

## John P. Clay and the Clay Sanskrit Library

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John P. Clay's vision came to life in the late 1990s, when he began to put the people and resources together for what would become the Clay Sanskrit Library. Since the publication of the first volume in 2005, fifty-six volumes have been published. The selection represents the richness and wide variety of Sanskrit literature, covering works of drama, poetry, satire, and novels, as well as the two famous epics, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

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## The “Gita-govinda: Love Songs of Radha and Krishna”(Skt. *Gītagovinda*)

A twelfth-century Sanskrit court poem, written by Jayadeva in twelve cantos, each of which consisting of one or more songs. The poem depicts young Krishna’s adventures with the *gopīs*, “cowgirls”, in particular his love for the *gopī* Rādhā.

सौन्दर्यैकनिधेरनङ्गललनालावण्यलीलाजुषो राधाया हृदि पल्वले  
मनसिजक्रीडैकरङ्गस्थले ।  
रम्योरोजसरोजखेलनरसित्वादात्मनः ख्यापयन्ध्यातुर्मानसराजहंसनिभतां  
देयान्मुकुन्दो मुदम् ॥

Radha was for him the one and only treasure trove of beauty:  
Within her heart, as on a stage, he played the part of Love and she  
played Love’s lovely leading lady;  
Her heart was like a lake, and relishing there the bobbing of  
lotuses, her pretty breasts,  
He revealed his likeness to the royal gander of Lake Mánasa upon  
which holy men meditate.  
Let Krishna make you happy!

*Gītagovinda* 11.36, translated by Lee Siegel  
(from *Gītagovinda, Love songs of Radha and Krishna*, Clay  
Sanskrit Library, pp. 168–9; from the eCSL collection)



Bodleian Libraries MS. Ind. Inst. Misc. 21. A depiction of Krishna and Rādhā from an album of Kalighat paintings from 19th century Calcutta. These images were created as inexpensive souvenirs for Hindu pilgrims visiting the famous temple of Kali. The paintings are bound in a single volume, which includes eight hand-coloured woodcut prints (ff. 29–36).



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