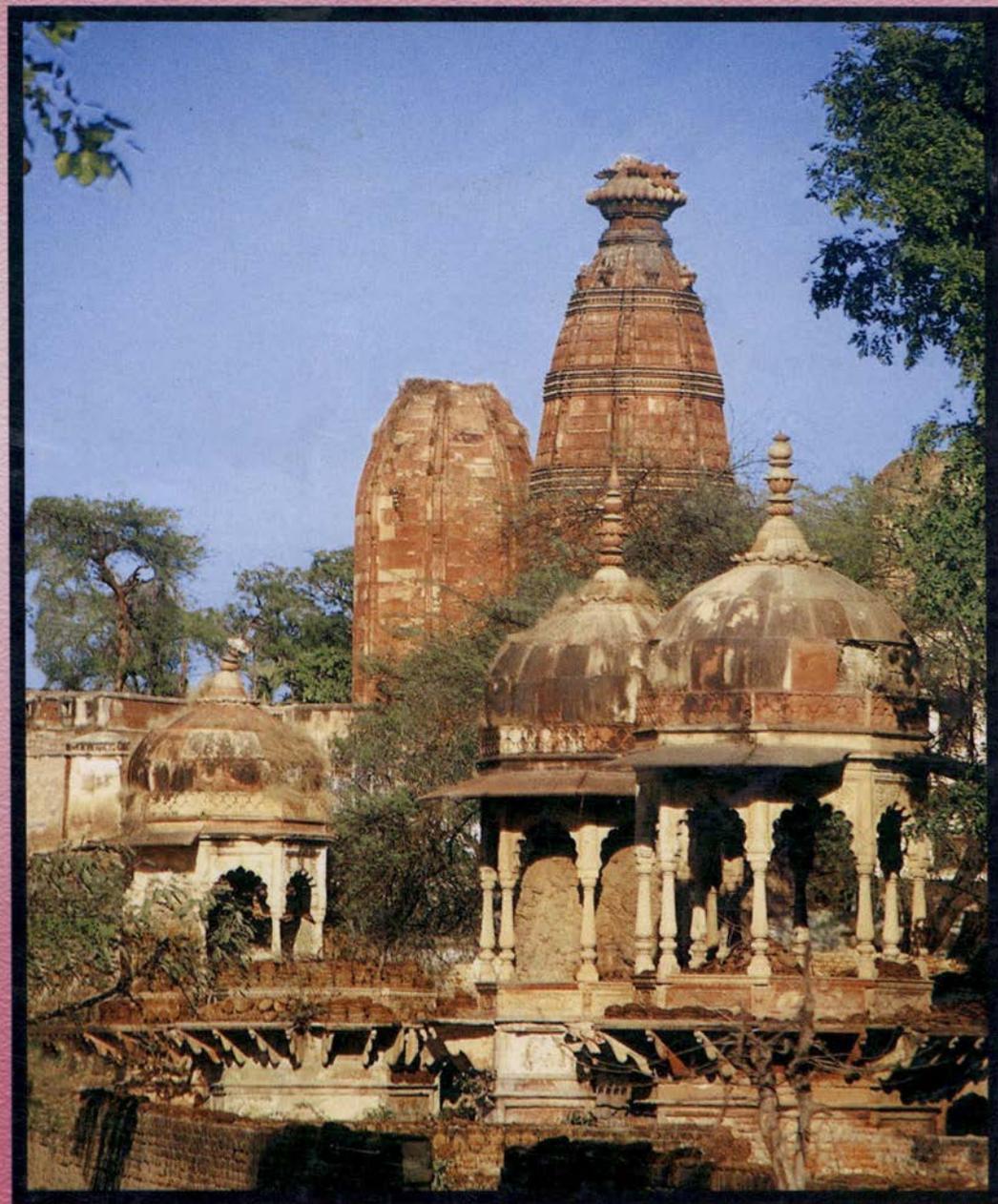


THE COLOR GUIDE TO VRNDĀVANA

INDIA'S MOST HOLY CITY OF OVER 5,000 TEMPLES



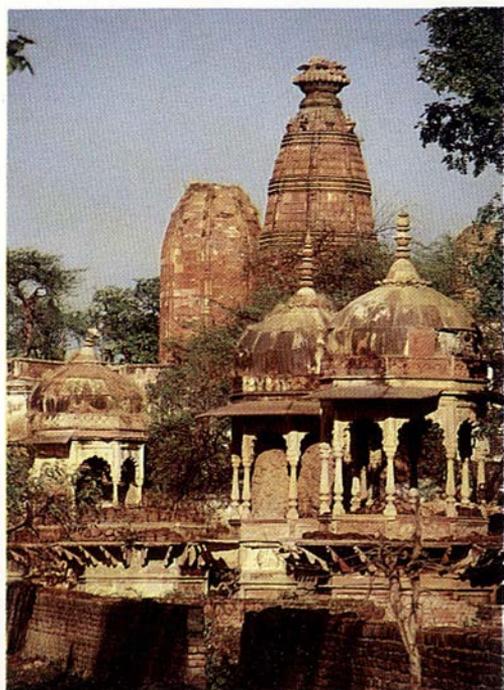
Rājasekhara dāsa Brahmācārī





THE COLOR GUIDE TO
VRNDĀVANA

INDIA'S MOST HOLY CITY OF OVER 5,000 TEMPLES



Written and Photographed by
Rājasekhara dāsa Brahmācāri

VEDANTA VISION PUBLICATIONS

*A view of the sacred river Yamunā seen
from the Madana-mohana temple*



Selected Verses from
ŚRĪ VṚNDĀVANA MAHIMĀMRITA
Prabhodānanda Sarasvatī

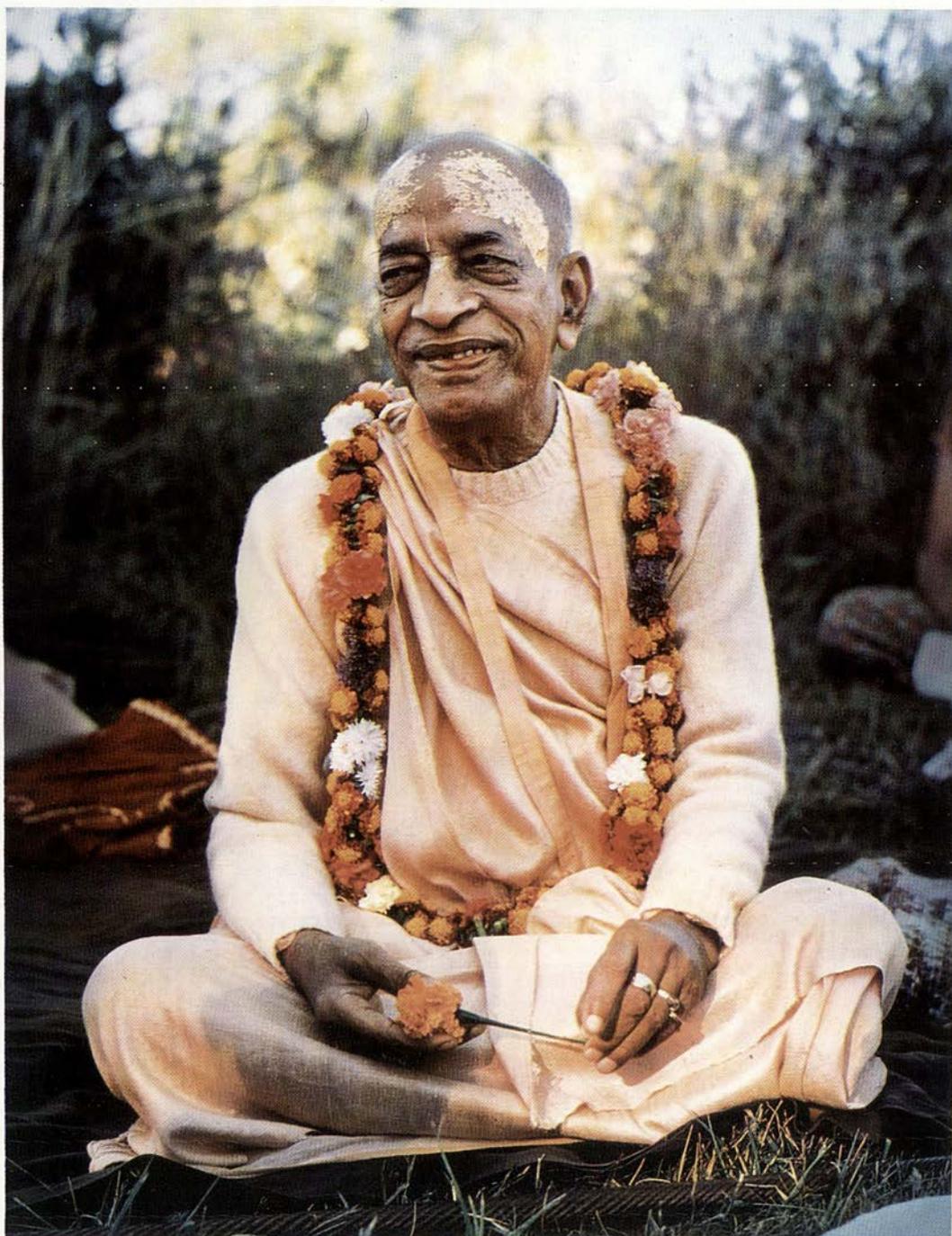
In Vṛndāvana the effulgent ground is fashioned with many very wonderful colorful cintāmani jewels. The trees and vines are full of blissful spiritual fruits and flowers. Birds make a great tumult by reciting the hymns of the Sama Veda, and the lakes and streams are filled with transcendental nectar. May my heart meditate on Vṛndāvana in this way.

Vṛndāvana is illuminated by numberless moons of spiritual bliss. It is cooled by the sweet nectar of spiritual love, and it is filled with desire trees and many hosts of madly cooing birds. Whose heart will not run to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna, who enjoy eternal transcendental pastimes in that Vṛndāvana?

In this beginning-less world of repeated birth and death, how many times have you not suffered in hell and how many times have you not relished the pleasure that eclipses the happiness of Brahmā, Indra, and the other demigods? My friend, in this one body, do not consider happiness or distress but simply worship the supreme transcendental abode Śrī Vṛndāvana.

A person absorbed in the most wicked sordid deeds, who once bows down to offer respect to a blade of grass in Vṛndāvana, at once becomes a very pious person. At the end of his body, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, who has all power to unshackle one from the bond of *karma*, he certainly attains the otherwise unattainable lotus feet of Lord Krishna.





HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA
FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS

*This book
is dedicated to
the sacred memory of
our beloved spiritual master*

**His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupāda**

*who revealed the holy dhāma of
Vṛndāvana
to the whole world*

*A view of Vṛndāvana and
the temple of Madana-mohana*



Selected Verses from
SRI VRNDĀVANĀSTAKA
Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

May Vṛndāvana, which is fragrant with a gentle breeze that makes the lotuses in the Yamunā rock to and fro, where there are groves of Kadamba trees, and where there are many *gopīs*, their hearts blossoming with happiness by hearing the music of Lord Mukunda's flute, be my shelter.

May Vṛndāvana, where Lord Brahmā and other *Jagad-gurus* desire to be born even as a blade of grass, and which, even though it is a forest, is many thousands of times more opulent, beautiful, charming, and sweet than the spiritual cities of Vaikuṅṭha, be my shelter.

May Vṛndāvana, where the fragrance of the eternally blossoming flower vines fills the goddess of fortune with wonder, and where the bumblebees in the trees filled with very sweet honey are poets who bow down and recite eloquent prayers, be my shelter.

May Vṛndāvana, which is decorated with blades of grass that bear the charming, gracefully marked footprints and playfull toenail prints of the youthfull divine couple of Vraja, who are glorious as a monsoon cloud and lightning, be my shelter.



Pronunciation Guide

The italicized Sanskrit words that appear throughout this book are spelled in a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word.

Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedge-hog**, and **red-hot**. **Ś** and **ṣ** are pronounced like **sh**.

Readers interested in the subject matter of this book are invited to correspond with the author:

Rājasekhāra dāsa Brahmācārī
Krishna Balarāma Mandir
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Raman Reti, Vṛndāvana U.P.

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On the cover : *A view of Madana-mohana Mandir from Karauli Ghāṭa*
Back cover : *A view of Keśī Ghāṭa from across the Yamunā river,*
(below) The Krishna-chandrama Mandir
Inside cover : *A view of the sacred river Yamunā from Keśī Ghāṭa*

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*A view of Vṛndāvana with the temples of
Govindajī and Rangajī in the distance*



Selected Verses from
VRAJA-RĪTĪ-CINTĀMANI
Viṣvanātha Cakravartī

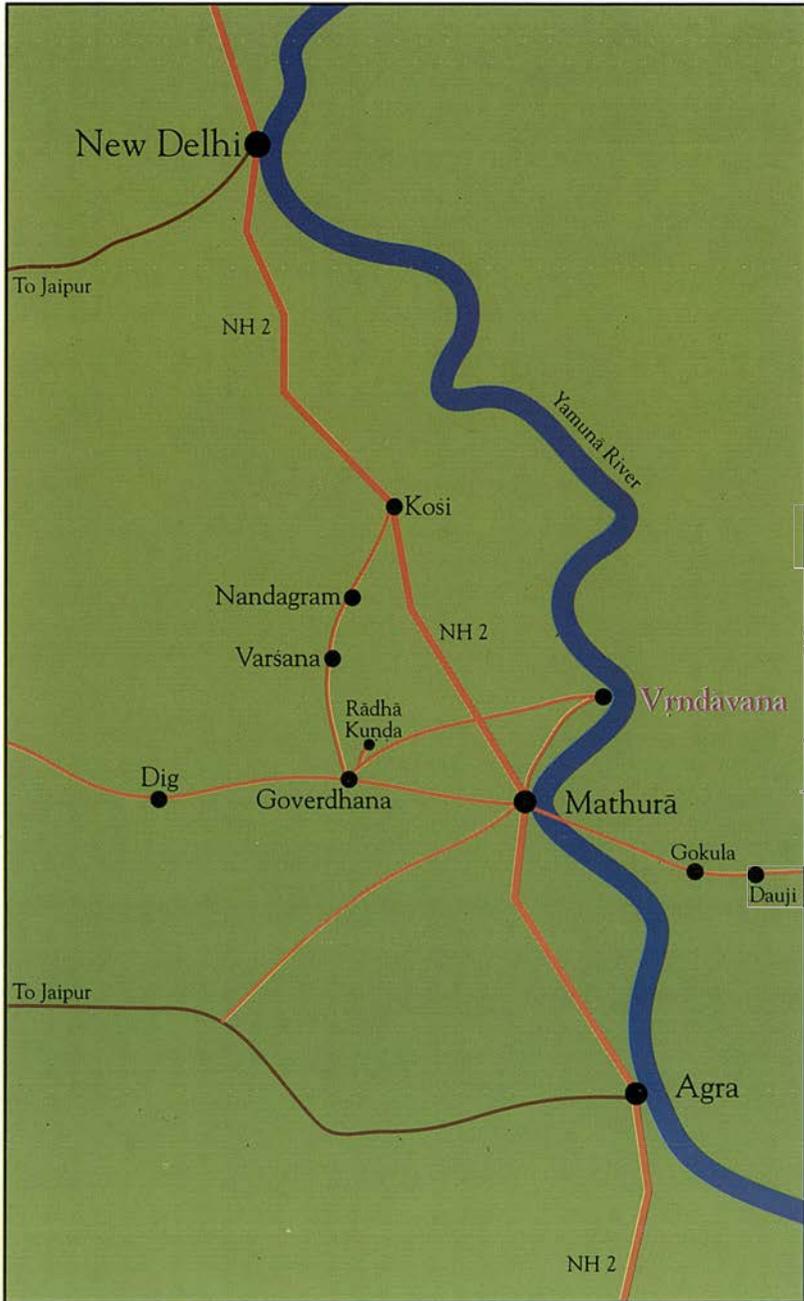
Let me glorify Vrajabhūmi, the place where Śrī Krishna enjoys transcendental pastimes. Simply by drinking with their ears the nectarian description of Vrajabhūmi, the liberated souls abandon the bliss of impersonal *brahman* and yearn to attain the land of Vraja.

With a pure heart let me worship Vrajabhūmi, which is the form of sweetness of meditation on Śrī Krishna, which is eternal, transcendental, blissfull, and peerless, and which, although it cannot be understood by ordinary people, is easily understood by its residents.

Some portion of transcendental Vṛndāvana become visible in this world at the time of Lord Krishna's manifest pastimes. conditioned souls think Vṛndāvana is material, although actually it is spiritual and beyond their ability to understand or describe.

The peerless and supremely sweet land of Vṛndāvana is the blissfull abode where the Supreme Personality of Godhead enjoys pastimes, it is the incarnation of the Lord's form and is non-different from him.





INTRODUCTION

It was certainly my great fortune that when I first came to India from London in January 1975, my first destination was the holy city of Vṛndāvana, the sacred abode of Lord Śrī Krishna, about which I had heard so much since joining the Hare Krishna movement in 1972. Little did I realize at that time, I would be spending the rest of my life living in India.

It is only by the divine grace of our beloved spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda, that it is possible to appreciate the great transcendental beauty of Vṛndāvana. I have also found that by his mercy, this appreciation simply goes on increasing day by day, year after year.

It had been my desire a long time to write a comprehensive guide to Vṛndāvana for the benefit of the thousands of pilgrims, especially from the West, who now flock in large numbers to Vṛndāvana. While I was rendering service at Śrīla Prabhupāda's rooms at Vṛndāvana's historic Rādhā Dāmodara temple, many devotees who came there asked directions to the various holy shrines around Vṛndāvana. It was then that I decided to prepare this guide book along with an accurate map, to enable them to easily locate the most important places of Vṛndāvana.

Even though I have done extensive research for this book, it is my intention to continue the research of Vṛndāvana's holy places for the benefit of all the devotees of Lord Śrī Krishna, who relish visiting Vṛndāvana *Dhāma* and going on pilgrimage to all the sacred places connected to the transcendental pastimes of the Lord.

Rājasekhara dāsa Brahmācārī
Gaura Purnima 1994

THE GLORIES OF

Selected verses from the Vedic scriptures

In all the three planetary systems, this earth is especially fortunate for here stands the town of Vṛndāvana

Ādi Purāna

Vṛndāvana *dhāma* is non-different from Krishna because the name, form, fame, and place where the Lord manifests – are all identical with the Lord as absolute knowledge. Therefore, Vṛndāvana *dhāma* is as worshipable as the Lord.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (Intro) — Śrīla Prabhupāda

The natural opulence of Vṛndāvana is just like as ocean. The opulence of Dwārakā and Vaikuṅṭha is not even to be compared to a drop of that ocean

Chaitanya Caritāmṛta — Kṛṣṇāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmi

Vṛndāvana cannot be understood by conditioned souls, for although it may appear to be material; all its villages, forests, and cow pastures are perfectly spiritual.

Vraja-riti-cintāmaṇi — Viśvanāth Cakravartī

With great humbleness let me offer my respectfull obediences to the supremely pious dear devotees of Lord Krishna who reside in Vraja. Even though Brahmā is a great demigod entrusted with many weighty duties, he sincerely yearns to take birth among the bushes and blades of grass in Vraja

Vraja-vilas-stava — Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmi

By uttering the name of Vṛndāvana one attains the merit of chanting Krishna's holy name. By smelling the fragrance of Vṛndāvana, one is blessed by the merit of smelling the sweet fragrance of *tulasi* leaves offered to Lord Govinda

Garga Saṁhitā

How wonderfull it is that simply by residing in Vṛndāvana even for one day, one can achieve a transcendental loving attitude towards the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This land of Vṛndāvana must be far more glorious than even Vaikuṅṭha.

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu — Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmi

Visiting Vṛndāvana is by itself equal to the merit of visualisation of Lord Hari. By eating in Vṛndāvana one obtains the merit of partaking of the offering to Lord Hari. By working in Vṛndāvana with one's hands, one obtains the merit of serving Lord Hari. Walking in Vṛndāvana equals the merit of pilgrimage to a different holy place with each and every step.

Garga Saṁhitā

VṚNDĀVANA DHĀMA

The results of travelling to all the pilgrimages in the three worlds is achieved simply by touching the holy land of Vṛndāvana

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu — Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmi

Even if I have the opportunity to bathe in the nectarian ocean of pure love of Krishna, and even if I have the pure devotees of the infalible Supreme Personality of Godhead as my associates, I will not consent to live, even for a single moment, in any sacred place other than Vrajabhūmi

Vraja-vilas-stava — Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmi

Selected verses from the Mathurā Mahātmya of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmi

If a person who has not seen Vṛndāvana has a keen desire to see Vṛndāvana, he will be reborn in Vṛndāvana no matter where he dies.

If a man decides in his mind “I will go to Vṛndāvana and stay there,” — simply by having such thoughts he will be freed from the wheel of *samsāra*.

All the sins accumulated through many births can be destroyed in a second by staying in Vṛndāvana

Sins committed in Vṛndāvana can be washed off in Vṛndāvana only. By staying in Vṛndāvana one can rise above *dhārma*, *ārtha*, *karma* and *mokṣa*. All these steps leading to salvation are easily attainable in Vṛndāvana.

Those who stay in Vṛndāvana for three nights, to them Lord Krishna gives happiness not even obtainable for those who are liberated.

Those who with devotion for Lord Krishna make a *parikramā* of Vṛndāvana — are freed from all sins and at death go straight to Viṣṇuloka.

Even women, *malecchas*, *sudras*, animals, birds, deer or anyone else dying in Vṛndāvana — goes to Viṣṇuloka.

Candālas, *yavanas*, women, and murderers who die in Vṛndāvana — will not take birth again.

Dumb unconscious beings, the blind, killers, and those not practicing any *tapasya* or *nyamas*, who die in Vṛndāvana at any time — go to Viṣṇuloka.

Any man — dying in a sewer, a broken house, a cemetery, in the air, on a stage, in a bed, in a mansion or anywhere in Vṛndāvana — will attain liberation.



THE HISTORY OF VRNDĀVANA DHĀMA

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Krishna descends to earth for performing His transcendental pastimes, He brings with Him His own eternal abode known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, along with His most intimate associates, friends, servants, and various other transcendental paraphernalia. Just like a King who goes to another country takes with him his personal friends, family members, ministers and secretaries, as part of his royal retinue.

The Lord's transcendental abode which is also known as the *dhāma*, is non-different from the Lord's eternal abode in the spiritual world, in fact it is an exact replica. By mundane material vision the *dhāma* may appear like any other place on earth, but to the pure devotees and perfect yogis, the *dhāma* is a completely spiritual abode saturated with its own transcendently surcharged atmosphere.

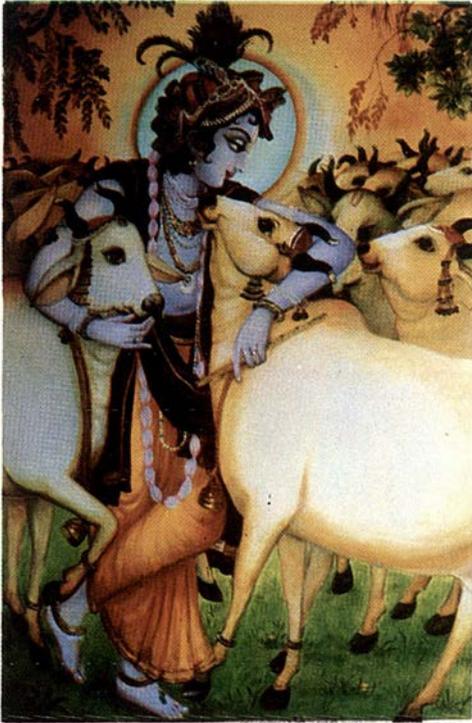


THE LORD DESCENDS TO EARTH

Five thousand years ago when the Supreme Lord in His original form as Krishna advented Himself here on earth, this part of the world was ruled by the most cruel and sinful King Kāṁsa. Kāṁsa had imprisoned his own father, Ugrasena, and usurped the throne of Mathurā. With the help of other sinful and irreligious kings and his demoniac friends, Kāṁsa let loose a terrible reign of terror. As declared by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*To deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants,
as well as to reestablish the principles of religion,
I myself appear, millennium after millennium.*

It was the Lord's divine plan to take birth in the dynasty of Bhoja kings at Mathurā, choosing Kāṁsa's very own sister, the beautiful princess Devakī, who was a great devotee of the Lord, to play the part of His so-called earthly mother. Prior to Lord Krishna's appearance, King Kāṁsa had been warned by a prophetic voice from the sky that the eighth son of Devakī would kill him. Kāṁsa wasted no time in arresting Devakī and her husband Vasudeva.



Krishna the Cowherd Boy

He threw them into prison and murdered all their newborn babies one by one.

From the very beginning of His transcendental birth, Lord Krishna performed the most amazing superhuman acts. He appeared before Devakī and Vasudeva as their eighth child in His four-armed form of Vishnu-*mūrti*. He then miraculously transformed Himself into a small baby. By His own divine will, baby Krishna was transferred from the prison cell of Kāṁsa, to the safety of Gokula, and the foster home of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā Mayī, the king and queen of the cowherd men.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Krishna, is called Bhagavān. This means He is full with six opulences: all strength, all beauty, all wealth, all fame, all knowledge and all renunciation. There is no one greater than God in these six opulences, even when He is playing as a small baby on the lap of His mother. The Lord is also called Yogeśvara, or the master of all mystic powers.

When Kāṁsa came to know that baby Krishna had escaped, he became furious and ordered all the newborn children in the kingdom to be immediately slaughtered. When he somehow understood that Krishna was still alive, he sent a number of his powerful demoniac associates in search of Krishna with orders to kill Him immediately. Due to the attack of so many demons sent by King Kāṁsa, like Pūtanā the witch, and Tṛnavarta the whirlwind demon, Nanda and Yaśodā took Krishna from Gokula to Nandagram, in the hope of giving protection to their transcendental child.

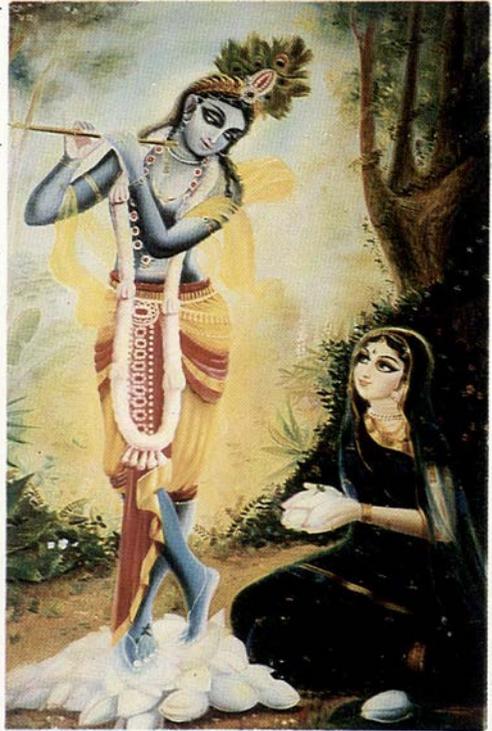
As Krishna grew a little older, He used to go to the pasturing grounds with the cows and calves, accompanied by His cowherd boyfriends and His elder brother Balarāma, whose mother was Rohinī, another wife of Vasudeva. Throughout Krishna's life, so many demons tried to kill Him - Pūtanā, Aghāsura, Dhenuka, the poisonous serpent Kāliyā, Pralamba, Keśī, Vyomāsura, not forgetting the evil King Kaṁsa. Each one failed, however, and in turn were killed by Lord Krishna.

When Krishna reached the age of six or seven, He became friendly with the beautiful young cowherd girls, the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana. They all worshipped Krishna as a great hero, due to His killing many demons. They also worshipped Him as the most beautiful person in the creation, and all desired to marry Him. The young *gopīs* were deeply in love with Krishna and desired to serve Him as much as they possibly could. They were not able to forget Krishna even for a moment. The most beautiful and qualified amongst the *gopīs* was Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Krishna's most beloved and favorite *gopī* damsels. As Lord Śrī Krishna is the source of all the incarnations of Vishnu, Rādhārāṇī is the original source of all the goddesses of fortune (*lakṣmīs*). Just as Krishna descended from the spiritual world, Rādhārāṇī also descended, along with 108 important *gopīs* for offering different kinds of service to Lord Krishna. Devotional service to God, out of pure love, is the topmost activity for all living entities; even the great yogis aspire to be eternally engaged in the loving service of Krishna.

There are a total of five holy *dhāmas* of Lord Śrī Krishna on earth, but the most important one is Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma*. It is the highest and most super-excellent abode, where only very intimate, transcendental loving pastimes are enacted by the Lord. By material vision, Vṛndāvana *Dhāma* has a radius of forty-two miles with Mathurā in the centre, and is known as the *Vraja Mandala*, which includes the twelve important forests. The forest of Vṛndāvana however is the most important; Vṛndāvana means forest (*vana*) of Tulasi plants (*Vṛndā*).

In this forest of Vṛndāvana, Lord Krishna enacted His most intimate pastimes with the beautiful *gopī* damsels of Vraja. In the evening, Krishna would come to the forest of Vṛndāvana and play on His transcendental flute, thus calling all the beautiful *gopīs* to come and enjoy the wonderful *rāsa-līlā*, the divine dance of love. Lord Krishna would then dance in spiritual ecstasy with hundreds of beautiful *gopīs*, and each *gopī* would have the opportunity of personally dancing with Krishna. The *gopīs* also exchanged intimate loving glances with Krishna and were embraced by the Lord to their hearts' content.

The wonderful pastimes of Lord Krishna unfolded one after another, day after day, thus enchanting the lives of all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. After attaining the age of eleven, Lord Krishna, accompanied by Balarāma, decided to go to Mathurā to kill the evil



Rādhā and Krishna

King Kāṁsa and release his parents, Vasudeva and Devakī, who were still in captivity. Lord Krishna's going to Mathurā, and later Dvārakā, form whole new chapters in the transcendental life and pastimes of Lord Śrī Krishna.

Those interested in understanding more about the wonderful pastimes of Lord Krishna would do well to read the books of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, especially *Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*, a summary study of Krishna's pastimes mentioned in the great classic *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

THE DISCOVERY OF VṚNDĀVANA BY LORD CHAITANYA

Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the most munificent incarnation of God, was known as the Golden *Avatar*, because His bodily complexion was like molten gold. He was the direct incarnation of Lord Śrī Krishna and appeared on earth at the holy place known as Navadvīpa in West Bengal only 500 years ago in the year 1486. The purpose of His divine appearance on earth was to reveal to the world, the *yuga-dharma*, or the religion for this age. He also rediscovered the most sacred places of Vṛndāvana which had been lost in time.

The religious process that Lord Chaitanya revealed to the world is known as the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* or the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names:

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.*

This is the easiest and most sublime process for God realization and even a child can follow it. In this dark age of *Kali-yuga*, intelligent men of the world can get true knowledge about God simply by performance of this *saṅkīrtana-yajña* (sacrifice).

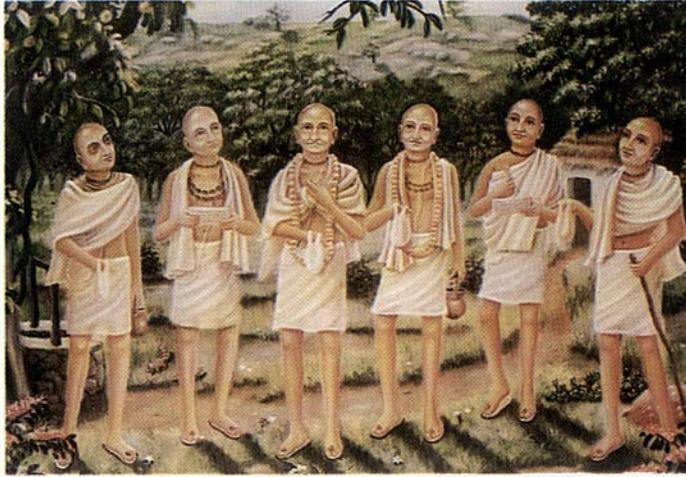
It was in the year 1515 that Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu visited Vṛndāvana, with the purpose of locating the lost holy places associated with Lord Śrī Krishna's transcendental pastimes. Lord Chaitanya wandered through the different sacred forests of Vṛndāvana in a spiritual trance of divine love, sometimes laughing, sometimes crying, sometimes dancing in ecstasy and constantly chanting the holy names of Krishna. By His divine spiritual power, He was able to locate all the important places of Lord Krishna's pastimes in and around Vṛndāvana.

When Lord Chaitanya first arrived in Vraja, He stayed at a *brāhmaṇa's* house in Mathurā and would walk around Vṛndāvana every day visiting the sacred places connected with Lord Krishna's pastimes. Later, Lord Chaitanya moved His residence to Akruṇa Ghāṭa and would daily visit Imlī-tala, where He sat looking at the river Yamunā while chanting Hare Krishna on His *japa* beads and constantly shedding tears in an ecstatic mood of divine love.

After a few months, Lord Chaitanya left for Jagannātha Puri and directed two of His dear-most followers, Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs to proceed immediately to Vṛndāvana, not only to excavate the places of Lord Krishna's pastimes but also to write books on the science of *bhakti-yoga*, in order to establish the teachings of Lord Chaitanya for the benefit of all future generations.

Lord Chaitanya taking sannyāsa





THE SIX GOSVĀMIS OF VRINDĀVANA

The six Gosvāmīs not only founded the holy city of Vr̥ndāvana, but also firmly established the teachings of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu through their various writings explaining the doctrine and philosophy of Śrī Caitanya for the benefit of the whole world. The two brothers Rupa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs were ordered by Lord Chaitanya in the year 1516 to go and live in Vr̥ndāvana and search out all the lost holy places connected with Lord Śrī Krishna's transcendental pastimes. He also ordered them to compile books on the great science of *bhakti-yoga*, the process of devotional service to God.

In their sacred mission, Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs were ably assisted by Raghunātha dāsa, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Jīva who altogether formed the famous transcendental group, the six Gosvāmīs of Vr̥ndāvana. Even though both Rūpa and Sanātana were very important ministers in the government of Bengal, by the divine inspiration of Lord Chaitanya, they completely renounced mundane family life in order to fully serve the mission of Lord Chaitanya.

When they first came to Vr̥ndāvana, it was just a large forest, and at night they would sleep under the trees. They dressed only in simple *kaupins* (loincloths), and subsisted on forest roots and dry *chapatis* obtained by begging alms (*madhukari*). The six Gosvāmīs hardly slept more than two hours a day and spend most of their time in meditation and writing books on the science of *bhakti-yoga*. Some of their original works, written on parchment leaves, have been preserved and can be seen at the Vr̥ndāvana Research Institute, as well as at the British Museum in London.

The fame of the six Gosvāmīs spread so far and wide that even Emperor Akbar decided to pay a visit to Vr̥ndāvana in the year 1570. Jīva Gosvāmī led him blindfolded into the sacred *kuñja* of Nidhuvana. So great was the Emperor's spiritual experience there, that to commemorate the event, he granted permission to construct four grand temples dedicated to Lord Krishna. The temples were Govindajī, Gopīnātha, Madana-mohana and Jugal-kiśore. The Emperor also donated funds to set up a library for the preservation of the Gosvāmī's books at Rādhā-Dāmodara temple. This library used to be in the room to the left of the altar and is still known as *grantha ghar* (book room). Akbar even provided first class sandstone, normally reserved for the Emperor's palaces and forts; such was his appreciation for the six Gosvāmīs. Unfortunately, one hundred years later, these same temples were desecrated by the soldiers of Emperor Aurangzeb, the Muslim zealot, in the year 1670.

THE SEVEN ORIGINAL AND MOST IMPORTANT TEMPLES OF VṚNDĀVANA

Temple	Founder
Madana-mohana	Sanātana Gosvāmī
Govindajī	Rūpa Gosvāmī
Rādhā Gopīnātha	Madhu Paṇḍita Gosvāmī
Rādhā Dāmodara	Jīva Gosvāmī
Rādhā Śyāmasundara	Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita Gosvāmī
Rādhāramaṇa	Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī
Rādhā Gokulānanda	Lokanātha Gosvāmī



Govindaji temple

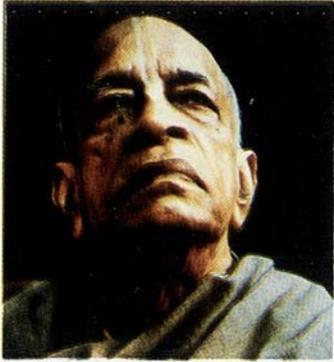
THE SIX GOSVĀMĪ'S CHRONOLOGY

1486 Lord Chaitanya's appearance	1542 Rādhāramaṇa Deity, first <i>sevā pūjā</i>
1488 Sanātana Gosvāmī's appearance	1545 Jīva Gosvāmī buys land at Rādhā-kunḍa
1489 Rūpa Gosvāmī's appearance	1552 Rūpa Gosvāmī writes <i>Nectar of Devotion</i>
1494 Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's appearance	1558 Sanātana Gosvāmī's disappearance
1503 Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's appearance	1558 Land at Rādhā Dāmodara acquired
1505 Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's appearance	1564 Rūpa Gosvāmī's disappearance
1510 Lord Chaitanya takes <i>sannyāsa</i>	1570 Emperor Akbar meets Jīva Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana
1513 Jīva Gosvāmī's appearance	1571 Raghunāth dāsa Gosvāmī's disappearance
1515 Lord Chaitanya visits Vṛndāvana	1578 Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's disappearance
1516 Rūpa and Sanātana come to Vṛndāvana	1579 Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's disappearance
1531 Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī comes to Vṛndāvana	1580 Madana-mohana temple opens
1534 Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's disappearance	1590 Rādhā Govinda temple opens
1535 Jīva Gosvāmī comes to Vṛndāvana	1598 Jīva Gosvāmī's disappearance
1542 Rādhā Dāmodara Deity, first <i>sevā pūjā</i>	1670 Aurangzeb desecrates temples

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA REVEALS VṚNDĀVANA TO THE WORLD

It was 500 years ago that Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu predicted that the holy names of Krishna would be chanted in every town and village throughout the world. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmi Prabhupāda appeared in this world just to fulfill the divine prophecy of Lord Chaitanya.

Acting on the order of Lord Chaitanya, Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs established Vṛndāvana as a sacred place of pilgrimage for the devotees of Lord Krishna. However, the people outside India had heard nothing about Vṛndāvana until 1965, when Śrīla Prabhupāda sailed to America to spread the Hare Krishna movement, and simultaneously reveal to the world the most holy of all holy places - Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma*.



Today, thousands of foreigners from the world over flock to this holy city on pilgrimage. Vṛndāvana is now considered to be the most important spiritual pilgrimage place on earth, thanks to the pioneering preaching work done by Śrīla Prabhupāda in broadcasting the glories of Vṛndāvana *dhāma*.

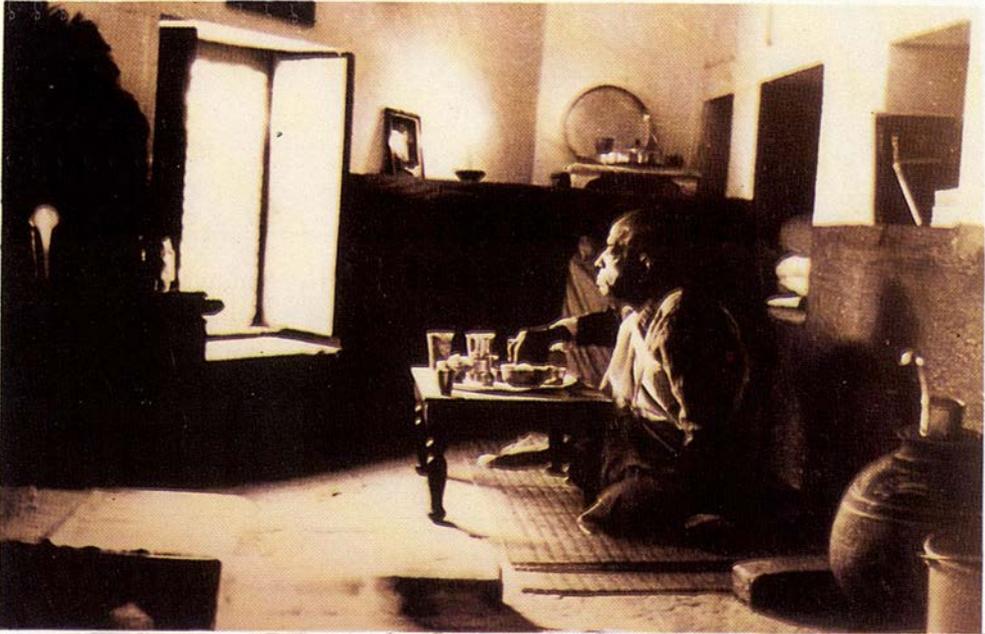
Since the time of the six Gosvāmīs, many exalted devotees have come in the disciplic line of succession from Rūpa and Sanātana, including such revered personalities as Raghunātha dāsa, Jīva, Krishna dāsa Kavirāja, Śrīnivāsa, Narottama, Śyāmānanda, Viśvanātha, Baladeva, Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī, and in the modern era, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, who all wrote and preached extensively. They established the path shown by Lord Chaitanya as the topmost process of self-realization for the whole of mankind. The culmination of all their hard work became manifest in the form of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who single-handedly spread these teachings all over the world. In fact, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura predicted at the beginning of the century: "One will soon come who will spread the holy names of Krishna throughout the world."

It is not difficult to see that since the time of Lord Chaitanya Himself, Śrīla Prabhupāda has become the most prominent and successful messenger of Śrī Chaitanya's teachings that the world has ever seen or is ever likely to see again. In the twelve short years from August 1965 to November 1977, Śrīla Prabhupāda actively preached, he established over 100 temples of Krishna worldwide, initiated more than 5,000 disciples, and distributed 100 million copies of his books on Krishna consciousness in 64 languages. Śrīla Prabhupāda's translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā* became the best selling edition in the world. About his books, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "My books will be the spiritual law books for the next 10,000 years." Śrīla Prabhupāda also said that "The American people will mark the day I arrived in this country, and brought the Krishna consciousness movement to America."

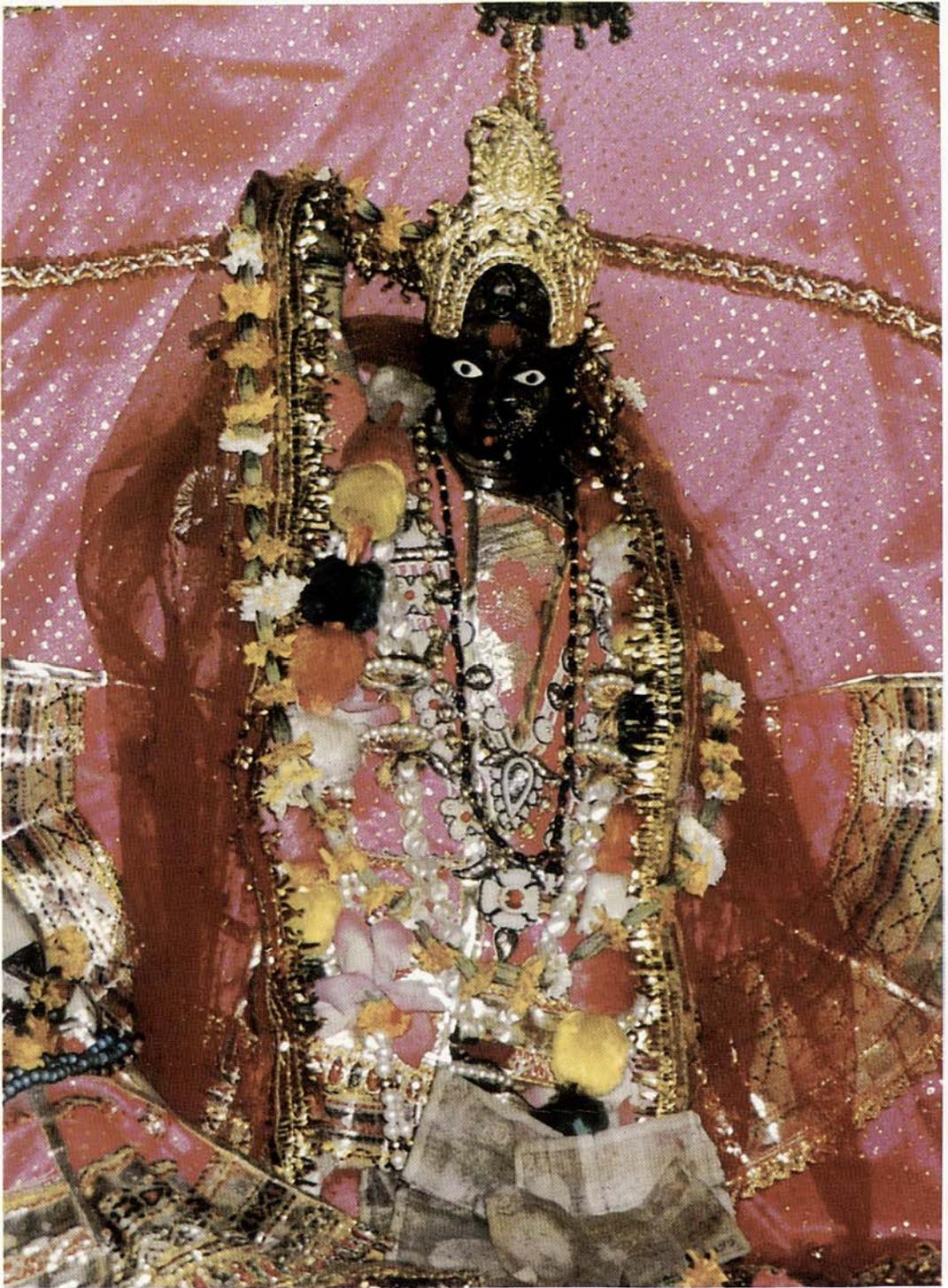
This unparalleled contribution to Lord Chaitanya's movement will go on reverberating for many, many years to come. The full impact of Śrīla Prabhupāda's great work will only be seen by the future generations. At this time, no one can comprehend the full extent and far reaching effect of Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission on earth. He ushered in a spiritual revolution that has changed the course of world history.

