Replicating Vaiṣṇava worlds: organizing devotional space through the architectonics of the maṇḍala

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Online publication date: 21 March 2011
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The community in Bengal, Orissa and Braj that coalesced around Kṛṣṇa Caitanya (1486–1533) identified themselves as part of his maṇḍali, as these Vaiśṇava communities today are called. Devotees saw Caitanya as Kṛṣṇa, svayam bhagavān, who appeared replete with his dhāma, his entire entourage and environment. Consequently, every historical devotee was identified with one of Kṛṣṇa’s entourage in the mythic ancient time of Kṛṣṇa’s life. To organize these relations, individuals were mapped onto a maṇḍala, which provided the meditative yogāśīla. All five of the original lineages were marked, so that even today any devotee can trace his or her place in the structure. The architectonics of the maṇḍala is very frequently deployed within the tradition, although never formally addressed. These architectonics structured spiritual lineages, established social hierarchies, organized ritual cycles and pilgrimages and even structured historical narratives. Nostalgia for the mythic time of Kṛṣṇa himself, and subsequently for its later manifestation in the time of Caitanya, drove an organization of collective memory to replicate those structures to the point that history itself was only understood to be valid if it followed them. India’s Vaiśṇava kings were seen to rule the maṇḍala of earth as Nārāyaṇa did the celestial realms. But after their eclipse under the Mughals, Caitanya became the ‘mobile’ Jagannātha, whose entourage and environment accompanied him everywhere. This mobility transformed the Vaiśṇava world into heaven-on-earth wherever Vaiśṇavas congregated. Each lineage, each community propagates itself in precisely the same fashion so that the whole is always present, giving the community a decentralised coherence, that has continued over the last five centuries.

Keywords: Gauḍīya community; Vaiśṇava; Caitanya; maṇḍala; devotional space; Kṛṣṇa

In the half century following the departure of the Bengali god-man Kṛṣṇa Caitanya (1486–1533), his followers did not at all agree on how his widely accepted divinity was to be understood and agreed even less about what practices were sanctioned by Caitanya so they could follow him to his heavenly realm. The hagiographical literature was unparalleled in its diversity of opinion regarding Caitanya’s divinity. More than a dozen major theories were formally articulated in various hierarchical configurations. These ranged from simple notions of the Godhead descending according to the ancient Pāñcarātra theories of amāśa and kālā to classical purānic formulations of dasā- and līlāvatāras and the descents for the four ages or yugāvatāras, and finally a variety of perspectives that saw Caitanya as pūrṇa or svayam bhagavān, the God Himself. Today, it is assumed that all of these interpretations were simply different features of a unitary godhead that by coincidence and choice assumed

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different forms, crowned by the ultimate and primary reason for the descent, the androgynous incarnation of Kṛṣṇa mysteriously fused with Rādhā in order for Kṛṣṇa to revel in the sublime experience of his own divine love. Scholars have routinely credited the so-called gosvāmī theologians for resolving the differences and codifying the theology and practices devoted to Caitanya as Kṛṣṇa. It was Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja’s Caitanya caritāmṛta that provided a primer for that theological structure and its accompanying rituals practices or sādhana. This apparent unanimity of conception and presumption of harmony is the direct result of the rhetorical power of the Caitanya caritāmṛta and the synthesizing work of later generations. At the time of writing that text in the last decades of the sixteenth century, the future of the community was very much in question. Different groups in Navadvīpa, Śantipur, Bāghnāpāda, among other locales in Bengal, Orissa and the Vraja regions do not appear to have been engaged in any kind of overt disagreements or conflicts, but they did not by any measure constitute a cohesive whole, much less a sampradāya as later followers would argue.

Seventeenth-century writers Nityānanda Dasa and Narahari Cakravartī told the history of this communal formation in clear teleological terms. Working from the perspective of those who had experienced the unified community, these authors produced a master narrative that collapsed decades of diligent work to create the community, smoothing out the rough edges of what was obviously a struggle to persuade the devotees to see their world as part of a larger, unified community. The retrospective view made community formation out to be inevitable through the efforts of a trio of gifted students – Śrīnivāsaśārya, Narottama Dāsa and Śyāmānanda – who carried the Caitanya caritāmṛta and a host of primary theological and ritual texts from Vraja back to Bengal for copying and distribution. Writing the story for a new generation, who had never known anything else, the narrative, although drama-filled, never left any doubt about the outcome. What transpired with this trio of gosvāmī-trained devotees was a replica of what had happened when Caitanya first appeared nearly a century earlier. Somehow, the future too would be a replica of both of those pasts.

But what is never addressed in this master narrative, which continues today to shape the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava communal world, is the hidden mechanisms that make such a perspective possible, both then and now. The key lies in the unifying structure of the mandala, and it remains all-but-hidden because the mandala is never addressed formally in the theological speculations of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community. Mandalas per se seem to matter little in most practices, unlike, for instance, their rôle in the older Pāṇcarātra traditions, or in various tāntrika traditions, both Hindu and Buddhist. What does matter are the principles by which mandalas generate an organized navigable space, their architectonics. These features are conveniently and widely deployed in the organization of theology, ritual and ritual space, physical space and social space. The paradox of the mandala’s ubiquity yet near invisibility in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava world should alert us to its pervasive and persuasive power. Invisibility signals that these principles are deemed part of the natural order, a way of thinking and seeing that is so obvious as not to be remarked.

The roots of these morphologies of power are inherent in the origins of the earliest forms of Pāṇcarātra Vaiṣṇavism as a distinct form of religious and moral action. The Pāṇcarātra samhitās detail a highly structured universe that is ultimately negotiable through public and private rituals to extend the hegemonic order. The ritual process enables the practitioner to order and construct or, perhaps more accurately, continually reconstruct his world to establish his proper place according to the norms of cosmo-moral order or dharma. Much of the impulse of this ritual activity was found in contemporary constructions of dharmic kingship and, when executed properly, the Vaiṣṇava king created a world order that
mirrored Viṣṇu’s heavenly realm. These mirrored spheres – designated by the general term *mandala* – were centred through the king, who established a relationship to his kingdom that was analogous to Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa’s place in heavenly Goloka. These parallel spheres were understood to be aligned at specific junctures, thereby allowing the fragile temporal kingdom to share directly in the power of its eternal model. These conjunctions occur especially through the person of the king and his court, and through the physical structure of the temple, the temporal abode of the lord of the universe, Viṣṇu as īśvara. Both of these concentrated axes channel the primordial power of *dharma* into the world, and from that impose structure on their social and physical environs. In these ancient formulations, which are reflected more generally in the grand epics of the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, the execution of a perfect worldly order depends on rightly regulated conduct, which will in turn remove the *dharma*-observing Vaiṣṇava king. Temporal, physical and social space must, then, be constructed around the centrality of Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa so that worldly geography becomes sacred by imitating a divine cosmography. The world thus ordered becomes a mesocosmic *mandala*, homologous to heaven, and the Vaiṣṇava king guarantees its stability for those who live within its dominion. This impulse to structure and restructure space (and time) can be easily traced back to epic configurations, but is adopted dramatically and pragmatically after the imperium of the Guptas in the early medieval regional dynasties such as the Rāstrakūtas in western peninsular India and the Gurjara Pratihāras in the west and central regions among others deftly explored by Sheldon Pollock.⁷

Significantly, these early Pāṇcarātra models of order bear no provision for a world without a Vaiṣṇava king – and that is precisely the world in which Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas found themselves after the demise of the Gajapati dynasty in Orissa in 1568. The Gajapatis were the last Vaiṣṇava Hindu dynasty in north India, arguably the last major Hindu dynasty in the north.⁸ Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas began to coalesce around Caitanya during the reign of the greatest king of that lineage, Pratāparudra (r. 1497–1540), who, according to the biographical tradition, became himself a devotee of Caitanya. In the manner of older Vaiṣṇava kings, the Gajapati ruler legitimated his reign through the Jagannātha cult; and his complete participation in the ritual cycle tied his fortunes to that of Jagannātha and his community.⁹ But in a shift that perhaps signaled the imminent demise of royal Vaiṣṇavism, Caitanya was deemed to be the mobile (sacala) Jagannātha,¹⁰ instantiating his *dhāma* in the form of a *mandala* wherever he went, this mobility freeing the communal structure from the temple cult.

