

Māyā is one of the most fascinating and enigmatic concepts in Indian philosophy, encompassing mystery, illusion, devotion, and indeed, the world itself. Māyā is found throughout Hindu texts, from the earliest scriptures, such as the Ṛg -Vēda, up to the most recent. This book explores māyā's rich conceptual history, and then focuses on the highly developed theology of māyā found in the Sanskrit Bhāgavata Purāṇa, one of the most influential Hindu sacred texts. Gopal K. Gupta examines māyā's role in the Bhāgavata, paying special attention to its relationship with human suffering (*duḥkha*) and divine play (*līlā*). While Indian traditions typically see māyā as a negative force that mires living beings in the phenomenal world, Gupta explores how the Bhāgavata identifies māyā as the divine feminine and affirms that māyā also has a positive role, as māyā is ultimately meant to draw living beings toward God (Krishna) and intensify their love for him.

'This is a very fine study of māyā with particular reference to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, an important scripture of Hinduism. Dr Gupta has done an excellent job bringing light to our understanding of this pivotal concept and his book should be widely read.'

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