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA'S CHRONOLOGY

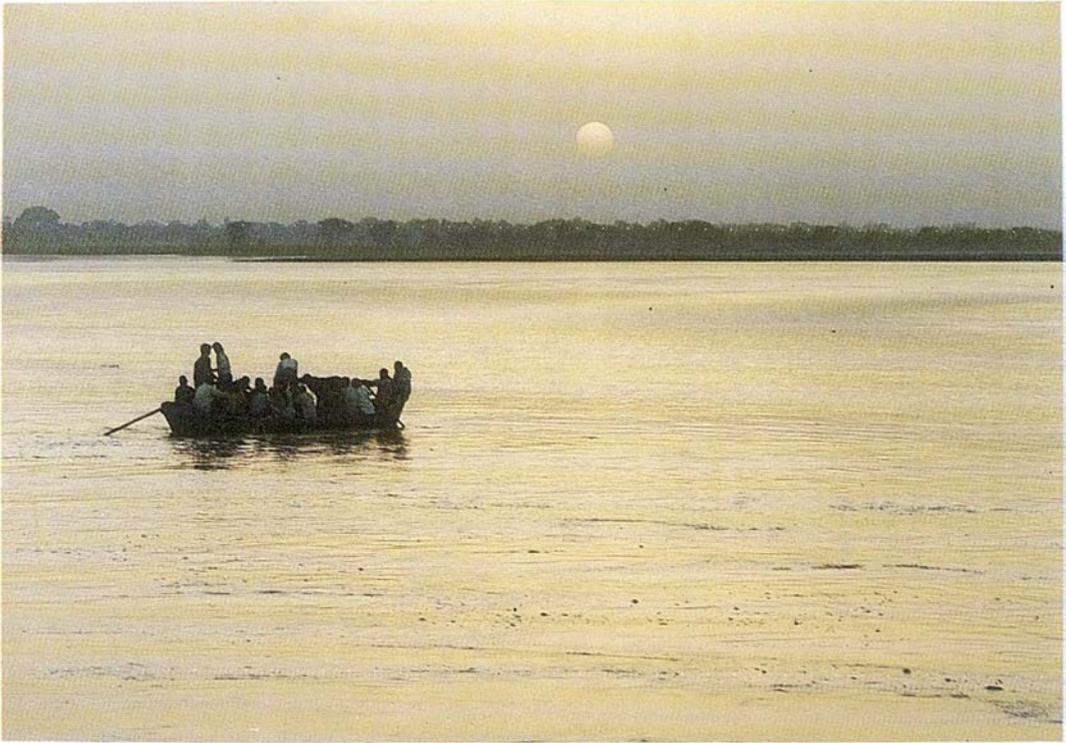
- 1896 Born in Calcutta.
- 1922 First met his spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī.
- 1933 Formally initiated by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī.
- 1944 Founded "*Back to Godhead*" magazine.
- 1954 Left family and accepted *varṇaprasta ashrama*.
- 1956 Moved to Vṛndāvana's Vamsī Gopāla temple.
- 1959 (July) Moved to Rādhā Dāmodara temple and began the English translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
- 1959 (November) Takes *sannyāsa* initiation into the renounced *gosvāmī* order.
- 1960 Published first book, *Easy Journey to Other Planets*.
- 1962 Published first volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in English language.
- 1963 Published second volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in English language.
- 1964 Published third volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in English language.
- 1965 Leaves India for America on the ship Jaladutta.
- 1966 Founded ISKCON, International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York.
- 1967 Returns to India, visits Vṛndāvana and his rooms at Rādhā Dāmodara.
- 1971 Returns to Vṛndāvana with 50 American disciples, tours all over India.
- 1972 Spends Kartik at Rādhā Dāmodara, gives historic *Nectar of Devotion* lectures.
- 1975 Opens Krishna Balarāma mandir in Vṛndāvana.
- 1977 Enters *samādhi* at the Krishna Balarāma mandir in Vṛndāvana.



Śrīla Prabhupāda taking lunch in his rooms at Rādhā Dāmodara temple



The Deity of Yamunā Devī at Keśī Ghāṭa



THE SACRED RIVER YAMUNĀ

The beautiful Yamunā, India's most sacred river flows through the transcendental land of Vṛndāvana. A bath in this river is said to be one hundred times more purifying than a bath in the Ganges. The reason being that even though the Ganges was once touched by the feet of Lord Vishnu, it was the Yamunā where Lord Krishna Himself played and swam with His cowherd boyfriends; He also sported in its waters with the beautiful *gopī* damsels of Vraja.

Starting from high up in the Himalayan mountains at Yamunotri, the river Yamunā slowly makes its way to the plains of India until it reaches Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma*. Formally, this river used to encircle Vṛndāvana, but now only touches this holy town on two sides leaving many of the ancient *ghāṭas* high and dry. Pilgrims still flock to these most sacred *ghāṭas* and touch their heads to the sand, which is accepted to have the same effect as actually bathing in the holy river.

The traditional bathing place of most pilgrims is at Kesi ghāṭa, where Lord Krishna bathed after killing the Keśī demon. The Yamunā has been flowing here at Kesi ghāṭa since ancient times. One who takes bath in the river Yamunā is freed from all past sins and contamination of this material world. That person will also gradually become a pure devotee and achieve liberation by returning to the spiritual world to personally associate with Lord Śrī Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Keśi Ghāṭa



RIVERSIDE GHĀṬAS

Vṛndāvana flourished under the patronage of the Rājput princes during the 17th and 18th centuries. At that time, many beautiful temples and riverside ghāṭas situated along the Yamunā were built out of red sandstone. The first ghāṭa was built around 1580 and the last one before 1870. Unfortunately, many of the ghāṭas have fallen into disrepair, or covered over by sand and mud in the course of time. There is now a major effort going on to restore the ghāṭas of Vṛndāvana to their former glory.

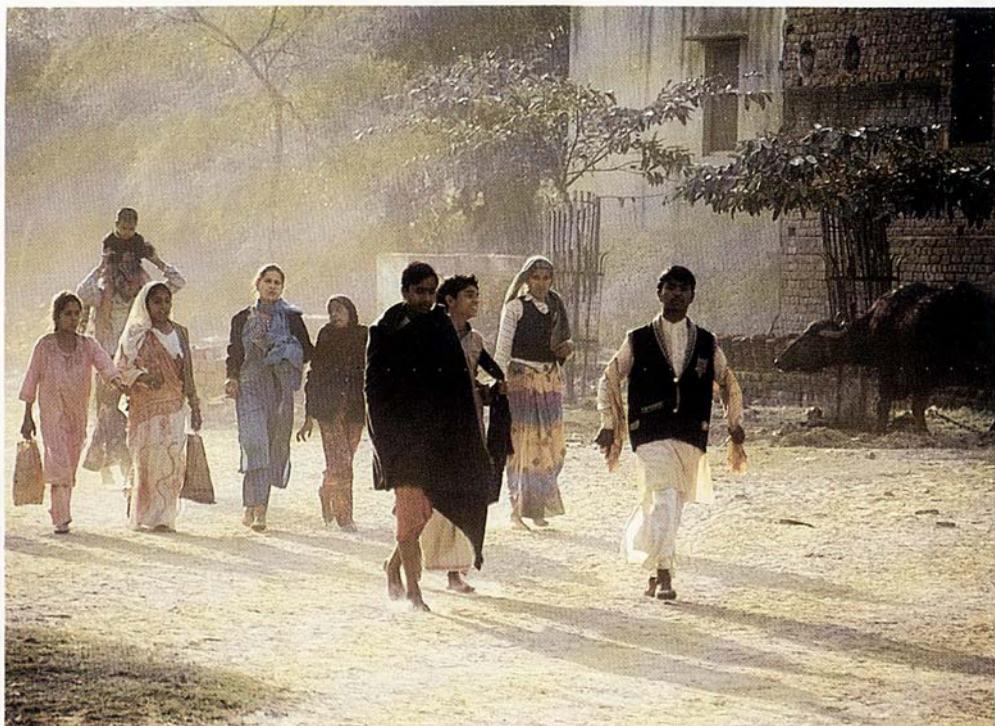
LIST OF RIVERSIDE GHĀṬAS AND WHO BUILT THEM

1. Varāha Ghāṭa
2. Mohana Ter Ghāṭa
(Paṇḍita Moti Lal)
3. Ram-Gol Ghāṭa (Go Ghāṭa)
(Gosain of Bihārī ji temple)
4. Kaliya-daha Ghāṭa (Holkar Rao)
5. Gopāla Ghāṭa (Karauli-ghāṭa)
(Madan Pal Rāja of Karauli)
6. Nabhawala Ghāṭa
(Rāja Hira Sinh of Nabha)
7. Praskandana Ghāṭa
(Gosains of Madana-mohana Temple)
8. Suraj Ghāṭa
9. Koriya Ghāṭa
(Gosains of Kol)
10. Jugal Ghāṭa
(Hari dāsa, Gobind dāsa Ṭhākuras)
11. Dhusar Ghāṭa
12. Naya Ghāṭa
(Gosain Bhajana Lal)
13. Śrīji Ghāṭa
(Rāja of Jaipur)
14. Bihar Ghāṭa
(Appa Ram from the Dakhin)
15. Dhurawara Ghāṭa
(Rāja Randhir Sinh of Dhura)
16. Nagari Dās Ghāṭa
17. Bhim Ghāṭa
(Rāja of Kota)
18. Andha Ghāṭa
(Rāja Man of Jaipur)
19. Tehriwara Ghāṭa
(Rāja of Tehri)
20. Imli Tala Ghāṭa
21. Bardwan Ghāṭa
(Rāja of Bardwan)
22. Barwara Ghāṭa
23. Ranawat Ghāṭa
(Rana of Udaypur)
24. Śringar Ghāṭa
(Gosain of Sringar Vata)
25. Gaṅgā Mohana Ghāṭa
(Rani of Suraj Mall)
26. Govinda Ghāṭa
(Rāja Man of Jaipur)
27. Himmat Bahadur's Ghāṭa
(Himmat Bahadur)
28. Cira Ghāṭa (Cehana Ghāṭa)
(Malhar Rao, Holkar)
29. Hanuman Ghāṭa
(Sawai Jay Sinh, Jaipur)
30. Bhramara Ghāṭa
(Sawai Jay Sinh, Jaipur)
31. Kiśor Rānī's Ghāṭa
(Rani of Suraj Mall)
32. Pandawara Ghāṭa
(Chaudhari Jagannātha)
33. Keśī Ghāṭa
(Bharatpur Rānī)
34. Dhira Samira Ghāṭa
35. Tekari Ghāṭa
(Tekari Rānī of Gaya)
36. Jagannātha Ghāṭa
37. Pani Ghāṭa
38. Adi Badri Ghāṭa
39. Raj Ghāṭa
40. Akrura Ghāṭa



On auspicious occasions tens of thousands of devotees perform parikramā of Vrndāvana





VRINDĀVANA PARIKRAMĀ

The sacred *parikramā*, or circumambulation of Vrindāvana city is approximately 6 miles long (10 km), and it takes about two or three hours to complete. Pilgrims arriving in Vrindāvana usually observe fasting for the day, take their sacred bath in the Yamunā River and then go on *parikramā*.

By circumambulation of Vrindāvana, one not only pays proper respect to the holy *dhāma*, but one also washes away innumerable sins accumulated over many, many lifetimes. If one circumambulates any temple of Lord Krishna or Lord Vishnu, one becomes freed from innumerable sins, but by circumambulating the whole of Vrindāvana, one automatically circumambulates over 5,000 temples all at one time. The local residents, known as *Brijvasis* usually go on *parikramā* on *Ekādaśī* (the eleventh day of both the waxing and waning moon) as it has far greater benefit than any other day. The *Brijvasis* believe that any offences committed in the holy *dhāma*, either knowingly or unknowingly, can only be washed off by circumambulating Vrindāvana especially on the *Ekādaśī* day.

It is accepted as a general rule that one should perform Vrindāvana, *parikramā* without wearing shoes; it is also recommended that one start their circumambulation of Vrindāvana in the early morning so as to avoid the scorching heat of the sun, especially during the summer months. *Parikramā* can be started at any place of one's choice along the *parikramā* path.

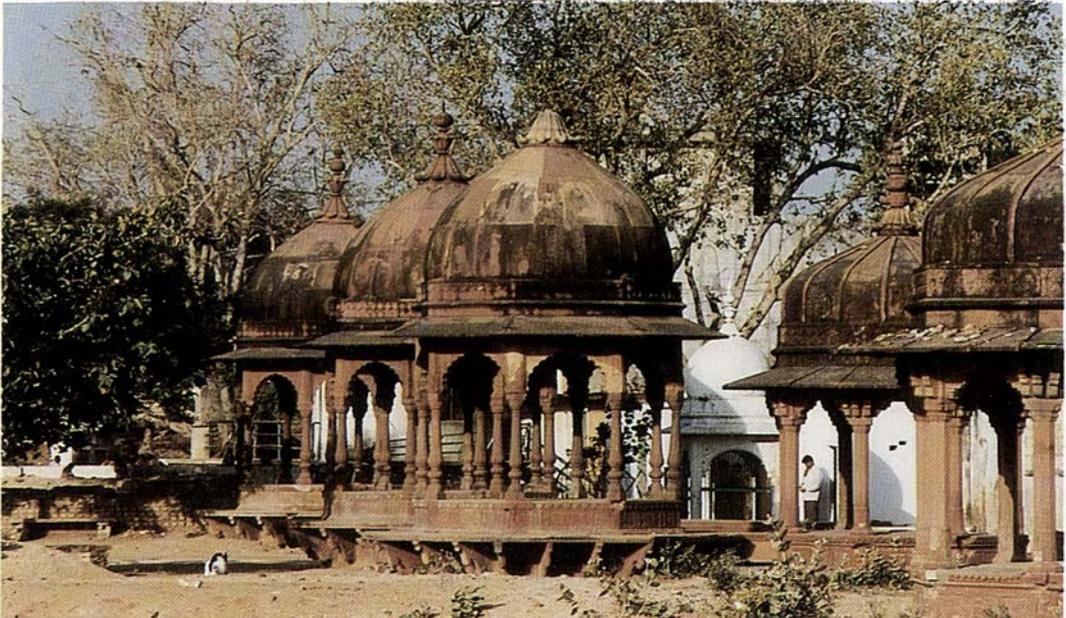
TEN OFFENCES TO BE AVOIDED IN THE HOLY DHĀMA

1. To have contempt or disrespect towards the guru who is the revealer of the holy *dhāma*.
2. To think that the holy *dhāma* is temporary.
3. To commit violence towards any of the residents of the holy *dhāma*, or to any of the pilgrims who come there, or to think that they are ordinary mundane people.
4. To perform mundane activities while living in the holy *dhāma*.
5. Earning money by and making a business of *Deity* worship and chanting the holy name.
6. To think that the holy *dhāma* belongs to some mundane country or providence such as Bengal, or to think that the *dhāma* of the Lord is equal to a holy place connected with some demigod, or to attempt to measure the area of the *dhāma*.
7. To commit sinful acts while in the *dhāma*.
8. To consider Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa different.
9. To blaspheme the *sāstras* which glorify the holy *dhāma*.
10. To be faithless and to think that the glories of the *dhāma* are imaginary.

In the sacred land of Vṛndāvana, the results of all devotional activities performed here are magnified one thousand times. Therefore, one can make rapid advancement if one lives offencelessly in the holy *dhāma*. If however, one does commit offences, they are also magnified one thousand times; therefore, one is advised to carefully avoid committing any offences in Vṛndāvana *dhāma*.

THE FOUR REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. No illicit sex | 2. No meat, fish or eggs |
| 3. No intoxicants (including tea or coffee) | 4. No gambling or mental speculation. |



Bihar Ghāṭa

*A view of Vr̥ndāvana and
the temple of Krishana Chandrama*

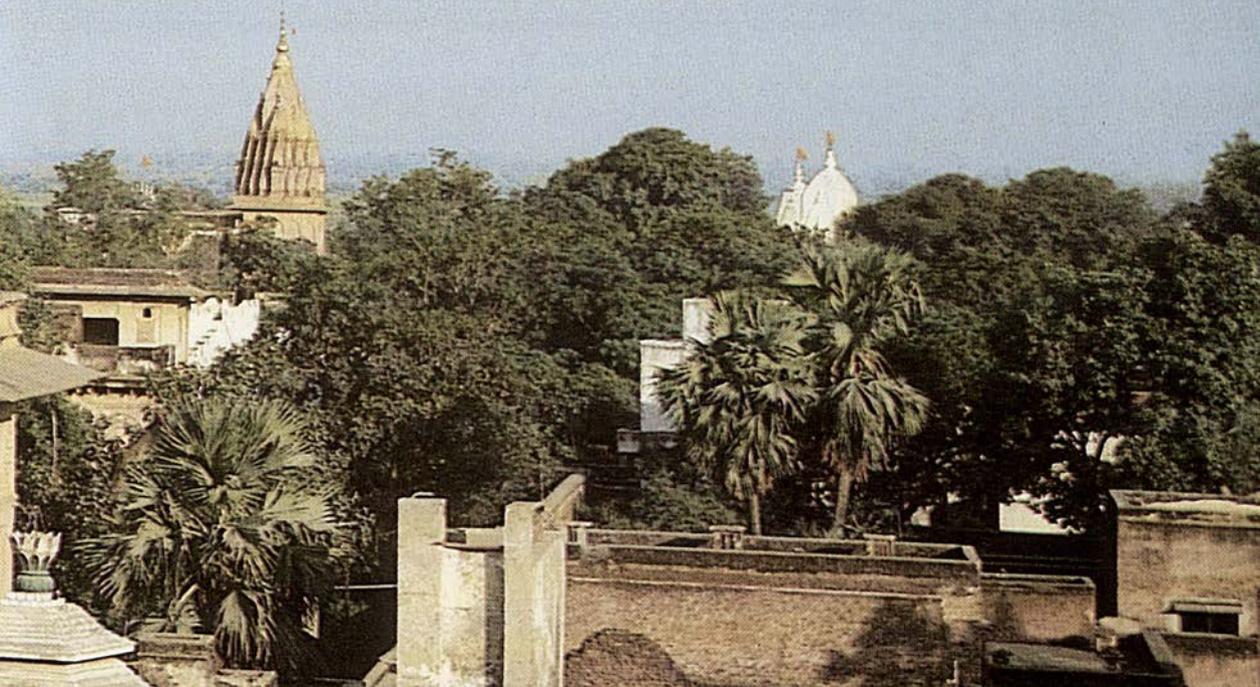


SACRED PLACES OF INTEREST

Śrī Vṛndāvana *Dhāma* — the sacred abode of Lord Śrī Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is regarded by saints and scholars alike to be India's most holy city. Nestled on the banks of the sacred river Yamunā, this holy city boasts of over 5,000 temples, each dedicated to the divine lovers Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna.

Lost to the world for almost fifty centuries, Vṛndāvana now beckons all sincere seekers of India's ancient spiritual culture to journey into the mystical realm of an almost forgotten world. Of over 5,000 holy places in Vṛndāvana, at least 100 are of great historical and religious importance. From the oldest temple of Maḍan-mohana to the newest Śrī Śrī Krishna-Balarama Mandir, Vṛndāvana offers a unique glimpse into the sublime realm of pure Krishna consciousness not available anywhere else in the world.

When Lord Krishna's earthly pastimes are over and He returns to the spiritual world, He leaves behind His transcendental abode known as the *dhāma*, so that devotees through the ages can take shelter there and become purified from all material contamination. Within the holy *dhāma* which by material calculation has a diameter of 84 miles, are twelve sacred forests. Of these sacred forests, the forest of Vṛndāvana is considered to be the most important because within it the Lord performed some of His most confidential loving pastimes.



The present day city of Vṛndāvana, situated on the western side of this sacred forest, marks the very site where the lord enjoyed the wonderful pastimes of *rāsā-līlā* — dancing in spiritual ecstasy through the moonlit summer nights with the celebrated *gopīs*, the beautiful damzels of Vraja. It is also here that we find the famous Seva-kuñja — the secluded garden where Lord Krishna would offer various kinds of loving service to His beloved consort Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, by massaging Her feet, dressing Her hair, and decorating Her body with jewels, precious ornaments and flowers.



A view from the Karauli Ghāṭa



1A. KRISHNA BALARĀMA MANDIR

This beautiful temple was established in 1975 by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) and has now become Vṛndāvana's most popular temple. Hare Krishna devotees from around the world can be seen here throughout the year, bringing a truly international flavour to this ancient holy city.

The central Deities are Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarāma and on the right alter is Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara and the *gopīs* Lalitā and Viśākhā. On the left alter is Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda, along with the *mūrtis* of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. Of all the temples in Vṛndāvana, the Krishna Balarāma Mandir has one of the highest standards of Deity worship and cleanliness. The devotees of the Hare Krishna movement (ISKCON) follow strictly the principles of *Vaiṣṇava Dharma* and observe four rules 1) No meat, fish or eggs; 2) No illicit sex; 3) No gambling; and 4) No intoxicants including tea or coffee. Besides this, all members are required to rise before 4 am, take bath, and attend the *maṅgala ārati* ceremony in the temple. They are also required to chant on *japa* beads sixteen rounds or 27,000 names of God daily.

HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA HARE RĀMA RĀMA RĀMA HARE HARE

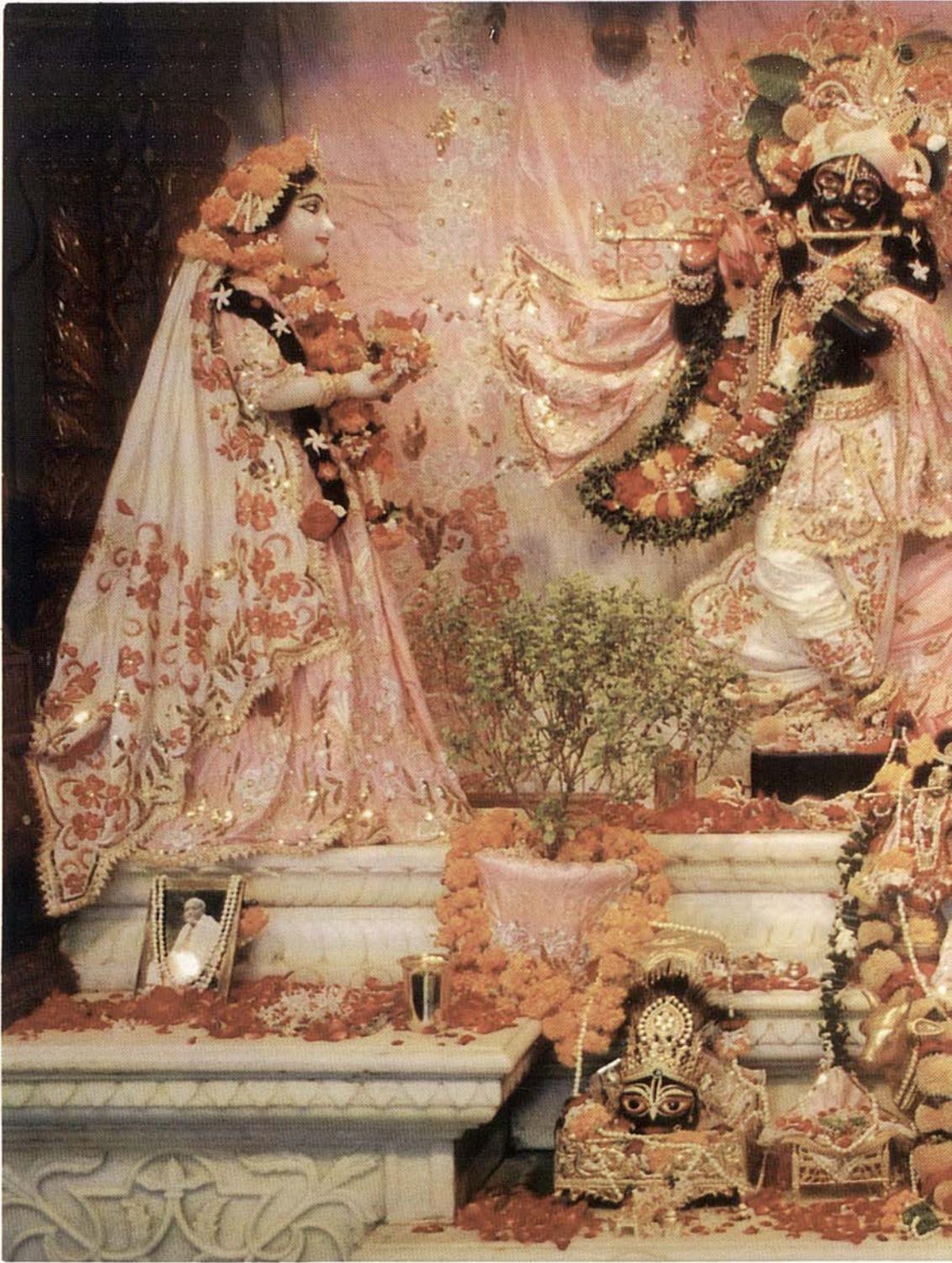
TIMINGS: Maṅgala 4:30 am Darśana 7:15 am -11 Rāj Bhoga Ārati 12 noon -12:30
Evening Darśana Winter 4:00 pm - 8:30 Summer 4:30 pm - 8:45

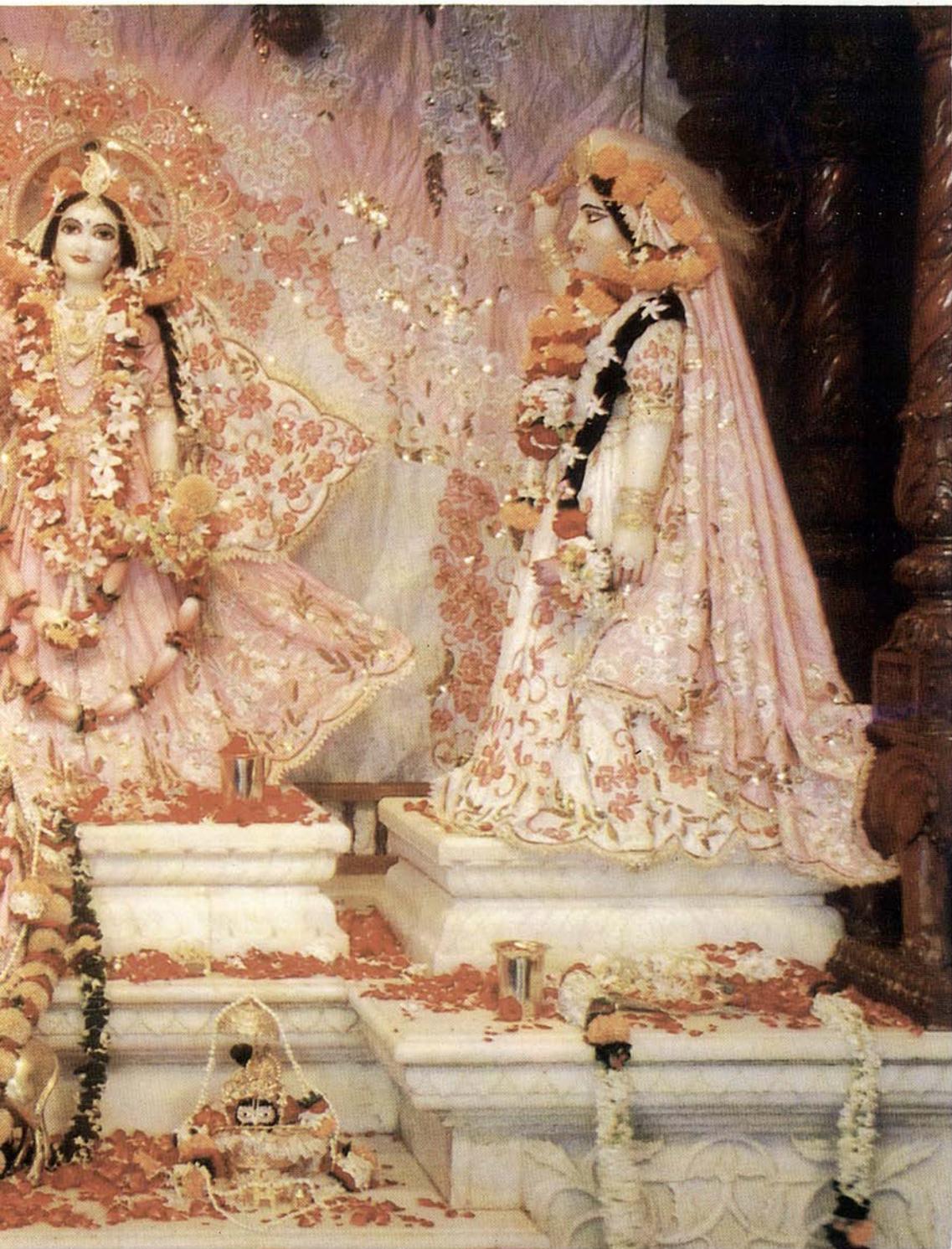


Evening ārati at Krishna Balarāma Mandir



Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Krishna Balarāma

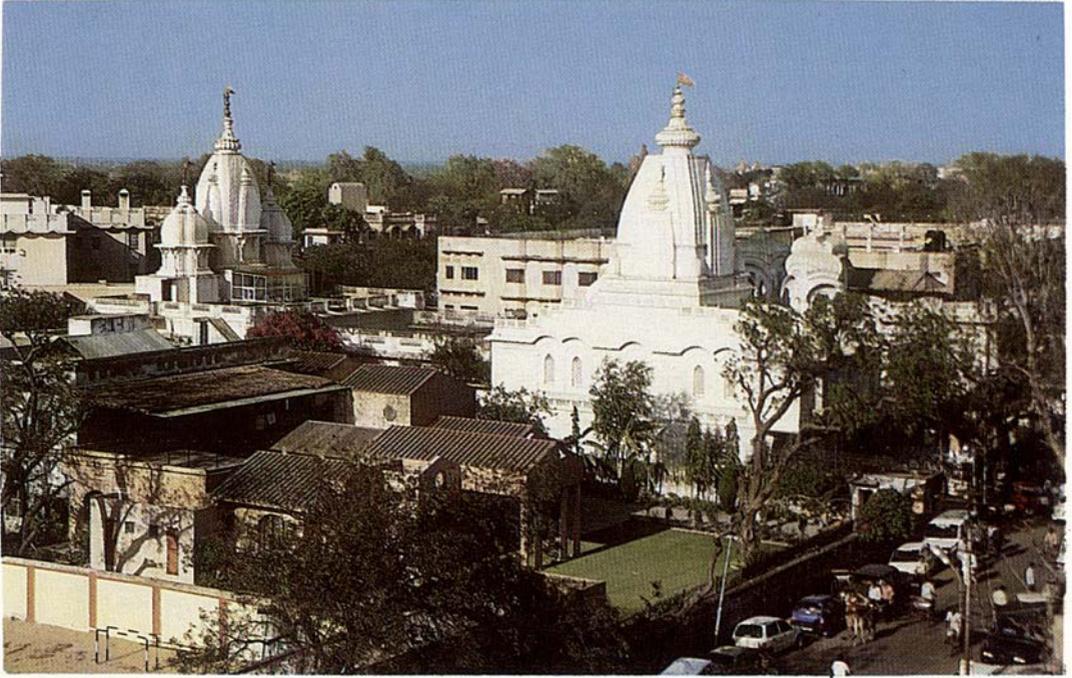




Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Śyāmasundara with the gopīs Lalitā and Viśākhā

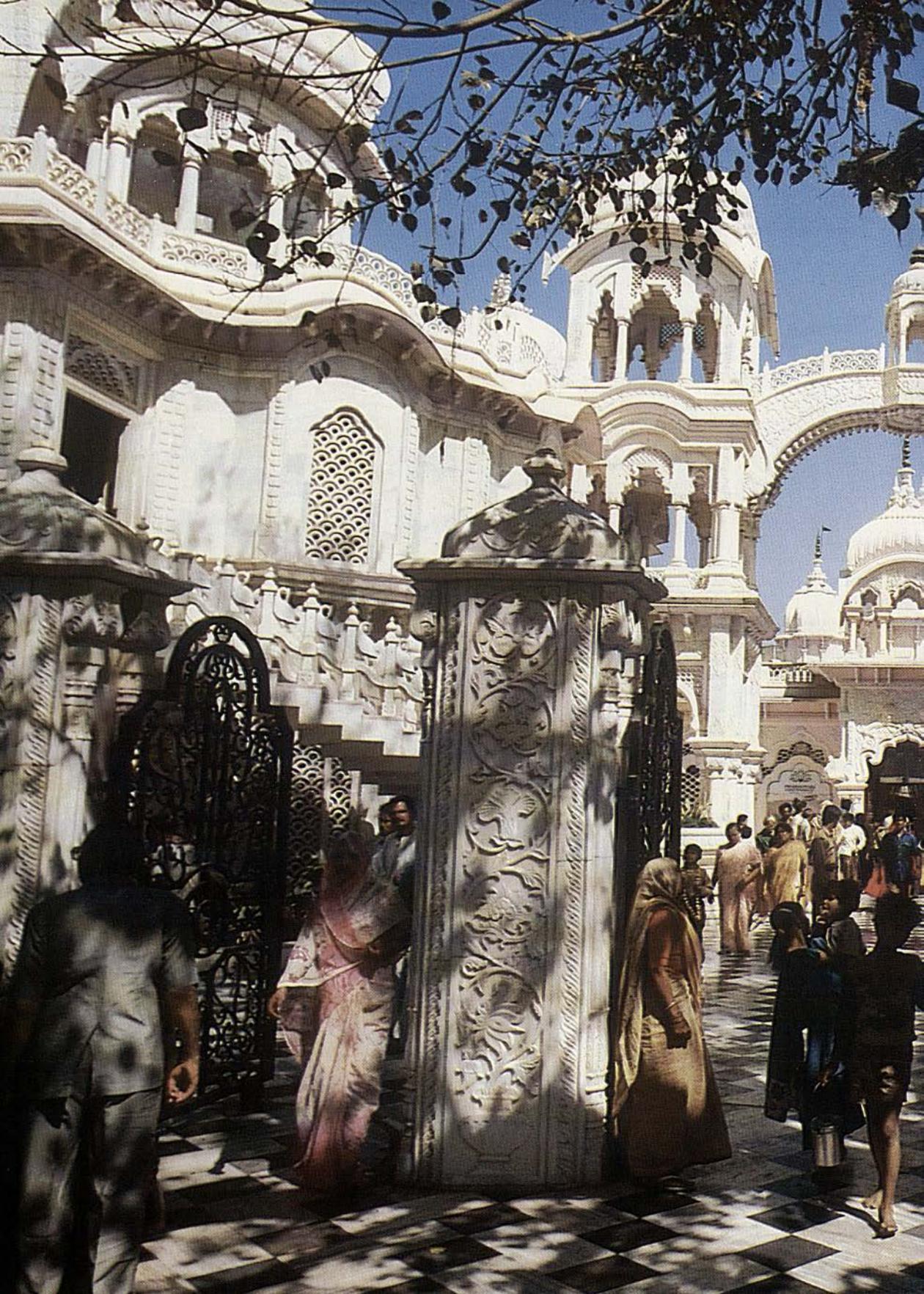


Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaurā Nitai



Different views of the Krishna Balamā Mandir







1B. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA SAMĀDHI

Situated in front of the main temple, this *samādhi mandir* is built from pure marble in honour of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), who's sacred body has been entombed here. He entered *samādhi* in the evening of November 14th during the most auspicious month of *Kārtika* in the year 1977, while surrounded by his loving disciples who were all chanting the holy names of Lord Krishna. There is a great *tirobhava mahotsava*, (disappearance celebration) held here each year just two days after *Govardhana Puja*, and his disciples and followers come from all over the world to attend this important festival.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was born in Calcutta in the year 1896 as the son of Gour Mohan De in the aristocratic Mullick family. As a youth Śrīla Prabhupāda attended the Scottish Churches College before entering the pharmaceutical business of Doctor Bose. At the young age of twenty two, he first met his spiritual master His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, who ordered him to preach in the English language and spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Chaitanya to the Western countries.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, taking the order of his spiritual master to preach in the West as his life and soul, single handedly spread the message of Krishna consciousness all over the world. In 1965 Śrīla Prabhupāda left Vṛndāvana and sailed to America, after struggling hard for over a year, he finally established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York in 1966. He made the holy name of Krishna a household word and he himself became world famous as the *guru* of the Hare Krishna movement.

In just 12 short years, Śrīla Prabhupāda circled the globe fourteen times on lecture tours,

as well as to inspire his disciples who numbered over 5,000. Śrīla Prabhupāda opened more than one hundred Hare Krishna temples in almost every country of the world, firmly establishing the Krishna consciousness movement as the foremost spiritual movement in the world today.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's greatest contribution to mankind, however, are his books, which have been translated into more than 60 languages, and are used as standard text books in colleges around the world. His books constitute a veritable library of Vedic philosophy, religion, literature and culture. The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, established for the purpose of publishing Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings, has become the world's largest publisher in the field of Indian religion and philosophy.

TIMINGS: Same as temple (Except Maṅgala Ārati at 4:10 am and darshana at 7:00 am)



Samādhi Murti of Śrīla Prabhupāda



The Samādhi Mandira of Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda



1C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI INTERNATIONAL GURUKULA

Founded by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1975, this school for boys, based on the ancient Vedic system of *Gurukula*, attracts students from the world over. The students, aged between five and fifteen follow the strict principles of *brahmacārya* (celibacy), which forms the very basis of Vedic culture. The purpose of the gurukula is to train the boys to be perfect *brāhmaṇas* so that they may develop all the good qualities of spiritual leadership.

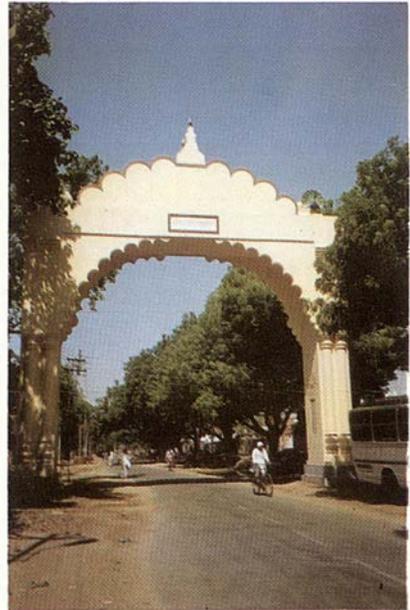
1D. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI MUSEUM

Situated at the rear of the temple is Śrīla Prabhupāda's residence which is now used as a museum in honour of his sacred memory. Some of the artifacts used personally by Śrīla Prabhupāda during his lifetime are on display, including the bed that he lay on during his last days before entering *samādhi*.

TIMINGS: Same as temple.

2. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI GATE (DWARA)

Opened in 1979, this huge gate over the old Chatikara road was erected in recognition of Śrīla Prabhupāda's great service to Vṛndāvana as well as his worldwide preaching work in spreading Krishna consciousness. This road which leads to Delhi was also renamed as Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg by the Vṛndāvana Municipality.



3. VṚNDĀVANA RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND LIBRARY

One can see some of the original autographed manuscripts of Sanātana, Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmīs at this research institute. There is also a good Vedic library here which is open to the general public.

TIMINGS: Daily 10 am - 5 pm

4. KRISHNA BALARĀMA PASTIME TREE

Two different trees growing from one trunk symbolizes, according to local *Brijvasis*, a sacred pastime place of Lord Krishna. Krishna and Balarāma used to come here to Ramaṇa Reti with the cowherd boys, and play in the soft sands. Ramaṇa Reti means pleasure giving sands. It is also the area where Lord Krishna would meet Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī before proceeding to Vṛndāvana for enjoying various transcendental pastimes.



Krishna Balarāma Tree

5. VARĀHA GHĀTA

Formerly the Yamunā River used to flow here in the days of Lord Krishna's advent on earth. It is here that Krishna showed His form of Lord Varāha (Boar Incarnation) to the *gopīs*. There is a wonderful Varāha Deity in the temple which is just opposite the *ashram* of Gautama Rṣī.

TIMINGS: Darśana 8:30 am - 12 pm and 4 pm - 9 pm

6. GAUTAM RSI ASHRAM.

This is where the great sage Gautam Rṣī performed austerities thousands of years ago. Śrīla Prabhupāda's geneoogical line belongs to the line of disciples from Gautam Rṣī.

7. COWHERD BOY'S TRAIL

This trail used to run along the bank of the Yamunā. The *Gopas* (cowherd boys) used to herd their cows along the trail. It now forms part of the Vṛndāvana *parikramā*.

8. MOHANA TER GHĀTA

At this place there used to be a garden (*kuñja*), where Lord Krishna danced with the *gopīs* on the bank of the Yamunā. Cupid (Kāmadeva) came here with the purpose of firing his arrow of attraction at Śrī Krishna. Upon seeing the exquisite beauty of the Lord, as he danced with the *gopīs*, Cupid himself became so attracted by Krishna's beautiful form, that he fell unconscious due to ecstatic feelings of love. Lord Krishna is therefore called Madana-mohana, or the attractor of Cupid (who is known as Madana).



Lord Varāha

A view of Kaliyā Ghāṭa





9. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI GO-SĀLĀ AND GARDENS

This *go-sālā*, managed by the ISKCON devotees, supplies milk to the Deities of Krishna Balarāma Mandir. There are also gardens, a nursery, and a *tulasi* grove that provides the temple with beautiful flowers.

10. GO GHĀTA (RAM GOL GHĀTA)

At this place, Nanda Mahārāja, Lord Krishna's father, gave cows away in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. The ISKCON *go-sālā* is situated near this *ghāta*.

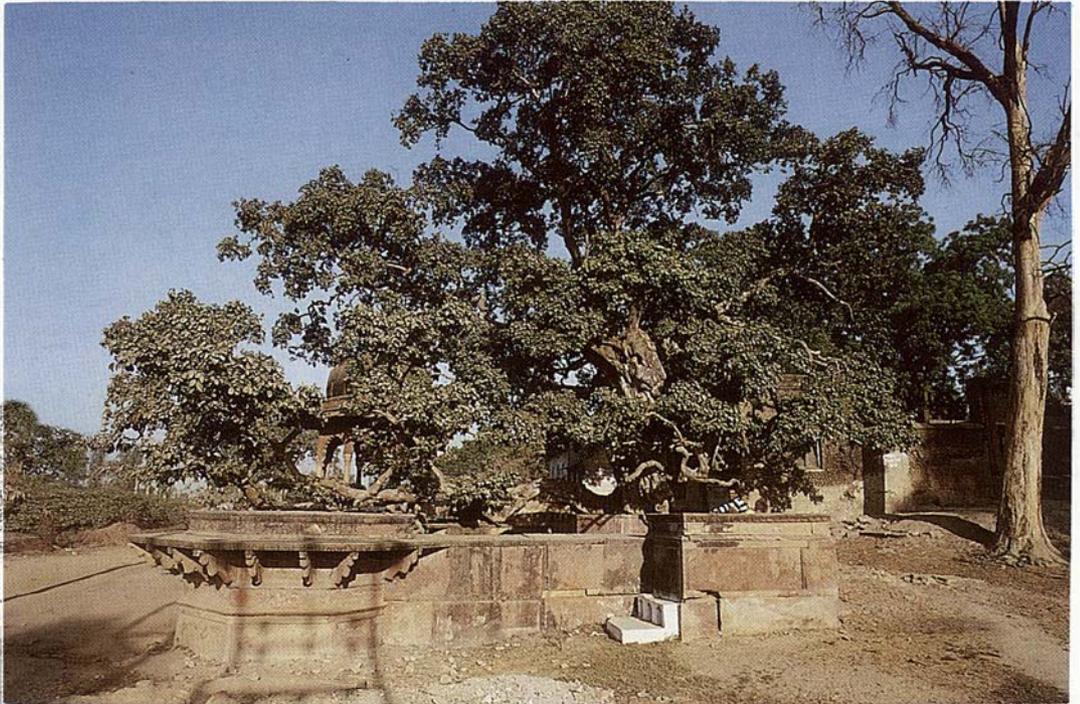


Bhaktivedanta Swami Gosālā

11. KĀLIYĀ GHĀTA (KĀLIYĀ-HRADA)

Here, Lord Krishna jumped from a big *Kadamba* tree into the Yamunā river, in order to chastise the Kāliyā serpent who was poisoning the waters of the river. The *kadamba* tree that Krishna climbed is still here, even though the Yamunā does not flow here anymore, except during the rainy season when the river floods.