Although Caitanya’s immediate following seems to have enjoyed a reasonable protection under the rule of Pratāparudra and his sons along the coast of Orissa south to Kaliṅga, the majority of the Vaiṣṇavas who followed Caitanya did not live under this royal Hindu protection. The regions of Bengal had not known sustained Hindu rule since the fall of the Sena dynasty in early thirteenth century, starting with the invasion by Muhammad Bakhtiyār Khilji in 1202. During the life of Caitanya and the initial period of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava growth, Husain Shāh (r. 1497–1519) and his sons controlled Bengal. This dynasty gave way in 1538 to a period of shifting rule that pitted Afghan against Mughal, and Bengal was finally consolidated for Mughal rule by Mān Siṅgh in the latter part of the century.¹¹ In the Mathurā region, where the gosvāmī theologians of the community worked to restore the pilgrimage centre of Vraja, Mughal rule was consolidated early on, for it was on the doorstep of the Mughal capitals. Without the benefit of a Hindu king as the ritual source of moral authority and guarantor of *dharma*, this Vaiṣṇava community, which operated out of Vraja, Puri and Bengal, not only survived, but thrived up to the present. The tradition makes clear that when the community was identified devotee-for-devotee with Krṣṇa
and his companions in the mythic Urzeit and subsequently reconstituted by the community at the Kheturi festival, its structure was in its most basic form of the mandala, which provided order in the absence of any other authority. The textual evidence points to their use, the architectural evidence confirms it and rituals developed over the last five centuries serve as the primary purveyors of the system; but their physical representation as images are extant only from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Religious nostalgia and memory

Just before Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja completed his hagiography of Caitanya in the late sixteenth century, a pandita named Kavikarṇapūra working in Nadiyā and Nilācala (Puri) began to circulate a short Sanskrit composition titled Gaurānandaśadāpikā or ‘The Lamp of the enumeration of the followers of the Golden One [Caitanya]’. The text opens (vv. 6–20) with a salutation to Caitanya and his closest associates known as the paṅca tattva, the ‘five metaphysical elements’ for the inculcation of bhakti devotion. In this configuration, Kṛṣṇa Caitanya is understood to have descended with his entourage, his dhāma, to establish the conditions for and then to propagate a new devotion. Caitanya functioned as the principle of svayam bhakta rūpa, the innate true form of the devotee (which necessarily included all possible forms, in the same manner that Kṛṣṇa as svayam bhagavān functions as the avatārin to include all possible avatāras); he is complete in and of himself. But Kṛṣṇa as Caitanya chose to spread responsibility for this propagation beyond his own immediate span on earth and so he descended with Nityānanda who was Kṛṣṇa’s elder brother Balarāma, the principle of the bhakta svarūpa or true form of the devotee. Caitanya’s elder brahmin companion was Advaitacārya, Sadāśiva, who descended as the bhaktāvatāra. Childhood companion Gadādhara was understood to be Rādhā, the principle of the bhakti sakti that empowered Caitanya to experience the highest form of love, prema. Finally came Śrīvastra (not to be confused with the later Śrīvīla who carried the gosvāmī books back to Bengal), in whose compound Caitanya as the not-yet-initiated Viṣvambhara discovered the extent of his emotional ecstasy in lengthy kīrtana sessions. Śrīvastra descended as the ideal bhakta or exemplary ordinary devotee, the embodiment of Nārada, who represented the rest of the practising community. One of only two truly original theories of divine descent in this tradition, the theology of the paṅca tattva included every individual within the tightly knit community. To be a devotee was to be a part of this divinely descended realm and the comprehensiveness of this inclusion is perhaps the most critical feature to make this theological position so powerful.

Kavikarṇapūra attributed this incarnational theory to Svarūpa Dāmodara in Puri, the man who served as amanuensis to Caitanya during his last decades and was the arbiter of proper devotion as applied to aesthetics through rasa sāstra. When Kṛṣṇadāsa composed his monumental Caitanya caritāmṛta, he opened with ślokas of Svarūpa that outline the paṅca tattva in eight chapters (CC 1.1–8). To expand this image, he picked up a metaphor from the Gaurānandaśadāpikā (v. 22) that identified Caitanya’s paramaguru Mādhavendra Puri as the tree of bhakti; in Kṛṣṇadāsa’s hands the image transformed to a more elaborate wishing tree of devotion, bhaktikalpataru (CC 1.9). In the next chapters (CC 1.10–12), he enumerated hundreds of followers of Caitanya, Nityānanda, Advaitacārya and Gadādhara, explaining who made up the remaining devotees with Śrīvīla. The image posed Caitanya as mysteriously both trunk and main root, with his gurus and paramagurus feeder and lateral roots; then out of that central column sprouted the branches of his four main followers, with their bands of followers duly indicated as smaller branches which I have crudely drawn (Figure 1). This clever image invokes the old
Vedic tree that grows from a heavenly realm to earth, from timelessness to time or history, an even more appropriate image because Caitanya as Kṛṣṇa does make precisely this kind of descent (Figure 2). In either configuration, the image has the advantage of not appearing to favour one group of devotees over another, a strategy consistent with Kṛṣṇadāsa’s attempts to consolidate the various devotional factions into a unified whole while maintaining an air of neutrality. Kṛṣṇadāsa’s segue away from the theological discussion of the pañca tattva doctrine in the opening sections of the Caitanya caritāmṛta to the image of the tree of bhakti appears to be crude and disconnected. But the images are a seamless change of perspective: An azimuthal projection of that tree (from above or below) maps the pañca tattva onto the tree with Caitanya represented in the polar centre and the four groups of devotees stipulated by the main branches radiating out from it, which I have again crudely drawn (Figure 3). When smoothed out according to the basic geometry of the squared circle, the image easily generates the basic symmetry of the mandala (Figure 4). At first glance, this image may well appear an accident, but as will become apparent, it is anything
but. Significantly, Kṛṣṇadāsa paid homage to as many devotees as he could muster in outlining the contours of the bhaktikalpataru, yet he chose not to pursue explicitly the concept of the dhāma that was the primary concern of Kavikarnāpura’s Gauraganoddeśadipikā.¹²

The logic of the descent of the dhāma carried significant implications, for each devotee of Caitanya was understood to be one of Kṛṣṇa’s companions in eternal Vraja. Kavikarṇāpura listed nearly two hundred of Caitanya’s followers with their identities matched to their heavenly counterparts. This list was the culmination of about half a century of speculation, for each of the hagiographers paid special attention to the personalities of the devotees who followed Caitanya and their social relationship to him. This exercise that helped the community develop a consensus about their identities among the celestials surrounding Kṛṣṇa. Some were obvious. Jagannātha Miśra and Saṁcī were Kṛṣṇa’s foster parents Nanda and Yaśodā respectively. Caitanya’s first hagiographer, a devotee of Rāma, was understood to be Hanumān; whereas the intimate devotee Jagadānanda was the descended form of Satyabhāma; and Sandipāṇi Muni, who had invested Kṛṣṇa with the sacred thread in Mathurā appeared as the venerable sage Keśava Bhārati. Not
Figure 3. Tree of Bhakti (generated from Polar azimuthal projection).

