies, Bengal studies, yoga, new religious movements and the history and sociology of religion. His area of specialization is modern Hinduism. He is the author of the monograph Modern Hindu Personalism: The History, Life and Thought of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī (2013). He has coedited The Sociology of Religion in India: Past, Present and Future (with Ruby Sain 2013), The Legacy of Vaisnavism in Colonial Bengal (with Lucian Wong 2020) and Handbook of Hinduism in Europe (with Knut A. Jacobsen 2020). He has published several articles in international journals about modern Vaishnavism.

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