Lord Krishna came to know that a very large and poisonous serpent had made its home in a lagoon on the Yamunā river. Because the serpent was so poisonous, not only all the fish died, but even the trees and grass surrounding the lake were dying. When birds flew over the area, they immediately dropped dead and fell into the lake, due to the highly poisonous vapors emanating from the water.



The sacred Kadamba tree at Kāliyā Ghāta said to be the same one that Krishna climbed

In that time, there were many frightful demons, who had all kinds of mystic powers. Lord Krishna had specifically appeared to rid the world of all these disturbing elements. The Lord came to this place with His cowherd boyfriends and decided to confront the king of the snakes. He climbed the large *kadamba* tree and from there, jumped into the poisonous waters of the Yamunā.

Lord Krishna then began splashing about and making very loud noises just to disturb the Kāliyā serpent. Sure enough, the Kāliyā snake came up to the surface to see who was attacking his home. This huge black serpent Kāliyā, (Kāliyā means black) possessed over one hundred hoods, each bedecked with a precious gem. When he breathed, fire emanated from his nostrils. He suddenly seized Krishna in his powerful coils, and bound the Lord as tightly as possible. But unfortunately this serpent did not realize that within its coils was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, playing as a child and enjoying His earthly pastimes in the transcendental land of Vṛndāvana. Without warning, Krishna, the Supreme Mystic, started to expand His body, and Kāliyā, who began to feel the incredible pressure, was forced to release the Lord from his deadly coils. Krishna then jumped on to the hoods of the great serpent and started to dance, stamping His foot down on the heads of the snake demon, Kāliyā.

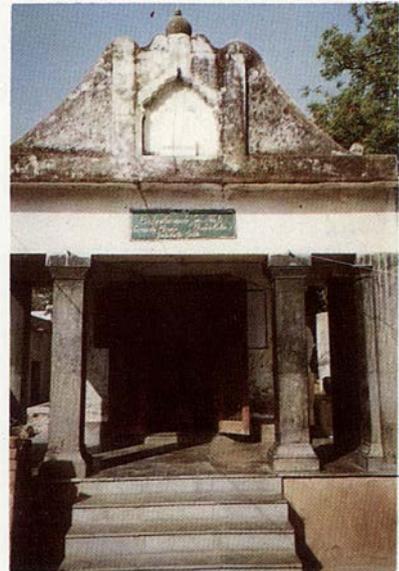
This stamping of Krishna, felt to Kāliyā serpent like Indra's thunderbolt striking a mountain. The Lord jumped from one hood to another, and Kāliyā felt helpless and bewildered; in anger he spat fire from his many mouths but the Lord was so dexterous that His dancing movements caused the snake to become dizzy. After so many kicks from the Lord, Kāliyā started to first vomit blood, and then refuse, before becoming almost unconscious. At that time, the many wives of the Kāliyā serpent appeared and begged the Lord with folded hands to spare their husband. Krishna decided to banish Kāliyā to the great ocean never to return again. Thereafter, the giant snake along with his wives, departed forever, and the transcendental Lord rejoined His cowherd boyfriends on the bank of the Yamunā, to continue their wonderful pastimes in the land of Vṛndāvana.



12. PRABODHĀNANDA SARASVATĪ SAMĀDHI

Just 20 meters from Kāliyā-ghāṭa is the *samādhi* of Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. He met Lord Chaitanya at Śrī Raṅgam, in South India and was the uncle as well as the spiritual master of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Taking a vow never to leave Vṛndāvana for the rest of his life, he used this area as his *bhajana-kuṭīra*. He was one of the intimate associates of the six *Gosvāmīs* and wrote a number of important books on Krishna consciousness.

TIMINGS: Open daily



Prabodhānanda Samādhi Mandira

13. KĀLIYĀ MARDAN TEMPLE

It is said that this Deity of Kāliyā Mardan, Lord Krishna subduing the Kāliyā serpent, is 5,000 years old and was originally installed by Krishna's grandson, Vajranaba.



Kāliyā Mardana

TIMINGS: Darsana 9 am - 12 and 5 pm - 8

14. PRASHKANDANA GHĀTA

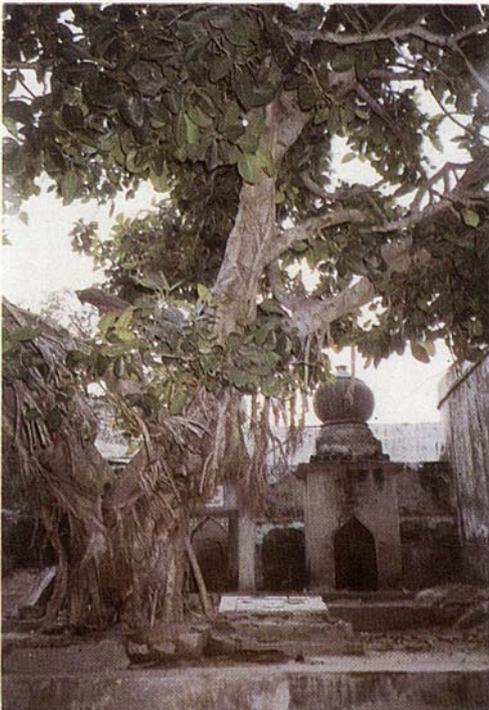
This is the place where Lord Krishna's perspiration (*prashkāndana*) caused a small lake to appear, just below Dvādasāditya hill (see Dvādasāditya Teela). This *ghāta* is no longer visible.

15. SURAJ GHĀTA

The Sun God Surya underwent great austerities here so that he could achieve *darśana* of Lord Krishna. Śrīmatī Rādhārānī also prayed here to ask the Sun God to appear and warm Lord Krishna who felt very cold after spending a long time in the Yamunā chastising the Kāliyā serpent. This *ghāta* is no longer visible.

16. ADVAITA VATA (BANYAN TREE)

This is the place where Advaita Ācārya stayed and performed his *bhajana* while visiting Vṛndāvana. While staying here he discovered the Deity of Madana-gopāla. When he left for Bengal he kept the Deity at Mathurā with a *brāhmaṇa* called Choube. This same Deity was later given to Sanātana Gosvāmī and became known as the celebrated Madana-mohana.



Advaita Vata

17A. DVĀDASĀDITYA TEELA (HILL)

This is the hill where Sanātana Gosvāmī used to perform his *bhajana* and worship his beloved Deity Madana-mohana by keeping Him up in a tree. Sanātana Gosvāmī came to Vṛndāvana in the year 1516, along with his brother Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. At a later time, the temple of Madana-mohana was built on this very same hill.

After chastising the serpent Kāliyā, Lord Krishna, feeling cold from being in the water for a long time, climbed this hill and lay down to rest in the sunshine. At that time, the twelve forms of Aditya (Surya the Sun God), appeared here as twelve blazing suns in order to prevent Krishna from catching a cold. Due to the intense heat, Lord Krishna started to perspire and the perspiration from Krishna's body caused a small lake to appear known as Prashkāndana Ghāta.



17B. RĀDHĀ MADANA-MOHANA TEMPLE

This famous temple was established by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and was the first temple to be built in Vr̥ndāvana, which at that time was just a forest. The original Deity of Madana-mohana was taken to Karauli in Rajasthan for safety during the attack on Vr̥ndāvana by the soldiers of the fanatical Muslim Emperor, Aurangzeb.

Lord Chaitanya displayed intense love for Sanātana Gosvāmī. Once, the Lord informed Sanātana that "Your body belongs to Me, it is my principle instrument for executing many important functions. By your body, I shall carry out so many tasks. You will have to ascertain the basic principles for devotees, also *Vaiṣṇava* duties and *Vaiṣṇava* characteristics; you will also have to explain about devotional service to Lord Krishna, as well as excavating the lost places of Krishna's pastimes, build temples and teach people how to adopt the renounced order (*sannyāsa*)!"

Madana-mohana, also known as Madana-gopāla was first discovered by Advaita Ācārya, in the place where he was performing his *bhajana*, now known as Advaita Vata, which is just below the Dvādaśāditya hill. When Advaita Prabhu was due to leave for Bengal he left Madana-mohana in the care of a *brāhmaṇa* named Choubē, who kept Him just like one of his own children. Many years passed, both Rūpa and Sanātana used to go to Mathurā for collecting alms (*madhukarī*), and it so happened that Sanātana Gosvāmī visited the house of that same *brāhmaṇa*. He received a sudden shock when he saw that Choubē's children were playing with Madana-mohana. He immediately called Choubē and chastised him for not showing proper respect to the Deity, and then explained to him all the rules and regulations of proper Deity worship.

That night, on returning to Vr̥ndāvana, Sanātana had a dream in which Madana-mohana told him that he had been very happy living in the *brāhmaṇa*'s house as one of his children, but now that the *brāhmaṇa* had introduced so many rules and regulations, He was not happy





anymore. The same night, the *brāhmaṇa* also had a dream in which Madana-mohana told him that, "As you have so many children, and Sanātana has none, so please give Me to Sanātana."

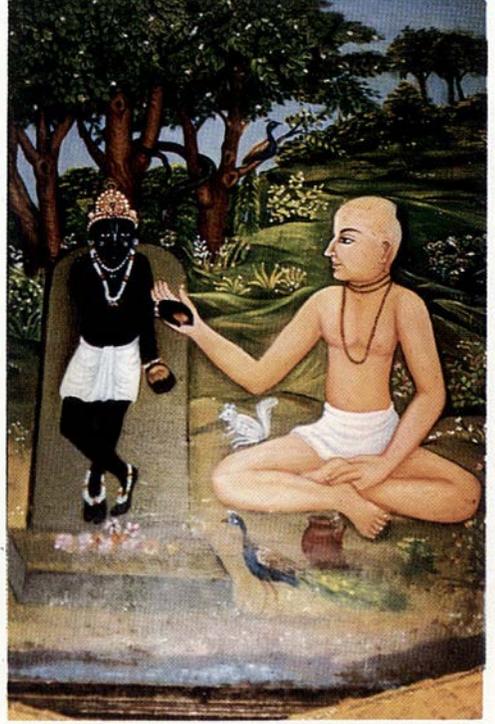
The next morning, Sanātana Gosvāmī rushed to the *brāhmaṇa*'s house to apologize and ask forgiveness, but to his surprise, the *brāhmaṇa* requested him to take Madana-mohana. At first, Sanātana refused because he was not able to offer nice food to Madana-mohana, as he lived only on dry *chapatis*. Later the same night in another dream, Madana-mohana told Sanātana that He would accept whatever Sanātana offered Him.

Sanātana Gosvāmī then brought Madana-mohana to Vṛndāvana, to the place where he did his *bhajana* situated on the top of the hill named Dvādaśāditya, and kept the Deity in a nearby tree. Sanātana regularly offered simple dried *chapatis*, but one day Madana-mohana suddenly asked for some salt. Sanātana then told Madana-mohana, "Just see, now you want salt and tomorrow you will want sweets; I am an old man and have so many books to write so please just accept this dry *chapati*".

It so happened that same day, that a wealthy merchant from Multan in Punjab, was taking three large boats full of salt and other merchandise down the river to Agra for sale in the local market. When passing Kāliyā ghāṭa, the boats got stuck on a sandbank and could not move. In great anxiety, the merchant, who's name was Rāmdāsa Kapoor, came ashore to find help, when suddenly Madana-mohana in the guise of a beautiful cowherd boy came there and advised Rāmdāsa to seek the help of Sanātana Gosvāmī, a saint who lived on the Dvādaśāditya hill. On climbing the hill, Rāmdāsa Kapoor saw Sanātana Gosvāmī engaged in his *bhajana* and asked him if he could help free his boat. Sanātana then advised him that he should pray to Madana-mohana, as only He could help him. Sure enough, when Rāmdāsa prayed to Madana-mohana, a storm suddenly appeared and it rained heavily, thus swelling the river and miraculously freeing the boats from the sandbank. Rāmdāsa was overjoyed and promised to return after finishing his business in Agra.

Within a short time Rāmdāsa Kapoor returned, having sold all his merchandise for a handsome profit and wanted to hand the full amount over to Sanātana, in appreciation for the help he had received from Madana-mohana. Sanātana asked him to build a nice temple for Madana-mohana, which he did. He also built a *ghāṭa* below, all out of fine red sandstone. Unfortunately about a hundred years later when Emperor Aurangzeb sent his soldiers to destroy the temples of Vṛndāvana, the Madana-mohana temple was also desecrated. This tragic episode occurred in 1670.

TIMINGS: Summer—Darśana 6 am - 11 and 5 pm - 9:30 Winter—Maṅgala (Kartik month only) 4 am; Darśana 7 am - 12 pm and 4 pm - 8



Sanātana feeding chapatis to Madana-mohana

17C. SANĀTANA GOŚVĀMĪ BHAJANA-KUṬĪRA

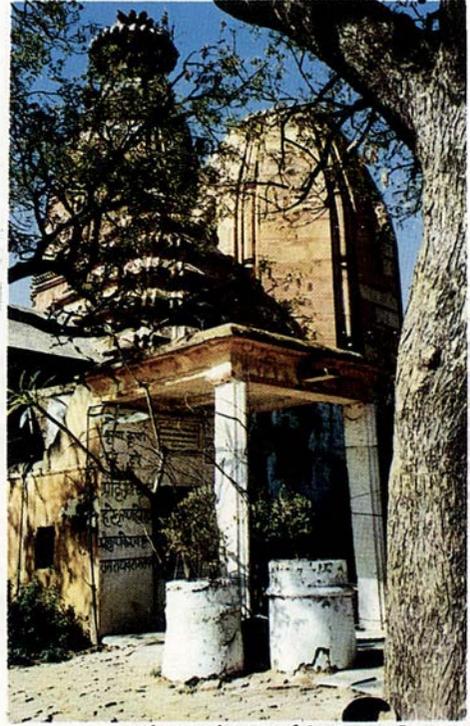
Just next to the temple is the *bhajana-kuṭira* of Sanātana Gosvāmī who also worshipped Madana-mohana in a tree before the temple was built. Next to the *bhajana-kuṭira* is a well made by the flute of Madana-mohana so that Sanātana Gosvāmī, in his old age did not have to go very far to get water.

17D. SANĀTANA GOŚVĀMĪ SAMĀDHI

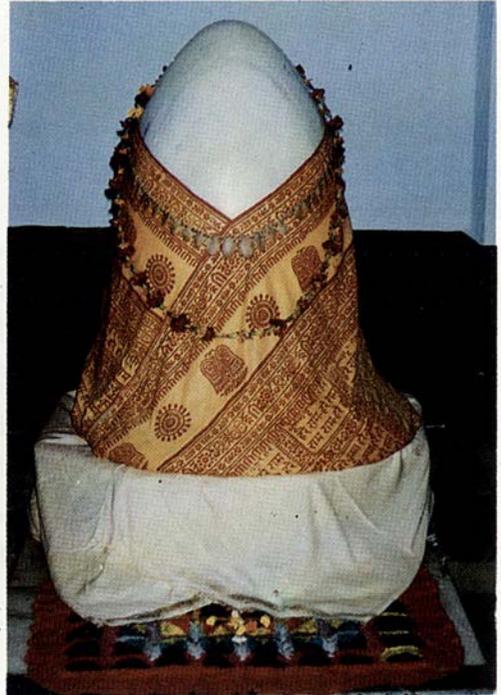
In 1558 Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī entered *samādhi* and his body was entombed in a small garden on the side of Dvādaśāditya Teela just behind the Madana-mohana Temple.

Sanātana Gosvāmī's family hailed from Karnataka, and although *Sarasvata brāhmaṇas* by caste, his forefathers became powerful kings in the region. Some members of this family moved to Bengal and this is where Sanātana was born in the year 1488. Sanātana had two younger brothers Rūpa and Anupama, and all three of them were great devotees of the Lord as well as learned scholars. Besides Sanskrit, they also knew Persian and Arabic, their fame as learned men spread far and wide. The ruler of Bengal, Hussian Shah, heard about the good qualities of the brothers and devised a plan to induct them into the government. At that time no high class man wanted to be associated with the Muslim *yavanas*, therefore Hussian Shah threatened to kill many *brāhmaṇas* and harass the Hindu community unless Sanātana and his brothers joined the government.

Not wishing to be the cause of distress to the Hindu community, the brothers agreed to accept positions in the government of Hussian Shah. Sanātana was appointed as the private secretary and given the name Sarkara Malik, Rūpa was appointed as Finance Minister and was called Dabir Khas, Anupama became the superintendent of the Royal Mint. They were given great wealth for their services but the orthodox *brāhmaṇa* community ostracized them for having accepted the association of the Muslims.



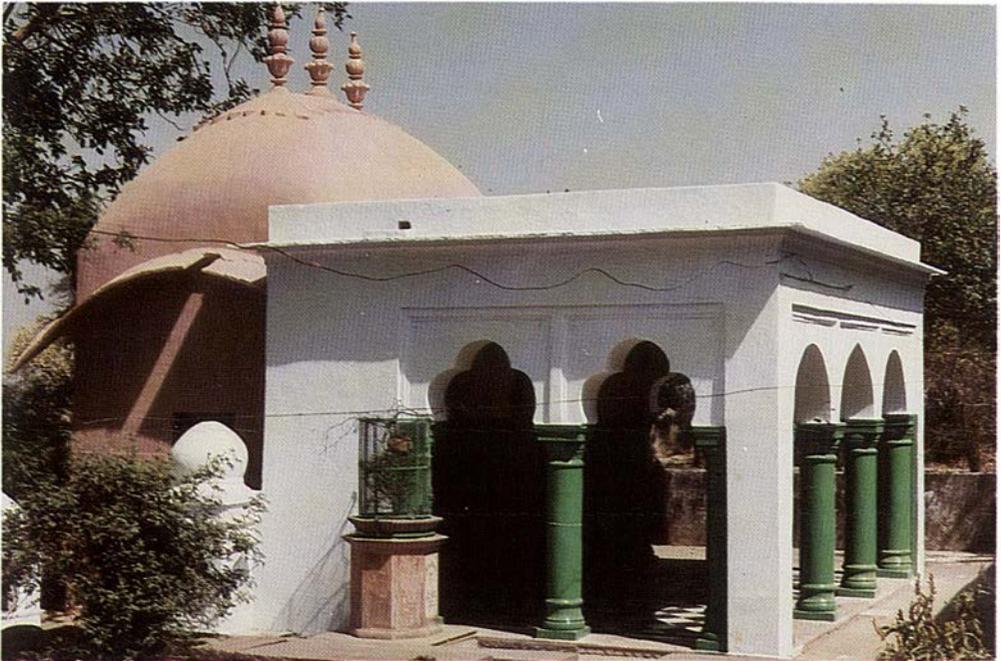
Bhajana kuṭira of Sanātana Gosvāmī



Samādhi Mūrti of Sanātana Gosvāmī

Rūpa and Sanātana moved their home to Ramakeli, which had become the capital of occupied Bengal from 1486. Regardless of their ostracization, many *brāhmaṇas* and *Vaiṣṇavas* continued to seek the association of Sanātana and Rūpa, they were the greatest *vaiṣṇava paṇḍits* (scholars) of the day, and had studied under the great teacher Vidyāvachaspati, the brother of Sarvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya.

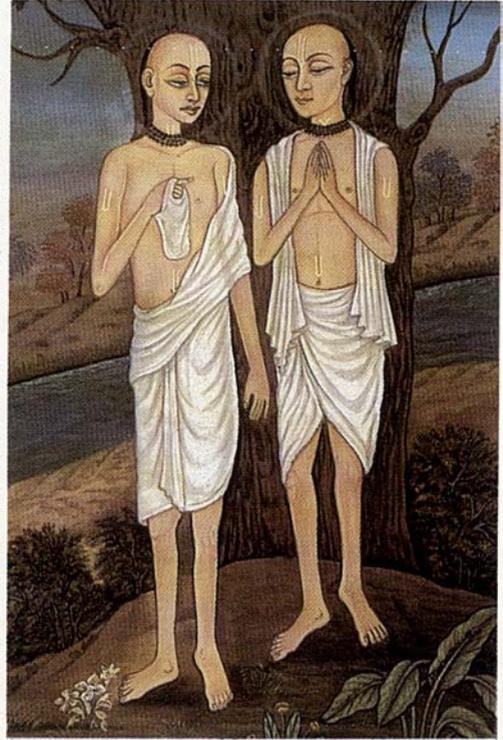
Sanātana and Rūpa heard about the wonderful activities of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and in their hearts the brothers had decided to surrender their lives to the Lord. They wrote letters to the Lord begging for His divine mercy and requesting that He save them from the sufferings of material existence. Lord Chaitanya who had moved to Jagganātha Puri after accepting the renounced order of life, *Sannyāsa*, decided to tour Bengal. After first visiting Navadvīpa, the Lord very soon arrived at Ramakeli, where thousands of people gathered to see Him. At that time both Sanātana and Rūpa came to see Lord Chaitanya, they took bunches of straw between their teeth and fell down like rods before the lotus feet of the Lord. They presented themselves as being the most fallen persons having accepted service in the Muslim government. They requested the Lord that as they were the most fallen, they should be saved first. The Lord accepted them and gave them the names Sanātana Gosvāmī and Rūpa Gosvāmī. Both brothers decided to retire from government service and dedicate themselves to the mission of Lord Chaitanya. Rūpa Gosvāmī retired first and left for Allahabad where he again met Lord Chaitanya. The lord then sent him to Vṛndāvana. Sanātana was not so fortunate, when he tried to retire from service, Hussian Shah threw him into jail. After bribing the jailor with a huge sum of money, Sanātana managed to escape and met Lord Chaitanya at Varanasi. After instructing Sanātana Gosvāmī on the science of *Bhakti-yoga* the Lord sent him to Vṛndāvana to join his brother Rūpa. Sanātana Gosvāmī established the temple of Madana-mohana and also wrote many impor-



Sanātana Gosvāmī Samādhi Mandira

tant books on devotional service. He lived in Vṛndāvana for forty two years and was considered to be the leader of all the Vaiṣṇava followers of Lord Chaitanya. Even Rūpa Gosvāmī accepted him as his own guru.

There are many amazing pastimes of Sanātana Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana, and how their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna used to take pleasure in serving their pure devotee. Once Rūpa Gosvāmī was thinking of how nice it would be to make sweet rice for Sanātana Gosvāmī, but unfortunately he did not have the ingredients for such a preparation. Suddenly, a beautiful young girl appeared at the door of his bhajan-kuṭir, the girl informed Rūpa that she had brought some ingredients for cooking, Rūpa asked the girl why she had taken such trouble to come there and bring these offerings; the girl replied that it was no trouble at all and that she wanted to render some service to a saintly person. Rūpa Gosvāmī gladly accepted the offering and took it inside his kutir, on returning to the door he saw that the young girl had disappeared. On inspecting the offering Rūpa saw all the ingredients for making first class sweet rice. He was amazed that he was just thinking of preparing sweet rice for Sanātana Gosvāmī, and suddenly this girl appeared and brought all the right ingredients for such a preparation. Anyway, Rūpa immediately cooked the sweet rice and offered it to his Deity Govindajī. Just then Sanātana Gosvāmī arrived and Rūpa invited him to take the sweet rice prasāda. On tasting the nectarean sweet rice, Sanātana Gosvāmī experienced ecstatic symptoms throughout his body. He asked how Rūpa came by such fine ingredients to make such a preparation, Rūpa then told him of the beautiful young girl who came to his door and brought all the ingredients for the sweet rice. Rūpa informed Sanātana that just prior to that he was thinking of how nice it would be to offer sweet rice to Sanātana, and just like magic this young girl suddenly appeared and brought all the right ingredients. Sanātana Gosvāmī immediately realized that this young girl was none other than Śrīmatī Rādhārānī, otherwise how is it possible for ordinary sweet rice to taste like ambrosia from the spiritual world. Tears immediately filled Sanātana Gosvāmī's eyes as he thought of the way in which Śrī-Rādhā had wanted to please him.



Rūpa and Sanātana

On another occasion Sanātana Gosvāmī was observing severe penances on the banks of Pavana Sarovara, fasting from both food and drink. Suddenly a beautiful young boy dressed like a cowherd came there carrying a pot of fresh milk. He came before Sanātana Gosvāmī and said, “Bābājī, I have brought you some milk”, Sanātana being surprised, asked the boy why had he taken such trouble to bring a pot of milk. The boy replied that he knew Sanātana Gosvāmī was not eating properly and therefore brought the milk for him. Sanātana Gosvāmī asked the boy how he knew he was not eating. The boy replied, “Many cowherd

men pass this way and they told me you were not eating properly and because they are busy herding cows, they sent me to bring you this milk". Sanātana Gosvāmī then said, "You are such a little boy and you have taken so much trouble to bring this milk". The boy replied, "No, no, Bābājī, it is no trouble at all". The boy then told Sanātana he would return tomorrow and collect the pot and suddenly he was gone. On drinking the milk Sanātana experienced ecstatic symptoms in his body, his eyes filled with tears as he tasted the nectar like milk. Sanātana Gosvāmī then realized that this could be no ordinary boy but was Lord Krishna Himself, offering milk to Sanātana because he was following severe penance by fasting. Sanātana Gosvāmī then decided not to fast anymore because he knew that the Lord was not happy with his severe fasts, and decided to practice *madhukari*, begging a small amount from the houses of *brāhmaṇas*.

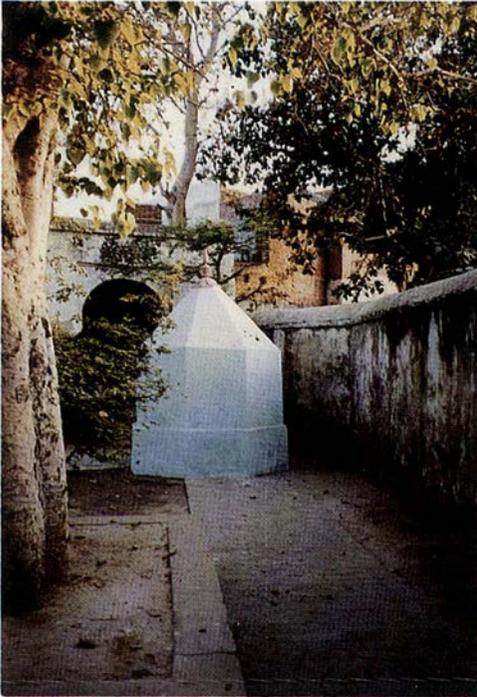
Sanātana Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Rati Mañjarī, one of the eight principle maid-servants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in the spiritual world.

TIMINGS: Same as temple above.

17E. TAPANA MIŚRA AND CANDRASEKHĀRA PUSHPA SAMĀDHI

Also in this garden are the *puṣpa-samādhis* of Tapanā Miśra and Candrasekhāra Ācārya, who were close associates of Lord Chaitanya. When Lord Chaitanya visited Benares (Kāśī), he stayed and took *prasāda* at the houses of these two devotees. Tapan Miśra was the father of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. When Lord Chaitanya was on the way to Vṛndāvana and also on His return journey, He visited Benares (Kāśī) where both these devotees were living. The Lord would stay at the house of Candrasekhāra and take His meals at the house of Tapan Miśra.

TIMINGS: Same as temple above



17F. GRANTHA SAMĀDHI

Also here in this garden is the *grantha-samādhi* containing the sacred books of the six *Gosvāmīs*. This is the only *samādhi* in existence that contains sacred books (*granthas*). The books entombed here are believed to be most of the original manuscripts of the *Gosvāmīs* that were written on palm leaves.

18. NEW MADANA-MOHANA TEMPLE

This temple was built next to the original temple after it was desecrated by the soldiers of Aurangzeb. This new temple contains the *pratibhū-mūrti* (replica) of the original Deities of Madana-mohana that were sent to Rajasthan for safety. There is no difference in potency between the original Deities and the *pratibhū-mūrti*, they are considered to be the same.

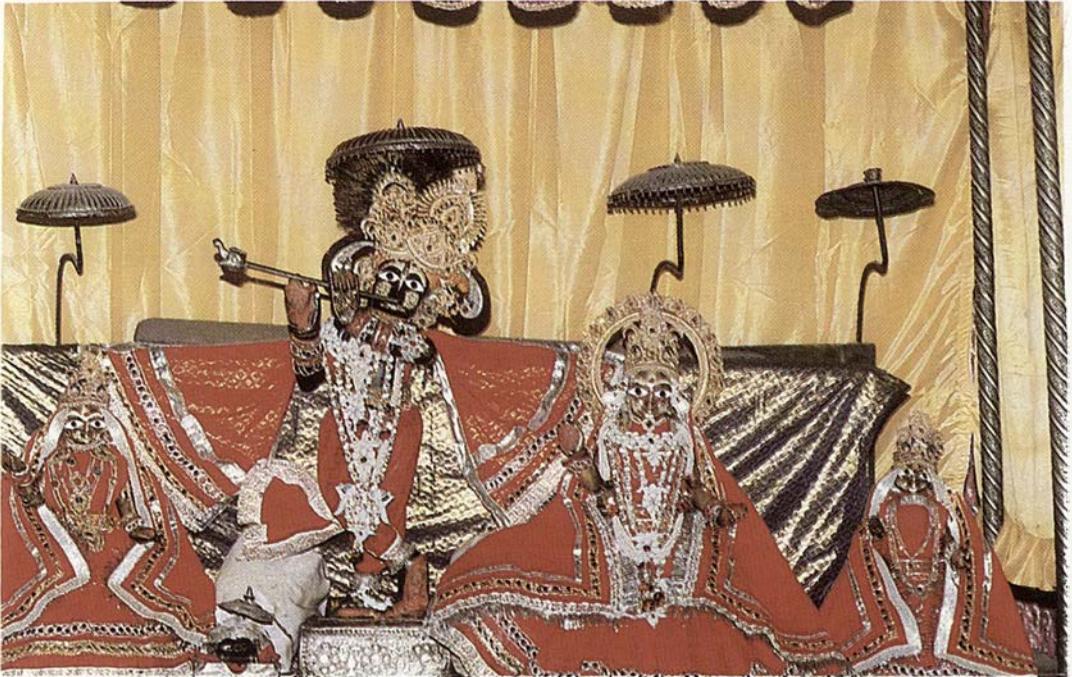
TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4 am; Darśana 7:30 am - 12 and 4:30 pm - 8

Winter—Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 8:30 am - 12 and 5 pm to 7

Grantha Samādhi



The samādhis of Tapan Miśra (left) and Candrasekhara Ācārya

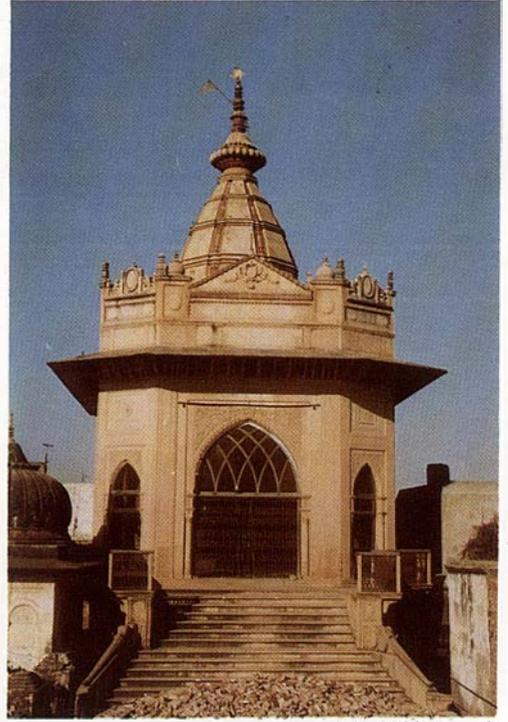


The pratibhū-mūrti of Rādhā Madana-mohana

19. AṢṬA SAKHĪ TEMPLE

Near to the Madana-mohana temple is this temple of the eight *sakhīs* (maidservants). This temple was established by the king of Hetambur in West Bengal, whose name was Rāja Ramranjan Cakravartī. He was an initiated disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. The king's wife had a dream where Lord Krishna asked her to build this temple of *Aṣṭa-sakhī*. The names of the eight *sakhīs* are from the left; Sudevī, Tuṅgavidyā, Indulekhā, Viśākhā, Lalitā, Citra, Campakalatā, and Raṅgadevī. The Deity of Rādhā-Rāsabihārī is in the centre.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5 am; Darsana 7 am
11:30 and 4 pm - 8
Winter—Maṅgala 5 am; Darsana 7 am
12:30 and 4 pm - 8



Aṣṭa Sakhī temple

20. DAVANALA KUṆḌA

After subduing the Kāliyā serpent, Lord Krishna came to this place along with the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. While they were resting a blazing forest fire (*davanala*), suddenly started which threatened to kill them all. Lord Krishna saved everyone by extinguishing the blazing forest fire by inhaling it into his mouth.



Davanala Kuṅḍa

21. DAVANALA BIHĀRĪ

This was the original temple built here to commemorate Lord Krishna's pastime of extinguishing the forest fire. This temple is about two hundred years old and is managed by the devotees of Nimbarka *Sampradaya*.

22. VISHRAM KUNḌA

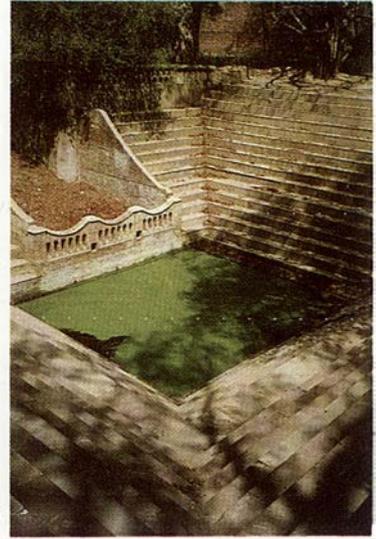
After extinguishing the blazing forest fire, Lord Krishna rested at this *kuṇḍa* with all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana.

23. JAIPUR TEMPLE

This temple was built by the Mahārāja of Jaipur, Sawai Madhav, in 1917 after thirty years of hard labour. It is one of Vṛndāvana's most opulent and grandiose temples. The fine hand carved sandstone is of unparalleled workmanship, the huge pillars that hold up the roof are each carved from one solid rock, and the intricately fashioned marble on the alter is reminiscent of the Mughal period. The Mahārāja financed the railway line that connects Vṛndāvana with Mathurā, just for the purpose of hauling the huge pieces of sandstone used in the temple construction. The Deities worshiped here are Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, Ānanda-bihārī and Hansa-gopāla

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 7:30 am - 10 and 5 pm - 8:30

Winter—Maṅgala 6:30 am; Darśana 8 am - 11:30 and 4 pm - 7



Vishram Kuṇḍa



Jaipura Temple

24. BĀNKE-BIHĀRĪ TEMPLE

Bānke-bihārī means Krishna, the Supreme Enjoyer. This is one of Vṛndāvana's most popular temples and famous all over India and was built in 1864. The Deity of Bānke-bihārī was discovered in Nidhuvana by Swami Haridāsa, a contemporary of Jiva Gosvāmī. Swami Haridāsa, known for his devotional *bhajan*s was the guru of the famous musician Tansen. Swami Haridāsa belonged to the Nimbarka Sampradāya.

TIMINGS: Summer — Darśana 9 am-12 and 6 pm-10
Winter — Darśana 10 am-1 pm and 6 pm-9

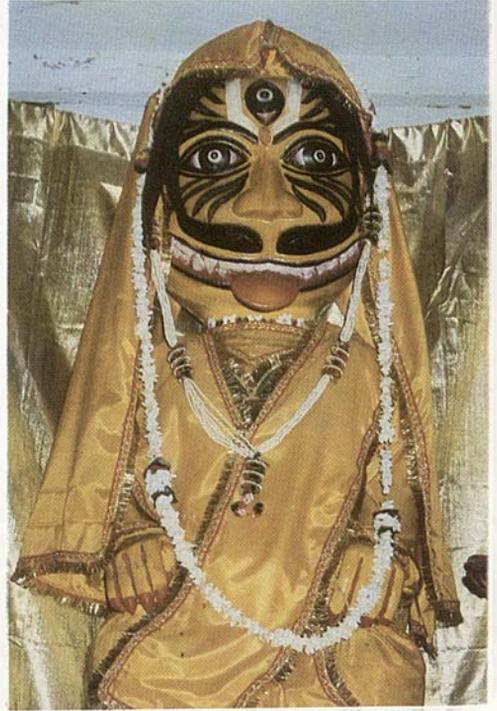
25. NARASIMHADEV TEMPLE

This large deity of Lord Narasimhadeva is carved out of wood and is one of the few Narasimha temples in Vṛndāvana.

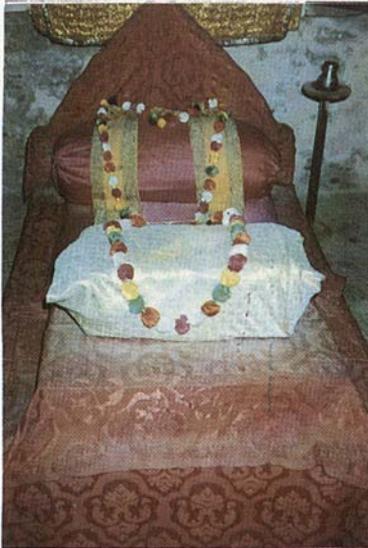
TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same — Darśana 5 am-12 pm and 4 pm-9 pm

26. RĀDHĀ VALLABHA TEMPLE

Another very popular temple especially with local *Vrajevāsīs*, is the Rādhā Vallabha Mandir, established by Hit Harivamsa who also founded the Rādhā Vallabha Sampradaya. The original temple was built after the Govindaji Mandir and was also desecrated by the soldiers of Aurangzeb in 1670.



Lord Narasimhadeva



Rāghunātha's Bhāgavatam

A new temple was later built right next to the old one and the original deity of Rādhā Vallabha was reinstalled there. In the same compound can be found the popular temples of Rādhā Ananda-vallabha, Rādhā Jivan-vallabha, and Rādhā Kisori-vallabha.

TIMINGS: Maṅgala 5:30 am; Darśana 8:30 am-12:45 & 6 pm-9

27. BHAṬṬAJI MANDIR

Here one can see the original Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam of Rāghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. The Bhaṭṭaji Mandir is situated within the courtyard of another Rādhā Madanamohana temple, just opposite from the Narasimha temple. Rāghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was famous for his chanting of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. When he chanted the verses in three different melodious metres (*ragas*), people would be overcome with spiritual emotion and sometimes swoon, while Rāghunātha himself would exhibit all the symptoms of ecstasy.

TIMINGS: Summer — 6 am-12 noon and 6 pm-8 pm
Winter — 8 am-12 noon and 6 pm-9 pm



The exquisite Deity of Rādhā Vallabha (the crown on the right signifies Rādhārāni)

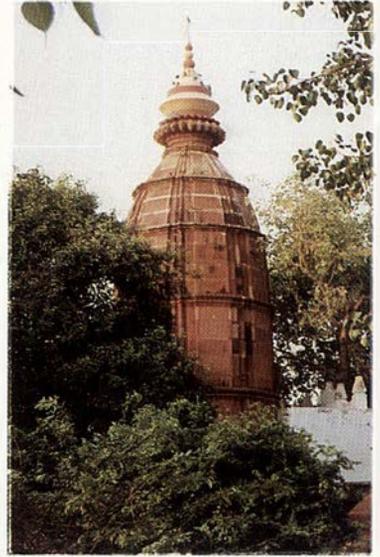
28. JUGAL GHĀTA

Here stands an ancient temple of Jugal-bihārī, which is over 300 years old. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī once stayed here while visiting Vṛndāvana.

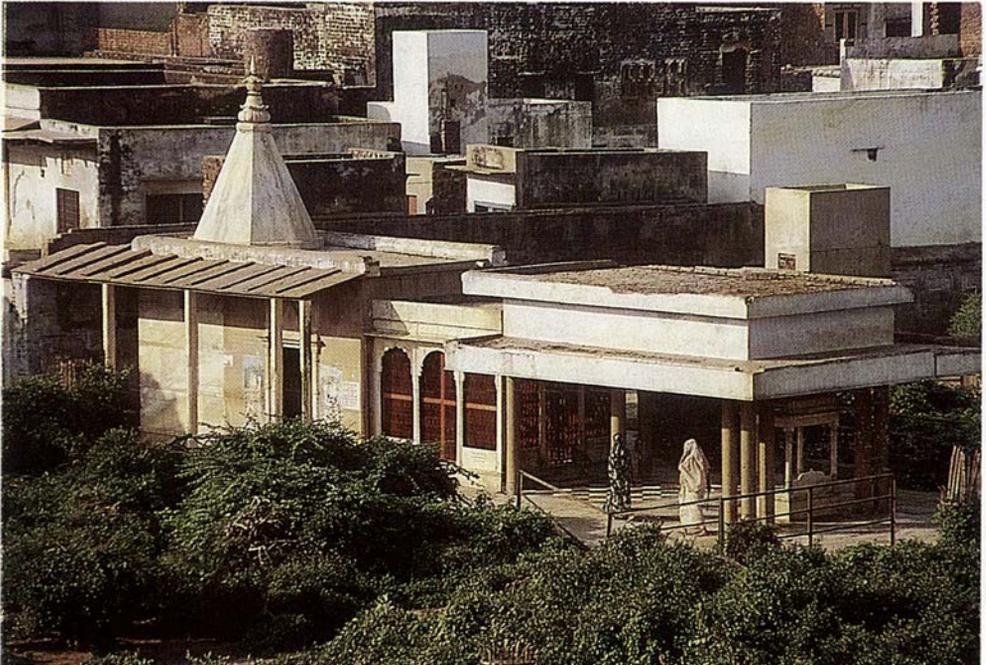
29. SEVĀ KUṆJA

This is the sacred place of the *rāsa* dance and also where Lord Krishna offered service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī by decorating Her hair with flowers, as well as massaging and painting Her lotus feet. Rādhā and Krishna would sometimes spend the night here, dancing with the *gopīs* and enjoying various transcendental pastimes. One can see the *rāsa-sthālī*, commemorating the *rāsa* dance of Lord Krishna with the *gopīs*. There is also a small temple dedicated to Rādhā and Krishna's pastimes called *Rang Mahal* where Lord Krishna decorated Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Near the entrance to this garden is a *kuṇḍa* created by Lord Krishna. He pushed His foot into the ground just to please Lalitā devī when she was feeling thirsty and wanted to drink water.

The transcendental *rāsa* dance performance of Lord Krishna can never be compared to any mundane dancing of the conditioned souls. Krishna's performance of the *rāsa* dance is a completely spiritual affair of pure love, enacted on the spiritual platform, between the Lord and His greatest devotees, who had all taken the form of *gopīs*, the beautiful cowherd damsels of Vṛndāvana. They were by far the most beautiful damsels in the whole universe.