Figure 4. Pañca tattva maṇḍala (generated from Polar Azimuthal Projection).
all figures were so easily classified, because they assumed multiple rôles that required a more complicated devotional calculus to rectify, such as Râmânanda Râya, identified as Kṛṣṇa’s childhood friend the cowherd Arjuna, as Pâṇḍava Arjuna, as gopī Lalitā, and as the lesser-known gopī Arjuniyā. Through a process of disciplined recollection (smarana) that stretched over the better part of the sixteenth century – based on careful accounting of personal proclivities and personality, social standing, proximity and relationship to Caitanya throughout his life, and individual devotional habits – the followers of Caitanya established sets of homologous identities linking those who participated in the historical līlās of Caitanya to those who participated in the eternal līlās of Kṛṣṇa in Vraja. Concentration on this religious nostalgia allowed them to reconstruct that past in the present.

Because Kṛṣṇa always descended to earth with his entire entourage and environment (the dhāma replete), theology dictated the necessity of the presence of his companions. It was imperative to identify them, for devotees had been given a glimpse, albeit all-too-short, of heaven recreated on earth. The urgency to clarify that reality seems to have been driven by a sense that because devotees had witnessed and recorded a world of heavenly perfection, it was incumbent on those left behind to understand its structure so that they too could at least attempt to replicate and maintain it within the practising community. Importantly, because the group’s structure hinged on individual and group relationships to god (Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya), the community itself was not place-bound. It could be created anywhere as long as the relationships were identified, because Vraja was always present wherever Kṛṣṇa was present. The implication was clear: when it was fully reconstituted, the dhāma generated the heavenly space with it. Because every devotee from the sixteenth century onwards would automatically find himself or herself as a leaf on one of the branches of those original guru lineages, it followed that wherever the community was replicated, eternal heaven itself was instantiated in that historical moment.

Kṛṣṇa’s world of timeless Vraja

For Caitanya’s followers of the sixteenth century, the initial identification of figures in their present world required a thorough understanding of Kṛṣṇa’s friends and companions. Because of the devotees’ love for Kṛṣṇa, his entourage was well known. This knowledge was reinforced by each of the 64 vaidhī ritual injunctions outlined by Rūpa Gosvāmī in Bhaktirasāmr tasindhu and subsequently developed by others. Each of those 64 ritual activities was designed to celebrate the various moments in the play of Kṛṣṇa. By sharing these stories publicly, and privately contemplating their portent, adept devotees developed an acute sensibility regarding the proclivities of each character in those Vraja līlās. The various ritual or practical contexts in which these lists of characters were invoked or recapitulated is not altogether clear for the earliest decades of the community’s growth. But by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, devotees had articulated elaborate meditative constructs to aid them in visualizing these relationships. Few although they are, these devices taken together represent one of the few sites in the tradition where the formal concept of a manda la is overtly deployed. Those formulations are subsequently used to generate graphic yantras for ritual consumption in the form of yogapīṭhas. In a contemporary example of the genre, Figure 5 shows a hand-drawn version of the yantra titled ŚrīŚrīvṛndāvanityalīlāyogapīṭhambujā or ‘The lotiform yogic meditative device for the eternal activities of the holy Vṛndāvana’, that is, the eternal Kṛṣṇa līlā.

Working from the inside, we find Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā in the centre, surrounded by mantras. The core holding Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is composed of two interlocking triangles
(symbolically masculine pointed up, feminine pointed down) indicating their simultaneous union and distinction or separation (the basis for the Gauḍīya preference for the acintya bheda bheda theology of ‘simultaneous distinction-non-distinction that is rationally uncognizable’\textsuperscript{19}). The centre is circled by three concentric mantras, the most interior of which invokes the primordial reality of Kṛṣṇa (klīm kṛṣṇāya svāhā), and which is resident on the interior of the extruded smaller triangles (turning them into petals), visually reinforcing the identity of Kṛṣṇa as svayam bhagavān, the innate Lord Himself. The next mantra then invokes Kṛṣṇa as Govinda in the company of his gopīs (klīm kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopījanavallabhāya svāhā) and is fixed in the exterior interstitial spaces, visually presenting the gopīs as extensions of Kṛṣṇa’s basic character, yet differentiated as saktis. The third and outermost of these concentric mantras invokes the efflorescence of Kṛṣṇa’s romance with Rādhā and the gopīs (klīm kāmadevāya vidmahe puspavānāya dhīmahi tanno ‘naṁga pracodayāt), and it delimits the perimeter of the circle, enclosing the other two, thereby demarcating the realm of essential activity and the primary focus of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava religiosity.\textsuperscript{20} Another concentric circle surrounds the central couple composed of eight
figures, called *mañjarīs*, who are servants of Rādhā functioning to facilitate and enhance her trysts with Kṛṣṇa, thereby indirectly serving Kṛṣṇa. These just-pubescent girls – all of whom are further emanations of Rādhā’s *sakti* – are never the direct object of Kṛṣṇa’s amorous advances, but they are privileged to the inner circle and witness Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s lovemaking as part of their service to her. Directly under each name is written each *mañjarī*’s colouration, the type of dress and the nature of the service she offers. Around this select inner circle radiate the remaining players in Kṛṣṇa’s amorous sport.\(^{21}\)

The first row of eight petals constitutes the first order of *gopīs* or *sakhīs*, women who are companions of Rādhā, whereas the second row marks the second order. All of these women have direct relationships to Kṛṣṇa, at least in potentia, and participate from time to time directly in his love play. They are the constituent parties to the *rāsa līlā* or circle dance described in the *Bhāgavata purāṇa* (10.29–33) and the other activities depicted in that text and others, such as Jayadeva’s perennially popular *Gītagovinda*. As companions of Rādhā, however, they are also marked for colouration, dress, and the occasional services they provide when they are not the object of Kṛṣṇa’s advances. Further down the eight inner petals, we find the names of additional *sakhīs* who figure less prominently in the *līlās*, but who are present and participate in a more limited way. Each of the eight primary *gopīs* are understood to be the best of – and therefore to represent metonymically – that rank of companions. The overall orientation of the *yantra* lies along the primary geographic axes, with four different Vraja-based forms of the goddess marking the gateways of the cardinal directions. From these central figures the relations of those in heavenly Vṛndāvana flow in ranked hierarchies.

This *yantra* represents the essential configuration of Kṛṣṇa in his realm according to the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava preference for the erotic. On the continuum of emotional stances, the well-known preference for loving sweetness (*mādhurya*), the epitome of which is erotic love (*śṛṅgāra*), represents the most satisfying love for a Gaudīya devotee because it is believed to be more satisfying for Kṛṣṇa. From that, other forms of love are graded eventually terminating at the opposite extreme that focuses on interaction with his awe-inspiring celestial lordship (*aiśvarya*). When hierarchized, the forms extend indefinitely to encompass all permutations within the taxonomy of the types of love a devotee might cultivate for Kṛṣṇa and who, significantly, reciprocates by presenting himself to the devotee in the corresponding form. Working from the less satisfying forms at the bottom of the hierarchy which correspond to the periphery of the *mandala*, *śānta* designates the awe of absolute submission appropriate for a subject in the presence of his ruling sovereign. This corresponds to the *aiśvarya* dimension of Kṛṣṇa. It is followed by *dāśya*, the love of a servant, which is more intimate, but still decidedly vertical in orientation. In Rūpa Gosvāmī’s schema, the next two forms properly rank *sakhya*, the love of friends or companions, below *vātsalya*, the love of a parent to a child. But the popular reconfiguration follows the emendations of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja which either grants rough equivalence to the two forms or subtly emphasizes *sakhya* over *vātsalya*.\(^{22}\) Regardless of their rank, both forms alternate, albeit differently, between horizontal and vertical orientations, according to the immediate connection of the individual to Kṛṣṇa. Given the paramountcy of the erotic, the shift in emphasis hardly affects the ordinary Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava devotee. By virtue of its completeness, *śṛṅgāra* (amorous love) alone exceeds all other forms, for this love encompasses all possible relationships and is directed at Kṛṣṇa in his *mādhurya* feature. Each successive step subsumes those prior, which is what makes *śṛṅgāra* most complete and therefore most satisfying\(^{23}\) (Table 1). When these forms of love are overlaid on the *yantra* in Figure 5, the graded and ranked *sthāyibhāvas* parallel the proclivities of the individuals positioned on that *yantra*. At the centre the ultimate experience of *śṛṅgāra* in the form
of Rādhā conjoined with Kṛṣṇa radiates out to lesser graded forms (in this example, the entire yantra is a graded version of śringāra tinged with sakhyā or companionship at the fringes).