Jugal Ghāta



The Rang Mahal Mandira at Seva Kuṅja

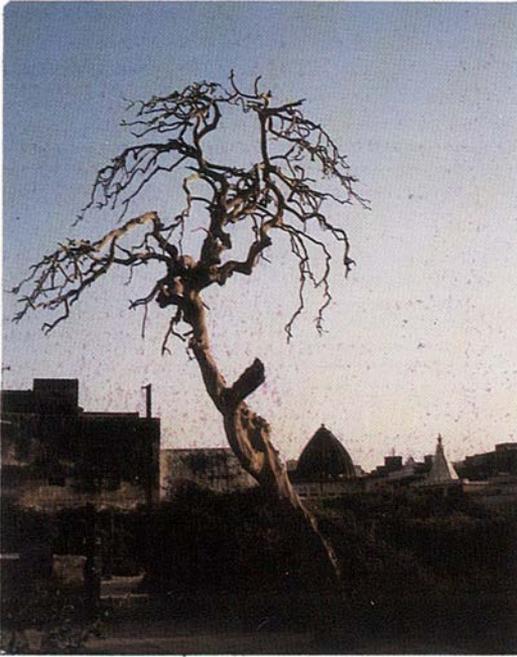


A painting of Krishna combing Rādhā's hair

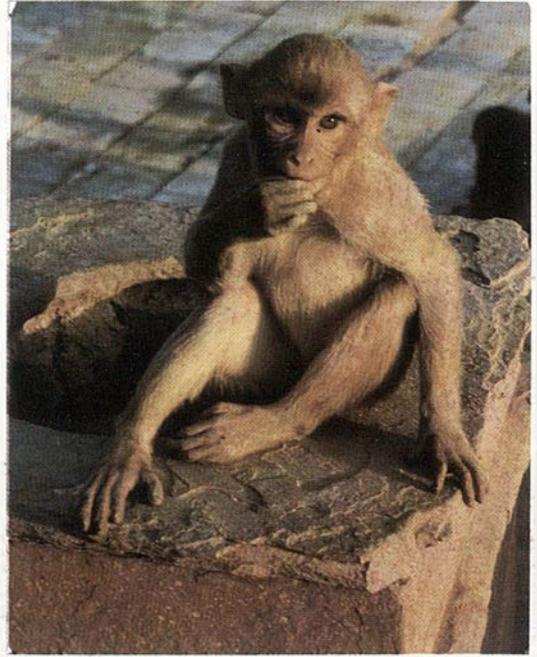


A view of Seva Kuñja





Sacred tree at Sevā Kuñja



Monkey at Sevā Kuñja

By His divine mystic power, Lord Krishna expanded Himself into hundreds of forms, in order to dance simultaneously with hundreds of *gopīs*. Each *gopī* thought that Krishna was dancing with her alone. As Lord Krishna and the *gopīs* danced together, a most wonderful musical sound was produced by the tinkling of their anklebells, ornaments, and bangles. The *gopīs* also began to sing beautiful songs whilst dancing, which pleased Krishna very much. Some of the *gopīs* touched Krishna cheek to cheek and Krishna began to offer them chewed betel nuts from His lotus mouth, which they exchanged by kissing. By accepting those chewed betel nuts from Lord Krishna's mouth, the *gopīs* became even more spiritually advanced.

Krishna, being the Supreme Lord, is also the Supreme Enjoyer. Everything in creation is meant for the Lords pleasure; the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana perfectly understood this and were prepared to do anything and everything for the satisfaction of Krishna. They did not expect anything in return for their service; this is *bhakti-yoga*, complete surrender in pure unalloyed devotion to the Lord.

In a former life, some of the *gopīs* had been great *ṛṣīs* and perfect *yogīs*. Due to their great austerities and perfect meditation, they had attained the chance to associate with the Supreme Lord in His most intimate loving pastimes within the forest of Vṛndāvana. It should be clearly understood that there is not even the slightest tinge of material lust, or mundane sex indulgence in the transcendental pastimes of spiritual love between Lord Krishna and the *gopīs*. In their former lives the *ṛṣīs* and *yogīs* were completely above the mundane sensual plane due to their perfect meditation; in their next lives they associated directly with the Lord, in their pure spiritual forms as the beautiful *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana. Those who think that these pastimes of the Lord in Vṛndāvana are manifestations of mundane lusty activities are certainly possessed of a hellish mentality.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5:30 am; Darsana 7 am - 12:30 and 3:30 pm - 6
Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darsana 7 am - 12:30 and 4:30 pm - 7

30. PURNAMĀSĪ TEMPLE

This is the temple of Purnamāśī who was an incarnation of Yōgamaya (Krishna's internal potency). She appeared as the mother of Sandipani Muni, Lord Krishna's spiritual master. All the inhabitants of Vraja accept her as their *guru* and would consult her on all important matters. It was Purnamāśī who used to play an important role in making arrangements for the loving pastimes between Rādhā and Krishna. Everyday she would meet Vṛndadevi at Vṛnda Kuṇḍa and discuss all the arrangements for the pastimes of the Divine Couple. Purnamāśī always sits here at the corner of Sevā-Kuṅja so as to assist Rādhā and Krishna in their transcendental pastimes here. The original Deity of Purnamāśī is at Sanket, halfway between Barsana and Nandagram. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī also used to worship a Deity of Yōgamaya which he installed in the Govindajī temple.

31. SĪTĀ-NĀTHA TEMPLE

This temple is dedicated to Advaita Ācārya and his wife, Sītādevī. Sītā-nātha means the Lord of Sītā, which refers to Advaita Ācārya, a close associate of Lord Chaitanya and one of the '*Pañca-taṭṭva*'. Advaita Ācārya was an incarnation of Lord Mahāviṣṇu and descended on earth just to help Lord Chaitanya in spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement. From this temple's courtyard, one can see both Sevā Kuṅja and the adjoining garden of Kiśor Ban. If one goes to the roof top, one gets a panoramic view of Sevā Kuṅja and the surrounding area.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 7 am - 12 and 4:30 pm - 7

Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darśana 7 am - 12 and 4:30 pm - 7



The Deity of Purnamāśī



The Deities of Sītā-nātha

32. IMLI TALA (TAMARIND TREE)

This tree was a favorite place of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Once, during a *rāsa* dance performance, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī suddenly left and finding Her missing, Krishna went in search of Her. As He was unable to find Her, He came and sat beneath this tree. Due to intense feelings of separation from His beloved Rādhā, Krishna's body started to turn the same golden hue as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's body. At that moment, Rādhārāṇī came there accompanied by Her girl friends and had *darśana* of that golden complexioned form of Lord Krishna.

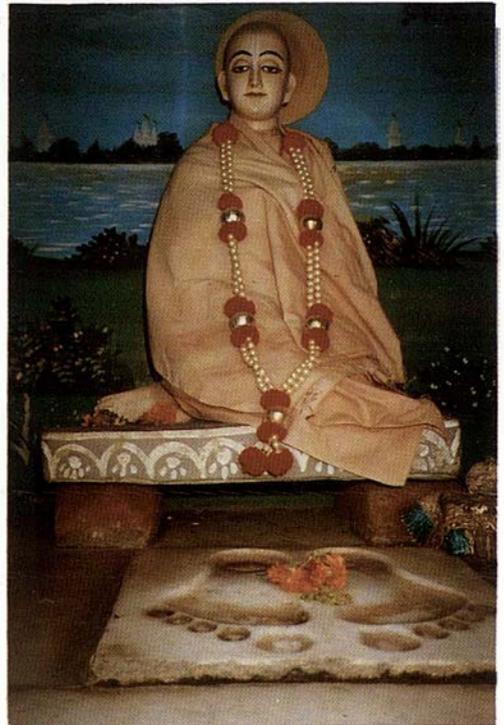
Rādhārāṇī asked Krishna the meaning of this golden form and He explained to Her that after searching for Her, He came and sat here and in a mood of deep separation, after chanting the name of Rādhārāṇī, His body started to turn a golden colour just like Hers. Then His own feelings and sentiments were replaced by Hers, and He began to experience Her mood of separation from Himself. Krishna then told Rādhārāṇī that in the *Kali-yuga*, He would again take on Her mood and complexion and distribute love of God to all the conditioned souls.

Almost 5,000 years later, Krishna again came in the form of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation of Krishna, known as the 'Golden *Avatara*' due to His golden complexion. When visiting Vṛndāvana, He came here regularly, and sat beneath this same tree and chanted the holy names of Krishna. Feeling deep separation from Krishna, Śrī Chaitanya's body would turn the same blackish hue as Lord Krishna's body and He would continually shed tears of love in spiritual ecstasy.

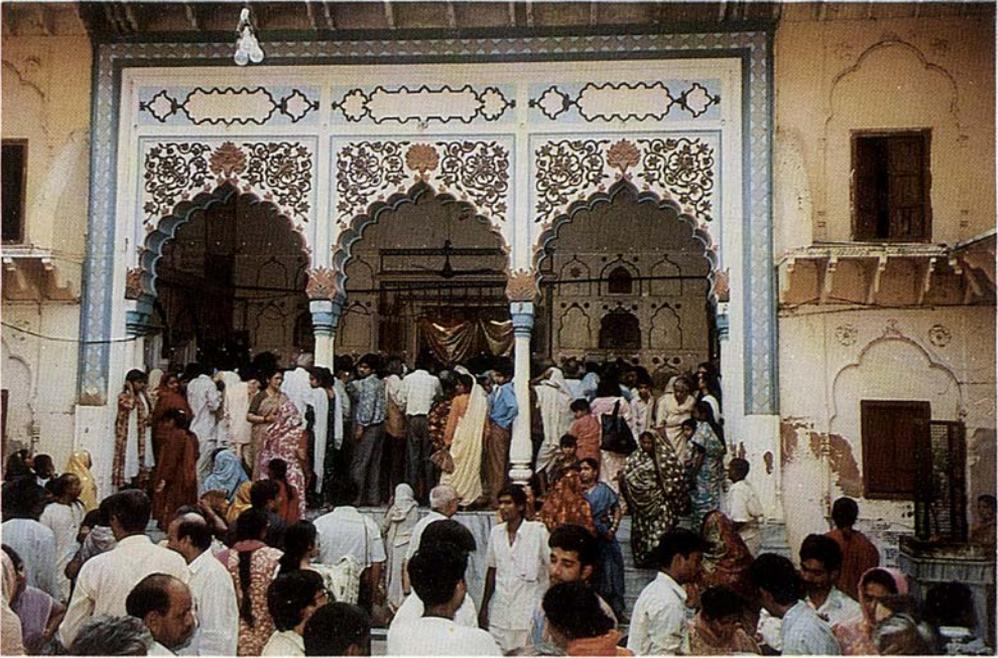
TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Darśana 5:30 am - 12 and 4 pm - 8



Imlī Tala (Tamarind Tree)



The Deity of Lord Chaitanya at Imlī Tala



Rādhā Dāmodara Temple

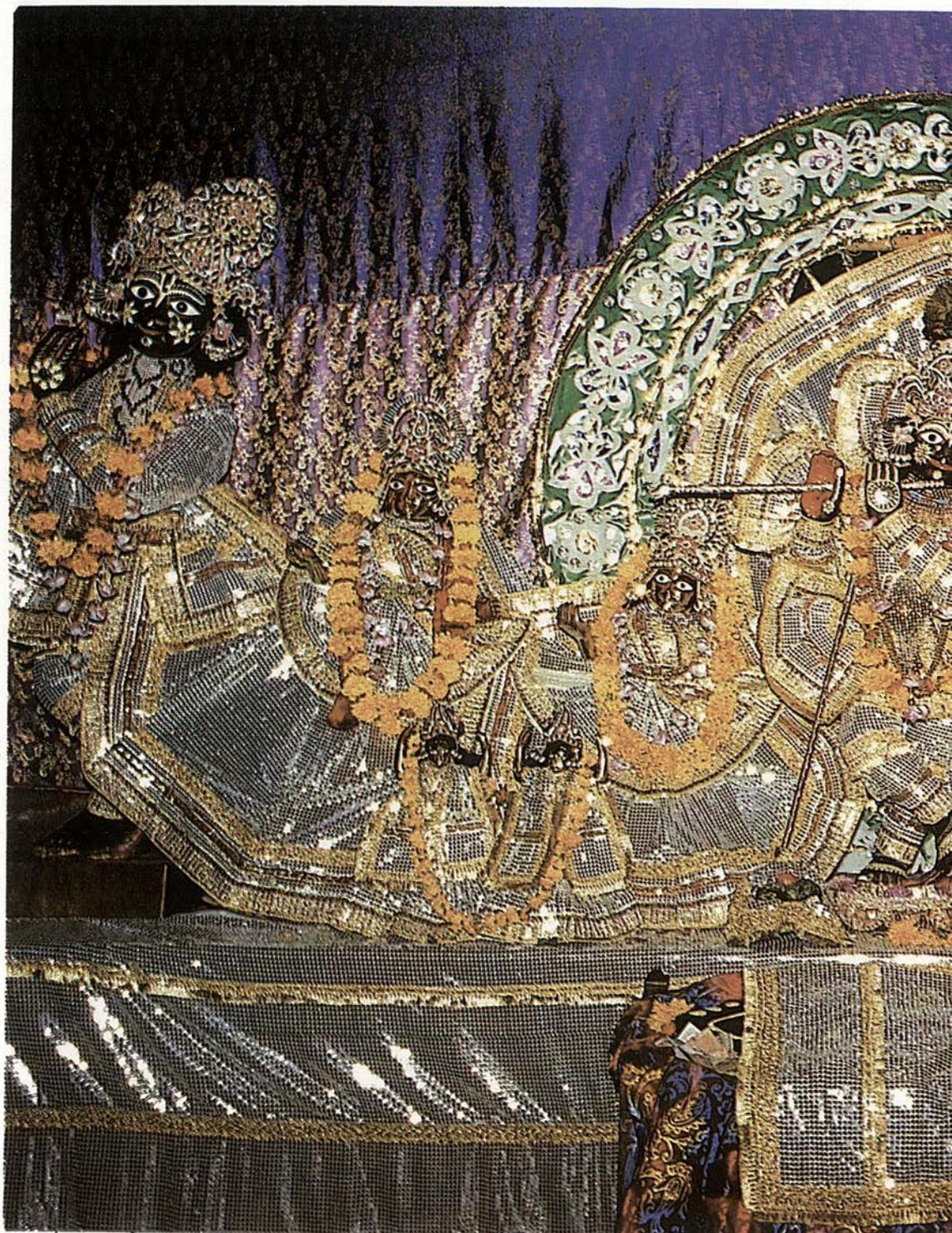
33A. RĀDHĀ DĀMODARA TEMPLE

This is one of the most important temples in Vr̥ndāvana. The original Deity was hand carved by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and given as a gift to his beloved disciple, Jīva Gosvāmī, who later built a temple here. The Deity was first worshipped in the year 1542. The land was later acquired in 1558 when the Deity was installed on the *simhāsana* (throne). The original Deity was moved to Jaipur when Aurangzeb attacked Vr̥ndāvana in 1670.

Formerly this spot was in the middle of Sevā-kuñja and it was the *bhajana* place of Rūpa Gosvāmī. He would daily hold discourses on the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and Krishna's pastimes here with the other Gosvāmīs and their close associates. Śrīla Prabhupāda said that Rādhā-Dāmodara temple is in the centre of the spiritual world, because of the transcendental activities that went on here amongst the followers of Lord Chaitanya, led by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Some researchers believe that the Deity now being worshiped is the *pratibhu-mūrti* (replica), whereas others claim this Deity to be the original. Besides the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara, also kept in this temple are the Deities originally worshiped by Krishnadāsa Kavirāja (Rādhā Vr̥ndāvana-candra), Jayadeva Gosvāmī (Rādhā Mādhava), Bhurgarbha Gosvāmī (Rādhā Chalachikan), as well as the *govardhana-śilā* of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, which has the footprint of Lord Krishna impressed upon it.

It so happened that Sanātana Gosvāmī used to circumambulate Govardhana hill everyday as part of his daily vows; even in his old age. One day, Lord Krishna in the guise of a beautiful cowherd boy, suddenly appeared before Sanātana Gosvāmī, and requested him that now you are very old, there is no need to go round Govardhana hill everyday. Sanātana replied that as he had taken such a vow to daily circumambulate Govardhana, he could not stop. Understanding Sanātana's determination, Krishna then stood on a big stone from the hill and started playing His flute. The flute playing of the Lord was so enchanting, that the



The deities on the altar at the Rādhā Dāmodara Temple are from the left: The pratibhū-mūrti of Rādhā Vṛndāvana-C
Rādhā Madhava (Jayadeva Gosvāmi); the Deity of Rādhā-Chalchikan (Bhūgarbha Gosvāmi)



ishnadāsa Kaviāja); the pratibhū-mūrti of Rādhā Dāmodara with Lalitā Śākhī at left (Jīva Gosvāmi); the pratibhū-mūrti of at the front of the alter, the celebrated Giri-govardhan Śīlā (Sanātana Gosvāmi)

stone started to melt and Krishna's footprint got impressed upon it and also the hoof print of a calf, along with Krishna's flute and His stick used for herding cows. Krishna then gave this stone from Govardhana hill to Sanātana and told that if he circumambulated this *govardhana-silā* by asking the *pūjāri* and giving a small donation.

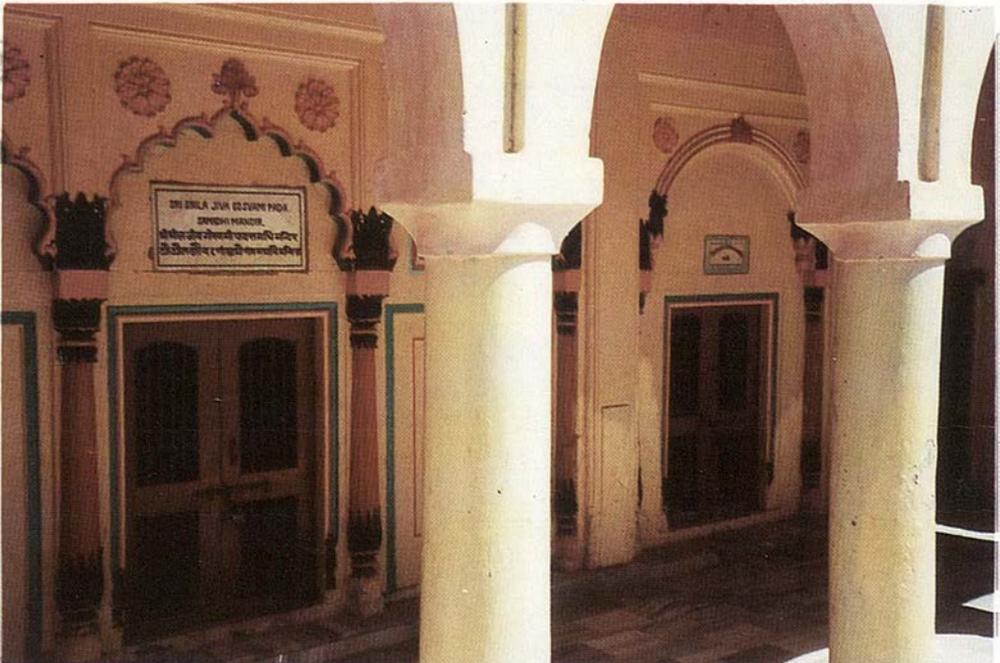
TIMINGS: Summer — Maṅgala 4:30 am; Darśana 6:30 am-12:30 pm and 5 pm-9:30 pm

Winter — Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 7:30 am-1:00 pm and 4:15 pm-8:45 pm

33B. JĪVA ĠOSVĀMĪ SAMĀDHI

In the year 1608, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī entered *samādhi* and his sacred body was placed here near to his beloved Deities, Rādhā Dāmodara. The youngest of the six *Gosvāmīs* of Vṛndāvana, Jīva Gosvāmī was considered to be the greatest philosopher in Indian history. After the disappearance of Rūpa and Sanātana, Jīva Gosvāmī became the *ācārya* for all the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas*. Jīva Gosvāmī was also the most prolific writer amongst the six *Gosvāmīs*, and wrote over 25 books. He was so expert in Sanskrit that he is considered the foremost Sanskrit scholar that ever lived, and to this day, the Benares Hindu University honours him with an entire department dedicated to the study of his books. It is believed that Jīva Gosvāmī was born in the year 1513 (although some scholars claim a much later date of 1523). He was the son of Anupama, the younger brother of Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs.

After the death of Jīva Gosvāmī's mother, (his father Anupama died shortly after his birth) Jīva decided to renounce the world and join his uncles, Rūpa and Sanātana in Vṛndāvana. On his way to Vṛndāvana he first visited Navadvīpa where he met Lord Nityānanda who took him on a tour of all the holy places of Navadvīpa *dhāma*. Lord



Jīva Gosvāmī's Samādhi (left) Krishnadāsa Kavirāja's Samādhi (right)



Jiva Gosvami

Nityānanda told Jīva that on his way to Vṛndāvana he should stop at Benares (Kāśī) and study under the great learned *Pandita* Madhusudana Vachaspati, who was a disciple of Sarvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. In a very short time Jīva became well versed in all aspects of *Vēdānta* philosophy and his reputation grew as an eminent scholar. Jīva Gosvāmī then left on the last leg of his journey to Vṛndāvana where he was greeted on his arrival by his two uncles Rūpa and Sanātana. Jīva then took shelter of Rūpa Gosvāmī who accepted him as his disciple.

Some time passed after Jīva's initiation when one day a great *Didvijayi paṇḍita* all-conquering learned scholar came to Vṛndāvana for the purpose of challenging both Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī's, who were known at that time as the greatest living scholars. When out of humility both Rūpa and Sanātana refused to debate the *Didvijayi*, he abused them and called them frauds for not taking up his challenge. Being humble *Vaiṣṇava* saints, the Gosvāmīs said that their reputation was exaggerated and claimed they were not fit to debate such a great scholar like the *Didvijayi*. The *Didvijayi* was very pleased to hear this and demanded a note confirming that he had defeated both Rūpa and Sanātana. Without hesitation the Gosvāmīs signed the note and sent him away. The *Didvijayi* having heard of the Gosvāmī's young nephew Jīva's growing reputation as a scholar, thought that if he could also defeat Jīva, his own reputation would be unequalled and he would become known as India's greatest scholar. Taking the note given to him by Rūpa and Sanātana, the *Didvijayi* approached Jīva Gosvāmī. On seeing the note Jīva became incensed with anger. How could both Rūpa and Sanātana, his worshipful *gurus* and great devotees of the Lord, be defeated by an ordinary puffed-up mundane scholar like the *Didvijayi*.



Jiva Gosvami's Samādhī Mūrti

Jīva immediately engaged the *Didvijayi* in a furious debate that lasted seven days. In the end Jīva completely defeated the *Didvijayi* and took back the note signed by Rūpa and Sanātana. The *Didvijayi* left Vṛndāvana in great shame and was never heard of again. Jīva Gosvāmī then went running to Rūpa and Sanātana to proclaim his victory over the *Didvijayi*, but the Gosvāmīs were not at all pleased to hear Jīva's news about retrieving the reputation of his two uncles. In fact Rūpa was most upset that Jīva's youthful pride had got the better of him. Rūpa Gosvāmī informed him that one who rejoices in another's humiliation and asserts his own worth is not fit to live in Vṛndāvana and has certainly accepted the renounced order prematurely. Rūpa then told Jīva that he was banished from their association and should leave Vṛndāvana immediately. Jīva was flabbergasted by Rūpa Gosvāmī's chastisement and with a sorrowful heart left Vṛndāvana for neighboring Mathurā.

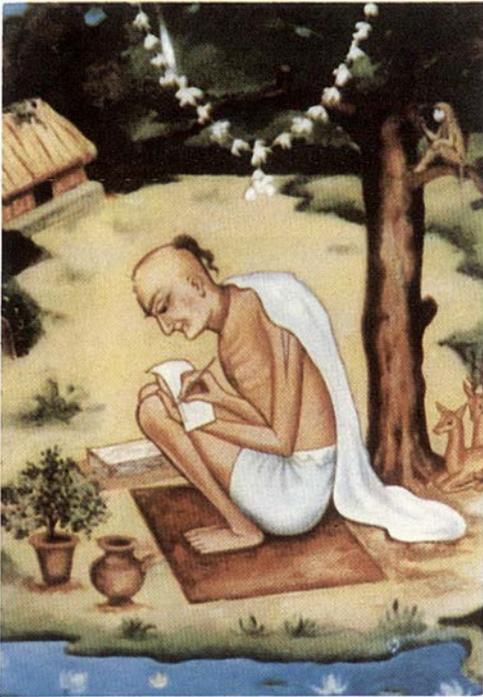
Jīva engaged in severe austerities and accepted a vow of silence that lasted for over a year. After sometime Sanātana approached Rūpa Gosvāmī and humbly requested that Rūpa show his mercy to Jīva. On being petitioned by Sanātana Gosvāmī, Rūpa relented and called back Jīva to Vṛndāvana. After this important lesson given by his beloved *guru*, Jīva went on to become the most prolific author amongst the *Gosvāmīs* and systematically planned the propagation of the *Gosvāmīs*' teachings. He sent three of his most brilliant students, Śrīnavāsa Ācārya, Narottama dāsa Thākura and Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita by bullock cart to Bengal and Orissa to distribute the books of the *Gosvāmīs*, thereby inaugurating the first ever book distribution party in the history of the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* movement.

Jīva Gosvāmī's fame spread so far and wide that even Akbar, Mughal Emperor of India, paid a visit to Vṛndāvana in the year 1570, and was so impressed by Jīva Gosvāmī and the work of the *Gosvāmīs*, that he gave permission for a number of temples dedicated to Lord Krishna to be built. Akbar also provided funds for the preservation of all the *Gosvāmīs*' manuscripts and a library was built at the Rādhā Dāmodara temple.

After the disappearance of the other *Gosvāmīs*, Jīva became the leader of all the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* and by his expert helmsmanship, the Krishna consciousness movement of Lord Chaitanya gained a solid foundation. It is believed that Jīva Gosvāmī disappeared in the year 1598, but according to a document kept at Rādhā Damodhara and considered to be his last will and testament, his disappearance was in the year 1608.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Vilas Mañjarī, one of the eight intimate maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in the spiritual world.

TIMINGS: Same as temple



Krishnadāsa writing Chaitanya Caritāmṛta

33C. KRISHNADĀSA KAVIRĀJA GOŚVĀMĪ SAMĀDHI

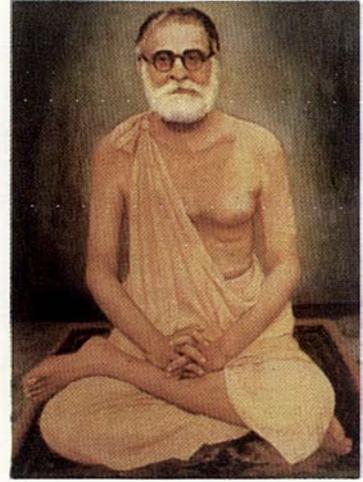
Next to Jīva Gosvāmī's *samādhi*, is the *samādhi* of Krishnadāsa Kavirāja, a close confidant of the six *Gosvāmīs*. Lord Nityānanda appeared in a dream to Krishnadāsa and ordered him to go to Vṛndāvana. He took initiation from Ragunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and lived near his *guru* on the bank of Rādhā Kuṇḍa. He was an erudite scholar and had studied all the branches of Vedic knowledge. He wrote a number of books but the most famous was the great classic, "*Śrī Chaitanya-Caritāmṛta*" which he completed in 1581. Just one year later in 1582 he entered *samādhi* and his sacred body was entombed here at the Rādhā Damodara temple. Krishnadāsa Kavirāja is an incarnation of Kasturi Manjarī. (Some people claim this to be the *samādhi* of Krishna dāsa Brahmācārī, a disciple of Gadadhāra Paṇḍit and *pujari* of Radha-Dāmodara)

TIMINGS: Same as temple

33D. ŚRĪLA BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ GOŚVĀMĪ PUṢPA SAMĀDHI

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī entered *samādhi* in 1936, his full *samādhi* is situated at Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, West Bengal. He was the only disciple of Gauṛa Kīṣore dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, and became the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was born at Jagganātha Puri as the son of Śrīla Baktivinoda Thākura in the year 1874. Śrīla Baktivinoda had prayed to Lord Krishna to send someone to help him in his mission of spreading Krishna consciousness. The Lord answered his prayer in the form of a wonderful son, who at birth had all thirty two bodily symptoms of a *mahā-puruṣa*. When he was born his umbilical cord was wrapped around his body like a *brāhmaṇās* sacred thread. As a youth he became a most brilliant student and could remember each and everything he ever read or heard. He became known as the walking encyclopēdiā and was awarded the title *Siddhanta Sarasvatī* by his tutors. He remained a *naistika-brahmacārī* and at the age of forty four accepted the renounced order of life



Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī *sannyāsa*, in 1918.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī opened sixty four temples (*Gauḍiya Maths*) all over India and established a number of printing presses for publishing books on Krishna consciousness. He used to call the press the "*brhat-mṛdanga*" or the "big drum". He would say that the chanting party could be heard for a few blocks, but the books printed at the press could be heard far and wide.



Puspa Samādhi of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī was known as the 'Lion *guru*' because of his bold and fearless preaching. His greatest contribution to Lord Chaitanya's movement was when he firmly established the truth according to Vedic scriptures that any one, regardless of birth, can become a *brāhmaṇā* if he has the proper qualifications, and no one can claim to be a *brāhmaṇā* if he is not properly qualified, totally defeating the philosophy of the caste *brāhmaṇās*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī also defeated the various *sahajīya sampradāyas* prevalent at that time, as well as the *mayavadi* impersonalists simply by his forceful and scholarly arguments. In fact he is known to have been the greatest scholar in the recent age and no one could ever defeat him in argument or debate

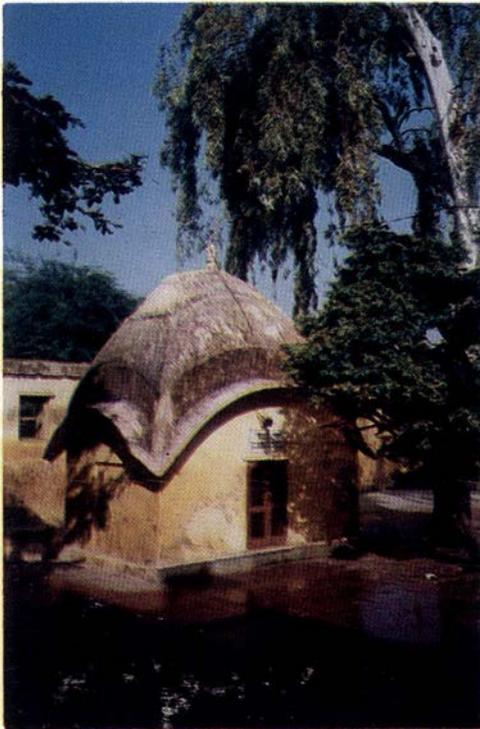
In 1922, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī first met his Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who at that time was a young married man and supporter of India's freedom struggle. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī asked Śrīla Prabhupāda to preach the message of Lord Chaitanya in the western world. In 1932 Śrīla Prabhupāda became the initiated disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī. Just two weeks before his disappearance in 1936, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī wrote to Śrīla Prabhupāda ordering him to preach the message of Lord Chaitanya to the English speaking people of the world. Accepting this order as his life and soul, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is recognized as the foremost disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī, single-handedly spread the Krishna consciousness movement to every corner of the world, thus fulfilling the dearest desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī.



Samādhi Pitha at Rādhā-Dāmodara

33E. KING BIRHAMBIR OF VANA VISHNUPUR PUSPA SAMADHI

Just near to the *samādhi* of Jīva Gosvāmī is the *puṣpa-samādhi* of this famous king of Vana Vishnupur, who stole the trunk of sacred books belonging to the *Gosvāmīs*.

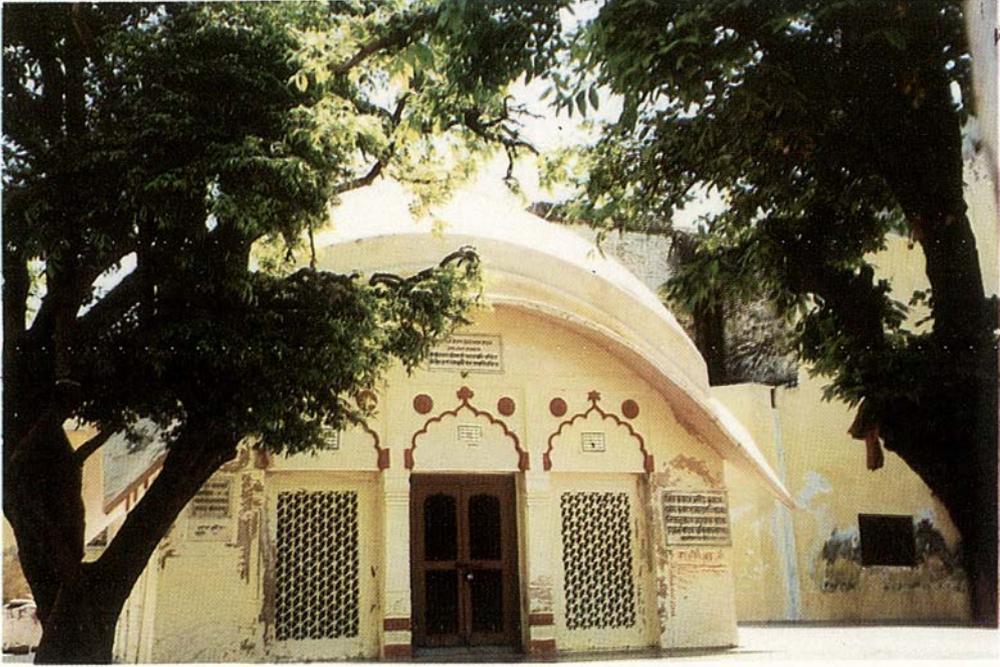


Bhajana-kutira of Rūpa Gosvāmī

Having been informed by his astrologers that the trunk contained great treasures, he had his men steal this trunk from three devotees; Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama dāsa and Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, who were on their way by bullock cart from Vṛndāvana to Bengal, for distributing these books to the Bengali *Vaiṣṇavas*. The king later realized his mistake and surrendered before Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and became his disciple, receiving the name Chaitanya dāsa. The king later turned his whole kingdom into a *Vaiṣṇava* state.

33F. RŪPA GOŚVĀMĪ BHĀJANA-KUṬĪRA

Here in the courtyard of the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, is the *bhajana-kutira* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. This spot was formally in the middle of Sevā Kuñja and it is here that Rūpa Gosvāmī made his headquarters, wrote many of his innumerable books, as well as conducted discourses on the *Bhāgavatam*, amongst the other *Gosvāmīs* and their associates.



33. SAMĀDHI OF RŪPA GOSVĀMI

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī entered samādhi in the year 1564 and his sacred body was entombed at this very site by his beloved disciple and nephew Jīva Gosvāmī. Rūpa Gosvāmī first arrived in Vṛndāvana along with his elder brother Sanātana Gosvāmī in the year 1516, after receiving the direct order of Lord Chaitanya to proceed to Vṛndāvana and fulfill four specific tasks. Firstly, to excavate the lost holy sites of Lord Krishna's pastimes in and around Vṛndāvana. To construct temples dedicated to Rādhā and Krishna, and also establish the rules and regulations of deity worship. And lastly, to compile books on the transcendental process of Bhakti-yoga, the science of devotional service to the Lord. Through his writings Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī chalked out the perfect spiritual path for all the followers of Lord Chaitanya down through the ages.

Rūpa Gosvāmī first met Lord Chaitanya at Ramakeli in 1514, and along with his brothers Sanātana and Anupama, completely surrendered to the lotus feet of the Lord. At that time all three brothers were employed as important ministers in the Mohammedan government of Bengal under Hussain Shah. Lord Chaitanya assured them that now they had surrendered to Krishna, they would soon be delivered and would be able to join the *sankirtana* movement. After some months both Rūpa and Anupama were freed from service, unfortunately Sanātana was not so lucky and was thrown in jail, but by the grace of Lord Krishna, he also got free from the clutches of Hussain Shah.

It was Rūpa Gosvāmī who more than anyone else, firmly established the *sankirtana* movement of Lord Chaitanya. He wrote a large number of important books on the science of *bhakti-yoga* and after the disappearance of Lord Chaitanya in 1534, Rūpa became the undisputed leader of all the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* in the world. Even today all *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* are known as *Rūpanugas*, or followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Rūpa Gosvāmī's most famous book is *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (*The Ocean of the Nectar of Devotion*) which must be read

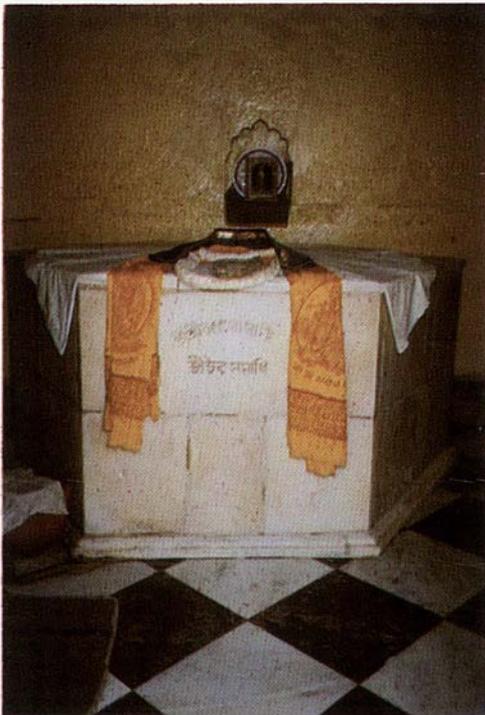


*The bhajana kuṭira (left) and
samādhi of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī*



by all aspiring *Vaiṣṇavas* and forms the solid foundation of the *bhakti* movement of Lord Chaitanya. The essence of this book was explained directly to Rūpa by Lord Chaitanya during their historic meeting at Prayag (Allahabad) in 1516. After teaching Rūpa all the important aspects of devotional service, the Lord sent him to Vṛndāvan to compile books on these very teachings.

After spending some time in Vṛndāvana, Rūpa and Anupama left to visit Lord Chaitanya in Puri, it is believed that on this long and arduous journey Anupama left his body. On his way to Puri, Rūpa Gosvāmī started to write a drama about Lord Krishna's pastimes in Vṛndāvana and Dwaraka. On arrival at a village named Satyabhamapur in Orissa, he had a dream that a beautiful woman appeared before him and asked him to write a separate drama about her. When Rūpa awoke the next morning he realized that she was Lord Krishna's most possessive queen, Satyabhama, and decided to write a separate drama about Dwaraka. On Rūpa's arrival at Jagganātha Puri, he met Lord Chaitanya and showed the Lord the outline of his two dramas. The Lord confirmed that writing two dramas mixing the *līlās* of Vṛndāvana and Dwaraka was not proper as there was a vast difference between them. In Vṛndāvana the Lord enjoys the *madhurya-rāsa*, whereas in Dwaraka He enjoys the *Swakiya-rāsa*. Lord Chaitanya as well as Ramananda Raya were delighted to read the early drafts of these two dramas, which were eventually called *Vidagdha Mādhava* and *Lalita Mādhava* respectively. These two works are considered by *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* to be the most important dramatic literatures in the Sanskrit language. Rūpa Gosvāmī stayed ten months in Puri and received further instructions on devotional service from Lord Chaitanya. The Lord then asked Rūpa to proceed to Vṛndāvana and complete the task of rediscovering the lost holy places of



Samādhi Mūrti of Rūpa Gosvāmī



Rūpa Gosvāmī



The six Gosvāmīs discussing Bhāgavatam at Rādhā Dāmodara

Lord Krishna's pastimes. On returning to Vṛndāvana, Rūpa Gosvāmī discovered at Brahma Kuṇḍa the Deity of Vṛndādevī, from who the town of Vṛndāvana takes its name, this Deity was later moved to Kamyavana. Rūpa Gosvāmī then discovered the famous Govindaji Deity and immediately established Lord Govindaji's worship on a grand scale. On hearing the good news of Rūpa's progress, Lord Chaitanya sent some of his best men to assist Rūpa in serving the Deity of Govindaji and establishing the Lord's mission in Vṛndāvana. Shortly Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs were joined by Raguṇātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Gopal Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Raguṇātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. These great personalities become famous as the six *Gosvāmīs* of Vṛndāvana. Jīva Gosvāmī, who was the son of Rūpa's brother Anupama, became the most important disciple of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Rūpa Mañjarī, the most important of the eight confidential maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in the spiritual world. It is said that without taking shelter of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī one cannot enter into the pastimes of Lord Chaitanya, and without taking shelter of Rūpa Mañjarī one cannot enter into the confidential loving pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna.

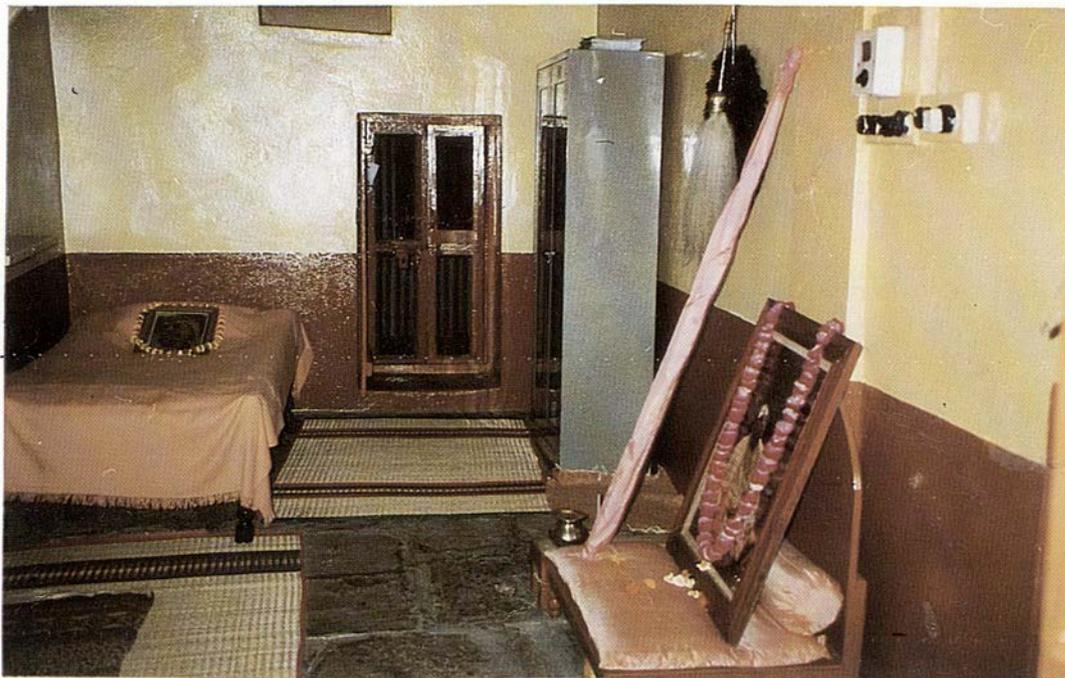
TIMINGS: Same as temple

33H. BHUGARBHA GOŚVĀMĪ SAMĀDHI

One of the close associates of the six *Gosvāmīs* and a disciple of Gadādhara Paṇḍit, he received the name of Bhugarbha because he used to perform his *bhajan* hidden inside a hole in the ground. He was ordered in a dream by Lord Chaitanya, along with Lokaṇātha Gosvāmī to locate the lost forests of Vraja. They arrived in Vṛndāvana just prior to Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs. Bhugarbha was an incarnation of Prema Mañjarī.



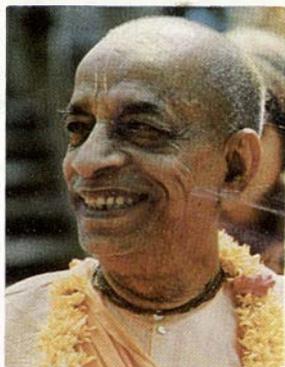
Śrīla Prabhupāda meeting friends in his bhajana kuṭira at the Rādhā Dāmodara Temple



331. BHAJANA-KUṬIRA OF HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

Known throughout the world as the illustrious founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda was living in Vṛndāvana before going to America to preach Krishna consciousness. It was in 1959 that Śrīla Prabhupāda first moved into the Rādhā Dāmodara temple where he occupied two rooms. In one room he performed his *bhajana* and wrote his English translation to the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. In the other, he prepared and accepted *prasāda* while looking across the courtyard at the *samādhi* and *bhajana-kuṭira* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Moving to the Rādhā Dāmodara temple was a major turning point in the life of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Here, he received the divine blessings of Rūpa and Jīva Gosvāmīs, and the inspiration to take the message of Lord Krishna to the West. This is where he formulated his plans to inundate the world with Krishna consciousness, and also where he got the idea of starting ISKCON, an international society of devotees, following the teachings of Lord Chaitanya and dedicated to the devotional service of Lord Krishna. It was also while staying at Rādhā Dāmodara that Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted the *sannyāsa* order of life on September 17th 1959.



In 1965, Śrīla Prabhupāda left the Rādhā Dāmodara temple and Vṛndāvana with just one crate of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatams* and only 40 rupees. He then sailed to America to spread both the glories of Lord Śrī Krishna and Vṛndāvana *dhāma* to the people of the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda had once confided to his senior-most disciples, that he is eternally present in his rooms at the Rādhā Dāmodara temple.