**Kṛṣṇa’s world replicated in Gaura’s Navadvīpa**

Because Caitanya’s contemporaries were understood to be a part of Kṛṣṇa’s dhāma descended with him, they too could be and are plotted in a similar fashion on their own analogous maṇḍala. Retrieving the Caitanya maṇḍala from the same Śrī śrī gauragovindā rātacakāla nityālvātā guṭikā of Kṛṣṇadāsa Siddhabābā used above24 (Figure 6), we find Mahāprabhu (Caitanya) in the centre, with Advaitacārya in the east, Nityānanda in the south, Śrīvāsa in the west and Gadoḍhara Pāṇḍita in the north (compare with the azimuthal projection of the wishing tree of devotion in Figure 4).

These figures are located within the two interlocking triangles observed in the first maṇḍala, and in whose points or petals reside the mantra invoking Caitanya as the Golden One or Gaura (kīm gaurāya svāhā).

In the circle immediately surrounding the paṁca tattva, there are eight male devotees titled gosvāmī. Starting in the east and moving clockwise through the directions, we find Rāghunātha Bhaṭṭa (e), Rāghunātha Dāsa (se), Gopāla Bhaṭṭa (s), Jīva (sw), Sanātana (w), Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja (nw), Rūpa (n) and Lokanātha (ne). These include the traditional and popular six gosvāmīs, with the addition of Lokanātha and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, the latter being the author of the *Caitanya caritāmara*.25 On each of the eight petals of the lotus, we find the names of eight prominent devotees from Bengal and Orissa during Caitanya’s life, who are collectively known as the eight mahants, and finally, lower ranked devotees guard the four gateways.

The basic structure of the Caitanya maṇḍala is the same as that of the Kṛṣṇa maṇḍala. Based on the theory of the incarnation of the dhāma, we would expect to and do find that the relative positions of individuals on the yantra would connect each earthly identity to its celestial counterpart. The gosvāmīs take as their celestial identities the form of maṇjarīs, so the inner ring in the Caitanya yantra matches in form and identity that in the Kṛṣṇa yantra, for instance, Rūpa Gosvāmī is Rūpa Maṇjarī and Sanātana Gosvāmī is Lavaṅga Maṇjarī and so forth.26 Similarly, among the eight mahanṭs, we find the appropriate alternate identities between the two maṇḍalas, for instance, Svarūpa Dāmodara is the gopi Viśākhā; and the same holds for the guardians of the gateway, for example, Mukunda Dāsa is aligned with the figure Vṛndāveṇī and so forth. As noted above, these identities are found in the *Gauraganoddeśadīpikā* and by the end of the sixteenth century were sufficiently standardized that few lists vary, although these two yantras do mildly diverge. The basic construct, then, is replicated between the Kṛṣṇa yantra and the Caitanya yantra as nearly interchangeable yogapīṭhas (Table 2).27

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**Table 1. Kṛṣṇa divinity and directed practices.**

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<th>Quality</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Bhāva</th>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Maṇḍala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mādhurya</td>
<td>Kān or Kānu</td>
<td>śrīgūra</td>
<td>rāgāṅgūra</td>
<td>Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Govinda</td>
<td>sakhyā</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bālagopāla</td>
<td>vātsalya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kṛṣṇa of Gītā</td>
<td>dāsya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aśvarya</td>
<td>Nārāyaṇa</td>
<td>śānta</td>
<td>vaidhyā</td>
<td>Periphery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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24 Smith, 2011, p. 123.
26 Smith, 2011, p. 152.
27 Smith, 2011, p. 159.
Table 2. Key *maṇḍala* structures in comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caitanya <em>maṇḍala</em></th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Kṛṣṇa <em>maṇḍala</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>pañca tattva</em></td>
<td>Center</td>
<td>Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight gosvāṁts</td>
<td>Inner circle</td>
<td>Eight <em>mañjars</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight mahants</td>
<td>Primary leaves</td>
<td>Sixteen <em>sakhīs</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four devotees</td>
<td>Gateways</td>
<td>Goddesses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accommodating apparent disjunctions of representation**

Although there can be little question about the symmetry of homologies between the two organizing *maṇḍalas*, the representations make clear that the precise item-for-item reproduction of the order for the one is not required in the other. Rather, their differences demonstrate the power of the *maṇḍala* as flexible organizational structure. It is relational according to principles that allow for the content to remain coherently conceived, although
variable in specifics. The symmetry of hierarchy (centre/periphery, up/down, directional) dictates the relationships. Details will vary depending on the historical circumstance and what the creator of the yantra wishes to emphasize. In the comparison of these two yantras, several notable disjunctions appear that illustrate the flexibility. The most obvious is the difference in the number of petals on the lotus, the Kṛṣṇa yantra showing 16 sakhiṣ, whereas the Caitanya yantra shows but eight. The inner circle of eight sakhiṣ, however, does represent 64 additional gopīṣ, who appear on the Caitanya yantra as 64 additional mahants. Tradition has it that there are 64 mahants, with 32 minor or upamahants (not shown on the mandala). These mahants were devotees who, during Caitanya’s lifetime, publicly recognized his divinity and made the annual pilgrimage to Puri in the later years of Caitanya’s life to celebrate the Jagannātha ratha yātra or Car Festival. These men were variously divided as members of the primary lineages of Caitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita and Gadādhara Paṇḍita.28 That there are minor differences in these lists reflects different emphases for different parts of the tradition in Bengal, Orissa and Vraja. For instance, in the Caitanya yantra (Figure 6) the handwritten note in the box in the lower left corner says ‘Note: In place of Śrī Mādhava Ghoṣa insert Śrī Vakreśvara Paṇḍita’. Clearly, the author was not concerned to rearrange the components of the mandala; simply noting the substitution was sufficient and would be viewed as both an ordinary and unremarkable emendation. The slots represent relationships but the historical individuals placed therein are not absolute. It is the structure that is enduring.29

When placing the individual in greater or lesser proximity to the centre according to the style of worship, the Caitanya maṇḍala accommodates different interpretations of Caitanya’s divinity and notably without conflict. The worship by the gosvāmīs as maṇjarīs requires that Caitanya be the androgynous incarnation of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa fused together, whereas Gadādhara becomes another sakhi. Worship of the paṇca tattva allows Gadādhara to assume Rādhā’s role although identifying Caitanya solely as Kṛṣṇa. The mahants surrounding the centre can function in either mode, aiding the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa or participating as direct objects of Kṛṣṇa’s affection themselves. The 12 gopālas centre on Nityānanda and Caitanya in the mode of companionship or sakhyā, although occasionally interacting with the mahants as sakhiṣ.30 A worshipper would utilize only that part of the yantra that was appropriate to his interpretation and mode of bhakti.