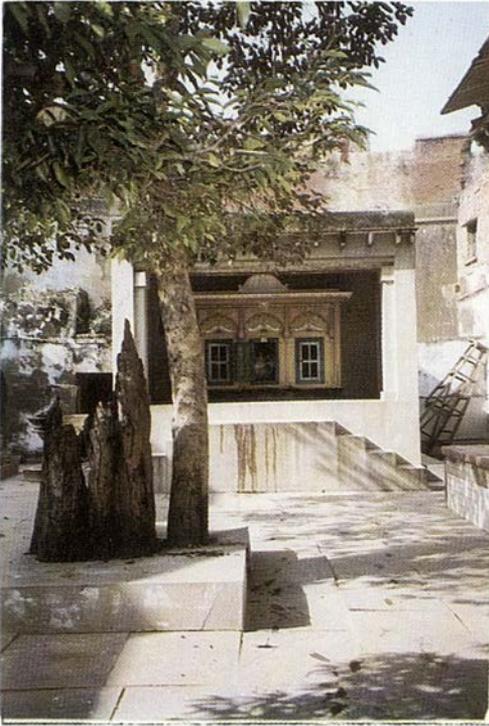
TIMINGS: Same as temple

A view of Govinda Ghāṭa with the dome shaped sandstone temple of Krishna-Baladeva

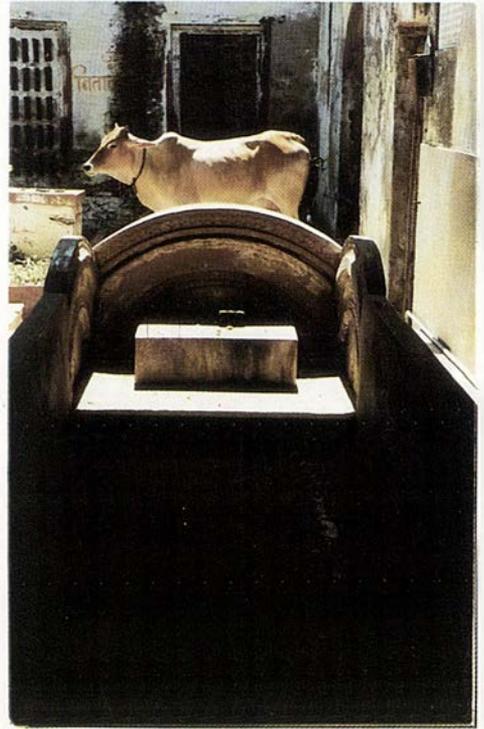




महाराष्ट्र
महाराष्ट्र
महाराष्ट्र



The sacred Banyan tree at Śrīngara Vāta



The place where Krishna decorated Rādhārāṇī

34. ŚRĪNGARA VATA (NITYĀNANDA VATA)

Śrīngara Vata was the favourite place of Lord Nityānanda and this is where He stayed and performed His *bhajana* when He was visiting Vṛndāvana. It was here at Śrīngara Vata that Lord Krishna used to decorate Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī with precious jewels, flowers and ornaments (*śrīngara*), before They went to the sacred garden of Nidhuvana to enjoy *rāsa-līlā*. The original banyan tree (*vata*) under which the Divine Couple sat has now almost vanished, leaving only a large stump. A branch from the original tree was planted here and has now grown into a large tree. Behind this sacred Banyan tree is a temple dedicated to Krishna's decorating Rādhārāṇī, and behind this temple is the actual place where Rādhārāṇī sat while She was decorated by Krishna. The cowherd boys also used to decorate Krishna and Balarāma at this very same spot. On the left of this same courtyard is a temple dedicated to Rādhā and Krishna, Gaurānitai and Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadra.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4:30 am; Darśana 8 am - 12:30 and 4:30 pm - 8:30

Winter—Maṅgala 5:30; Darśana 8am - 12:30 and 4:30 pm - 8

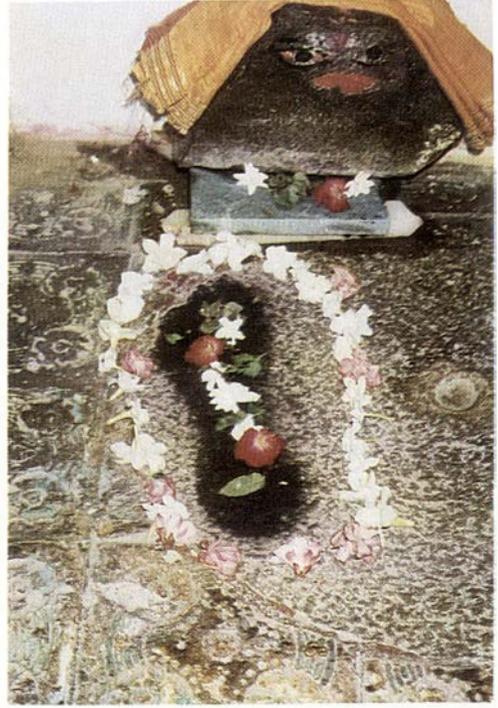
35. GOVINDA GHĀṬA

One of the sacred *ghāṭas* where Lord Krishna would meet the *gopīs* and enjoy *rāsa-līlā* and other transcendental loving pastimes on the banks of the Yamunā. It is believed that this is the same place where Krishna left the *gopīs* during the *rāsa*-dance. There is also an old Krishna Balarama temple at this same *ghāṭa*.

36. JARU MAṄḌALA

At this place stands a very ancient *Jamun tree* that marks the spot where Lord Krishna disappeared from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī when He carried Her away from the rāsa-dance, Jaru Maṅḍala means the area (Maṅḍala) swept with a broom (*Jaru*), so that the devotees could sit down and hear stories of Krishna's pastimes. When the devotees were sitting and hearing about Krishna *līlā*, a blind old lady used to grind grains nearby with a large mortar. She did this both day and night because, being blind she never knew what time it was. This was disturbing the devotees who could not concentrate properly due to the grinding sound.

One day Lord Krishna appeared before the old lady and placed His lotus foot on the grinding mortar to stop it moving and asked her to stop grinding as the noise was disturbing His devotees. The old lady asked the Lord that if she stopped grinding how could she earn something to support herself. The Lord replied, "From now on My foot print will be unpressed upon the grinding mortar and people will come from all around to see it. In this way they will all make a small offering and you can subsist by way of these offerings." People from all over Vṛndāvana still flock to see Lord Krishna's footprint on the grinding mortar at Jaru Maṅḍala.



Krishna's footprint on the grinding mortar

37. ANDHA GHĀṬA

This *ghāṭa* was built by Rāja Man Singh of Jaipur and is one of the places of Lord Krishna's pastimes. This is where Krishna and the *gopīs* would play the game of "blind mans buff". Krishna and the *gopīs* would take it in turns to put on a blindfold and the person blindfolded would have to catch the others. This *ghāṭa* is now in disrepair.

38. ŚYĀMĀNANDA PAṆḌITA PUṢPA SAMĀDHI

This is the *puṣpa* (flower) *samādhi* of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita. A twenty four hour *akhand kirtan* is performed here in his honour. Śyāmānanda took birth in Orissa from Bengali parents one year after the disappearance of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. As a youth, after taking permission from his parents, Śyāmānanda travelled to Ambika Kalna in Bengal and accepted initiation from Hṛday Chaitanya, an associate of Lord Chaitanya. He remained there studying under his *guru* for sometime, after which his *guru* asked him to go to Vṛndāvana and study *bhakti śāstras* under Jīva Gosvāmī. On arriving in Vṛndāvana, Śyāmānanda joined Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and-Norottama dāsa who accepted him as their younger brother.



Śyāmānanda's Samādhi Mūrti

These three devotees became known as Jīva Gosvāmī's most brilliant students.

After completing his studies, Śyāmānanda left Vṛndāvana along with Śrīnivāsa and Narottama after receiving the order from Jīva Gosvāmī to preach and distribute the books of the *Gosvāmī's* in Bengal and Orissa. Śrīnivāsa and Narottama preached in Bengal while Śyāmānanda went alone to Orissa and converted the whole state to *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism*. The most prominent disciple and close companion of Śyāmānanda was Rasiknānda Prabhu, who assisted his *guru* in spreading the *saṅkīrtan* movement all over Orissa.

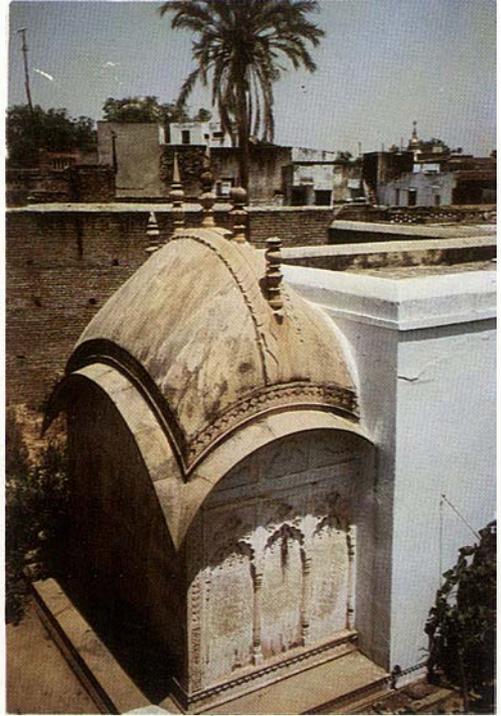
One interesting episode in the course of Śyāmānanda's preaching in Orissa happened one day when Śyāmānanda and his disciples were performing *Hari-nama sankīrtan* in the street. One officer of the Muslim government, a militant Pathan of the name Sher Khan became furious when he saw the blissful devotees chanting the holy names of the Lord in public. He immediately barged into the middle of the *saṅkīrtan* party and threatened all the devotees with dire consequences if he ever saw them chanting in public again.

Unperturbed by such threats, the very next day Śyāmānanda and his disciples were again out in the street chanting when Sher Khan, in a violent mood arrived on the spot with his soldiers. They then broke the drums and threw away the *kartals* (hand cymbals). Suddenly Śyāmānanda began shouting in a high pitched mystical way calling the names of Rādhā and Krishna. Suddenly the beards and mustaches of Sher Khan and his men burst into flames. Utterly flabbergasted and shocked by the sudden turn of affairs, all the Pathans ran away. That night Sher Khan had a bad dream, Allah came to him and gave him a slap saying the name and form of Krishna is the same as His. Allah also told Sher Khan that in His most confidential feature He has appeared on earth as Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

The very next day Sher Khan came before the *sankīrtan* party and bowed down to Śyāmānanda, pleading for forgiveness and requested Śyāmānanda to initiate him into the chanting of the holy name. Sher Khan became an important disciple of Śyāmānanda, receiving the spiritual name Chaitanya dāsa. This episode illustrates the great spiritual potency of Śyāmānanda.

Śyāmānanda Paṇḍit Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Kanaka Mañjarī, one of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's intimate maidservants in the spiritual world.

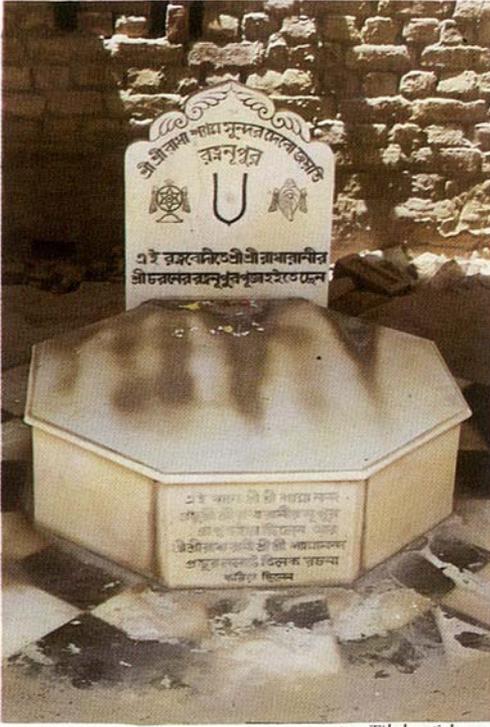
TIMINGS: Open 24hrs daily



Śyāmānanda's Samādhi Mandira



Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita



Tilaka Sthana

38B. ŚYĀMĀNANDA TILAKA STHĀNA

This is where Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita received the sacred *tilaka* mark from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Daily Śyāmānanda, who was at that time known as Dukhi Krishnadāsa, would sweep the area of Sevā-kuṅja which was very large in those days. One day he found a brilliantly shining golden anklebell. On inspecting the anklebell closely, he concluded that it must belong to Rādhārāṇī. On discovering Her anklebell missing, Rādhārāṇī asked Her girlfriend, Lalitā Sakhī, to go and find the lost anklebell.

On reaching Sevā-kuṅja, Lalitā saw Śyāmānanda sweeping and asked if he had seen her sister's lost anklebell. Śyāmānanda replied that he had indeed found the lost anklebell, but refused to give it to Lalitā. Instead, he asked that her sister should come in person and collect the anklebell, hoping that he might get the sacred *darśana* of the most beloved Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Lalita then told Śyāmānanda to ac-

company her and asked him to take bath in the Lalita Kuṅḍa. When Śyāmānanda came out of the *kuṅḍa* his body had changed into that of a *mañjarī* (*Gopi*). Lalita then took Śyāmānanda to *gupta* Vṛndāvana (hidden Vṛndāvana) and there he saw Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī sitting on a bejeweled throne surrounded by all Her maidservants. Śyāmānanda then knelt down at Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet and replaced the lost ankle bell.

Being pleased with the humble service of Śyāmānanda, who daily swept the sacred garden of Seva-kunj, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī took the anklebell and touched it to the forehead of Śyāmānanda, leaving a special type of *tilak* mark. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī then asked Lalita to present Śyāmānanda with a beautiful Deity of Lord Syāmasundara (Krishna) and was also given the name of Śyāmānanda, which means one who gives pleasure (*ānanda*) to *Śyāmā* (Rādhārāṇī). Lalita then took Syamānanda back to the place where she found him and he regained his original form. The Deity given to Śyāmānanda can be seen standing to the right of the main altar in the temple of Rādhā Syāmāsundara. The followers of Śyāmānanda still use the same unique *tilak* mark given by Rādhārāṇī.

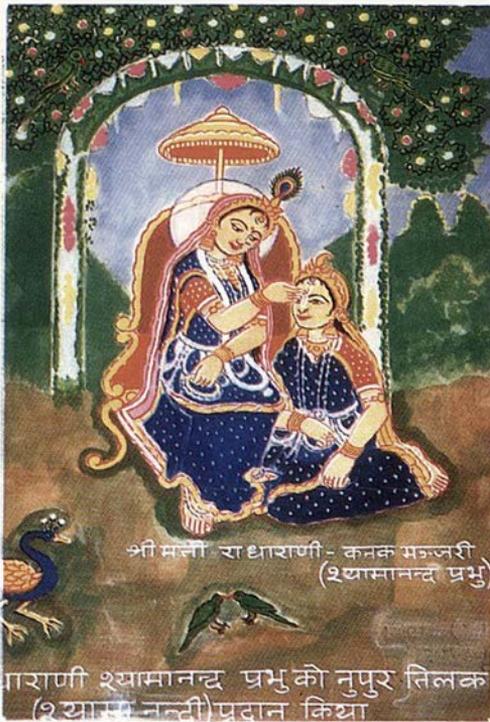
39. RĀDHĀ ŚYĀMASUNDARA TEMPLE

This temple was established by Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita during his second visit to Vṛndāvana. The original Deity given to Śyāmānanda by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī can be seen to the right of the alter. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇ also looked after this temple when he lived in Vṛndāvana while studying under Vishvanatha Cākṛavartī. The large Deity on the central alter was personally worshipped by Baladeva.

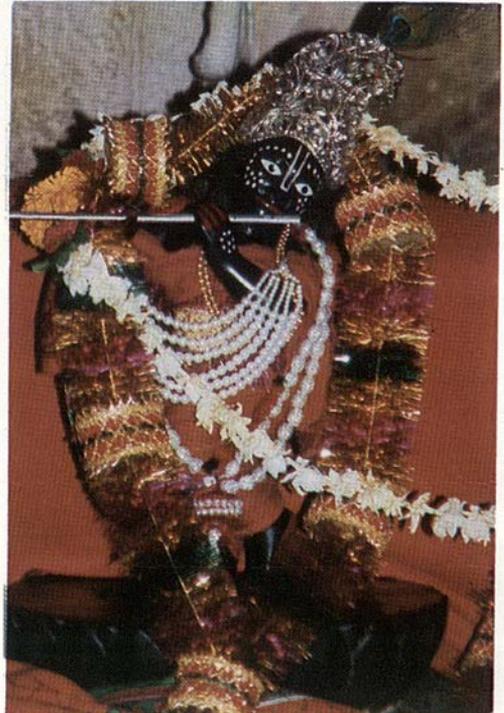
TIMINGS: - Maṅgala 4 am; Darśana 8 - 11:30 and 4 pm - 7:30



Śyāmānanda returns the anklebell to Rādhārāṇī



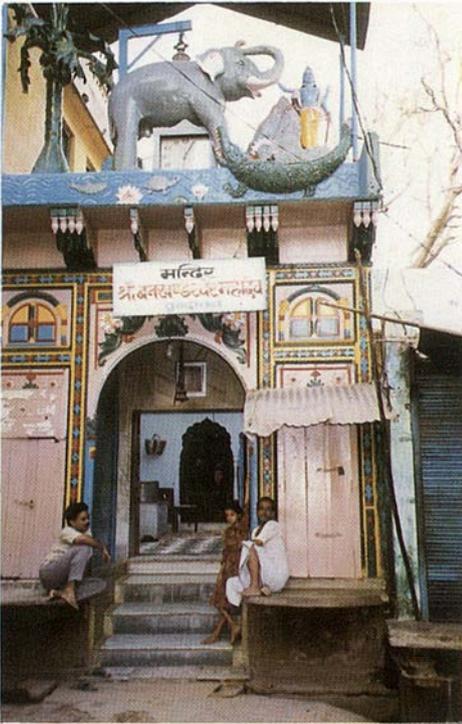
Rādhārāṇī gives Śyāmānanda the sacred Tilak mark



The Deity given to Śyāmānanda by Rādhārāṇī



The beautiful face of Lord Śyāmasundara



Ban-khandi Māhadeva



Murāri Gupta's Gaura-nītai

40. BAN-KHANDI MAHĀDEVA TEMPLE

There are 5 famous Śiva temples of Vṛjaḥ , which include: Gopīśvara, Bhuteśvara, Chakaliśvara, Kāmeśvara and Nandeśvara. Lord Śiva has the special position of being the protector of the holy *dhāma*. Sanātana Gosvāmī would daily take *darśana* of Chakaliśvara Mahādeva at Govardhana. Once, in a dream, Chakaliśvara Mahādeva appeared and told Sanātana that as he was very old, he need not go all the way to Govardhana to take *darśana*, as Chakaliśvara was now manifest in Vṛndāvana as Ban-khandi Mahādeva. Sanātana then began to visit Ban-khandi Mahadeva temple for *darśana*.

41. MURĀRI GUPTA GAURA-NITAI TEMPLE

These are the Gaura-nitai Deities of Murāri Gupta, one of Lord Chaitanya's close associates. They were brought to Vṛndāvana, and later worshipped by Pīshimā mātāji, a great female saint of Vṛndāvana. It was Murāri Gupta who kept a diary of all the pastimes of Lord Chaitanya in Navadvīpa.

These neem-wood Deities of Gaur-nitai are the only ones in existence that have been carved in this unique style. Murāri Gupta was from childhood a great devotee of Lord Rāmachandra, in fact Lord Chaitanya showed him His form as Lord Rāma. When Murāri Gupta requested Lord Chaitanya to allow him to make Deities of Gaur-nitai, the Lord told him to make the Deities according to his own devotional mood. Therefore Murāri Gupta had the Deities carved with three special features. Firstly, the Deities are standing in the *tri-bhanga* stance of Krishna and Balarāma, secondly, Their hands are in the *mudra* of Rāma and Laxmana firing arrows and giving benediction. Thirdly, the hair of the Deities is made up into a topknot, just like Śrī Chaitanya and Nityānanda in Their Navadvīpa pastimes.

Lord Chaitanya informed Murāri Gupta that he was an incarnation of Hanumān, Lord Rāma's eternal servitor.

TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Darśana 7:30am - 12 and 4pm - 8:30

42. MIRA BAI TEMPLE

This temple is dedicated to the great female saint, Mira Bai, who renounced the life of a princess, to come and live in Vṛndāvana and worship Lord Krishna. She is famous for her devotional songs about Lord Krishna. This is the place where she used to live and perform her *bhajana*.

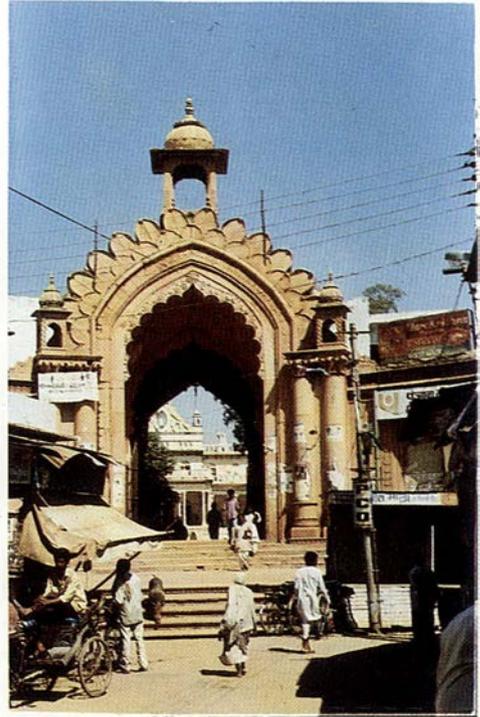
TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Darsana 7:30 am - 12 and 5 pm - 8

43. SHAHJI TEMPLE

A popular temple of Vṛndāvana, designed and built in 1876 by the wealthy jeweller, Shah Kundan Lal of Lucknow, who also built the temple of Rādhāramaṇa. He was a disciple of the *Gosain* of Rādhāramaṇa and the Deities here are called Chota (small) Rādhāramaṇa. This temple was built to house the original Deities of Rādhāramaṇa, but the *Gosains* decided at the last minute not to move the Deity from the original temple.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5:30 am; Darsana 8:30 am - 12:30 and 4:30 pm - 8:30

Winter—Maṅgala 6:30; Darsana 8:30 am to 12:30 and 5:30 pm - 7:30



The gateway of Shahji temple



Shahji temple

44. ŚRĪJĪ TEMPLE

This is the main temple of the Nimbāra Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya in Vṛndāvana.

TIMINGS: Darśana 9 am - 12 pm and 5 pm-8pm Maṅgala: 5 am

45. NIDHUVANA

In this sacred *kuñja* (garden), the divine couple Rādhā and Krishna sometimes rest after performing the *rāsa-lilā* dance. At the far end of this garden is a small temple talled *Rang Mahal*, where a bed is kept for the divine couple to rest. It is also here that Krishna decorates Rādhārāṇī with various kinds of cosmetics before performing the Rāsa dance. There is also another small temple dedicated to Rādhā, when she stole Krishna's flute. In this temple, Rādhārāṇī can be seen playing on Krishna's flute, accompanied by her girl-friends. Lalitā and Viśkhā. There is also a *kuṇḍa* (pond) dedicated to Viśākhā Sakhī. One can also see the *samādhi* of Swami Haridāsa, who used to perform his bhajana here. It was also in this *kuñja* that the Deity of Bāṅke-bihārī was found by Swami Haridāsa. This spot is just near the Rang Mahal.

TIMINGS: Summer—7:30 am - 12 and 3 pm - 7

Winter — 8:30 am - 12 and 2 pm - 6:30

46. CHIR GHĀTA (CEHAN-GHĀTA)

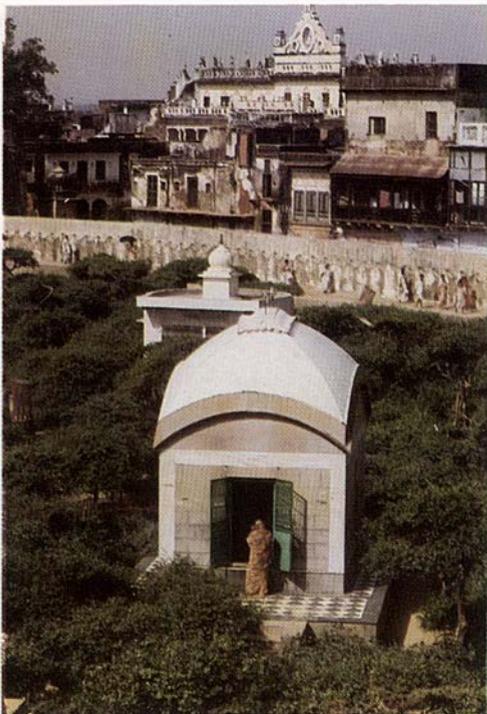
After killing the terrible Keśi demon, Lord Krishna rested at this place. Lord Chaitanya also rested at this same *ghāta*. Some people claim this is the *Cira-ghāta* where Lord Krishna stole the *gopī*'s clothes, but according to Jīva Gosvāmī the original *Cira-ghāta* is eight miles up-river and a different pastime of hiding the *gopī*'s clothes occurred here.



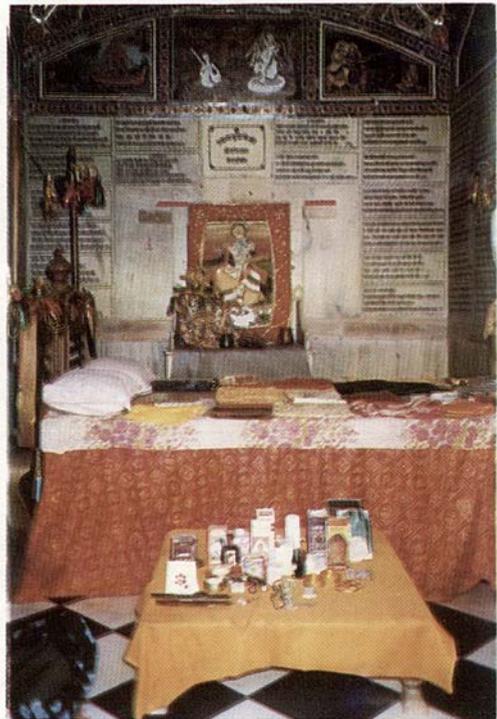
Chir Ghāta



The sacred garden of Nidhuvana



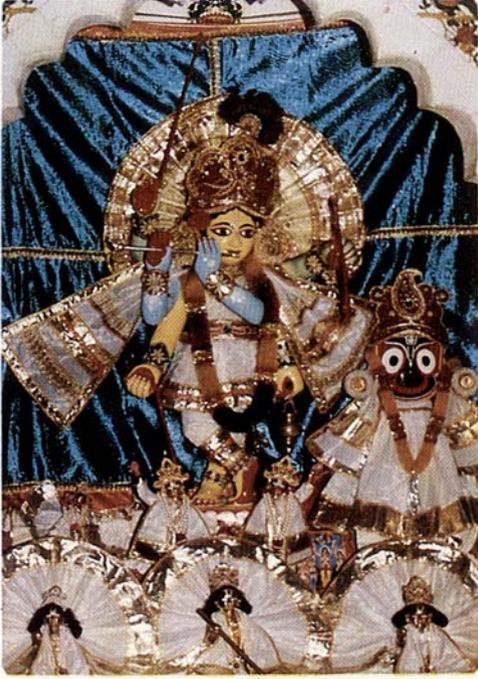
Rang Mahal Mandira at Nidhuvana



Rang Mahal where the Divine Couple rest



The Deity of Rādhārāṇī playing Krishna's flute accompanied by her friends Lalitā and Viśakhā



Sad-bhuja Mahāprabhu

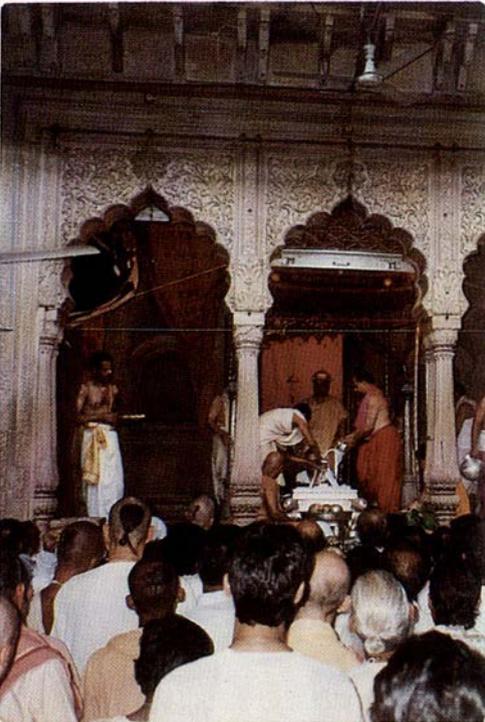
47. SAD-BHUJA MAHAPRABHU TEMPLE

This is the Deity of Jagganātha dāsa Bābāji Maharāja. During his first stay in Vṛndāvana, Jagganātha dāsa Bābāji worshipped the Sona Gaurāṅga Deities, and when he went to Bengal the Deities were given to a *brāhmaṇa* in Vṛndāvana to worship. When Jagganātha dāsa Bābāji later returned to Vṛndāvana he began to feel separation from his Gaurāṅga Deities. He therefore asked his disciple to find another Deity of Gaurāṅga. The disciple just happened to come upon a farmer who had just received a supply of wheat bran for feeding his cows. As the cows began to eat the wheat bran a beautiful Deity of Sad-bhuja Mahāprabhu (the six armed form of Lord Chaitanya) was discovered in the pile of wheat bran. At the request of the disciple, the farmer gave this Deity to Jagganātha dāsa Bābāji. When Jagganātha dāsa Bābāji again returned to Bengal, this Deity was moved to its present location next to Nidhuvana.

48A. RĀDHĀRAMAṆA TEMPLE

This is the famous temple of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. The *sevā pūjā* of Rādhāramaṇa was established in 1542, after the Deity self-manifested from a *sāligrām-silā*. Also kept in this temple is the wooden sitting place (*chokī*) and shawl (*chaddar*) of Lord Chaitanya. that He gave as a gift to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.

Once, on Lord Narasimhadeva's appearance day a rich business man made an offering of clothes, crowns, and jewellery to Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, who lamented that as he was worshipping *sāligrām-silā* (which is round just like a stone), he could not utilize such articles like the other *Gosvāmīs* were in dressing their Deities. Lamenting in this way, the *Gosvāmī* took rest. Early the next morning, when he came to bathe his *sāligrām-silās*, he discovered that one of the *silās* had transformed into the most beautiful Deity of Krishna, who had manifest Himself out of love, just to receive worship from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Rādhāramaṇa means "one who gives pleasure to Rādhā", and is one of the many



Rādhāramaṇa temple

The Deity of Rādhāramaṇa



names of Lord Krishna. There is no Deity of Rādhārāṇī in this temple, but a crown is kept next to Krishna signifying Her presence.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4am; Darsana 8 am-12:30 and 6 pm - 8
Winter—Maṅgala 5:30am; Darsana 8 am-2:30 and 6 pm - 8

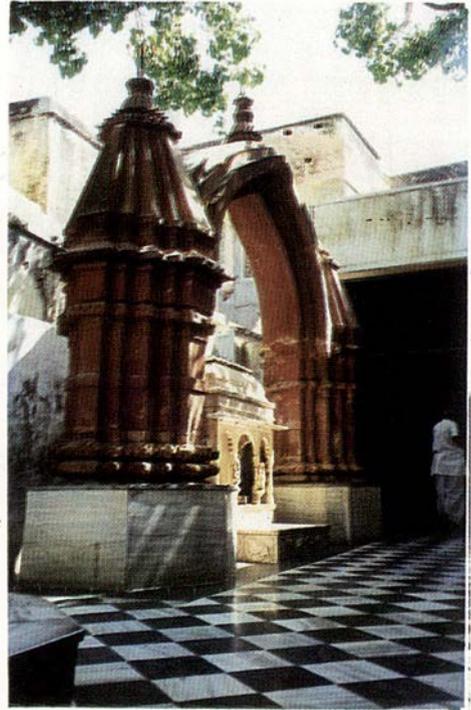
48B. APPEARANCE PLACE OF RADHARAMANA

At this place, the Deity of Rādhāramaṇa manifested from a *sāligrām-silā*. This is also the place where Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī used to worship his Deity and perform his *bhajana*.

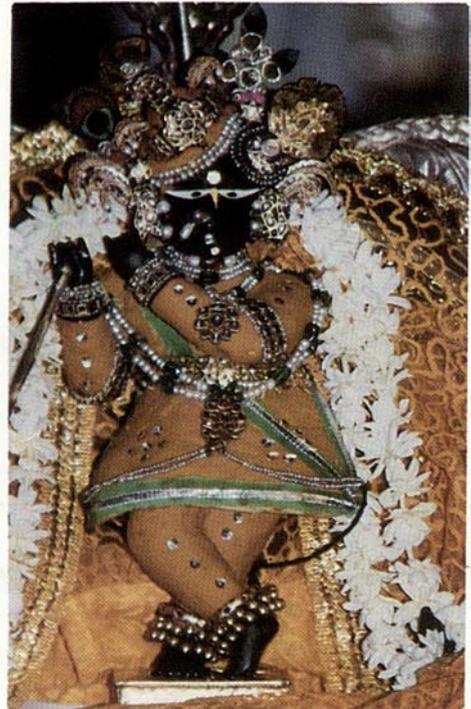
48C. GOPALA BHATTA GOSVAMI SAMADHI

In 1585, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī entered *samādhi* and his sacred body was entombed here next to the place where he worshipped his beloved Deity, Rādhāramaṇa. One of the six *Gosvāmīs* of Vṛndāvana, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was the son of Vyenkata Bhaṭṭa a brāhmaṇa priest of Śrīraṅgam temple in Tamil Nadu. His uncle Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, also became his spiritual master. In the year 1511, after having taken *sannyāsa*, Lord Chaitanya visited Śrīraṅgam and upon seeing the Deity of Lord Raṅganātha, started to dance in ecstasy. Vyenkata Bhaṭṭa joined the dancing and chanting along with the Lord Who bestowed His mercy on Vyenkata by embracing him. Vyenkata Bhaṭṭa then invited Lord Chaitanya to stay at his house during the four months of the rainy season (*Chaturmasya*). At this time Gopāla Bhaṭṭa as a young boy, got the chance to serve Lord Chaitanya and hear about devotional service from the Lord's lotus mouth. Gopāla also used to get the remnants from the Lord's plate, thus receiving the full blessings of Lord Chaitanya.

After sometime Lord Chaitanya left on his tour of South India, he told Gopāla Bhaṭṭa that in the future he should go and stay in Vṛndāvana. He studied under the expert guidance of his uncle and *guru* Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa became learned in Sanskrit, poetry, rhetoric and all aspects of the revealed scriptures, his scholarship was unparalleled.



Appearance place of Rādhāramaṇa

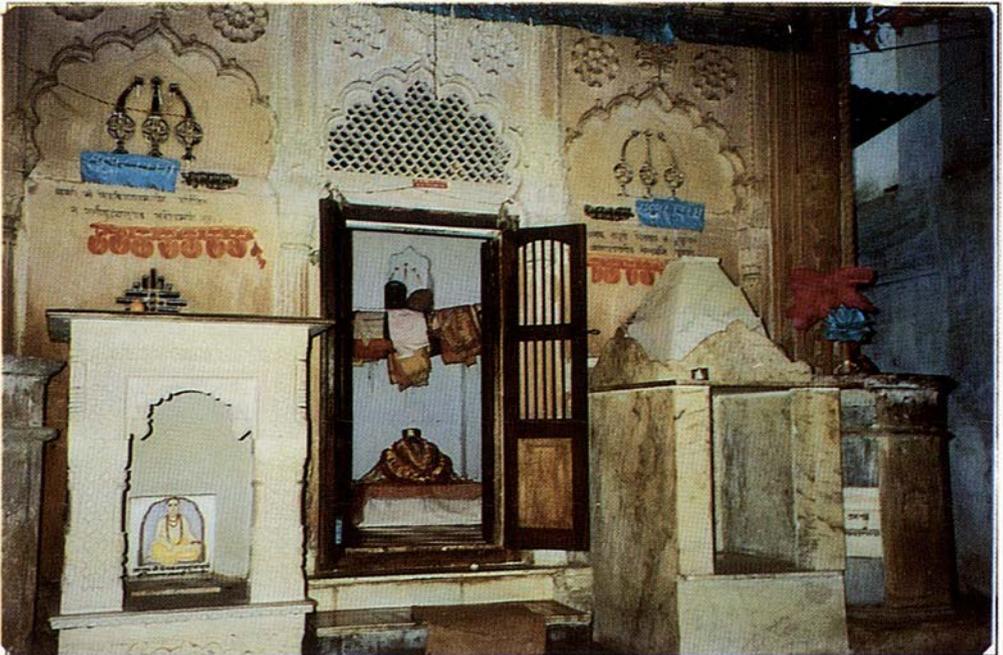


Rādhāramaṇa during chandan-yatra

After the passing away of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's parents, he left home and went to Vṛndāvana where he joined Rūpa and Sanātana, who had already been informed by Lord Chaitanya that Gopāla Bhaṭṭa would soon come and from that time on their life-long friendship began.

After spending time in Vṛndāvana studying and writing, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa made a trip to Nepal where he obtained twelve *Śāligrām-sīlās* (sacred black stones). How he obtained these *Śāligrām-sīlās* is very interesting. One day he was taking his bath in the Kali Gandaki river, as he thrust his *kamandala* (water pot) into the river to scoop water for bathing, twelve *Śāligrām-sīlās* mysteriously entered his *kamandala*, he then put them back into the water and tried again to scoop water for his bath, again the same number of *Śāligrām-sīlās* entered his *kamandala*, again Gopāla Bhaṭṭa put them back into the river. When this happened a third time, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa decided that this must be the Lord's divine plan and he kept the *Śīlās* in a cloth bag and hung them around his neck. From that time on he worshipped these *Śāligrām-sīlās* and later returned to Vṛndāvana. On the appearance day of Lord Narasimha, in the year 1542, one of the *Śāligrām-sīlās* manifested into the wonderful Deity form of the Lord Krishna, much to the great pleasure of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. The *Gosvāmīs* named the Deity Rādhāramaṇa (one who gives pleasure to Rādhā).

It was Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī who was responsible for originating the six thesis of *Sat-Sandharbha*, later elaborately developed by Jīva Gosvāmī. He also edited the *Hari-bhakti-vilas*. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's most prominent disciple was Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Ananga Mañjarī, one of the eight intimate maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī in the spiritual world.



Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī's Samādhi



The Rādhā Gokulānanda Mandira and samādhi pitha

49A. RĀDHĀ GOKULĀNANDA TEMPLE

This temple was founded by Lokanātha Gosvāmī, who performed *bhajana* at this spot. The small, but very beautiful Deity of Gokulānanda was worshipped by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Also kept in this temple are the Deities worshiped by Lokanātha Gosvāmī (Rādhā-Vinoda), Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa (Vijay Govinda), and Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura (Chaitanya Mahāprabhu). Also here is the small *Govardhana Śilā* given to Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī by Lord Chaitanya, which has the Lord's thumb impression upon it.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 8 am - 12 and 5:30 pm - 8

Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darśana 8 am - 12 and 5:30 pm - 8

49B. LOKANĀTHA GOŚVĀMĪ SAMĀDHI

The sacred body of Lokanātha Gosvāmī was entombed here at the place where he performed his *bhajana* just next to the temple of Rādhā Gokulānanda which was established by him.

Sometimes called the seventh *Gosvāmī* of Vṛndāvana, Lokanātha Gosvāmī was a close associate of the six *Gosvāmīs* and was specially known for his humility and renunciation. Lokanātha was sent to Vṛndāvana in the year 1509 by Lord Chaitanya who appeared in a dream and ordered Lokanātha along with his close friend Bhugarbha, to locate all the sacred forests of Vraja, and reestablish the holy places of Lord Krishna's pastimes.

Lord Chaitanya also informed Lokanātha Gosvāmī that in the future he would have to initiate one important person as his disciple of the name Narottama. Some years later Lokanātha Gosvāmī accepted Narottama as his only disciple. It is believed that Lokanātha Gosvāmī entered *samādhi* somewhere between 1583 and 1588.

Lokanātha Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Manjulali Mañjarī, one of the eight confidential maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī in the spiritual world.



The Deities on the altar at the Rādhā Gokulānanda temple, are from the left: the pratibhū-mūrti (the original Deity of Gokulānanda (Viṣṇanātha Cakravartī); and right, the pratibhū-mūrti.



...itanya (Norottama dāsa), the pratibhū-mūrti of Rādhā Vinode (Lokanātha Gosvāmi); and below, Rādhā Vinode is the
...vardhana silā (Raghunatha dasa); the pratibhu-murti of Radha Vijaya-govinda (Baladeva Vidyābūśan).



The courtyard of the Gokulānanda Mandir

49C. NAROTTAMA DĀSA ṬHĀKURA PUŚPA SAMĀDHI

This *puśpa-samādhi* of Narottama dāsa contains a garland, cloth, *kaupina* and *japa* beads used by him. His *guru* was Lokanātha Gōsvāmī. He became famous as a great preacher and singer of *kīrtanas* and *bhajanās*. Even today, his songs are most popular amongst the *Vaiṣṇavas*. Śrīla Prabhupāda loved to sing the beautiful songs of Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura.

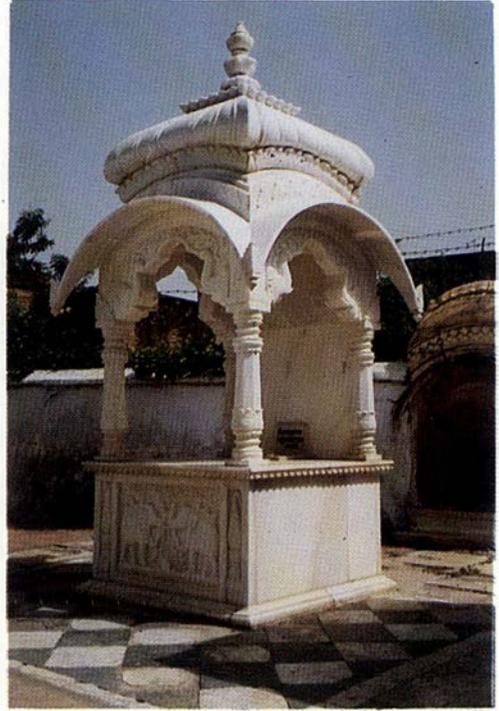
When Lord Chaitanya was on a tour of Bengal, he visited Ramakeli to see Rūpa and Sanātana. At that time Lord Chaitanya went to the river Padma and on the opposite bank He could see the village of Kheturi (now in Bangladesh). On gazing into the water the Lord suddenly began to call out, "O Narottama! O Narottama!" in the most ecstatic of moods. Lord Chaitanya then told his devotees, "Very soon a great personality will be born in the village of Kheturi. His name will be Narottama and he will absorb My *kīrtan-rasa* with all of My love." The Lord then informed the devotees that He would bathe in the river Padma and when Narottama came there to bathe, the water would extend to him the Lord's divine love.



Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura

In 1534, the year of Lord Chaitanya's disappearance, Narottama took birth at Kheturi, his father was a great king even though by caste they were *kayasthas* (*sudra*). Narottama became a brilliant student and loved to hear the pastimes of Lord Chaitanya. One day soon after Narottama became a teenager, Lord Nityānanda appeared to him in a dream and told him, "Tomorrow morning you should take your bath in the river Padma, at that time you will receive pure love of God." On waking, Narottama went immediately to the Padma river and on entering the waters experienced a spiritual transformation. As Narottama went into a deep ecstasy, Lord

Chaitanya suddenly appeared before Narottama and embraced him, Narottama felt the spirit of the Lord enter his heart. At that moment Narottama's dark complexion turned to molten gold, the same colour as Lord Chaitanya's body. On coming out of the water, Narottama started to dance in ecstasy up and down the bank of the river. After some hours, Narottama's parents came looking for him and when they saw the golden complexioned youth dancing in ecstasy, they could not at first recognize him as their own son. On bringing him home they realized he was a changed person, continually chanting the holy names of the Lord both day and night.



Narottam dāsa Thākura's Samādhi

After some months, Narottama had another dream that Lord Chaitanya appeared and again embraced him, this time the Lord told Narottama to proceed immediately to Vṛndāvana and take initiation from Lokanātha Gosvāmī. Soon after this dream, Narottama ran away from home and went to Vṛndāvana much to the despair of his parents. On arriving before the Govindajī Deity in Vṛndāvana, Narottama fainted and fell on the ground, at that time he manifested eight different symptoms of ecstasy. On hearing about this, Jīva Gosvāmī immediately came there to meet Narottama, who the devotees of Vṛndāvāna had been waiting for since the prediction of Narottama's appearance by Lord Chaitanya. In Vṛndāvana Narottama stayed under the care of Lokanātha Gosvāmī and for over one year performed menial service in the hope of receiving initiation. Out of humility, Lokanātha Gosvāmī did not feel qualified to accept disciples, but in a dream Lord Chaitanya appeared to Lokanātha and reminded him of His order to accept Narottama as a disciple. Lokanātha Gosvāmī then immediately gave initiation to Narottama and asked him to study *bhakti śāstras* under the guidance of Jīva Gosvāmī.