With each member of the original cast of the Caitanya līlā potentially incorporated into the yantra in concentric circles, ranked by the type of love each exhibits, the entire community is hierarchized by the same principles exhibited by the Kṛṣṇa yantra. The structure proves to be neatly expandable. This expansiveness has important implications for community organization: the key individuals indicated in the Caitanya maṇḍala – paṇca tattva, eight gosvāmīs, eight primary mahants, who lead 64 secondary mahants and the 12 gopālas – serve as the beginning points of guru lineages.31 The maṇḍala, then, not only organizes the original community, but radiates that order through history, for every devotee’s lineage derives from this original set. Any Gauḍīya Vaishṇava will be able to locate his place in the larger temporal order by tracing his guru lineage into the structure of the maṇḍala – and in this way the utopian Ur-community of the incarnated dhāma continues to impose order long after its original inhabitants have departed back to heavenly Vṛndāvana. A devotee can then place at the centre any part of his paramparā and generate the appropriate sets of relationships from among those emanating figures, which has the effect of customizing the maṇḍala as yogapīṭha as a blueprint for local community, not just the historical Ur-community.

This flexible structure is perfectly suited for the decentred community, for there is no one central lineage, no one central geographic region, and no one institutional body to
sanction ritual action or canon, save the cohesive power of the *Caitanya caritāmṛta*, which itself uses the hierarchical grading system of the *mandala* to make its own case. This replicability of the community *mandala* guarantees that each generation somehow mirrors or even reproduces the generations prior. It is easy to acknowledge that the *mandala* provides such a blueprint, especially when each smaller community calls itself a *mandali*. But it is more than a blueprint, for the principles of the *mandala*’s organization, its architectonics, do not simply duplicate, but actually *generate* the forms through which the devotee perceives the world, which is to say, the principles are not passively observed, but actively engaged. These forms extend from the mental and emotional spaces of advanced visualization practices to the physical spaces of ritual and pilgrimage and the theological underpinnings that undergird these constructions. These principles generate space and collapse time into an infinitely replicable world that constitutes the ‘real world’ of the practitioner.

**Constructing ritual time and space**

In laying out the prescribed 64 *vaidhī* ritual acts in the *Bhaktirasāmrtasindhu* (1.2.72–244), Rūpa Gosvāmī ranks five above the rest (vv. 225–44). Those five metonymically represent the entire set: chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa, celebrating the stories of Kṛṣṇa from the various sources of revelation, performing ritual worship of the image of Kṛṣṇa, keeping the company of holy men who have dedicated their lives to Kṛṣṇa and visiting and living in Vraja. Chanting the name (which includes *mantra*, *japa*, *kīrtana*) by itself in turn functions as a metonym for the top five and by extension for all 64. It is easy to see how the *yogapītha* to Kṛṣṇa (Figure 5) could aid in the celebration of the *līlās* of Kṛṣṇa and at least tangentially in several of the others. The one injunction least likely to be observed is the last: visiting and then taking up residence in Mathurā. But in this tradition, Mathurā is not just the literal geophysical location of Vraja. It is a construct generated by the devotee that is a microcosm of that physical landscape. Vraja is construed as a *mandala* – the term does mean after all an orb or realm or region – but at least by certain practitioners in the Gauḍīya tradition this is not a simple metaphor or casual identification. Vraja is understood to be constructed following the same relational architectonics used to generate the *mandalas* of Kṛṣṇa seen above (Figure 5) and the entire region is subsequently ordered according to the graded hierarchy of the types of love previously noted (Table 1).

The principles for ranking the types of love, which are then matched to forms of divinity, lead to a corresponding designation of heavenly destinations for those so involved. Locales in heavenly Vaikuṇṭha are graded according to proximity to Kṛṣṇa, with its most esoteric recesses occupied by the flute-playing Kān or Kānu, the intimate paramour favoured by the *gopīs*. The more intimate, the closer to the centre, the locus of the *mādhurya* forms of Kṛṣṇa; the less intimate, the farther one moves towards the periphery to embrace the *aiśvarya* forms. According to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviṟāja’s summary of the cosmography of Vaikuṇṭha, in the heart lies Vṛndāvana as part of the intimate landscape of Goloka (*CC* 1.3.3; 1.5.11–15; 2.15.170–77; 2.20.180–84; 2.21.2–42, 73–81). Farther afield lies Mathurā, with Dvārkā most distant still. All of these are encompassed at the periphery by the greater terrain of Kṛṣṇaloka. This graded cosmography reflects the same hierarchical arrangement found in the forms of love. But it would be wrong to attempt to impose a precise one-for-one correspondence. We should rather see the locale as a function of orientation and tendency, situated along a continuum of experience which allows for finer gradations of placement, especially since these ideal forms of love are seldom embodied exclusively by any one character save Rādāhā (Table 3). That minor disparity underscores the resilience of the *mandala* construct that easily adjusts to the theological, political, or
Table 3. Cosmography of heaven.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Bhāva</th>
<th>Heaven</th>
<th>Manḍala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mādhurya</td>
<td>śrīgāra</td>
<td>Vṛndāvana and Goloka</td>
<td>Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mathurā</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dvārakā</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aśvarya</td>
<td>śānta</td>
<td>Krṣṇaloka</td>
<td>Periphery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nirguṇa brahman</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enveloping effulgence</td>
<td>Extra-manḍala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

social emphasis at stake, allowing the forms to demonstrate minor inconsistencies although remaining conceptually coherent. The proximate locations situate śrīgāra in its rightful home in the centre of Vṛndāvana, sakhyā and vātsalya, in both Goloka and Dvārakā, with dāsya covering Dvārakā and the remainder of Krṣṇaloka and oriented towards Krṣṇa’s martial, theriomorphic and celestial forms. Significantly in this scheme, śānta is associated not with Nārāyaṇa’s celestial forms, but with the vedāntic experience of mokṣa or liberation – reflecting the ambivalence within the tradition whether or not śānta is reckoned as a proper form of love. This vedāntic goal, wherein individual identity is diffused into the larger reality, takes its presence as the penumbra of Paravyoma that surrounds the manḍala of Vaikuṇṭha heaven with an ethereal effulgence where there can be no interaction with Krṣṇa.

The physical land of Vraja located some 145 kilometres south-southeast of New Delhi was in this configuration understood to be a physical replica of the eternal Vraja. But it is more than a replica. Rather, it is a genuine homologue, wherein every hill, tank, river, ghat and so forth is identical to its heavenly version; they are coterminous. Each feature of the landscape has been extolled by devotees since the recovery of the lost sites of Vraja that began in earnest in the sixteenth century. The landscape is well traversed by visiting devotees, many of whom make the full parikrama or circumambulation of the entire Vraja region and within that of each of the stops along the way, such as Govardhana Hill, the Vṛndāvana circuit visiting the 12 forests (vana) and the 24 groves (upavana) and so forth. Each major Vaiṣṇava tradition attached to the region fixes their own itineraries, but variations are minimal (e.g. Gauḍīya devotees do not actually climb Mt. Govardhana as do others). The oldest guides for Gauḍīyas were generated by the devotees in the sixteenth century, first found in the narratives of Krṣṇadāsa’s Caitanya carītaṁrta (2.17–18) and other hagiographies, but were developed in earnest during the following century. Manohara Dāsa’s 17th c. Anurāgavallī (chap. 6) follows the peregrinations of Śrīnivāśacārya and Narottama Dāsa to and around Vraja in his pilgrimages back from Bengal. But it is Narahari Cakravartī’s Bhaktiratnakara that set the standard for such narratives, for he takes the reader every step around Vraja, stopping to recount the stories of each site – forests, temples, gardens, groves, tanks, hills, pathways, roads and even stones. The whole of chapter five is devoted to this description, where he lists 350 separate sites in more than 3800 Bengali and Sanskrit couplets. This chapter is still consulted by individuals looking to make the pilgrimage today. Today, cheaply printed pilgrimage guides to the sites are abundant in several languages. But few provide more than the simplest of sketched maps or line drawings of the region, which are often accompanied by blurry illustrations.

In the late 1980s when I was working with Edward C. Dimock to complete the translation of Caitanya caritāmṛta, I discovered a handwritten manuscript of a Vraja pilgrimage guide. The 71 page manuscript bears the name of Harikṛṣṇa Dāsa and is titled Śrī vana jātrā, śrī caraṇa bharasa, śrī śrī vrajamanḍala caurāśi kroṣā parikrama (Figure 7). It is hand-stitched in the shape of a modern printed text, with 71 pages of text measuring...
Figure 7. Title page of *parikrama*.

6.5’ × 8’ (±0.25’, approximating Foolscap quarto); each page consists of 20–24 lines of text. The manuscript includes a handwritten title page indicating Harikṛṣṇa Dāsa was both compiler and publisher (the last line indicated the first edition, so clearly it was intended for publication, although I have never located a printed copy). Unlike most guides, the manuscript included seven area maps on unnumbered pages. Unfortunately there was no date, but based on the maps and on other features internal to the manuscript, it is reasonable to estimate a date of the 1940s or early 1950s. The paper binding with its Lil’ Abner cartoon suggests the same time frame.

The first map of the ‘Mathurā Mandala’ in this text is hand drawn depicting the Vraja *parikrama* delimitation with key sites marked (Figure 8). We can see very clearly the Yamunā River, major thoroughfares, various pilgrimage sites and ghats, a route marked for systematic circumambulation, relative distances (although no scale is indicated) and directional orientation. In an accompanying map (Figure 9), we get more detailed features of Vṛndāvana, including the railway line, primary streets (which are generally unchanged today, although several major roads have been added), 22 ghats, of which 19 are named, the major temples, and other pertinent features such as the dispensary and post office. In this map of Vṛndāvana proper the mapmaker has depicted the natural boundary of the Yamunā as it curves northeast and then back south around the city, which sits on this spit of land nearly completely surrounded. Significantly, the southern boundary extends along a line which closes the circle, a line which does not mark a road, but which circumscribes the area into a circle according to the order of the *parikrama*, albeit somewhat asymmetrical as the mapmaker acknowledges the geophysical irregularities.

This process of conceiving the area as *mandala* with a simple perimeter line transforming the map into *mandala* is made clearer in the depiction of the region of Śrī Nandīśvara (Figure 10). Here, the physical features for pilgrimage are laid out in the manner of the
Figure 8. Mathurā Manḍala.

previous maps, but the central area of Nanda’s home now appears as a perfect circle, conveniently indicating both a manḍala and hill. If we match the orientation of the housing compound itself, the Nandamahal, to the directional indicators, the site is oriented towards the east – as is the centre of every Vaiśṇava yantra.

The full transformation of the incipient manḍala noted in the first map of Mathurā (Figure 8) becomes apparent in another printed map of Vṛndāvana (Figure 11) supplied by Kṛṣṇadāsa Siddhabābā in the same text from which the Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya yogapīṭhas were reproduced. In this map, Vṛndāvana has been configured in a perfect circle, bounded completely by the Yamunā River. The centre is Śrī govinda sthalī, which is enclosed by a series of forests and groves, with access points along the axial directions (the central yogapīṭha faces east). The outer circle is a succession of trees and flowers. Moving inward there are seven concentric rings of forests or vanas. Next is the circle of mandapas for the thousand sakhīs who play with Kṛṣṇa throughout the eight parts of the day, the now heavily ritualized aṣṭakāliyā līlā. In the central arena, which is bounded by a neat line of sweet smelling golden vākula trees, the cardinal directions are marked by lotus ponds in groves (kuṇīja). In the interstitial directions are bowers (mandapa) of four fragrant jasmines. In these eight areas Kṛṣṇa can carry on the most intimate of his amorous adventures with the gopīs. Inside this ring in the interstitial directions lie four more intimate bowers. In the centre lies the manḍala of Kṛṣṇa, labelled yogapīṭha. The gateways in the cardinal directions on the outer perimeter are marked by mandapas of the goddess. Including the
circle of the Yamunā (the main branch which circles to the north, and the smaller rivulet or brook, a nearly invisible Yamunā, that circles to the south), the complete mandala is composed of a centre arena with eleven concentric rings.

The details of what is understood to transpire in the space that has been so ordered do not concern us here, but rather the structuring process. The entire region of Mathurā is conceived as a mandala, with each smaller point therein likewise structured, so that we have mandala within mandala within mandala, an iteration that reveals a fractal-like structure. The expansion of this basic ordering principle can be illustrated in a series of images moving from the macro to the micro level. Another mapmaker’s vision of the Govindānanda kuñja at the centre of Vṛndāvana39 (Figure 12) starts with a map slicing less than one quarter of the fuller circular image in Figure 11. The entry point is from the Yamunā ghat to the east. The various concentric forests and groves are duly indicated, with the central region only generally demarcated with a circle and a square within it.

The next image (Figure 13) brings the bhakta to the entrance of the central arena of Govindānanda kuñja itself. The mandiras, mandapas and kuñjas circling the central yogapitha are enumerated in the octagonal orientation that mirrors that of our printed map in Figure 11. Figure 13 focuses on those central eight bowers of lotus and assorted flowers. The surrounding forests and groves are marked with trees drawn in perspective, reminding the viewer that this is a three dimensional topography being mapped. The arenas of activity are stylized into the more familiar mandala form, with the obvious axial orientations. The final image in this series (Figure 14), gives a detailed view of the very central mandira of Krṣṇa, with the various rooms of his abode clearly designated (cooking, sleeping and
Figure 10. Nandīśvara.

so forth). Again, the perspective of the trees, coupled with the stairways in the cardinal directions and the obvious fact that this is a house, reminds the viewer of its three dimensional nature. The centre of the mandala is the ratnasimhāsana or ‘jeweled lion-throne’ where Kṛṣṇa sits (note the carryover of form from the older Pāñcarātra configuration of the sovereign at the centre of the mandala). The replication of the basic form serves to organize the complete geography and experience of Vṛndāvana, indeed by its expandability and flexibility, the entire world, into a comprehensible whole.

Replicating Vṛndāvana in the new age

By the logic of the dhāma, not only did Kṛṣṇa’s entourage descend as Caitanya’s followers, but the entire realm of Vṛṣṇa accompanied Kṛṣṇa. Navadvīpa became Vṛndāvana. Since the 16th c., pilgrims have flocked to Navadīpa in much the same way as Vṛṣṇa and the markets are awash in pilgrimage guides. Just as the configuration of individuals on the two yogapīthas for Kṛṣṇa’s and Caitanya’s retinues mirrored one another although incorporating the historical exigencies pertinent to the epiphany in the 16th c., the same modifications of the geophysical features of Vṛndāvana have been executed for Navadvīpa. The mandala of Navadvīpa supplied by Kṛṣṇadāsa Siddhabābā (Figure 15) shows the Gaṅgā (mālagangā or primary channel) flowing around the city of Caitanya’s youth in the same manner as the
Yamunā flowing around Vṛndāvana, including the additional phantom Gaṅgā which flows to the south to complete the circle.  