After some time Jīva Gosvāmī ordered Narottama, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Śyāmānanda to go and preach in Bengal and Orissa. Narottama returned to his native village Kheturi and organized the first ever *Gaura-purṇimā* festival celebrating the appearance day of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. All the followers of Lord Chaitanya from Bengal and Orissa attended this huge celebration, including the senior-most *Vaiṣṇava* at the time, Jahnavā Mata, the consort of Lord Nityānanda and her son Vīrabhadra. At the festival, Narottama installed five sets of Deities and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya presided over the *abhiṣek* (bathing ceremony). One of these Deities, Braja-mohan is now being worshiped in Vṛndāvana. Narottama preached extensively all over Bengal, Manipur and Assam with the help of his innumerable disciples. His most prominent disciple was Gaṅgānārayan Cakravartī, and his very close companion was Ramachandra Kavirāja, both of whom expertly assisted Narottama in his preaching. Narottama dāsa Thākura was an incarnation of Vilas mañjarī, one of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī's intimate maidservants in the spiritual world.



Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's Samādhi

49D. VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTI ṬHĀKURA SAMĀDHI

Entombed here is the sacred body of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura who disappeared from this world in the year 1708. He was the greatest *ācārya* during the seventeenth century and his contribution to the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava* movement of Lord Chaitanya is unparalleled. He was born in the Nadia district of West Bengal of *brāhmaṇa* parents in the year 1638. As a boy he became an expert scholar in Sanskrit, poetry and rhetoric and was undefeated in argument and debate. Viśvanātha was married by his parents at a very young age but having no attraction for family life, he soon left home and went to Vṛndāvana where he stayed at Rādhā Kuṇḍa. After some years he returned to Bengal where his *dikṣa guru*, Rādhāramaṇa Cakravartī ordered him to honour his family commitment and spend the night in the bed of his young and beautiful wife. Following the order of his *guru*, he entered the bed of his wife but simply lay there chanting the holy name of the Lord until morn-

ing. After hearing what happened, Viśvanātha's *guru* was very pleased to know that his disciple was so pure and had perfect control over his senses. Viśvanātha's *guru* then asked him to come and live in his own house and make a copy by hand of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Viśvanātha became so absorbed in copying the *Bhāgavatam* that he would go into a trance. Even though the sun was beating down, the spot where Viśvanātha sat was somehow or other shaded as if by a miracle. On another day it started to rain but again somehow the spot where Viśvanātha sat writing, no rain fell. A local landowner saw this miracle and informed all the townspeople, much to Viśvanātha's embarrassment. After some time his *guru* ordered him to return to Vṛndāvana where he again stayed at Rādhā Kuṇḍa and wrote many authoritative books on devotional service. He also composed and sang many beautiful devotional songs, the most famous being *Śrī Śrī Gurvaṣṭaka*, the prayers to the spiritual master, sung every morning during *maṅgal ārati* in ISKCON centers around the world.

The Deity of Gokulānanda was given to him by a *brahmacārī* who, while visiting Mathurā, had a dream in which the Lord appeared and ordered him to hand over his small Deity of Gokulānanda to Viśvanātha. The *brahmacārī* immediately came to Vṛndāvana and offered the beautiful Deity of Gokulānanda to Viśvanātha. At first Viśvanātha refused on account of being a mendicant, saying he could not properly worship the Deity. That night the Lord appeared in Viśvanātha's dream and informed him that the Lord Himself would provide the necessary food for offering. "You just serve Me in what ever way you can and this will give Me the greatest happiness." The *brahmacārī* also had another dream where the Lord told him to return again and this time Viśvanātha would accept the worship of the Deity. Viśvanātha also worshiped for sometime the *Goverdhana-Śīla* belonging to Ragunātha

dāsa Gosvāmī, both these Deities can be seen in the Rādhā Gokulānanda temple.

Viśvanātha Cakravarti became the leader of all the *Vaiṣnavas* in Vṛndāvana, he had many disciples but Baladeva Vidyābhūṣan was the most prominent. In the year 1706, *paṇḍits* of the Rāmanuja sect in Galta near Jaipur challenged the bona-fides of the *Gauḍīya sampradaya* and wanted to take over the worship of the Govindaji Deity of Rūpa Gosvāmī, which was then being worshiped in Jaipur. Viśvanātha Cakravarti being too old to travel decided to send his most brilliant student Baladeva Vidyābhūṣan to answer the challenge. Baladeva gave a fitting reply in the form of a brilliant commentary on *Vedānta Sūtra*, known as the "*Govinda Bhasya*", because this commentary was dictated to him by Lord Govindadeva Himself. After the disappearance of Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravarti became the most prominent *āchārya* and guardian of *Gauḍīya Vaiṣnavism*. Shortly after Jīva Gosvāmī departed, a great controversy arose amongst the followers of Jīva. Some of these neophyte scholars believed that the Divine Couple, Rādhā and Krishna are eternally married (*Swakiya-rāsa*) and should not be worshipped as paramours in the *parakiya-rāsa*. It was Lord Chaitanya who personally established the philosophy of *parakiya-vāda*, the mood of worshipping Rādhā and Krishna as unmarried lovers. In order to accommodate his neophyte followers, Jīva acknowledged the *swakiya-vāda*, in his commentary on Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Ujjvala-nilamani*. Unfortunately these foolish followers failed to see that in all of Jīva's other books, *parakiya-vāda* is supported.



The Govardhana Śilā of Lord Chaitanya

When Viśvanātha Cakravarti appeared on the scene, he soundly defeated all of the puffed-up so-called scholars with his vast knowledge and learning of *Gauḍīya Vaiṣnava* philosophy. It so happened that these false *paṇḍitas* did not take their defeat lightly and made plans to kill Viśvanātha. He used to perform his *bhajana* secretly in the forests near Rādhā-Kuṇḍa and one day the envious scholars waited in a secluded place for Viśvanātha to appear with the intention of killing him. Considerable time passed, but there was no sign of Viśvanātha. After a long wait they suddenly saw a beautiful young girl picking flowers in the forest and decided to ask her if she had seen Viśvanātha. The beautiful young girl replied that indeed she had seen him, but now he had gone elsewhere. All the scholars were enchanted by the beauty, charm and grace of this young girl and completely forgot their enmity with Viśvanātha. They then asked who she was. The girl replied that she was the maidservant of Śrī Rādhā and had been sent to pick flowers so that Śrī Rādhā could make a garland for Her beloved paramour, Śrī Krishna. Upon saying this, the beautiful young girl suddenly vanished and the bewildered scholars saw only Viśvanātha standing there. The scholars could immediately understand that this was Viśvanātha's mercy open them by showing

them his eternal spiritual form as a *mañjarī* and they all fell down at his lotus feet. Viśvanātha then asked them what place lies between Rādhā's home at Barsana and Krishna's home at Nandagram. The scholars replied that Sanket lies between these two places. Viśvanātha then asked why Radha meets Krishna at Sanket rather than at Krishna's home in Nandagram. If the Divine Couple were actually married Rādhā could easily meet Krishna at His father's house in Nandagram. But this She does not do, instead Rādhā meets Krishna at Sanket, the place of Purnamāsī, who makes arrangements for Their meetings, thus proving that Radha and Krishna are not married. After this incident all the scholars became disciples of Viśvanātha.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura compiled many books on the science of Krishna consciousness and it is said that he was a plenary part of Rūpa Gosvāmī, who came to simplify the most difficult truths of Rūpa's writings. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī was an incarnation of Vinoda mañjarī, one of the intimate maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārāni in the spiritual world.

49E. GAṄGĀNĀRĀYAṆA CAKRAVARTĪ SAMĀDHI

A prominent disciple of Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, his *samādhi* is situated next to his *guru* in the Rādhā Gokulānanda courtyard. Gaṅgānārāyaṇa was a high caste *brāhmaṇa* by birth and like many other such *brāhmaṇas*, accepted Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura as his *guru*, even though Narottama was born in a *sūdra* family. At that time this created a big disturbance amongst the *smarta-brāhmaṇas*, who complained to the king about Narottama's conduct in initiating *brāhmaṇas*. These *smarta paṇḍits* convinced the king to go to the village of Kheturi where Narottama was living and openly challenge him on this controversial point. When Gaṅgānārāyaṇa heard that the king's party and the *smarta paṇḍits* were coming to



Gaṅgānārāyaṇa Cakravartī's Samādhi

Kheturi, he along with Rāmacandra Kavirāja, disguised themselves as a clay-pot seller and a betelnut seller and set up stalls near where the king's party was camping. Within a short time the *smarta paṇḍits* had to buy provisions for cooking and naturally visited the stalls of Gaṅgānārāyaṇa and Rāmacandra. These two devotees started to speak to the *smarta paṇḍits* in perfect Sanskrit, and put forward many philosophical arguments which the *smarta paṇḍits* found impossible to refute. The *smarta paṇḍits* were flabbergasted to think that just a common clay pot seller and a betelnut *walla* of Kheturi could speak in such perfect Sanskrit and put forward so many brilliant arguments totally defeating them, what would happen when they actually met the *guru* of Kheturi himself, Narottama. Surely they would be utterly defeated, and embarrassed by holding a debate with such a person. The *smarta paṇḍits* thought it wise to immediately leave Kheturi and save their reputations rather than face the ignominy of losing

the debate with Narottama. That night the king and the *Digvijayi paṇḍita* had a dream that they should take initiation from Narottama which they did.

50. VAMSI GOPĀLA TEMPLE

When Śrīla Prabhupāda first moved to Vṛndāvana as a *vānaprastha*, he stayed in a room on the second floor of this temple from 1956 to 1959, before moving to Rādhā-Dāmodara. It is not possible to have *darśana* of Śrīla Prabhupāda's rooms as they are now occupied by others.

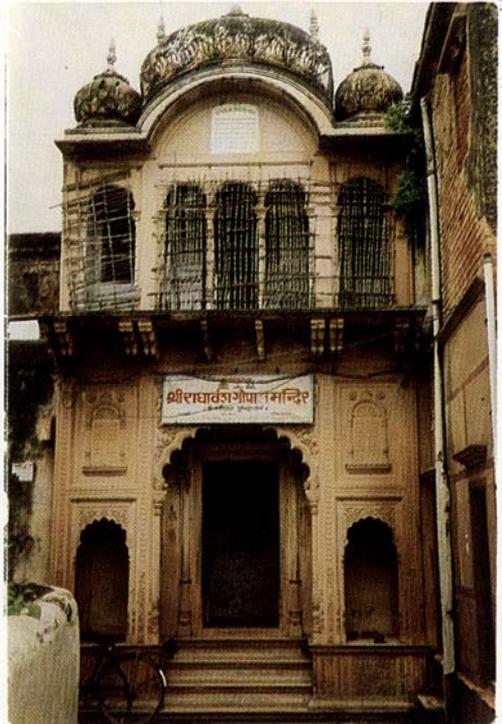
TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Maṅgala 4 am; Darsana 5 am - 11 and 3 pm - 7:30

51. GADĀDHARA PAṆḌITA DANT (TOOTH) SAMĀDHI

Near to the Vamśi Gopāla Temple is the tooth *samādhi* of Gadādhara Paṇḍita, who was one of the *Pañca-tattva*, and a very close confidant of Lord Chaitanya from childhood. Lord Chaitanya ordered Gadādhara Paṇḍita that he should never leave Jagannātha Purī. Gadādhara's disciple, Nayanānanda, brought the tooth of Gadādhara to Vṛndāvana, and placed it in this *samādhi*. Nayanānanda's *samādhi* also used to be here but has now disappeared.

Gadādhara Paṇḍita was born one year after Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in the year 1487. From childhood he always associated with the Lord as his dearest friend. They both attended the same school and even lived close to one another in Navadvīpa. As Gadādhara grew up he was almost inseparable from Lord Chaitanya who was his very life and soul. Later when Lord Chaitanya returned from Gaya, the Lord began to manifest Krishna-*prema* day and night. He would float in an ocean of love of God and continuously chant the holy names of Krishna. On seeing the Lord's ecstatic mood, Gadādhara also became overwhelmed with Krishna-*prema*, shedding tears of love in divine ecstasy. When Lord Chaitanya was performing His Navadvīpa-*līlā* it was Gadādhara who was His chief assistant. Another name of Lord Chaitanya is Gadādhara-pranānātha, the life and soul of Gadādhara.

Once when the great devotee Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi came to Navadvīpa, Gadādhara along with Mukunda went to visit him. On seeing Puṇḍarīka, who was dressed very opulently like a king, in fine clothes and sitting on silken cushions, Gadādhara began to think that he was just another materialistic person and began to lose faith in his reputation as a devotee. On understanding Gadādhara's thoughts, Mukunda began to sing a verse about Krishna-*līlā* from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, suddenly Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi began crying out "Oh, Krishna, Krishna!" Tears flooded his eyes and he fell on the ground and after rolling back and forth a number of times, lost consciousness.



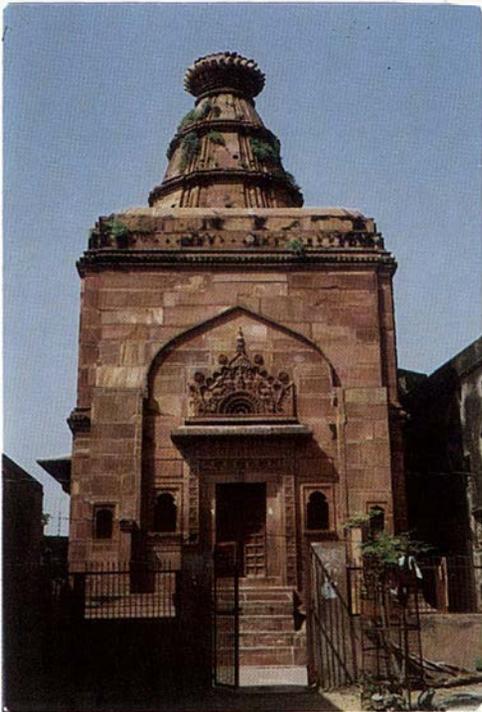
Vamsi Gopala temple

Upon seeing this, Gadādhara felt very bad having criticized Puṇḍarīka within his mind, he therefore resolved that in order to become free from an offence against such a mahābhāgavata, he would take initiation from him. When Puṇḍarīka regained consciousness, Gadādhara surrendered at his lotus feet and became his disciple. When Lord Chaitanya took sannyāsa and went to Jagganātha Puri, Gadādhara also accepted sannyāsa and followed Him. Gadādhara engaged in the service of the Tota Gopinātha Deity and would also speak on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Lord Chaitanya would often come and listen to Gadādhara's discourses. The Lord ordered Gadādhara never to leave Puri but to remain there always as a śetra sannyāsī. When the time came for Lord Chaitanya to end His earthly pastimes He disappeared into the Tota Gopinātha Deity of Gadādhara. They, who in Vṛndāvana are Rādhā and Krishna, take the form of Gaura-gadādhara in the pastimes of Lord Chaitanya in Navadvīpa. Gadādhara Paṇḍita Gosvāmī was an incarnation of the pleasure potency and considered non-different from Śrīmatī Rādhārānī, the eternal consort of Lord Śrī Krishna.

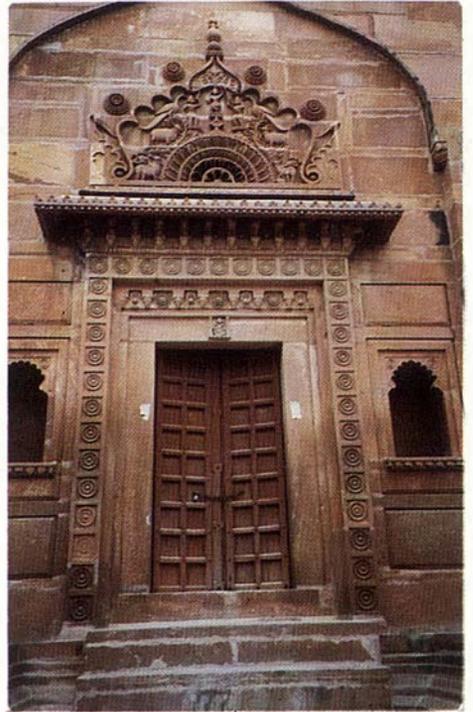
TIMINGS: Daily 7 am - 7 pm

52. JUGAL KISORE TEMPLE

This is one of the oldest temples of Vṛndāvana and was completed in 1627. After Emperor Akbar's visit to Vṛndāvana in the year 1570, he gave permission for four temples to be built by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣnavas, which were Madana-mohana, Govindaji, Gopinātha and Jugal Kiṣore. After the desecration by Aurangzeb's soldiers in 1670, this temple was completely abandoned. It is sometimes called the Keśī ghāṭa temple, as it is located next to this ghāṭa.



Jugal Kiṣore temple

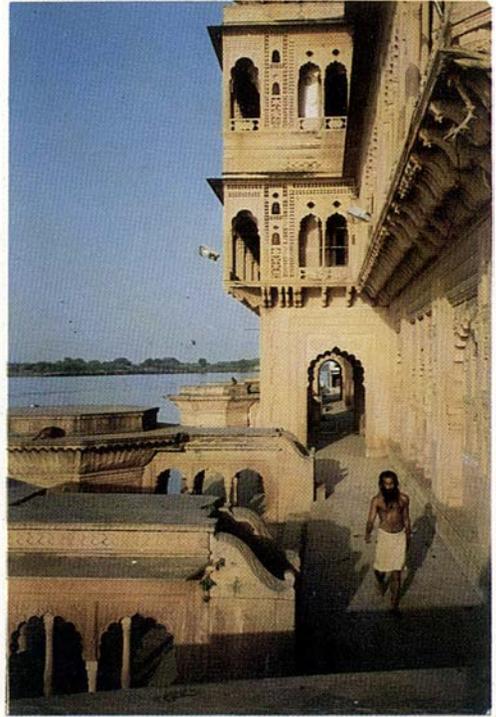


Temple doorway

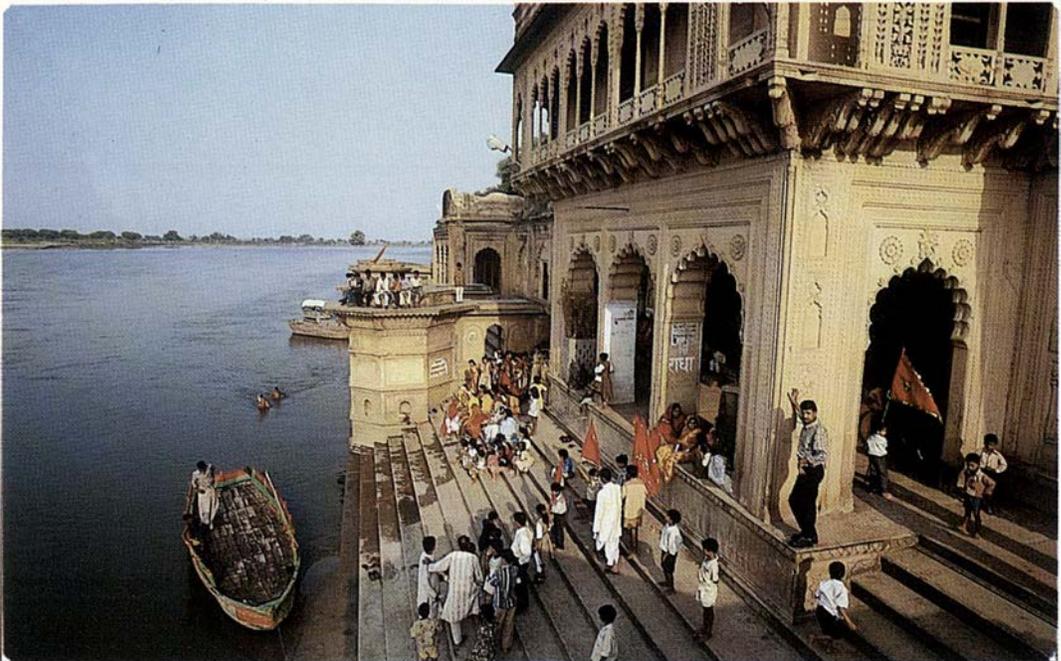
53. KESĪ GHĀTA

This is the place where Lord Krishna killed the Keśī demon who appeared in the form of a gigantic horse. This is also the most famous bathing place in Vṛndāvana. An *ārati* to Yamunā Devī is held here every evening. This Keśī demon was another friend of the evil king Kaiṁsa. By this demon's mystic powers, he assumed the form of a giant horse, and in a wild and angry mood, entered Vṛndāvana where he found Lord Krishna playing by the bank of the Yamunā river with His cowherd boyfriends.

Lord Krishna heard the frighteningly loud whinnying sounds of the demon horse, which caused terror to all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. Krishna then came before the Keśī demon to accept his challenge and immediately, Keśī started galloping toward Krishna, hoping to trample Him to death. The demon did not know that this small child, enjoying pastimes with His boyhood friends on the bank of the Yamunā, was non-other than the all powerful, Supreme Personality of Godhead. As the horse demon approached, Krishna caught hold of his legs and then circled the demon a number of times. When the demon was completely baffled as to what was happening, Krishna picked him up, just as a child picks up a flower, and threw him one hundred yards away which knocked him unconscious.



Keśī Ghāta



Pilgrims gather at Keśī Ghāta

A view of Keśī Ghāṭa from across the river Yamunā





On regaining consciousness, Keśī again charged towards Krishna, this time Lord Krishna pushed His hand inside the horse's mouth, knocking out all his teeth. The Lord's hand then began to expand in the horse's throat. Keśī demon immediately started choking to death. His legs started shaking, sweat poured out from his body, his eye balls bulged out from their sockets and as he died, he passed stool and urine simultaneously. Thus, another terrible demon was eliminated from the face of the earth by the grace of Lord Śrī Krishna. After killing the Keśī demon, Krishna took His bath at this very same ghāṭa.

54. BHRMAR GHĀṬA

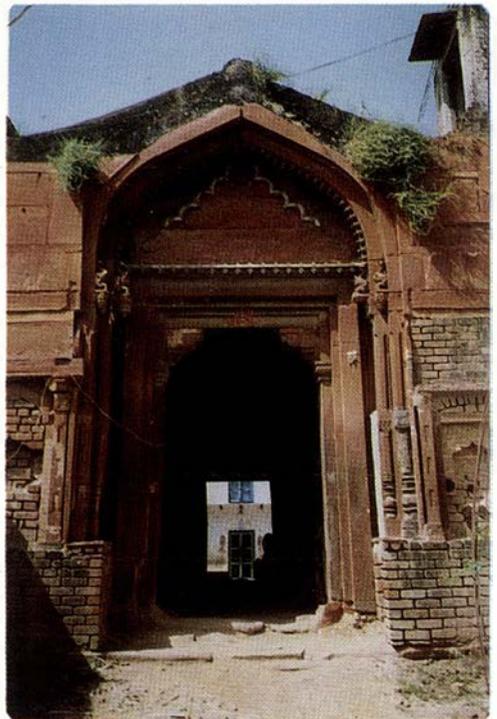
While Rādhā and Krishna sat here on the bank of the Yamunā, the sweet fragrance emanating from Their transcendental bodies, attracted a swarm of black bees (bhramar) which started to hover around, enjoying the nectar-like fragrance emanating from the Divine Couple.

55. RĀDHĀ GOPINĀTHA TEMPLE

This Deity was worshipped by Madhu Paṇḍita Gosvāmī, one of the close associates of Lord Chaitanya. The Gopinātha Deity was originally installed by Vajranaba, Lord Krishna's grandson, 5,000 years ago. The Deity was rediscovered at Vamśī-vata by Paramānanda Bhaṭṭācārya, who gave the Deity to Madhu Paṇḍita. This temple was also desecrated by the soldiers of Aurangzeb in 1670 and a new temple was constructed just behind the old one. The original Gopinātha Deity is in Jaipur, where He was sent for safe keeping. The Deity in this temple is the *pratibhū-mūrti* (replica) which is considered to be non-different from the original Deity.



The old Gopinātha temple



The western gate to the Gopinātha temple



The Deities of Rādhā Gopinātha with Anaṅga Mañjari on the right

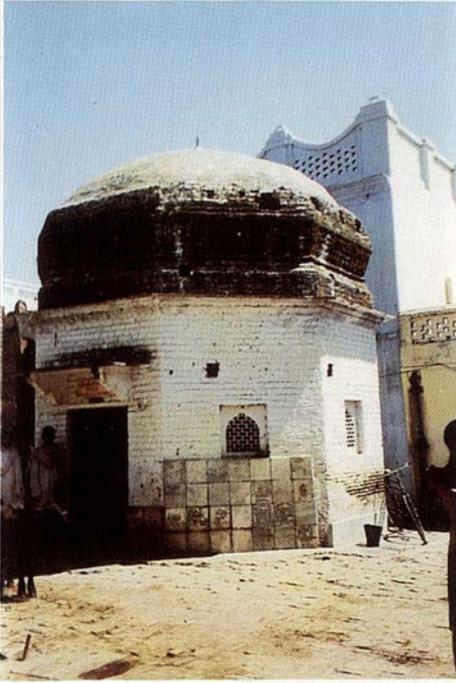
There is a very nice story of how Anaṅga Mañjari appeared on the alter at the Gopinātha temple. Normally in all temples Rādhārāṇī stands on the right of Krishna, but in this temple she stands on the left and Anaṅga Mañjari stands on the right.

In the late 16th century when Lord Nityānanda's eternal consort Jānavā Mātā visited Vṛndāvana, she felt that the Deity of Rādhārāṇī at the Gopinātha temple was too small. On her return to Bengal she had a new Deity of Rādhārāṇī carved and sent it to Vṛndāvana. This new Deity of Rādhārāṇī was then installed on the right side of Lord Gopinātha and the smaller one moved to the left side.

It so happened that all the devotees visiting the Gopinātha temple concluded that the new Deity looked more like Jānavā Mātā than Rādhārāṇī. This was because the new Deity was carved by one of Jānavā Mātā's dearest disciples. The devotees soon came to realize that the newly installed Deity was in fact Anaṅga Mañjari, Rādhārāṇī's younger sister, of whom Mā Jānavā is a direct expansion. Some devotees felt that out of her immense love for her younger sister, Rādhārāṇī consented to allow Anaṅga Mañjari to stand in Her own place next to Lord Gopinātha, allowing her the chance of serving the Divine Couple to her hearts content. It would appear that Anaṅga Mañjari has her very own transcendental way of appearing on the alter so she may eternally render loving service to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gopinātha.

Another very interesting point is that when Lord Balarāma, Krishna's elder brother, desires to take part in the amorous pastimes of conjugal love between Rādhā and Krishna and the *gopīs*, he expands Himself and becomes non-other than Anaṅga Mañjari, the younger sister Rādhārāṇī.

TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same — Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 7:30 am - 11:45 and 4:30 pm - 8:30



Madhu Paṇḍita's Samādhi

56. MADHU PAṆḌITA SAMĀDHI

Situated in the compound of the Gopinātha temple is the *samādhi* of Lord Chaitanya's associate, Madhu Paṇḍita Gosvāmī, who was a disciple of Gadādhara Paṇḍita. Madhu Paṇḍita established the temple of Rādhā Gopinātha and lived in Vṛndāvana until he entered *samādhi*, his sacred body was then entombed at this spot just near the original main gate of the Gopinātha temple.

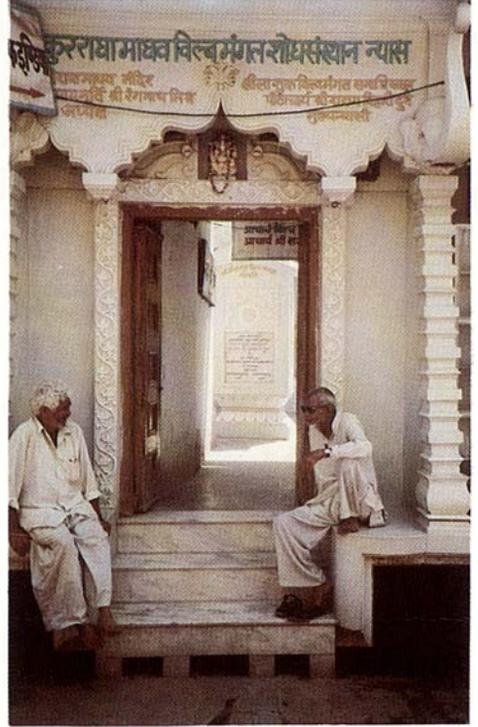
57. SONA GAURĀNGA TEMPLE

These are the celebrated Deities worshiped by Jagannātha dāsa Babajī when he was staying at Surya-kunda. They were moved to Vṛndāvana when a gang of thieves tried to steal them having mistaken them to be pure gold (*sona*) because of their brilliant shine. When Jagannātha dāsa Babajī returned to Bengal these beautiful Deities were looked after by a local brāhmaṇa.

TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same — Maṅgala 5:30 am;
Darśana 8 am - 12 and 4 pm - 7:30



Sona Gaurāṅga



Bilvamangala Thākura's Samādhi

58. SAMĀDHI OF BILVAMAṄGALA ṬHĀKURA

This famous saint of Vṛndāvana is said to have lived here for about 700 years, performing *bhajana* at Brahma-kuṇḍa. He is the author of the famous book *Krishna-karnāmṛta*, which was read every day by Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Bilvamaṅgala is also well known for his devotional songs about Lord Krishna. He was the most prominent disciple and follower of Vishnu Swami from South India and moved to Vṛndāvana around 700 A.D. He is also known by the name of Līlā-suka.

TIMINGS: Daily 4:30 am - 12 and 4:30 pm - 9

59. GAURĀṄGA MAHĀPRABHU MANDIR (AMIYA NIMAI)

This temple is dedicated to Lord Chaitanya. The Deity is over seven feet tall and is well known throughout Vṛndāvana as 'Amiya-Nimai'. 'Amiya' means ambrosia as well as immortal. This Deity was installed by the Gosains of the Rādhārāmana Temple.

TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Darsana 6 am -12 and 4 pm - 8

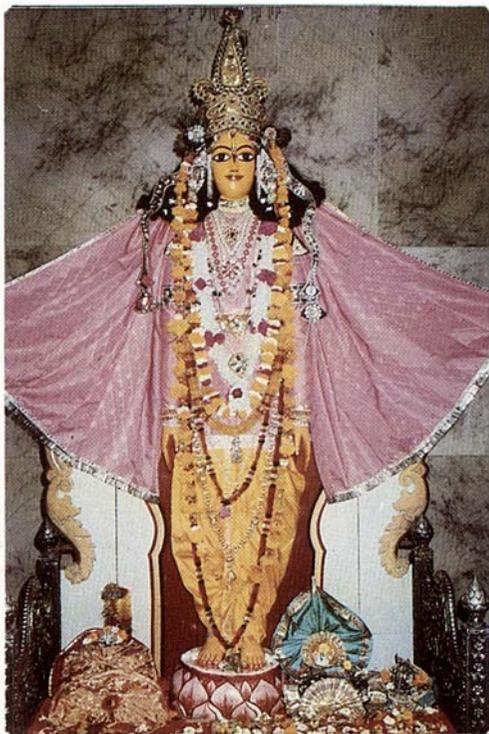
60A. JULA ṬHĀKURA (ŚRĪNIVĀSA ĀCĀRYA KUṆJA)

Inside this courtyard to the left is the temple of Rādhā-mādhava. The small silver Deity of Krishna on the bottom shelf is Jula Ṭhākura, the Deity of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, who used to keep Him in his bead bag (*jula*).

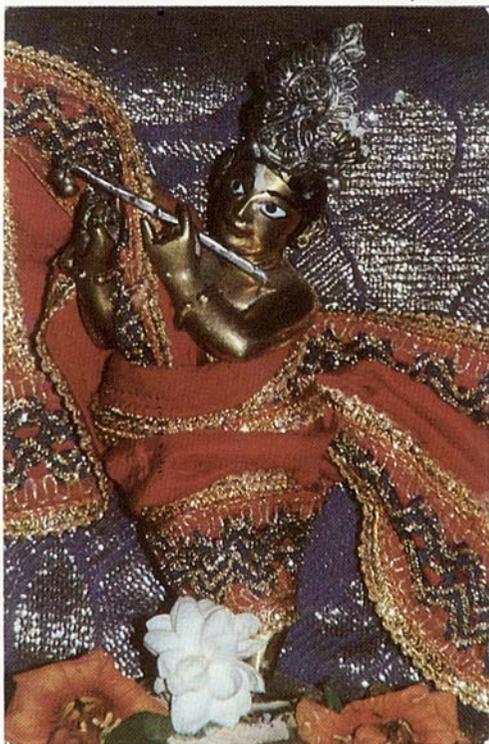
TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Darsana 7 am-12 and 4 pm - 7:30

60B. ŚRĪNIVĀSA ĀCĀRYA SAMĀDHI (ŚRĪNIVĀSA ĀCĀRYA KUṆJA)

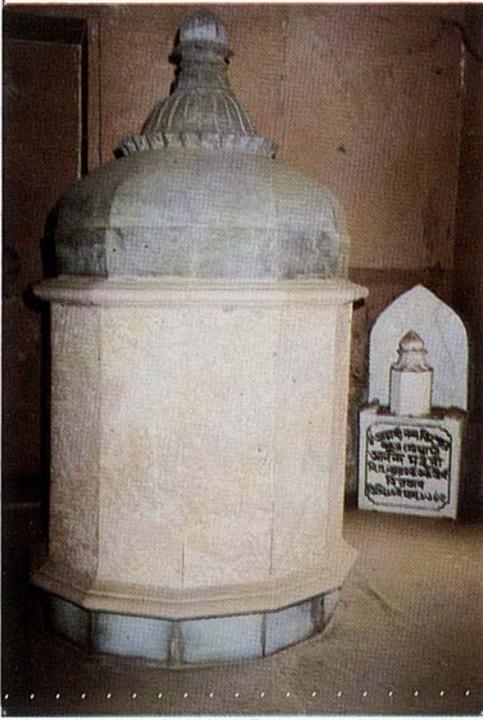
A disciple of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya was also an intimate student of Śrīla Jiva Gosvāmī, who ordered him to preach Lord Chaitanya's message in Bengal. The *samādhi* is in a room on the right side of the courtyard. Śrīnivāsa had many disciples but Rāmacandra Kavirāja was most prominent. Śrīnivāsa was a great preacher of *Bhāgavata*, and even converted King Birhambir, the dacoit king, to *Vaiṣnavism*.



Amiya Nimai



Jula Ṭhākura



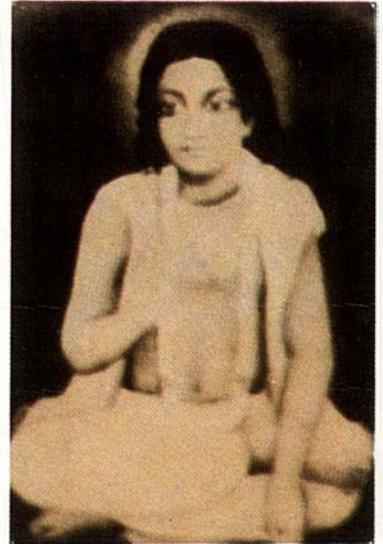
Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Thākura's Samādhi

The father of Śrīnivāsa attended the sannyāsa ceremony of Lord Chaitanya in Katwa, and accompanied by his wife, he again met Lord Chaitanya in Puri where the Lord predicted that they would have a son named Śrīnivāa. As a youth, Śrīnivāsa became known as a most brilliant student, he had such beautiful bodily features and golden lustre that he reminded everyone of Lord Chaitanya. It is said that Śrīnivāsa was the embodiment of Goura-shakti, Lord Chaitanya's spiritual potency, and was in fact a one-sixteenth part of the full spirit of the Lord.

While on his way to Puri to meet Lord Chaitanya for the first time, he learned of the Lord's untimely departure from the world, which left him in an ocean of sorrow. On arriving in Puri he took shelter of Gadādhara Paṇḍita who informed him of Lord Chaitanya's order that he should learn Śrīmad Bhāgavatam from him, and should later go to Vṛndāvana, take initiation from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and study bhakti-śāstras. After Gadādhara Paṇḍit's disappearance, Śrīnivāsa went to Vṛndāvana where he took initiation from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

and studied under Jīva Gosvāmī, along with Narottama dāsa and Śyāmānanda.

After completing his studies, Śrīnivāsa was ordered by Jīva Gosvāmī to go to Bengal by bullock cart with Narottama and Śyāmānanda, and distribute the books of the Gosvāmīs, thus becoming the first book distribution party in the history of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Unfortunately, disaster was to strike, on the way to Bengal all the books were stolen by a gang of thieves sent by the dacoit king, Birhmabir of Bana Vishnupura, whose astrologers had informed him of a most valuable treasure being carried by Śrīnivāsa and his party. After recovering from the shock of losing all the books, Śrīnivāsa asked Narottama and Śyāmānanda to continue the journey while Śrīnivāsa himself stayed behind and searched for the books. Śrīnivāsa just happened to visit the court at Vana Vishnupura where he heard an unbona-fide discourse by the court paṇḍita on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Śrīnivāsa challenged by the court paṇḍita who sarcastically requested Śrīnivāsa to give a better discourse, which Śrīnivāsa did, referring to the commentaries of the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. All those who heard Śrīnivāsa's Bhāgavatam discourse were astounded, including the king who was sitting in the audience. The king immediately surrendered to Śrīnivāsa and asked him if he



Śrīnivāsa Ācārya

could do any service for him, Śrīnivāsa requested the king to help him find the sacred books of the *Gosvāmīs* that had been stolen by thieves. The king suddenly broke down and started crying, condemning himself as the most sinful wretch for having ordered his men to steal the sacred books, thinking them to be valuable treasure. The king showed the books to Śrīnivāsa who became ecstatic at the sudden good fortune. King Birhambir of Vana Vishnupur later became a disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya receiving the name Chaitanya dāsa, he converted his whole kingdom into a *Vaiṣṇava* state.

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya became one of the most important preachers of Lord Chaitanya's movement and along with Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita inundated the whole of Bengal, Orissa, Assam and Manipura with Krishna *bhakti* and *Hari nama sankirtan*. Śrīnivāsa not only became famous as a preacher of *Bhāgavatam* but was also known for his wonderful *kirtans*. He wrote the famous song glorifying the six *Gosvāmīs* of Vṛndāvana known as *Sat-gosvāmī-astakam*.

He later married at the request of his mother, his daughter Hemlatā became a great preacher in the *sankirtana* movement. Śrīnivāsa made hundreds of disciples but Rāmacandra Kavirāja, the close friend of Narottama dāsa Ṭhākur was the most prominent. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya became one of the most important preachers in the generation immediately following Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya was an incarnation of Mani mañjarī, one of the intimate maid-servants of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī in the spiritual world.

TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Darśana 7 am - 12 and 4 pm - 7:30

60C. SAMĀDHI OF RAMACANDRA KAVIRĀJA

A disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and close friend of Narottama dāsa, he was one of the eight *Kavirājas* and his *samādhi* is next to the *samādhi* of Śrīnivāsa. He received the title *Kavirāja* (king of poets) from the *Gosvāmīs* who were very pleased by his wonderful poetry about the pastimes of Lord Krishna and Lord Chaitanya. He assisted Narottama in organising the great Kheturi festival celebrating the appearance day of Lord Chaitanya. He also had a brother named Govinda Kavirāja, who was another of the celebrated eight *Kavirājas*. He finally disappeared from the world in Vṛndāvana and his *samādhi* was placed next to his spiritual master at Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Kuñja.

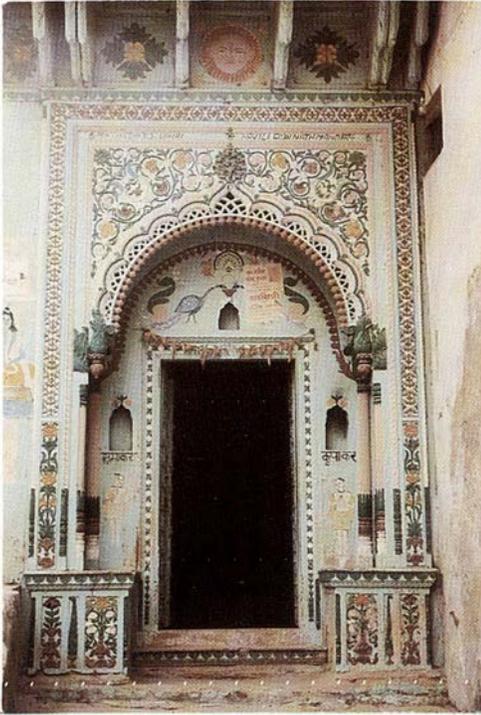
60D. PUṢPA SAMĀDHI OF HEMLATĀ

ṬHĀKURĀNĪ

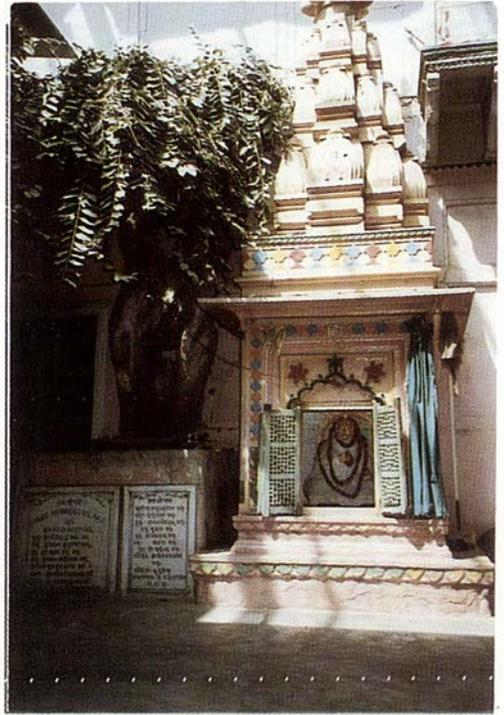
This is the daughter of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and as a powerful preacher of *Vaiṣṇavism* made many disciples, her *samādhi* is near the *samādhi* of her father.



The gateway to Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Kuñja



Doorway of Rādhā Kanṭha temple



Samādhi Mandir of Gopāla Guru

61A. RĀDHĀ KANṬHA TEMPLE

These are the Deities of Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī. This temple was established by Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī who was a disciple of Vakreśvara Paṇḍita. As a child, Gopāla used to meet Lord Chaitanya. Once, the Lord jokingly called him *guru*; the name stuck and he became known as Gopāla Guru. He studied *bhakti-śāstras* under both Svarūpa Dāmodara and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—9 am - 12 and 4 pm - 8

61B. GOPĀLA GURU SAMĀDHI

Even as a young boy he became a close associate of Lord Chaitanya and was accepted as a disciple by Vakreśvara Paṇḍita, he established the temple of Rādhā Kanṭha where his *puṣpa-samādhi* is situated in the temple courtyard. After his disappearance in Jagannātha Purī, his followers who attended the *samādhi* ceremony there, came back to Vṛndāvana, and to their surprise, found the very same Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī sitting under the tree in the courtyard of this temple. He informed his followers that the body they saw was his spiritual body. He met all the devotees of Vṛndāvana and then disappeared while sitting under the same tree. His followers then constructed another *samādhi* next to this tree.



Mūrti of Gopāla Guru

62A. RĀDHĀ SYĀMA-RĀYA TEMPLE (DHIRA SAMIRA MANDIRA)

These are the Deities of Rādhā Syāma-rāya, belonging to Gauridāsa Paṇḍita, who established this temple. He was a very dear follower of both Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda.