The axial directions are marked by streets, which move from ghats on the Gaṅgā towards the central compound of Caitanya’s house. The eastern street has a lion gate at the entrance to the compound. The outermost circle is the footpath that moves along the banks of the Gaṅgā, within which lies a series of 12 named forests (three in each quadrant). Moving into the next circle we find flower gardens of no explicit variety. The next ring includes the housing compounds of a number of important devotees. In the southeast quadrant are placed the residences of Nityānanda, Advaita, Vanamāli, Rāghava Paṇḍita and Jagadānanda Paṇḍita. In the southwest are those of Narahari Sarakāra, Murāri, Mukunda and the 64 mahants. In the northwest are those of the eight primary mahants, Sarāṅga Ṭhākura, Gadādharā Paṇḍita and Gadādharā Dāsa; in the northeast, Candrasēkhara Acārya, Śrīvāsa and Abhirāma and his followers. This marks one set of the most prominent of Caitanya’s Navadvīpa followers. Just inside this ring lies a circular road. Moving towards the centre from the road, there lie three concentric growths: a flower garden, a grove of fruit trees and a banana grove.
In the centre of the circle lies the square of Caitanya’s dwelling, which is broken into four basic divisions. The upper left corner, the smallest of the four living areas with only four rooms, is designated for the use of Gaura’s first wife, Lakṣmīpriyā, who died at a young age while he was away in eastern Bengal and it contains room for the servant women. The lower left, composed of eight inner rooms, houses Viṣṇupriyā, Gaura’s second wife, whom he abandoned to become an ascetic; it includes her sleeping quarters and cooking and dining room and it also houses the dining room for Gaura’s mother, Sacī. The upper
right division, with six rooms includes the quarters for mother Śacī, and father, Jagannātha Miśra. Finally, the largest section of the compound, with 12 rooms, is designated primarily for the use of Caitanya himself. Significantly, his sleeping quarters lie as close to the centre of the mandala as this configuration will allow – a subtle hint that the emphasis of this artist is on the śrīngāra or amorous mode of love with Caitanya as the direct object of affection, analoguous to the gopīs loving Kṛṣṇa. Caitanya’s dining room is immediately south and
his meditation hall immediately east. The Nārāyaṇa mandira, where pūjā is performed, is located just south of Gaura’s dining room. There are quarters for the male servants in this compound, as well as a guest room and a sleeping room for bhaktas. In short, the topographical features of Navadvīpa and the architectural features of Caitanya’s house are portrayed in a manner that renders the history of the early community and its members’ relationships to Caitanya: time and space are collapsed into a single two-dimensional blueprint of a three and four dimensional image.
The expansion of this redacting vision can be seen in a set of four hand-drawn images much like the series for Vrndavana. This artist has conceived of Navadvipa as a perfectly circular island (Figure 16).\(^{44}\) Caitanya’s compound is located in the circle on the macro level. The axial and interstitial directions are marked by streets radiating out from the centre. Additional streets divide the city into larger concentric rings, the outermost of which provides the path along the Ganga. Moving from the outside in, the first ring is composed of seven tiers of gardens (compare this with the seven forests surrounding the govilna sthalí in Figure 11), which are lumped together as a single undifferentiated block. Within the next street, which separates those gardens from the rest, lie the compounds of eight primary devotees: Srvása (ese), Advaita (sse), Nityánanda (ssw), Sanatana Miśra (sws), Suryadāsa (wnw), Mādhavācārya Deva (nnw), Nṛsimhānanda Brāhmaṇāri (nne), and Murāri Gupta (ene). Within this circle, a street divides off the next tier of space which is composed of public areas. Within that, eight more residences are noted: the writing of the numbered key is smeared at this point, but the first appears to be Rāmānanda Rāya (ese), then Govinda[?] (sse), the next two are illegible, followed by Govinda Ghoṣa (wnw), Vakreśvara Pāṇḍita (nsw), Vāsudeva Ghoṣa (nne) and Svarūpa Dāmodara[?] (ene). The layout of this manḍala is obviously different. This time, the eight mahants – and those are clearly the figures indicated in the innermost circle surrounding Caitanya’s quarters – have closer association and
access than even the members of the pañca tattva who are scattered around the mandala at a greater distance (and among whom Gadadhara Pañḍita, the bhakti śakti, is markedly absent). The theological preference of the artist is becoming clear, for the pañca tattva is not primary to his vision; yet the structure remains effectively unchanged and the different theories of divinity accommodated.
The mapmaker then zooms in to fill details of the central compound of Caitanya, the ‘Mahāprabhu Bhavan’ (Figure 17) and by his choices further clarifies his theological orientation. The outer circle has rows of palm or banana plants, demarcating the sacred core and reminding the reader of the implicit three-dimensionality of the representation.

The central chambers, with ten rooms demarcated and running east to west, are designated for the exclusive use of Caitanya. Moving from the east (at the bottom of the

![Figure 17. Detail of Mahāprabhu Bhavan, Gaura’s residential compound.](image-url)
A mandala (man. d. ala) entry is through the main gateway, with the first chamber providing a public audience room, followed by a meditative hall, which constitutes the mani mandira or bejeweled temple. This room becomes the focus of the next two images. Caitanya’s sleeping quarters, with the Nārāyaṇa mahal (the pājā room of the house) are in the centre of the mandala, followed to the west by the kitchen and dining area and his generous personal quarters. In the western end of the building are rooms for his servants.

Each of the four surrounding quarters are perfectly symmetrical. In the southeastern most space is the room for Jagannātha Miśra, Caitanya’s father and Hāḍāi Paṇḍita, Nityānanda’s father. Advaita’s father, Kubera Paṇḍita is also located there. In the southwestern corner is the room for Caitanya’s mother, Śacīmātā and the mothers of Nityānanda and Advaita, Padmāmātā and Nābhāmātā respectively. In the northeastern corner is the room for Caitanya’s second wife, Viṣṇupriyā and her closest companions, and the two wives of Nityānanda, Vasudhā and Jāhnāvā. In the northeastern corner is the room for Lakṣmīpriyā, Caitanya’s first wife and her helpmates, and the wife of Advaitācārya, Sītā Thākurāṇī, and her friends. At this juncture, the basic mandala reveals the preference of the author for the nādiyā nāgarī bhāva and gaura nāgara bhāva devotional mode. In this approach, Caitanya is understood to be the new Kṛṣṇa who is the object of direct erotic interest, and his gopīs are the women of Navadvīpa; it is their loveplay that replicates the love of Kṛṣṇa in the Vraja idyll. Although not inconsistent with the concept of the pānca tattva, it is its emphasis on śrīgāra (amorous love) that discounts the rôle of Gadādhara Paṇḍita as saktī. In short, Caitanya plays with the women of Navadvīpa and secondarily with the mahants, who are females themselves [as we saw in the initial Navadvīpa nityalītā yogapīṭhāmbuja (Figure 6)].

The next image in the series (Figure 18) seems to be exploratory and incomplete, but represents the yogapīṭha of Caitanya, within the mani mandapa (the bejeweled temple). The outline of the meditative hall is conceived of as a central area with eight separate groves and pools of different shapes radiating out in the cardinal and interstitial directions. In the illustration, this upper central image surrounded by eight trees is the overall configuration. The shapes of the remaining groves and pools are rotating around it, but the exact location of each is not clear, although I would speculate that the pool indicated at the bottom of the illustration is the easternmost part, with the mandala shaped lotus pond in the centre of the picture as the centre of the whole. The only note on the page simply says ‘pond’ or sarovara and the number of the note corresponds to the central figure. The resemblance of this landscape to that of Kṛṣṇa’s realm in Vṛndāvana does not at all appear to be accidental, especially given the theological thrust of the set of mandalas.