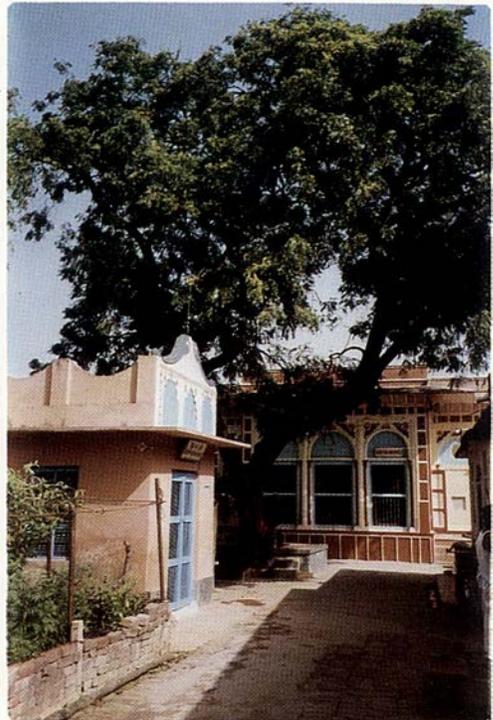
TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4 am; Darsana 6 am - 12 and 4 pm - 9
Winter—Maṅgala 5 am; Darsana 6 am - 12 and 4 pm - 8

62B. SAMĀDHI OF GAURIDĀSA PAṆḌITA

Entombed here is the sacred body of Gauridāsa Paṇḍita, a direct disciple of Lord Nityānanda and close associate of Śrī Chaitanya. At this place near Dhira Samira Ghāṭa, Gauridāsa performed his *bhajana* and also established the temple of Rādhā Syāma-rāya. Gauridāsa lived in Ambika-Kalna, not far from Shantipura. His elder brother had two daughters, Vasudha and Jahnavā, who were both married to Lord Nityānanda. When Lord Chaitanya was going to take *Sannyāsa*, he visited Gauridāsa to say good-bye. Gauridāsa was so overcome with feeling of separation, that weeping, he fell at the feet of Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda, and begged Them to never leave his house, otherwise he felt he would die. Seeing the great anxiety of Gauridāsa, Lord Chaitanya told him that, "We two brothers will always stay here in your home." Consoling him with these words, the two brothers Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda, manifested themselves in the form of two perfect Deities, exact replicas of Gaura-nityānanda, Gauridāsa was stunned. The Lord informed him, "These two will stay in your home forever and you will internally realize We are always here and will accept all the offerings you cook." Hearing this, Gauridāsa immediately began to cook a wonderful offering. After enjoying the wonderful meal, Lord Chaitanya and Lord Nityānanda left, leaving behind the two Deities of Themselves which Gauridāsa continued to serve with great devotion. Once when a big festival celebrating *Gaura-Purṇimā* was being held nearby, these same Gaura-nitai Deities jumped



Deity of Syāma-rāya



Temple and samādhi at Dhira Samira Mandira

down from the alter and joined the *kirtan*, dancing wildly in ecstasy. Gauridāsa had to chase after Them and when Gaura-nitai saw him coming in an angry mood carrying a big stick, They suddenly disappeared into the heart of Gauridāsa 's disciple Chaitanya dāsa. On seeing this, Gauridāsa immediately embraced his disciple and from that time on his disciple



Śiva-lingam of Gopīśwāra Mahādeva

became known as Hṛdaya Chaitanya dāsa, because Chaitanya and Nityānanda hid inside his heart (Hṛdaya). Hṛdaya Chaitanya later became the *guru* of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita.

Gauridāsa Paṇḍita was an incarnation of the cowherd boy Subala, one of the twelve most prominent cowherd boyfriends of Lord Krishna in the spiritual world.

63. DHIRA SAMIRA GHĀTA

Dhira Samira Ghāta means the *ghāta* where the breeze blows very gently, and gives pleasure to Rādhā and Krishna, who enjoyed transcendental pastimes in the gardens that were once situated on the banks of the Yamunā at this place. The gardens and *ghāta* have since disappeared in the course of time and the Yamunā river bed has shifted further away.

64. GOPISVARA MAHĀDEVA TEMPLE

This temple, dedicated to Lord Śiva, is very important, as Lord Śiva not only protects the holy *dhāma*, but also guards the *rāsa-maṇḍala*. The Śiva Linga is 5,000 years old and was originally installed by Lord Krishna's grandson, Vajranaba.

Once, during a performance of the *rāsa-līlā*, Lord Śiva came to see the wonderful dancing of Lord Krishna and the *gopīs*, but when he tried to enter the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, he was stopped by Lalitā and Viśākhā Sakhīs, who informed him that as he was a male, he could not enter. Lalitā then told Lord Śiva to first bathe in the Rādhārāṇī Manasorovar lake. Lord Śiva then went and took bath at this lake and immediately turned into the form of a *gopī*. He then returned to the *rāsa-maṇḍala* where Lord Krishna welcomed him and gave him the name Gopīśvara. Lord Krishna also gave Śiva the boon that without Lord Śiva's permission, no-one could enter into the *rāsa-maṇḍala*.

TIMINGS: Summer—Darsana 5 am - 12 and 4 pm - 9

Winter—Darsana 6 am - 12 and 4 pm - 9



Mūrti of Gopīśwāra Mahādeva at Vāmsi Vata

65. RADHA GOPALA TEMPLE (BRAHMACĀRĪ MANDIR)

This large temple was built in 1860 by the King of Gwalior, Mahārāja Jiyaji Scindia, under the order of his *guru*, Giridharidāsa Brahmācārī.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5:30 am; Darsana 8:30 am - 12:30 and 5 pm - 9

Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darsana 8:30 am to 12:30 and 4:30 pm to 8:30

66. VAMSI VATA (BANYAN TREE)

This is the famous place mentioned in innumerable songs where Lord Krishna came on the beautiful full moon night of the *sarat* season (Autumn), and called all the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana to dance with Him, simply by playing an enchanting melody on His transcendental flute. *Vamśī* means flute and *vata* means Banyan tree.

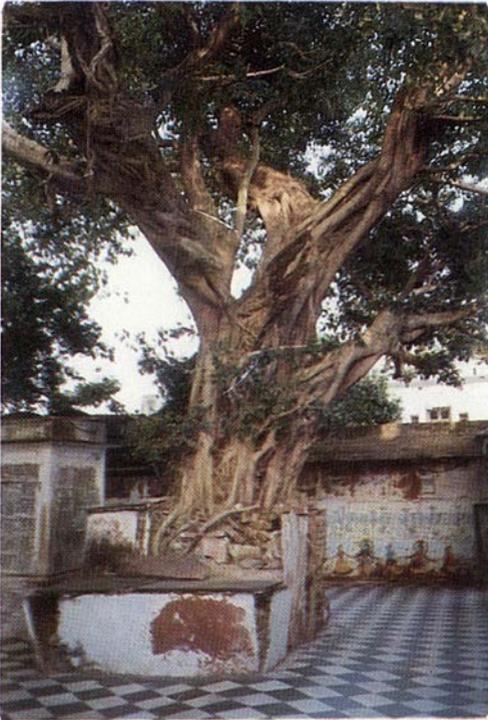
There used to be a Banyan tree standing here from the time of Lord Krishna, but about 450 years ago, the Yamunā flooded and washed the tree away. Paramānanda Gosvāmī collected one of the branches and planted it at the same spot. While planting the branch, he discovered the Deity of Gopinātha. This Deity was originally installed 5,000 years ago by Vajranaba, the grandson of Lord Krishna. The tree he planted is still there today.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4 am; Darsana 6 am 11 and 5 pm - 9

Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darsana 8 am - 1:00 and 4 pm - 7:30



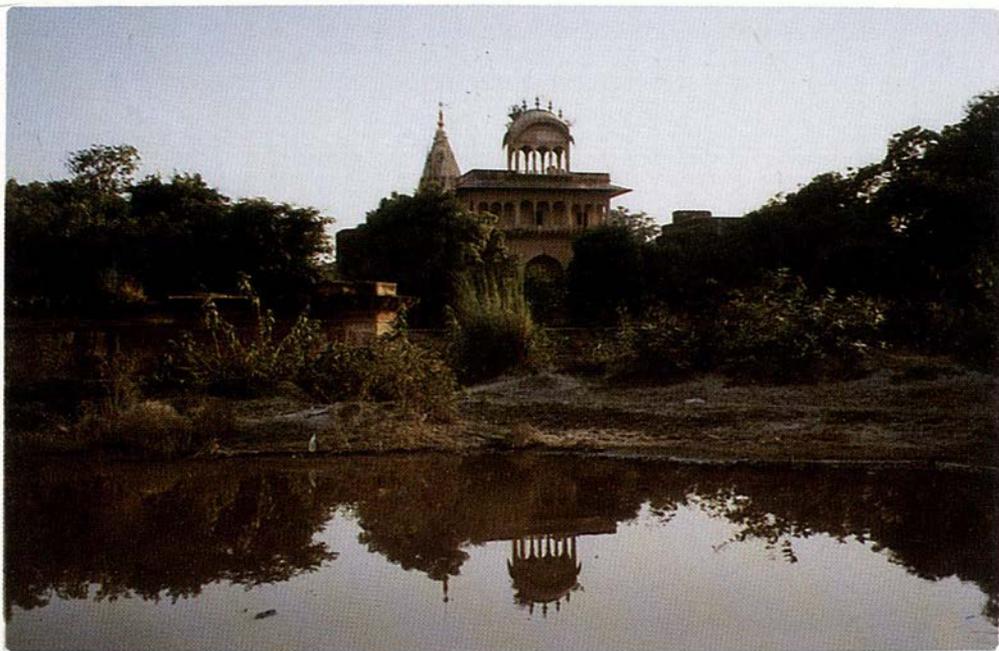
Rāsa Sthali at Vamśī Vata



Sacred Banyan tree at Vamśī Vata



Rāsa-līlā painting at Vamśī Vata



67. TEKĀRI RĀNI TEMPLE

This beautifully ornate temple is dedicated to Rādhā and Krishna and was built by the Bihārī Queen, Indrajit Kunver in 1871.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 6 am - 10:30 and 5 pm - 8:30

Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darśana 7 am - 11 and 4 pm - 7:30

68. JAGANNĀTHA GHĀTA

About two hundred years ago, Haridāsa, a *Rāmanandi Vaiṣṇava* who was devoted to Lord Krishna, used to meditate on the bank of the Yamunā near Vaṁśī Vata. One night in a dream, Lord Jagganātha appeared and informed Haridāsa that He would very much like to come and live near the bank of the Yamunā in Vṛndāvana, and accept the worship of Haridāsa. Lord Jagganātha asked Haridāsa to immediately go to Jagganātha Puri and as this was the time once every twelve years when the body of the Jagganātha Deity is changed, Haridāsa should bring the old body of Lord Jagganātha back to Vṛndāvana .

On waking Haridāsa gathered all his disciples and with a rousing *kirtan* set off on foot for Jagganātha Puri. On arriving in Puri, Haridāsa went straight to the Jagganātha temple and requested the priests to allow him to take the old body of Lord Jagganātha back to Vṛndāvana. The priests however flatly refused and advised Haridāsa to speak directly to the king of Puri, who was the chief administrator of the temple. On hearing the request of Haridāsa, the king also refused and informed Haridāsa that the old body of Jagganātha would be put into *samādhi* as per the ancient custom and no one was allowed to take possession of the old Deity .

On hearing the king's refusal, Haridāsa decided to go to the beach and fast until death. That night the king had a dream in which Lord Jagganātha came before him in a very angry mood and demanded to know why the king had refused to follow the order given by the Lord Himself to His servant Haridāsa. The king immediately upon waking called for

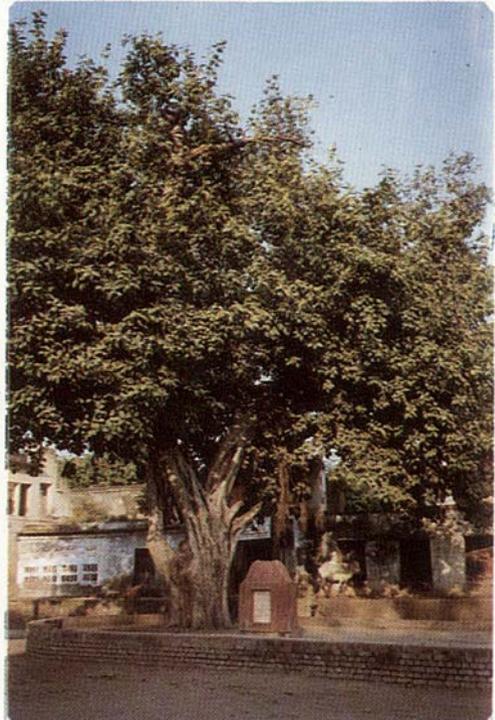


Their Lordships Jagganātha, Subhadra, and Baladeva

Haridāsa, informed him of the dream and granted permission for Haridāsa to take the old Deity of Lord Jagganātha back to Vṛndāvana. The Deities of their Lordships Jagganātha, Subhadra and Baladeva were then placed on a chariot and accompanied by priests and a large contingent of soldiers, brought to Vṛndāvana and installed on the bank of the Yamunā at this same place, which then became known as Jagganātha Ghāṭa.

69. JÑĀNA GUDRI

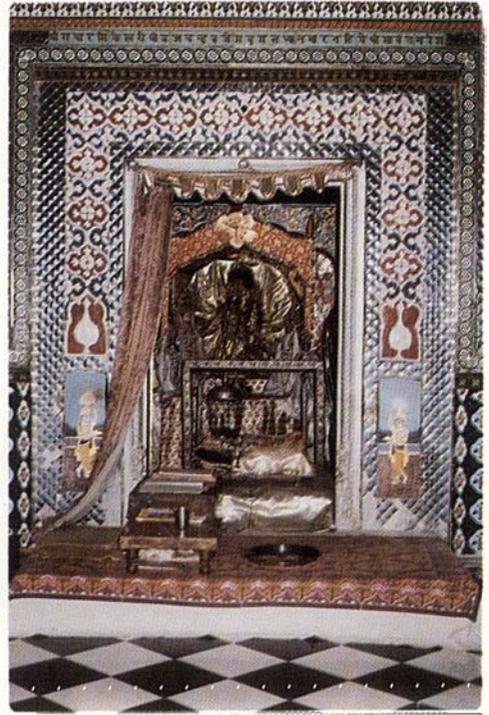
At this spot underneath the Banyan tree (Vata), Uddhava discussed topics about Lord Krishna's pastimes with Vidura. Uddhava told Vidura that Krishna spoke of no devotee prior to His disappearance except Vidura, whom He mentioned three times over. This brought torrents of tears to Vidura's eyes when he thought of the Lords mercy upon him. Also at this place, *Prayag Rāja Tīrtha* (Allahabad) came here in the form of a black horse in order to take bath and relieve himself of all the sins left by pilgrims who visit Prayag. After taking bath at this place, Prayag's black form turned white, having been freed from all the sins. *Brijvasis* take bath at this same spot when the Yamunā floods during the monsoon.



Jñāna Gudri



Braja-mohana



Mirror Mandira

70. RADHA BRAJA-MOHANA TEMPLE

This Deity was installed by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura at the Kheturi festival in West Bengal, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya performed the *abhiṣeka*. All the important *Vaiṣṇavas* of the day, attended the first ever festival to celebrate the appearance day of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Of the five Deities installed at that time, this is the only one to have been brought to Vṛndāvana for worship.

71. MIRROR MANDIR AND RĀDHĀ-NĀMA BANK

This temple of Jugal Kiṣore is known as the Mirror temple (Kanch Mandir) because the walls are decorated with thousands of small mirrors. This temple is very popular with the Hindu pilgrims visiting Vṛndāvana. The temple was built by the Mahārāja of Begawar (M.P), Sawan Singh Juedeva. He was a disciple of Hari Rāma Vyāsa Gosvāmī. In this temple one can also see a small Deity of baby Krishna lying in a swing. In the far right hand corner of the courtyard is the Rādhā-nāma Bank, where pilgrims are encouraged to write as many times as possible the holy name of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Krishna in a book or on paper, which is then deposited in the bank for the eternal benefit of the writer.

72. LALA BABU TEMPLE

This is the temple of Lord Krishna Candrama, built in 1810 by a millionaire from Bengal of the name Krishna Candra Sinh, better known as Lala Babu. This is a large temple set in a nice garden, surrounded by a high wall. Lala Babu renounced the world at an early age and became a *vairāgi*. He also constructed the *ghāṭas* surrounding Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

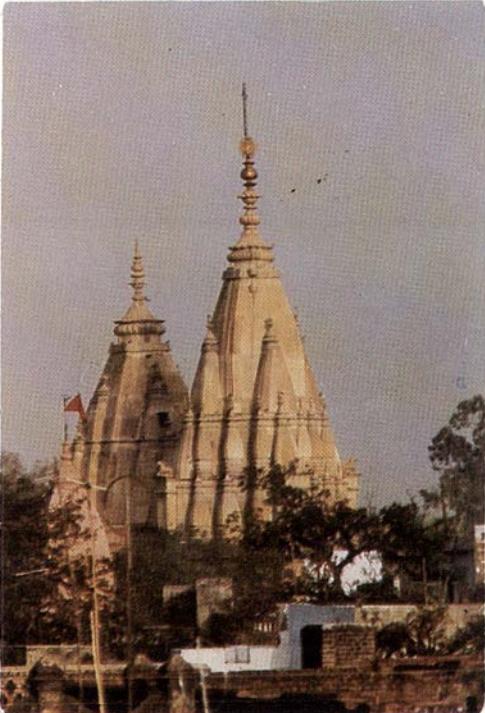
TIMINGS: Summer/Winter same—Maṅgala 5 am; Darśana 8 am - 12 and 4 pm - 8

73. BRAHMĀ KUṆḌA

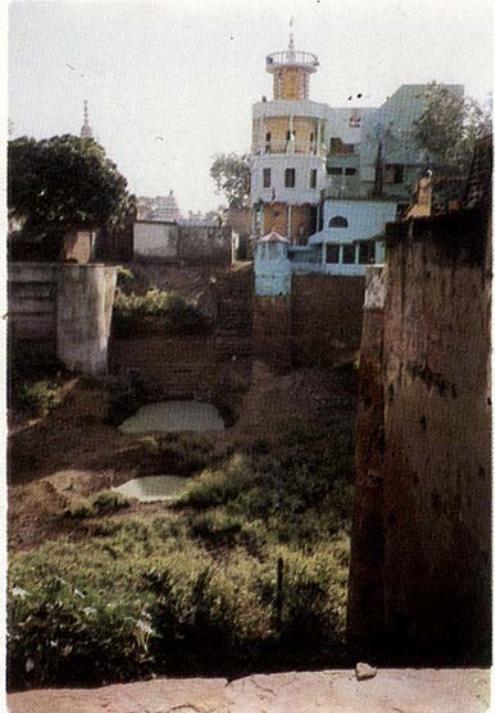
This is where Brahmā offered his prayers to Lord Krishna after he had stolen all the cowherd boys and calves. Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura performed *bhajana* here at Brahma Kuṇḍa for 700 years. Rūpa Gosvāmī also discovered the Deity of Vṛndādevī on the northern side of this *kuṇḍa*.

This *kuṇḍa* (pool) was created from the tears of Lord Brahmā, the secondary creator of the universe, when he tearfully offered his wonderful prayers to Lord Krishna. It so happened that Brahmājī had been hearing about the wonderful activities of Krishna, the cowherd boy of Vṛndāvana, and suspecting that He might be the Supreme Personality of Godhead, decided to test the Lord by playing a trick. One day, while Lord Krishna was taking His lunch along with the cowherd boys, the calves, who were grazing nearby, were taken away by Lord Brahmā. Krishna volunteered to go and see what had happened to the calves and while He was gone, Brahmā came and took away all the cowherd boys. By his mystic powers, he hid both the cowherd boys and the calves in a cave. After putting them all into a deep sleep, he then left for his own planet.

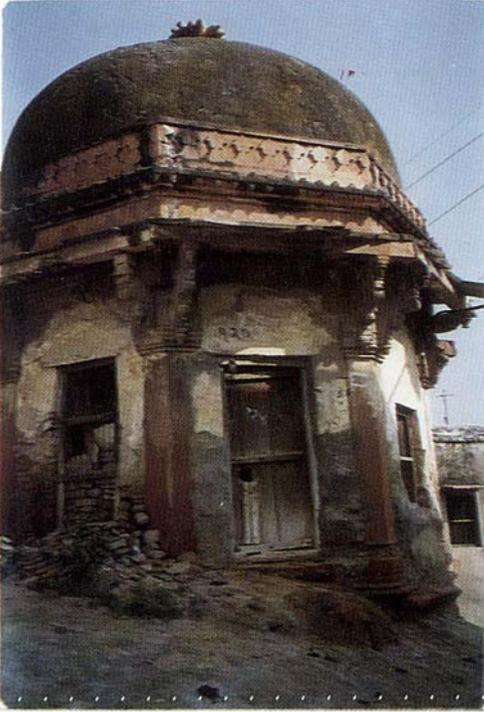
On not finding the calves, Lord Krishna returned and seeing that the cowherd boys were also missing, could understand that this was the trick of the demigod Brahmā. As it was time to return home, and He could not return alone, Lord Krishna decided to expand Himself as the calves and cowherd boys. On reaching the village, nobody could understand that the boys and the calves were missing. Lord Krishna had expanded Himself to appear like each and every boy, so much so, that the parents of those boys could not understand that this was not their original child.



Lala Babu temple



Brahmā Kunda



Ancient temple at Brahmā Kuṇḍa

After Lord Brahmā had left, he had second thoughts about his mischief making, and therefore decided to return in case Krishna had become angry and was going to punish him for his impudence. Even though for Brahmā, only a few moments passed of his time, here on earth, one whole year had gone by. On arriving back at the scene, Brahmā was astonished to see all the same cowherd boys and calves playing with Krishna, and became even more astonished when all the cowherd boys and calves suddenly transformed into four armed forms of Vishnu. Brahmā could then understand the omnipotency of Lord Krishna which made Brahmā's own display of mystic power look insignificant. Brahmā then immediately brought all the cowherd boys and calves stolen by him and returned them to the same spot. He then fell on the ground just like a stick and prayed to Lord Krishna to forgive him for his impudence in trying to test the power of the Lord.

At this time, while offering his prayers, Brahmā shed torrents of tears which formed a small lake and became known as the Brahma-kuṇḍa. Until a few years ago, this *kuṇḍa* was full of water but at present it has dried up and also fallen into neglect. The Manas Mandir temple overlooks this *kuṇḍa*, and by climbing to the rooftop, one not only gets a good view of Brahma-kuṇḍa but also a wonderful panoramic view of the whole of Vṛndāvana.

74. RAṄGAJĪ TEMPLE

This South Indian style temple was built by the wealthy Seth family of Mathurā in the year 1851, and is dedicated to Lord Śrī Raṅganātha or Raṅgajī - a form of Lord Vishnu lying down on the Śeṣa Nāga (celestial serpent). This temple has a traditional South Indian *gopuram* (gateway) and is surrounded by high walls. It is one of Vṛndāvana's largest temples. Once a year a grand car festival (*Ratha Yatra*) is held known as *Brahmotsava*, during the month of *Chait* (March - April), this festival lasts for 10 days. The Car (*Rāth*) is pulled to the Raṅgajī Bāg gardens nearby. This happens to be the only temple in Vṛndāvana that does not allow foreigners to enter.* In fact, it is one of the few temples in all of India that still follows this outdated rule. The original Raṅgajī Mandir is situated at Trichy in Tamil Nadu, and allows entry of all foreigners.

* (Foreigners can enter into the courtyard and walk around the outside perimeter of the temple, they may also visit the museum upon paying a small fee.)

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4 am; Darsana 8 am - 12 and 3 pm - 6

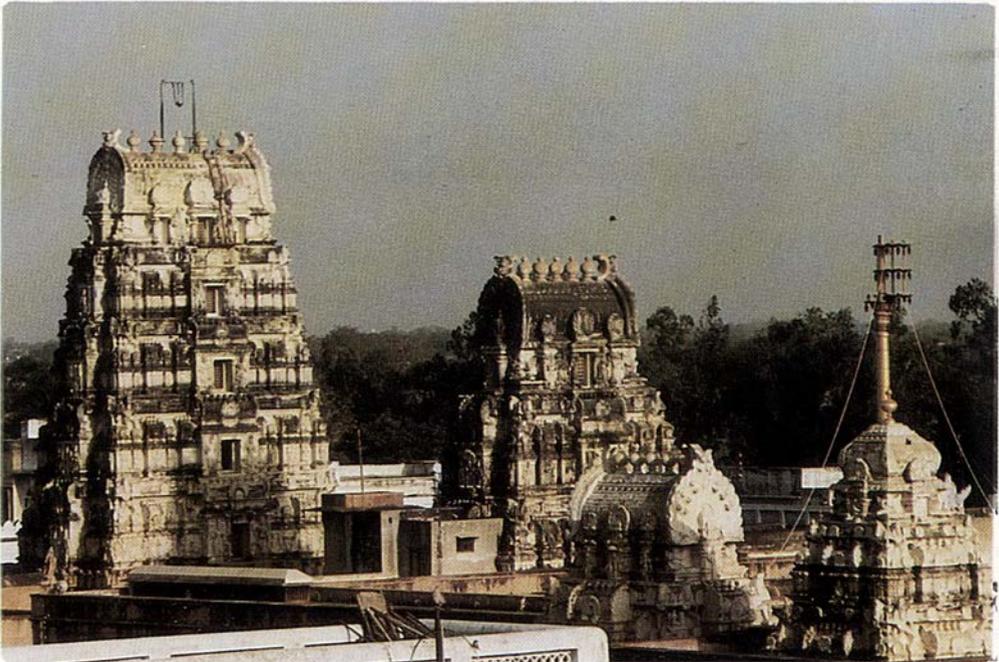
Winter—Maṅgala 6 am; Darsana 8 am - 11 and 3 pm - 7



Entrance of Rangaji temple

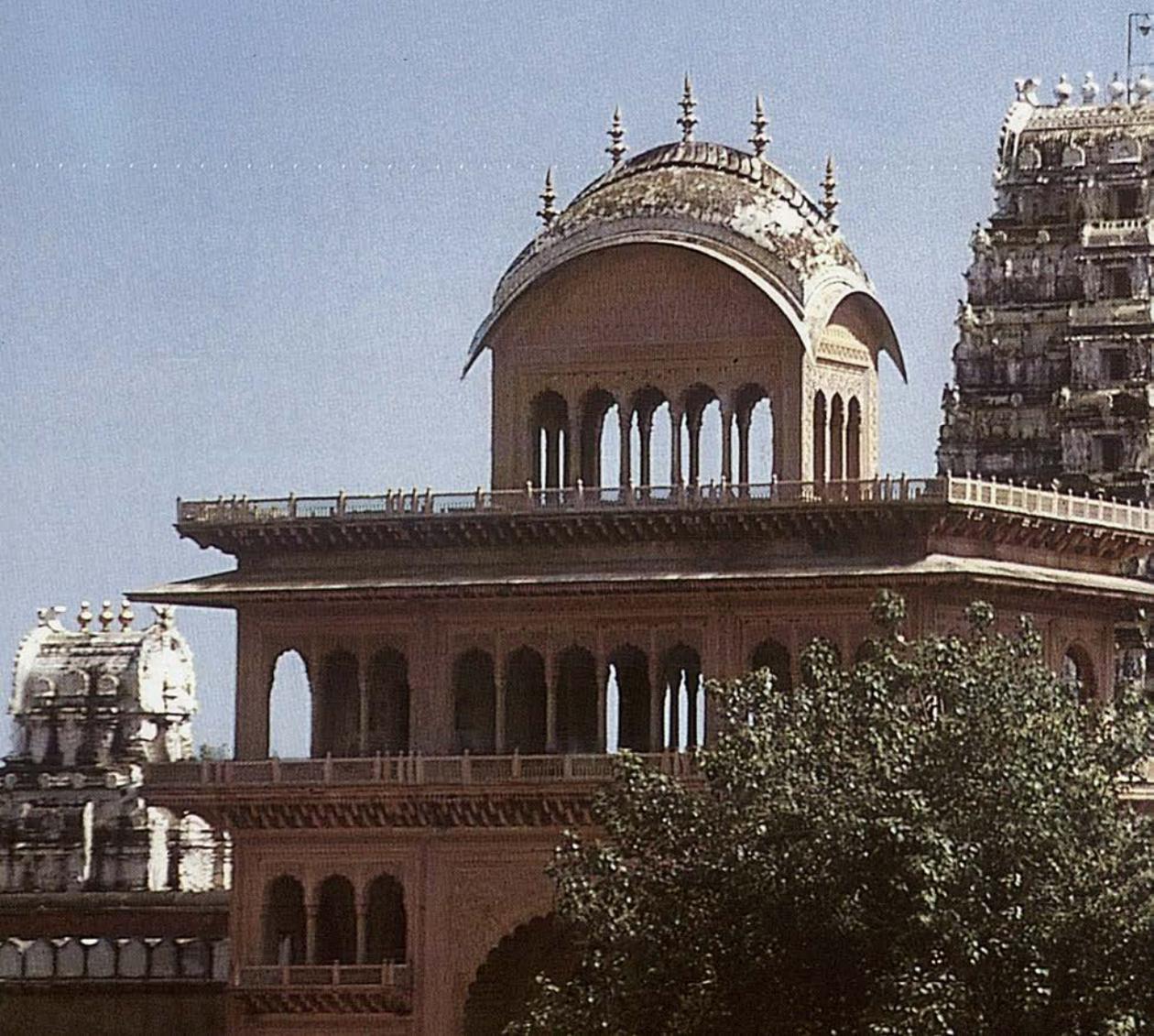


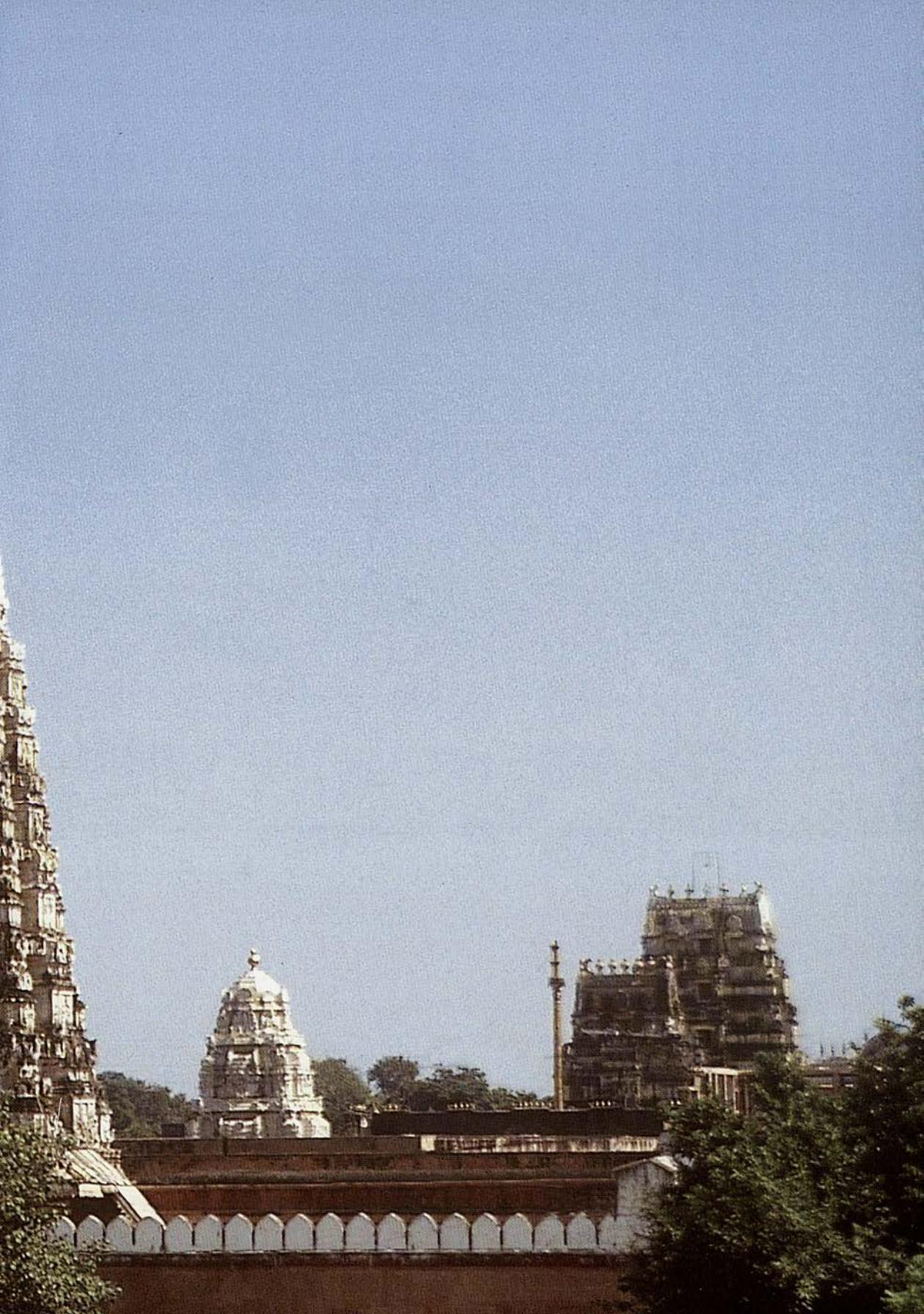
Gopuram (gateway)



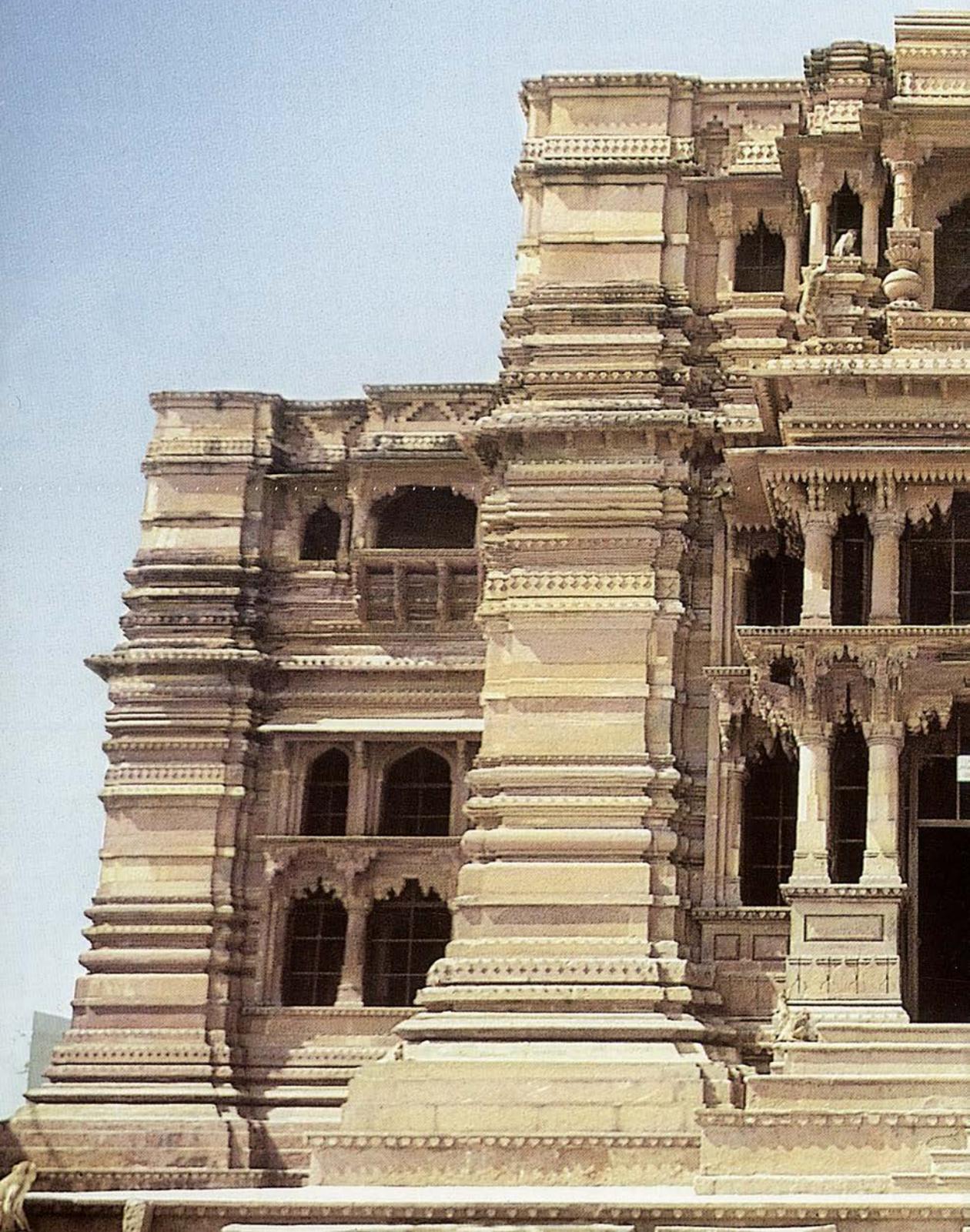
Rangaji temple

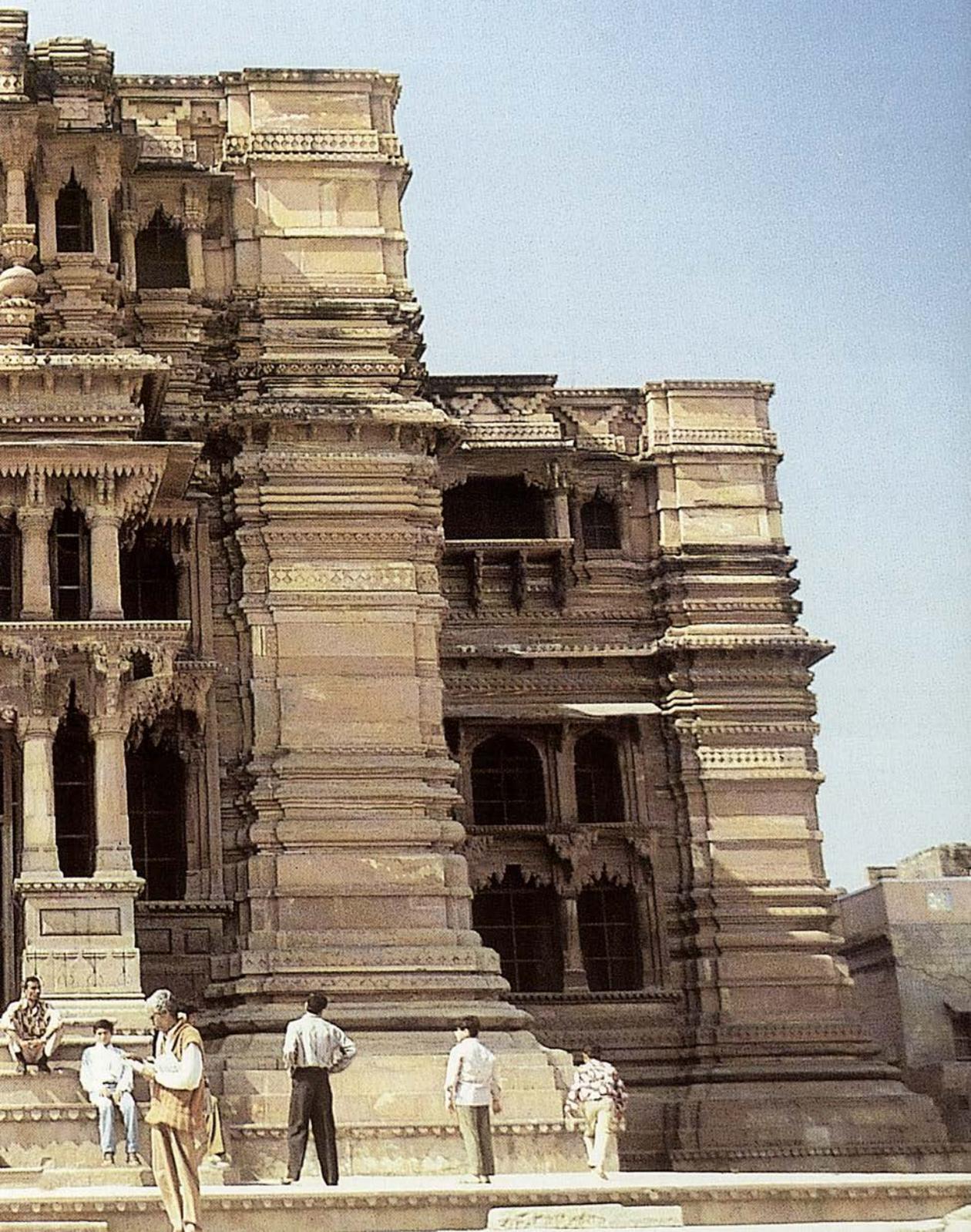
A view of the Raigaji Mandira





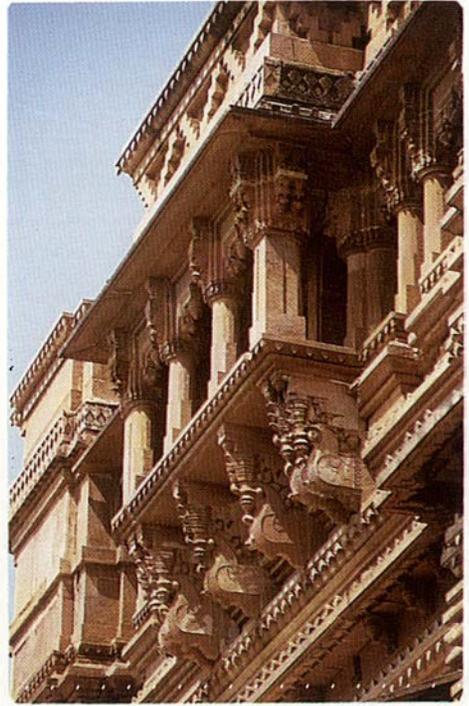
The Govindajī Temple





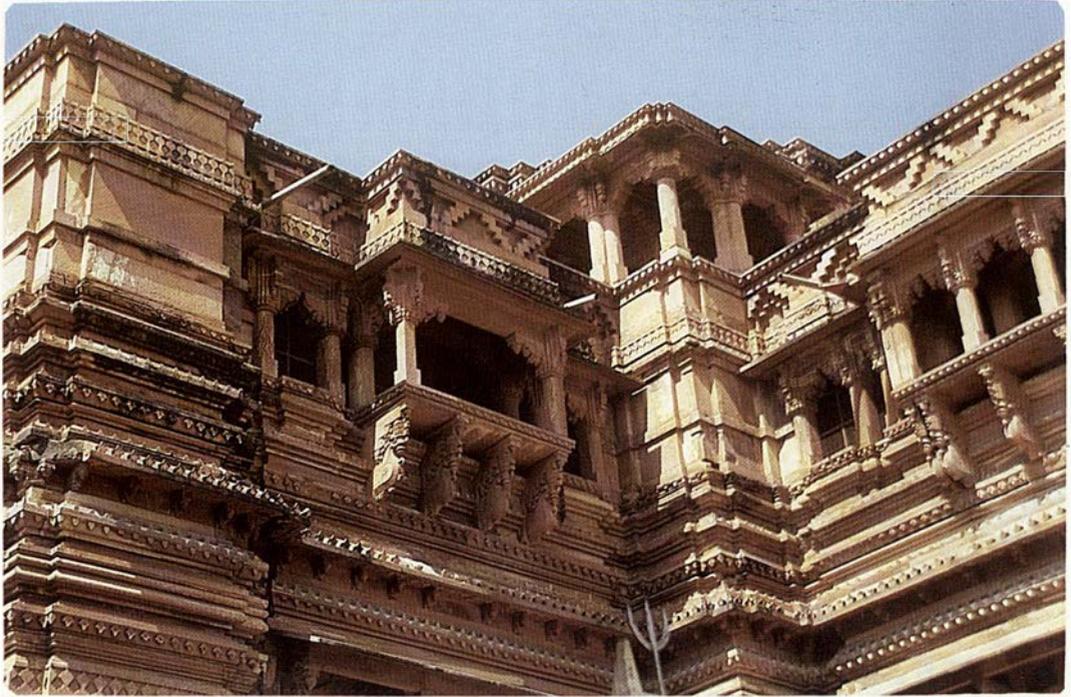
75A. RĀDHĀ GOVINDA TEMPLE

This Deity was established by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī who was ordered by Lord Chaitanya to excavate all the lost holy places of Vṛndāvana. Five thousand years earlier, Lord Krishna's grandson, Vajranaba, installed a number of important Deities in Vṛndāvana, Govindajī was one of these Deities. Rūpa Gosvāmī searched all over Vṛndāvana to locate the Yogapith, the resting place of the original Deity of Govindajī, but after months of searching, the Deity could not be found. Rūpa Gosvāmī, feeling disappointed, came and sat by the bank of the Yamunā and shedding tears, began calling the name of Lord Chaitanya - "Ha Chaitanya, Ha Chaitanya" (Oh Chaitanya). Suddenly, Lord Krishna in the guise of a beautiful *brijvasī* boy appeared and informed Rūpa Gosvāmī that a cow came every day to a nearby hillock, and emptied its milk into a hole on the hilltop. He asked Rūpa to accompany him to the place and see what might be in the hole. Rūpa Gosvāmī followed the boy and upon reaching the spot, the boy disappeared. Looking within the milk drenched hole, Rūpa Gosvāmī immediately fell unconscious in a wave of ecstatic emotions. When he recovered, he summoned the local people who excavated the



The main entrance to the Govindaji Temple





The Govindaji Temple is considered to be one of the finest examples of medieval temple architecture in the whole of north India.





The vast interior of the Govindaji Temple



hole and found the beautiful Deity of Lord Govinda. The loud cries of “He Govinda, He Krishna” suddenly reverberated throughout the sky.

The construction of the temple of Rādhā Govinda began under the guidance of Raghunāth Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and his disciples headed by Rāja Man Singh of Jaipur some time after 1570. It was the most impressive edifice that Hindu art had ever produced in the whole of Northern India. It towered into the sky seven stories high and was built on top of the hill where the Deity was first discovered, making it the tallest building in this part of India. The temple was completed in 1590.



The Deity of Yogamāya

Less than one hundred years later, Emperor Aurangzeb, the Muslim zealot, was standing on the ramparts of his fort at Agra, and noticed a bright light burning in the far distance. Upon being informed that this was a large ghee lamp kept atop the Rādhā Govinda temple in Vṛndāvana, he became furious that a Hindu shrine was taller than any Muslim building and immediately ordered its destruction. By the time the soldiers arrived, Lord Govindadeva and all the important Deities of Vṛndāvana had been moved to safer places. The soldiers of Aurangzeb dismantled the top floors of the Govindajī temple and desecrated the sanctum sanctorum as well as mutilated all the stone carvings within the temple.

TIMINGS: Darsana 8 am - 12:30 and 4 pm - 9

75B. YOGAPITHA

This is the very spot where Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī found the Govindajī Deity. A special chapel was built to the left side of the main alter and a small Deity of Yogamāya was installed here along with the lotus footprints of Lord Govinda. This Deity of Yogamāya (Lord Krishna's sister) was also worshipped by Rūpa Gosvāmī. During the attack by Aurangzeb on Vṛndāvana, the Deity of Yogamāya was hidden and later reinstalled in the same chapel. One has to ask the *pujāri* (priest) for a *darshan* of the Yogapitha.

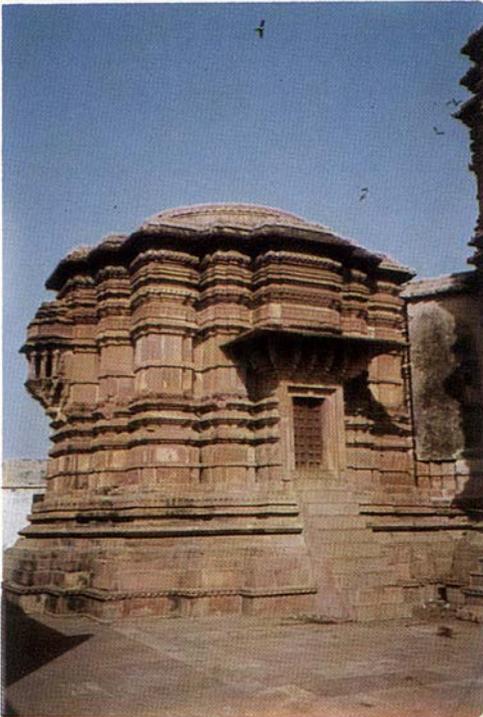
76. NEW GOVINDAJĪ TEMPLE

Situated behind the original Govindajī temple is this new temple, containing the *pratibhū-mūrti* of Rādhā Govinda. The original Deities are now in Jaipur in the palace grounds of the Mahārāja. The *pratibhū-mūrti* is considered non-different from the original Deity.

TIMINGS: Summer—Maṅgala 4:30; Darsana

7:30 am - 10:30 and 5:30 pm - 7:30

Winter—Maṅgala 4:30 am; Darsana
8 am - 11:30 and 4:30 pm - 7:30



Yogapitha



The Praibhu Murni of Govindaji



64 Samādhis

77A. 64 SAMĀDHIS AND VENU KUPA

In the far right hand corner of the 64 *samādhis* garden, there used to be a pond which is now dry called Venu Kupa, where Lord Krishna dug His flute (*venu*) into the ground to produce a fresh water spring to quench the thirst of the cowherd boys. In this particular garden are the full *samādhis* of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Subuddhi Rāya, and Kāśīsvara Paṇḍita. Also here are the *samādhis* of 64 important followers (*Mahants*) of Lord Chaitanya. Besides the three full *samādhis*, the rest of the *samādhis* are either *nama*, *puspa* or *smṛta samādhis*, including the *Gosvāmīs* - Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha dāsa, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Jīva, Lokanātha and Krishṇadāsa Kavirāja as well as Svarūpa Dāmodara, Candrasekhāra Ācārya, Rāmānanda Rāya, Śivānanda Sena, Kāśī Mīśra, Sikhi Mahiti, Kavi Karnapura, Vasudeva Ghosh, Rāghava Paṇḍita, Murāri Chaitanya, Chota Haridāsa, Jāhnvā Mātā, Kolaveca Śrīdhara, Mukunda dāsa, Saraṅga Ṭhākura, Kala Krishna dāsa, and others.

TIMINGS: Daily 7am - 9pm

77B. SAMĀDHI OF RAGHUNĀTHA BHATTA GOSVĀMĪ

Entombed here in the 64 *samādhis* garden are the ashes of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. It was decided to cremate his body so that the Muslim fanatics could not desecrate it. This was also done to Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who's *samādhi* is at Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī also performed his *bhajana* in this very same garden. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, as a child first met Lord Chaitanya in the house of his father Tapan Mishra, who originally hailed from East Bengal but had subsequently moved to Benaras (Kāśī). On the way to Vṛndāvana Lord Chaitanya stopped in Benaras to meet Tapan Mishra and also Candrasekhāra Ācārya. On the Lord's return from Vṛndāvana He also stayed in Benaras for ten days. Lord Chaitanya stayed at the house of Candrasekhāra, and took his meals at the house of Tapan Mishra. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, although just a child would serve the Lord by massaging His



Samādhi of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

lotus feet. When Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa finished his studies he went to Jagganātha Puri to meet Lord Chaitanya who was very pleased to see him. The Lord ordered Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa to remain a lifelong *brahmacārī*. Raghunātha remained at Puri for eight months, he was a very expert cook and would sometimes prepare *prasāda* for Lord Chaitanya.

The Lord then ordered Raghunātha to return to Kāśi and care for his aged parents. When his parents finally passed away, Raghunātha returned to Jagganātha Puri to be with Lord Chaitanya and spent another eight months serving the Lord. One day the Lord asked Raghunātha to proceed to Vṛndāvana and study *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* under the guidance of Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs, and help them in their mission of fulfilling the Lord's unfinished work of locating all the lost places of Lord Krishna's pastimes.

On his arrival in Vṛndāvana, the *Gosvāmīs* were very happy to see him and accepted him as

their godbrother. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī exhibited all the good qualities of a pure *Vaiṣṇava*, he was very meek and humble and would never hear blasphemy of any devotee. Even when there were points to criticize, he used to say that since all devotees are engaged in the service of the Lord, he did not mind their faults. Raghunātha became so expert in reciting *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* that he would recite each and every verse in three different *rāgas* or tunes. He regularly recited *Bhāgavatam* in front of Rūpa and Sanātana and the assembled *Gosvāmīs*, and while doing so he would be overcome by the symptoms of ecstatic love. Tears would flood his eyes, his voice would falter, his hair would stand on end and overcome with ecstasy he would sometimes swoon. It is said that his voice was as sweet as a cuckoo and within no time his fame spread far and wide. Raghunātha's original *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* can still be seen at the Bhaṭṭaji Mandir in Vṛndāvana.

Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa ordered his disciples to construct the temple of Govindāji. Raghunātha also prepared various ornaments for Govindaji including a flute and shark shaped earrings. Raja Man Singh of Jaipur was an important disciple of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and it was the Raja who did so much, not only in constructing the Govindaji temple, but also many other temples and ghāṭas as well.

Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī was an incarnation of Śrī Raga Mañjarī, one of the eight intimate maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī in the spiritual world.

77C. SAMĀDHI OF KĀSISVARA PANDITA

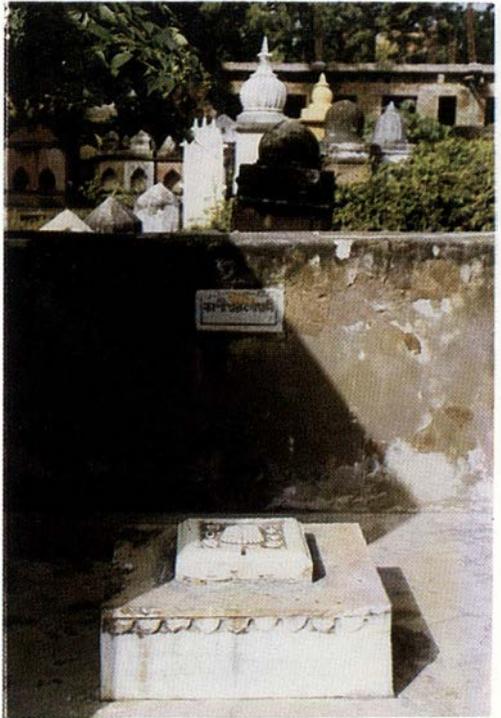
The Godbrother of Lord Chaitanya, who was sent by Īśvara Purī (Lord Chaitanya's spiritual master), to be one of the Lords personal servants at Jagannātha Purī. His sacred body is entombed here at the place where he did his *bhajana*, in the garden of the 64 *samādhis*.

Because he was very big and strong his service to Lord Chaitanya was to walk in front of the Lord when He went to the Jagganātha temple and clear away the crowds with his hands, so that the Lord could proceed without being touched. Kāśīsvāra also used to distribute *prasada* after the *kirtan* to all the devotees. After some years, Lord Chaitanya sent Kāśīsvāra Paṇḍit to Vṛndāvana to serve the Govindāji Deity of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Kāśīsvāra was an incarnation of Lord Krishna's personal servant in the spiritual world called Bhrngara.

77D. SAMĀDHI OF SUBUDDHI RĀYA

Sent to Vṛndāvana by Lord Chaitanya, Subuddhi Rāya performed his *bhajana* at the same place where his body is entombed in the 64 *samādhis* garden. Subuddhi Rāya was a big landlord of Bengal and he had a Muslim servant of the name Saiyada Hussain Khāna. This servant was put in charge of digging a large lake but Subuddhi Rāya found some discrepancy and punished the servant with a whip. Some years later this same servant, Saiyada Hussain Khāna, was appointed Nawab of Bengal by the Muslim Emperor. One day Hussain Khāna's wife noticed the lash marks on her husband's back and on hearing that this was caused by Subuddhi Rāya, she asked her husband to put him to death. Hussain Khāna found this very difficult, as Subuddhi Rāya practically raised him from childhood and had been as affectionate as a father to him. As his wife kept pressing him, he decided to convert Subuddhi Rāya into a Muslim by sprinkling water from his water-pot on Subuddhi Rāya's head. In those days this was considered by orthodox Hindus, sufficient to convert anyone from Hindu to Muslim. Subuddhi Rāya was then ostracized from the Hindu society and immediately left home and travelled to the holy places. On arriving in Benaras (Kāśī), he was advised by *brāhmaṇas* there to commit suicide. It so happened that at this time Lord Chaitanya was also visiting Benaras and upon meeting Subuddhi Rāya advised him not to commit suicide but instead go to Vṛndāvana and continuously chant the holy names of the Lord. Subuddhi Rāya then came to live in Vṛndāvana where he stayed for the rest of his life. Subuddhi Rāya became a close friend of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. His sacred body was entombed here at this garden near his dearest friend Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.



Samādhi of Kāśīsvāra Paṇḍita

78. KĀTYĀYANĪ DEVĪ TEMPLE

A very famous temple of Vṛndāvana. It is said that this is where the hair (*katya*) of Goddess Kali fell from the sky. The *gopīs* used to worship Kātyāyanī Devī in order to get Lord Krishna as their husband. (This is not the same shrine where the *gopīs* used to worship Kātyāyanī Devī, as they made a Deity from sand and mud, which is the local tradition during Kātyāyanī *Vrāta*)

79. GOVINDA KUNḌA

At this kuṇḍa Krishna and Balarāma would rest at midday along with their cowherd boyfriends who would massage Their legs while They rested. At this time the crows would drink the cool water of the kuṇḍa. This is the largest of the kuṇḍas situated in Vṛndāvana and it is said that both Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī did bhajana on the banks of this kuṇḍa. The ghātas of this kuṇḍa were built by a princess. Chandhārani Kali Sundāri of Rajshahi in East Bengal. This kuṇḍa is now mostly dry and ony fills with water during the rainy season.

80. PANI GHĀṬA

The *gopīs* were on their way to visit the ashram of Durvasa Muni on the other side of the Yamunā. They were taking all kinds of wonderful food preparations for the great muni, in the hope of getting his blessings. They came down to the Yamunā here and spoke as follows - "Dear Yamunā Devī, on the strength of Krishna being a strict brahmacārī, kindly allow us to cross". Upon hearing the words of the *gopīs* to cross. Upon hearing the words of the *gopīs*, Yamuna Devi immediately parted her waters and allowed the *gopīs* to cross. When the *gopīs* reached the ashram of Durvasa Muni, they fed him all the wonderful preparations they had made. Upon being fully satisfied, Durvasa Muni blessed all the *gopīs*. He gave a special benediction to Rādhārāṇī, that wheatever She cooks will taste like nectar, and whoever eats Her cooking will achieve a long life, without getting any disease. It was for this reason that mother Yaśodā would ask Rādhārāṇī to cook for Krishna every day.

81. ADI-BADRI GHĀṬA

It is said that Krishna showed His form as Adi Badri Narayana to the *gopīs* here. It is also said that Śrīla Vyāsadeva wrote the Tenth Canto of the Bhāgavatam at this spot.



82. RAJ GHĀTA

It was here that Lord Krishna disguised Himself as a boatman, and when the *gopīs* came there to cross the Yamunā river, Krishna insisted that first He would have to wash the feet of one of the *gopīs*, otherwise, His boat could not take them across the river. When the *gopīs* asked who's feet He would wash, Krishna consulted with His boat and informed them that it was Rādhārānī's feet that were to be washed. Upon hearing this, Rādhārānī at first refused, but when she was told by Krishna that the boat also refused to take them, she relented and agreed to let Krishna wash Her feet. After washing Rādhārānī's feet, Krishna first sprinkled the water on His own head, then on the Yamunā, and then on His boat.

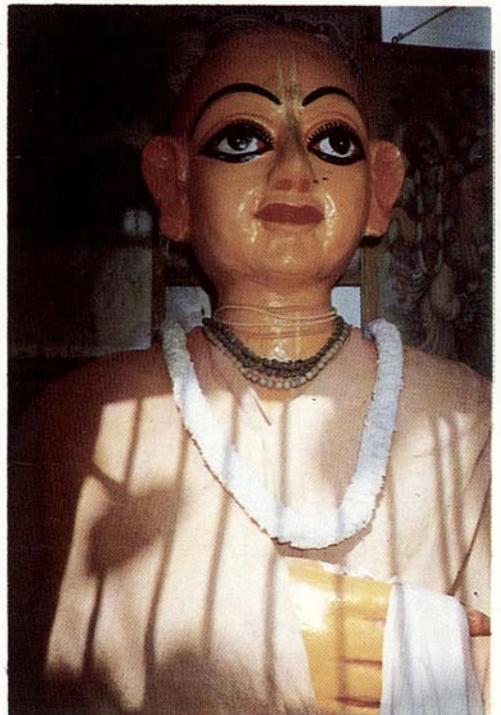
After this, the *gopīs* entered the boat and started to cross the Yamunā. When in the middle of the river, Krishna suddenly stopped rowing and complained that He was feeling very weak, due to hunger. Krishna then suggested to the *gopīs*, that they should feed Him the milk sweets that they were carrying. At first they refused, but when they saw there was no alternative, they fed all the milk sweets to Krishna. Being completely bloated, Krishna lay down in the boat, unable to move. On seeing this, Rādhārānī asked one of the *gopīs* to see what was wrong with the boatman. After checking for a moment, the *gopīs* started to laugh, and pulling Krishna's flute out from under the boatman's clothing, revealed Krishna's true identity. At this, all the *gopīs* started to laugh and clap their hands.

83. ŚRĪ CHAITANYA VIŚRAM STHALI (MAHĀPRABHU BAIṬHAKA)

Lord Chaitanya used to sit beneath this banyan tree at Rāja Ghāta and rest. It is situated next to an old Jagannātha temple and it is believed that this Jagannātha Deity belonged to Murārī Gupta.



Chaitanya Visram Sthali



Deity of Lord Chaitanya at Visram Sthali



The Deity of Batharan-bihāri

84. BATHARAN-BIHARI TEMPLE (BHOJANA STHALI)

This is the place where Krishna and Balarāma ate lunch provided by the wives (*jañjñā patnis*) of the sacrificial *brāhmaṇas*. One day Krishna and Balarāma left very early in the morning with their cowherd boyfriends along with their cows and calves for the forest of Vṛndāvana. After some time the cowherd boys complained of feeling very hungry because they had come without taking their breakfasts.

Lord Krishna then told the cowherd boys that nearby were the houses of the *brāhmaṇas* who were engaged in performing sacrifices for the purpose of gaining elevation to the heavenly planets. "Please go to them and ask for charity, but don't mention My name because I am only a cowherd boy (*vaiśa*). You had better ask in the name of Balarāma because he is known as the son of Vasudeva, a *Kṣatriya*. These *brāhmaṇas* generally only give charity to other high class *brāhmaṇas* and do not care for others. They are not *Vaiṣṇavas* and never chant the holy names of God!"



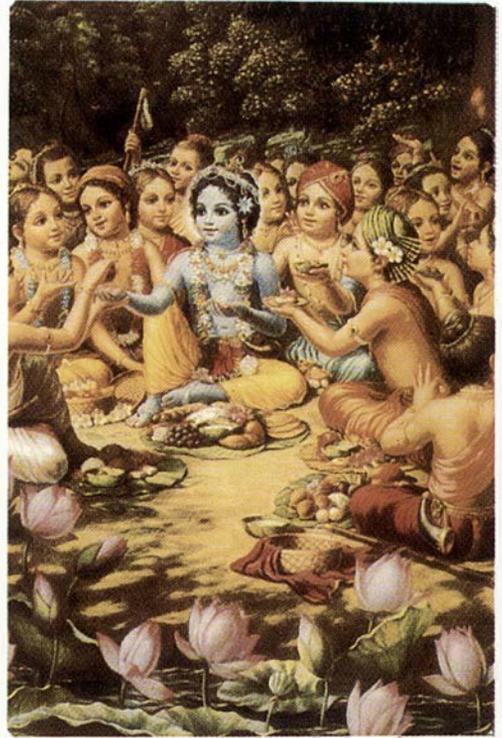
Batharan-bihāri temple (Bhojana-sthali)

The cowherd boys then went to the houses of the *brāhmaṇas* and humbly requested some food that they could eat along with Krishna and Balarāma who were tending cows nearby. The cowherd boys said, "Krishna who is non-different from Vishnu, is waiting nearby and you should immediately deliver whatever food you have in stock!"

Although the cowherd boys requested charity in the name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Krishna, the *brāhmaṇas* did not care to listen to them. Because they were *smārta brāhmaṇas* and only interested in material benefits through Vedic sacrifice, they could not even appreciate the begging of the Supreme Lord. These caste *brāhmaṇas* could not understand the actual purpose of the Vedas which is to understand Lord Krishna. In spite of their advancement of knowledge and rituals, they were ignorant fools and all of their activities were simply a waste of time.

The cowherd boys being disappointed at being ignored by the *brāhmaṇas*, returned to Krishna and Balarāma and gave the sad news. Surprisingly Krishna asked them to return, but this time to ask the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*. On returning the cowherd boys approached the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*, who upon hearing that Krishna and Balarāma were asking for food, became anxious to see Them. Being spiritually advanced by thinking of Krishna constantly, they were performing the greatest form of mystic meditation. They did not have to be convinced of the importance of Krishna and Balarāma. They had been constantly thinking of how to serve Krishna and Balarāma and when they would get the chance to see Them. All the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* became busy engaged in filling different pots with nice foodstuffs. Because of the performance of the sacrifice, there were so many wonderful preparations that were all very palatable. For a long time the wives had been anxious to see Krishna and Balarāma, but as they were leaving home to go and see the Lord, their husbands, fathers, sons and relatives forbade them to go. But the wives did not care, when a devotee is called by the attraction of Krishna he does not care for bodily ties.

The women on entering the forest saw Krishna and Balarāma tending the cows along with their boyfriends. Krishna looked so beautiful dressed in garments glittering like gold, He wore a nice garland of forest flowers and had a peacock feather on His head, He was also painted with the minerals found in Vṛndāvana. He looked exactly like a dancing actor on a theatrical stage. With their very eyes the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face, within their hearts they began to embrace him to their hearts content. The Lord could understand that they had come to Him despite the protests of their families. They had come to see Him who was their life and soul, and they were perfectly following the instructions of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, that one should surrender to Krishna giving up all other varieties of occupational and religious duties. After thanking the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*, Krishna and Balarāma sat down with their cowherd boyfriends at this same spot and enjoyed the wonderful food sent by the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*.



Krishna enjoying the food given by the *yajna-patnis*

85. AKRURA GHĀṬA

Here is a very beautiful Deity of Krishna and Balarāma with Akrura standing in the middle. This is the sacred place where Akrura stopped to take bath when he was escorting Krishna and Balarāma to Mathurā at the invitation of King Kamsa. Akrura parked his chariot under the shade of a large tree. Both Krishna and Balarāma took bath in the river Yamunā and returned to sit in the chariot. Akrura then took permission from their Lordships and went to take his own bath.

While standing within the water Akrura suddenly saw Krishna and Balarāma, he was very surprised to see them there as he was sure they were sitting on the chariot. Being confused he came out of the water and returned to the chariot and got a shock when he saw Krishna and Balarāma still sitting on the chariot as before. He then hurried back to the river and this time he not only saw Krishna and Balarāma in the water but also saw they were surrounded by many Demigods, Siddhas, Charanas and Gandharvas. They were all standing before the Lord who was lying down on the serpent Sesa Naga. In other words after again returning to the river he saw that Balarāma had changed into Sesa Nāga and Krishna had changed into Mahā-Vishnu. Out of astonishment Akrura began to offer prayers to the Lord and while Akrura was offering his prayers the Lord suddenly disappeared, therefore Akrura came out of the water and returned to the chariot.

Krishna and Balarāma were still sitting there and Krishna asked Akrura if he had seen something wonderful. Akrura replied that all the wonderful things happening in the world are simply appearing in Your universal form, so when I have seen You, what wonderful thing have I not seen. Akrura continued by saying, "There can not be anything more wonderful than Your transcendental form, when I have seen Your transcendental form, what is there left to see." After saying this Akrura started the chariot and continued on the road to Mathurā.

Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu also stayed at Akrura Ghāṭa when He visited Vṛndāvana in 1515. At first the Lord stayed with a *brāhmaṇa* in Mathurā, but due to His great popularity, large crowds would gather from morning to evening just to get a glimpse of the Lord. Therefore Lord Chaitanya felt that it would be better to go to a quiet place and so moved to Akrura Ghāṭa. Everyday Lord Chaitanya would visit the holy places of Vṛndāvana and in the evening return to Akrura Ghāṭa. The Yamunā river used to flow past this place but since many years the river bed has shifted away and is now situated about one kilometer to the West.



Akrura Ghāṭa

*The Deities of Krishna and Balarāma with
Akrura in the centre (Akrura Ghāṭa)*



Selected Verses from
ŚRĪ VRAJA-VILASA-STAVA
Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmi

Surrounded by their witty *gopī* friends, the youthful divine couple enjoy many kinds of transcendental pastimes within the groves and mountain caves, and among the blossoming vines of Vṛndāvana forest. I worship Vṛndāvana forest, which is delightful with the scent of Their lotus feet.

Filled with many large lakes, hills, and rivers, with many desire trees and desire creepers, and with many flowers invaded by a great army of bumblebees intoxicated by the sweet aroma, the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana are splendidly beautiful. I bow down to offer my respects at every moment to these twelve forests, which are very dear to Lord Krishna.

With great humbleness let me offer my respectful obeisances to the supremely pious dear devotees of the Lord who reside in Vraja. Even though Brahmā is a great demigod entrusted with many weighty duties, he sincerely yearns to take birth among the bushes and blades of grass in Vraja.

The grass, bushes, insects, and other creatures in Vraja are all very dear to Lord Krishna. They assist the Lord in His pastimes. They are full of transcendental bliss. Again and again the scriptures recount the earnest request of Brahmā and others to reside in Vraja. For these reasons I bow down to offer my respects to all the creatures who reside in Vraja.

Even if I have the opportunity to bathe in the nectarean ocean of pure love of Krishna, and even if I have the pure devotees of the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead as my associates, I will not consent to live, even for a single moment, in any sacred place other than Vrajabhūmi. Even if the residents of Vraja appear to be ordinary, and even if they fill my ears with useless gossip, I pray that I may remain among them, eternally residing here in Vraja.

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE GAUḌĪYA VAIṢṆAVA SAMPRADAYA

- 1473 Appearance of Lord Nityānanda.
1479 Mādhavendra Purī visits Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Govardhana Hill.
1479 Mādhavendra Purī establishes worship of Śrī Gopāla Rāya
1482 Advaita Ācārya takes *dikṣa* in Vṛndāvana from Mādhavendra Purī.
1483 Appearance of Lokanātha Gosvāmī.
1486 Appearance of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
1487 Appearance of Gadādhara Paṇḍita.
1488 Appearance of Sanātana Gosvāmī.
1489 Appearance of Rūpa Gosvāmī.
1491 Disappearance of Mādhavendra Purī.
1491 Viśvarūpa (Lord Caitanya's brother) takes *sannyāsa*.
1494 Appearance of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.
1496 Appearance of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī.
1503 Appearance of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.
1505 Appearance of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.
1509 Lokanātha Gosvāmī and Bhugarbha Gosvāmī come to Vṛndāvana.
1510 Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu takes *sannyāsa*.
1513 Appearance of Jiva Gosvāmī.
1515 Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu visits Vṛndāvana.
1516 Rūpa and Sanātana come to Vṛndāvana.
1516 Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Gosvāmī comes to Vṛndāvana.
1534 Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's disappearance.
1534 Appearance of Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura.
1535 Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī comes to Vṛndāvana.
1535 Jiva Gosvāmī comes to Vṛndāvana.
1541 Disappearance of Lord Nityānanda.
1541 Completion of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* by Rūpa-kuṇḍa.

- 1545 Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī starts excavation of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.
- 1550 Disappearance of Advaita Ācārya.
- 1554 Completion of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa.
- 1558 Disappearance of Sanātana Gosvāmī.
- 1564 Disappearance of Rūpa Gosvāmī.
- 1570 Emperor Akbar meets Jīva Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana.
- 1571 Disappearance of Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.
- 1575 Completion of *Caitanya-bhāgavata* by Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura.
- 1576 Jīva Gosvāmī appointed *Mahānta* of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.
- 1578 Disappearance of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.
- 1580 Temple of Madana-mohana opens at Vṛndāvana.
- 1581 Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī completes *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.
- 1582 Disappearance of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī.
- 1583 Disappearance of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.
- 1585 Disappearance of Lokanātha Gosvāmī.
- 1590 Govindaji Mandira opens in Vṛndāvana.
- 1608 Disappearance of Jīva Gosvāmī.
- 1611 Disappearance of Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura.
- 1630 Disappearance of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita Gosvāmī
- 1638 Appearance of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.
- 1670 Emperor Aurangzeb attacks Vṛndāvana.
- 1708 Disappearance of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.
- 1838 Appearance of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.
- 1874 Appearance of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī.
- 1896 Appearance of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
- 1914 Disappearance of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.
- 1915 Disappearance of Gaura Kishore dāsa Babajī Mahārāja.
- 1933 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda initiated by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī at Allahabad.
- 1935 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda meets Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī at Rādhā-kuṇḍa.
- 1936 Disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī.
- 1954 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda takes *vānaprastha*.
- 1956 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda arrives in Vṛndāvana.
- 1959 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda takes *sannyāsa*.
- 1965 His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda sails to America.
- 1966 Incorporation of ISKCON in New York, U.S.A.
- 1975 Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandira opens in Vṛndāvana.
- 1977 Disappearance of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

Glossary

A

Abhiṣeka - bathing ceremony
Ācārya - one who teaches by example
Avatāra - the Lord's decent to earth

B

Bhajana - meditational practices especially chanting and hearing
Bhajana-kutira - small cottage or hut used for practicing meditaion
Bhakti - the process of devotional service
Brahmacārya - celibate student life
Brāhmaṇa - a wise and cultured person well-versed in Vedic knowledge
Brijvāsī - an inhabitant of Vṛndāvana

D

Darshana - seeing the form of the Lord in a temple
Dhāma - the abode or place of residence of the Lord
Dwara - gateway

E

Ekādaśī - eleventh day after both the full and new moon especially meant for remembering Lord Krishna. A day meant for fasting from grains.

G

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava - a devotee of the Lord following in the line of Lord Chaitanya
Gaura-śakti - the divine energy of Lord Chaitanya
Ghāta - bathing place on the bank of a river or lake
Gopīs - cowherd girlfriends of Lord Krishna
Gopas - cowherd boyfriends of Lord Krishna
Go-śālā - place for keeping cows
Gosvāmī - a holy man who can control the mind and senses
Grantha - sacred books like Śrīmad Bhāgavatam
Guru - a spiritual master or teacher
Gurukula - a school of Vedic learning guided by the spiritual master

J

Japa - soft chanting on beads

K

Kaupina - loin cloth used by holy men
Kali-yuga - the present age lasting 432,000 years, symptomised by quarrel and hypocrisy, the last in a cycle of four ages
Kirtana - the chanting of the holy names of the Lord accompanied by drums and cymbals
Kuṇḍa - a small pond or lake
Kuñja - a garden of bushes and flower trees

M

Madhukari - process of collecting alms by holy men
Mahā-mantra - the great chant for diliverence introduced by Lord Chaitanya: *Hare Krishna*

Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Mahā-bhāgavata- a highly advanced *Vaiṣṇava*

Mahā-puruṣa - great liberated person

Mandir - a temple of the Lord

Maṅgala-ārati - the daily pre-dawn worship of the Deity

Mañjarī - a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī

Mayavadi - one who meditates on the impersonal feature

N

Naistika-brahmacārī - one who has remained celibate from birth

P

Parikramā - circumbulation of a holy place or temple

Paṇḍita - a learned *brāhmaṇa*

Prasādam - the sacred remnants of food left by the Deity or spiritual master

Pratibhu-mūrti - a replica of the original Deity having the same spiritual potency

Pūjārī - a priest serving the Deity in the temple

Puṣpa Samādhi - A tomb containing flowers from the original *samādhi*

R

Rāsa-līlā - The Lord's pastime of dancing with the *gopīs*

Rāsa-mandala - the actual area where the *rāsa-līlā* takes place

S

Samādhi - the tomb of a saint

Sampradaya - disciplic line of succession

Sankīrtan-yajña - the sacrifice of chanting the holy names of the Lord congregationally

Sannyāsa - the renounced order of life

Śetra sannyāsi - a *sannyāsi* who vows never to leave the holy *dhāma*

Seva-pūja - offering of worship to the Deity

Smarta brāhmaṇa - *brāhmaṇas* who follow the *māyāvāda* school and accept only the *śrutis*

Sthali - a sacred place

Sthana - place of appearance

Suhajīya - materialistic devotee who takes everything cheaply

T

Tilaka - the sacred clay marking on the forehead and body of holy men

V

Vaiṣṇava - a devotee of Lord Krishna or Vishnu

Varnaprasta ashram - the ashram one enters on retiring from family life

Vraja - the entire area of Vṛndāvana *dhāma*

Y

Yavanas - a low class person with unclean habits like meat-eating

Yoga - the spiritual practice of linking oneself to God

Yuga-dharma - the religion of the age

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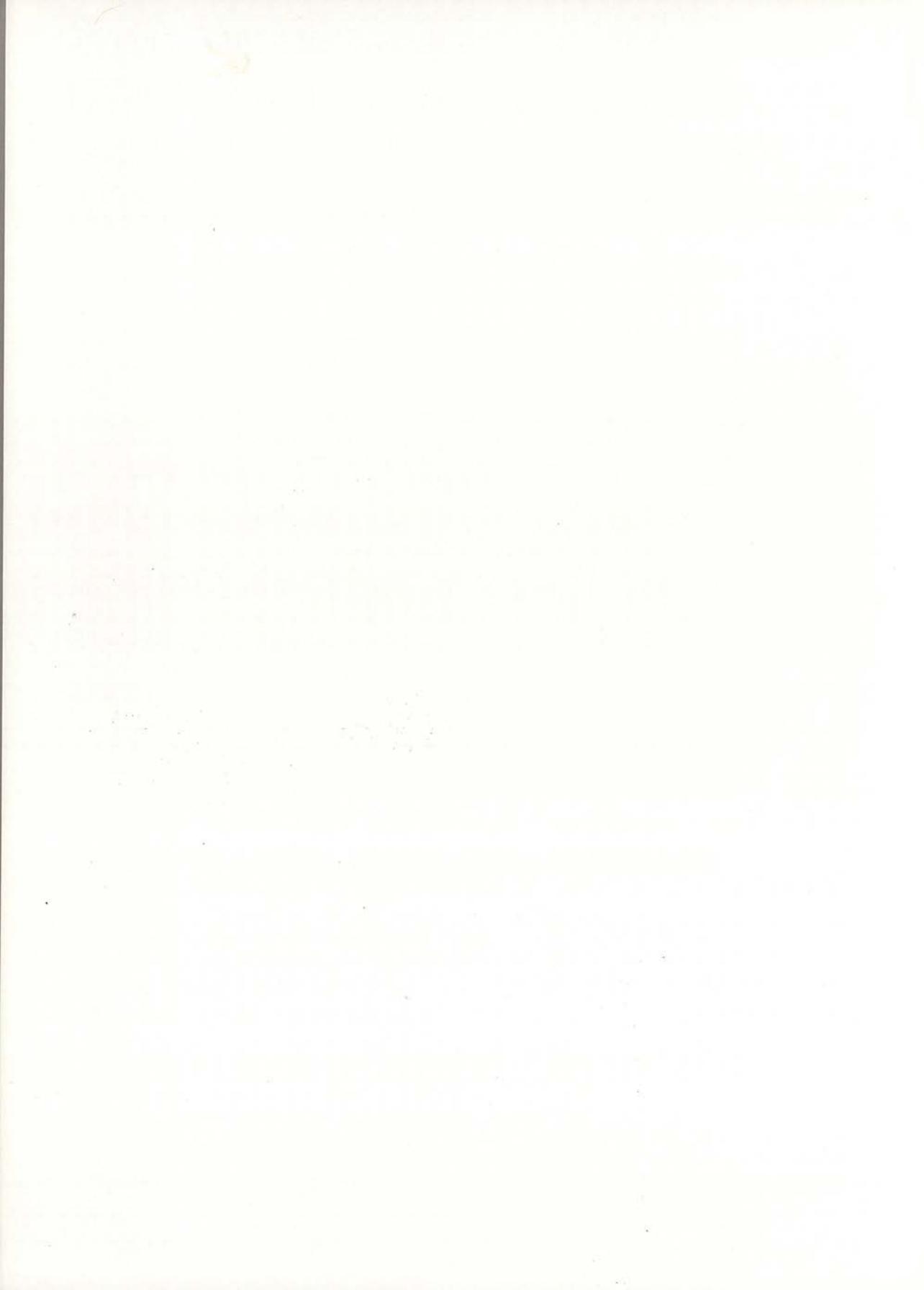
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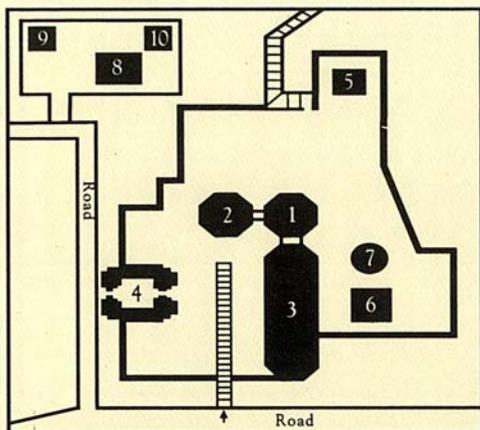
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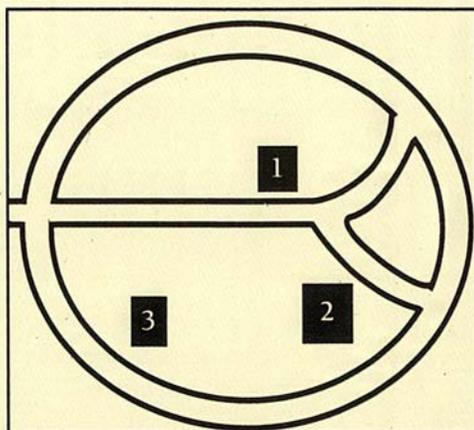


RĀDHĀ MADANA-MOHANA TEMPLE



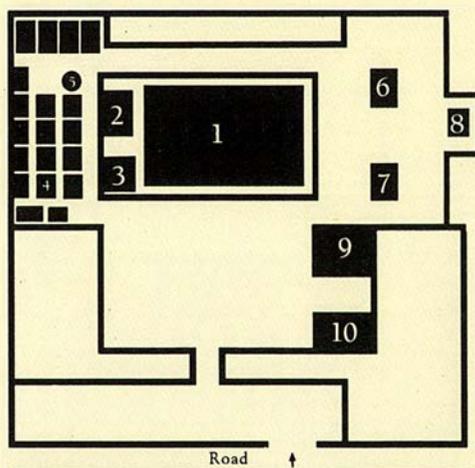
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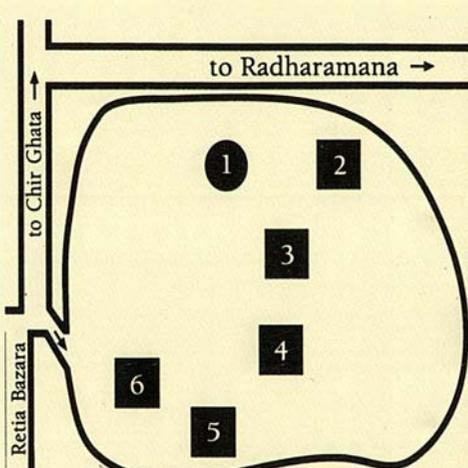
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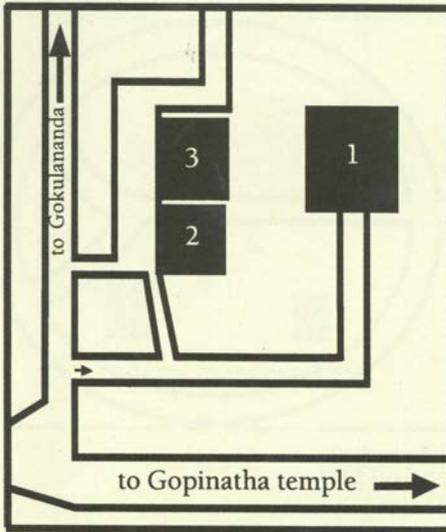
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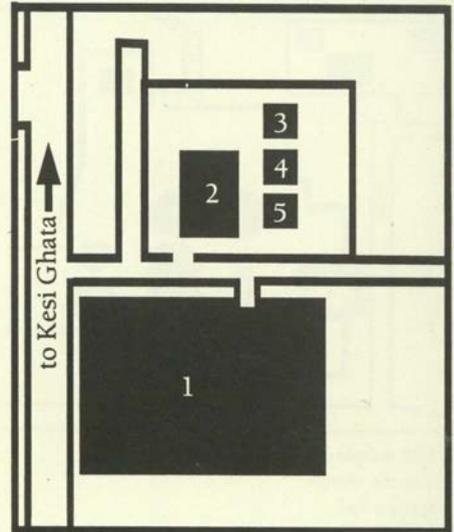
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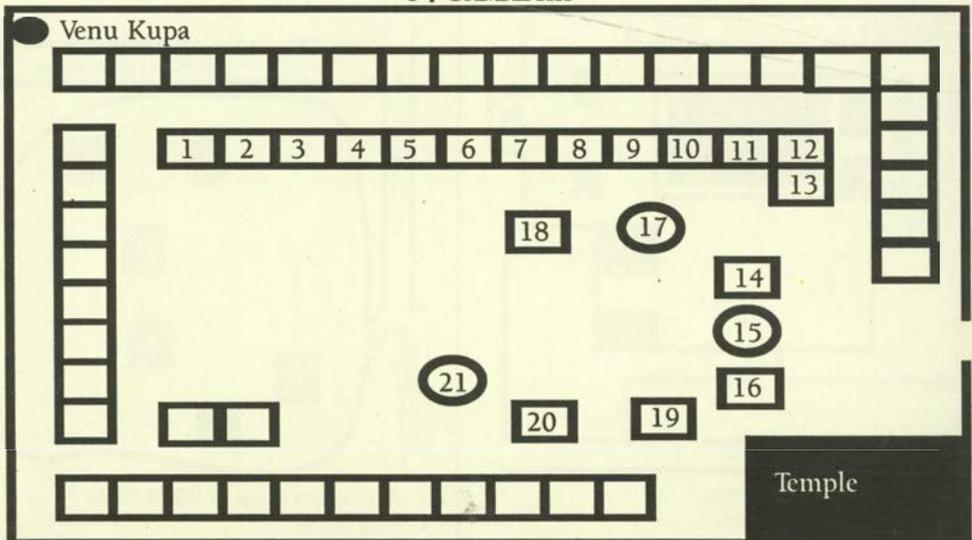
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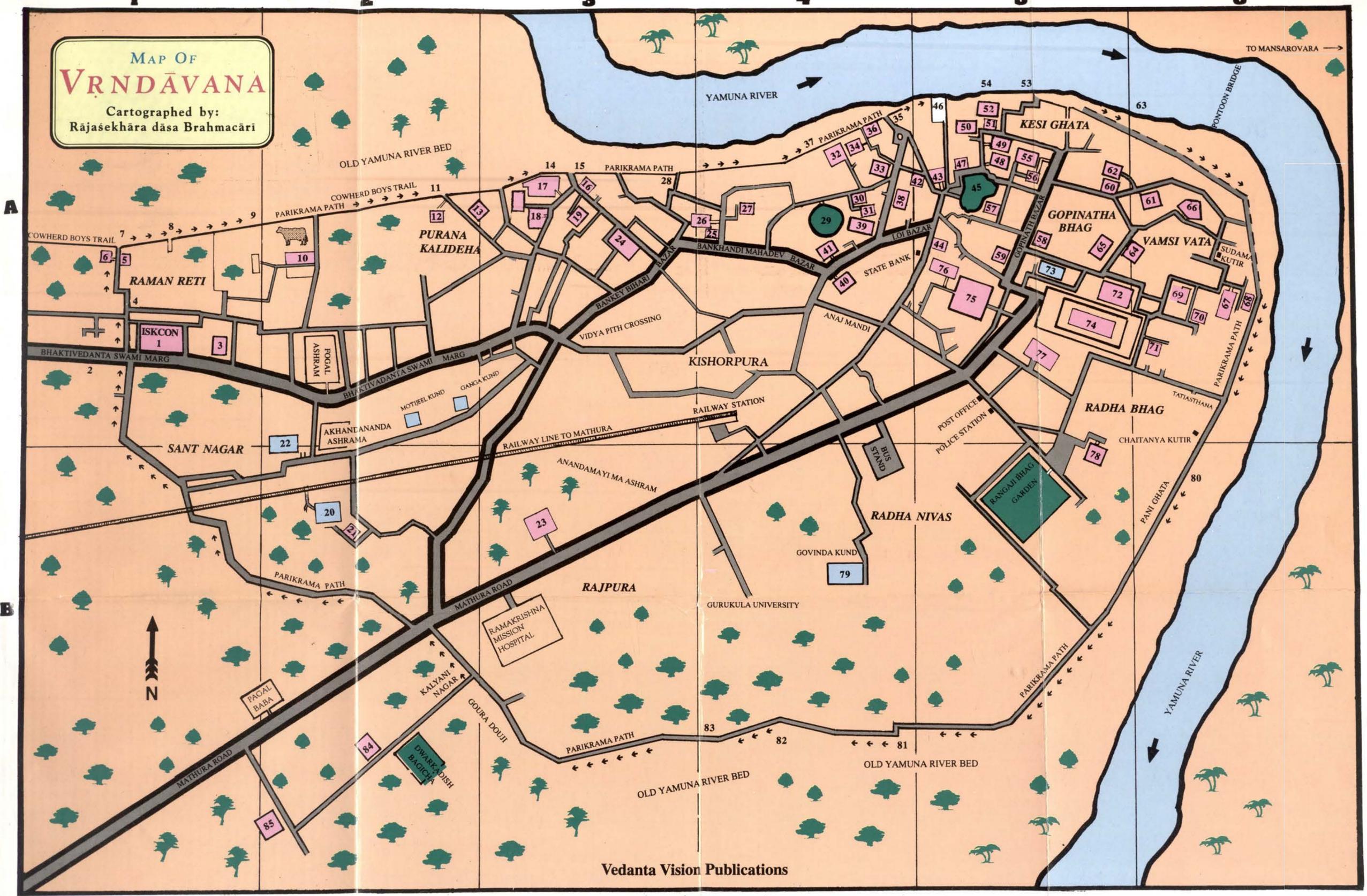
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