The final image in this series (Figure 19) illustrates the interior of the central yogapīṭha (note the strong connection in shape to the central one of the previous illustration). In the centre of this lotus pond, we recognize the basic lotiform shape of the original Kṛṣṇa mandala (Figure 5) and Caitanya mandala (Figure 6), replete with interlocking triangles, eight numbered positions ringing the centre, and 16 petals, each of which is numbered. Unfortunately, the numbering key is missing for the interior lotus, but it should, at this point, be fairly easy to imagine what the designations might be. The space surrounding the centre is divided. A prominent devotee occupies each of the four cardinal gateways. On each corner of the outside tier of rooms, we find three rooms of identical shape and mark in all quadrants. According to the numbered guide at the bottom of the page, these are storehouses for the items required in worship. In the interior square that immediately surrounds the lotus, four rooms for four female Thākurāṇīs are set aside: Sītā Thākurāṇī (Advaita’s
wife) in the southeast; Viśnupriyā (Caitanya’s second wife) in the southwest, Lakṣmīpriyā (Caitanya’s first wife) in the northwest; and Jāhnavā Devī (Nityānanda’s second wife) in the northeast. The presence of these women reinforces the theological position noted earlier, and the configuration is completely predictable. Were the artist to depict another theological perspective, the shapes would undoubtedly remain essentially unchanged, with the figures suitably adjusted. With this image, we are brought full circle to the original contemplative yogapītha.
Rereading the mechanics of the Kheturi festival

To the casual observer, the foundation narrative of the Gauḍīya community starts with the advent of the brahmin Viśvambhara Miśra, who renounced the world to become Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. Social historians have for the most part confused Caitanya’s rôle as the inspiration of the community and credited him with founding the group, but a close reading of the hagiographical tradition makes clear that by their own admission he never set out to found a community; he only sought to experience the love of Kṛṣṇa. Most devotees understandably
have little need to imagine the foundation in any other terms than the theological conflation of Kršna’s līlās in eternal Vraja with Caitanya’s līlās in Navadvīpa and Purī. The theory of the descent of the dhāma makes the latter eternal as well, as both yogapīthas noted above (Figures 5 and 6) made clear by their titles. Foundations are not at issue. But the historical moment when like-minded devotees coalesced into a the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava community took place more than three-quarters of a century after the departure of Caitanya: at the festival in Khetūrī in the early decades of the seventeenth century, the historical bases for which I have developed more fully elsewhere. 46 It was here in a festival that lasted a month that the trio of students – Śrīnivāsa, Narottama Dāsa and Šyāmānanda – brought together the disparate groups of Vaiṣṇavas scattered about Bengal and Orissa and replicated the original community, which was signaled when Caitanya and his now-dead entourage mysteriously reappeared to dance side-by-side with the current generation in the mandala of kīrtaṇa.

Understand the functioning of the mandala and its architectonics, we find a strong confirmation of the mechanics by which that event became the point after which Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava identity as a communal identity was guaranteed into an indefinite future, rather than the function of a one-off coincidence of Caitanya’s advent. Those principles would allow the community to replicate itself in perpetuity.

In the master narrative, Jīva Gosvāmī deputed three young men to return to Bengal to try to create bridges among the increasingly isolated groups of devotees. They carried with them a host of Sanskrit theological and eulogistic works by the various gosvāmī authors and the all-critical Caitanya caritāmṛta of Kršnadāsa Kavirāja to serve as a primer to the theological system. As is well known, they were robbed of these books – each reputed to be the sole extant copy – by dacoits in the employ of the ruler of Vana Viṣṇupura, Vīra Ḥamvīra. This king was subsequently turned from his evil ways by the devotion of Šrīnivāsa and it was Vīra Ḥamvīra who personally restored the books by way of repentance. Śrīnivāsa, himself a master copyist, immediately instructed the king to commission copies of the books so they would never again be lost. After Śrīnivāsa enlisted the services of the king, the trio settled into regions of Bengal and what is today northern Orissa in what appears to be a deliberate decision to fill in the interstices between the older established Vaiṣṇava strongholds – not presenting a direct challenge, but supplementing and connecting the pre-existing groups.

Śrīnivāsa also instituted a series of melās, gatherings of Vaiṣṇavas to celebrate the death anniversaries of the handful of devotees who had known Caitanya personally, the final remnants of his dhāma. At these gatherings, copies of the gosvāmī books and their interpretive key in the Caitanya caritāmṛta were gifted to those present. There were seven of these gatherings, but the largest took on a different quality. It did not celebrate the memory of any particular devotee, but rather the installation of new images of Kršna and Caitanya, a symbolic act that signaled the beginning of a new era. This month-long festival was hosted by Narottama Dāsa at Khetūrī. At the end of the installation a great kīrtaṇa session began in which all devotees were swept into a frenzy of singing and dancing. So great was the surge of devotion that members of Caitanya’s original entourage mysteriously appeared one-by-one, to dance with his counterpart among those devotees present. Caitanya danced with Śrīnivāsa, Nityānanda danced with Narottama and so forth until Caitanya’s entire dhāma was rendered visible for those who had the eyes to see. As Narahari Cakravartī makes clear in his Narottama vilāsā (chap. 7), the pairings marked the instantiation of a new dhāma. The relative placement of those in the dance followed the hierarchical principles of the mandala, with the contemporary devotional dhāma centred on Śrīnivāsa, Narottama Dāsa and Šyāmānanda, paired with and thereby replicating the prior dhāma centred on Caitanya, Nityānanda, Advaitācārya and so forth.
When the community coalesced during the Khotturi festival, the effect was to recognize the presence of the dhāma, at least in some limited and circumscribed way, in every gathering of Vaiṣānas. Where Vaiṣānas were present, Caitanya was present, where Caitanya was present, Kṛṣṇa was present. The architectonics of the mandala enabled the community to imagine, to generate an ever-refreshing group. Each time the social organization that was soon called the mandali was recognized by devotees, it reproduced a mirror-image of the dhāma and those other communities past. These organizational principles extended to structure every experience of the devotee, projecting the principles of this form onto the organization of ritual space to the cosmography of pilgrimage destinations. The architectonics were easily projected to structure meditative space. Indeed, the meditative instrument of the yogapīṭha opened the technique, making the relational mandala form as key. The result is that the adept Vaiṣṇava comes to recognize the truly ‘real’ world in the schematic form of the mandala, seeing through the apparent confusions of creation. The individual, then, as part of a group, comes to realize that he or she is not only a devotee, but a participant in a higher reality, that the group represents more than the group itself, that to participate is to become something other than mere conventional signs could suggest. Through the principles of the mandala, the individual devotees participate in an idealized and coherently conceived world, a world that brings forth something that is more than its appearance. It is not dissimilar to the description of the ontology of the body proposed by French philosopher and social critic Jean-Luc Nancy: the community and the individuals within it become exscribed, that is, they participate in an experience of being-other-than-itself, meaning much greater than its mere parts or representation, part of larger, in this case truly cosmic, reality. It is a meaning which eludes the casual observer, and which can only be faintly detected by those not initiated into its mysteries, a detached observation of the self and community from the perspective of eternal Vraja.

Notes
1. For a detailed study of these hagiographical transformations and the ensuing theological rectification, see Stewart, The Final Word, especially chaps. 2–6.
2. Dimock, Caitanya caritāmṛta; unless otherwise noted, all translations will be from this text. The translation is based on the R.G. Nātha edition; see Kaviṛāja, Caitanya caritāmṛta; all citations will be to these two editions, which share identical versification.
3. Dāsa, Prema vilāsa, ed. Vidyāratri. The controversial alternate edition does not change the master narrative, but differs only in observations about subsequent events; see Prema vilāsa, ed. Tālkūdāra.
4. Cakravartī, Bhaktiratnākara, ed. Vidyāratri. This text differs significantly from the later Gauḍiyā Maṭha edition; see Cakravartī, Bhaktiratnākara, ed. Vidyāsagara. For the formation of the community, the coda titled Narottamavilāsa is all-important.
5. This is consistent with the position argued by Bourdieu in Outline of a Theory of Practice, especially with respect to his articulation of doxa and habitus.
6. The Pañcarātrāgama includes more than 150 extant texts, nearly all of which include large sections on basic cosmology and cosmography, ritual injunction, and temple construction; for guide see Smith, A Descriptive Bibliography of the Printed Texts.
8. See Kulke, Jagannatha-Kult und Gajapati-Königtum.
9. For the specifics of this close participation, see three articles by Kulke, titled ‘Early Temple Policy and the Structure of Medieval Hindu Kingdoms’, ‘Early Royal Patronage of the Jagannatha Cult’, and ‘Jagannatha as the State Deity under the Gajapatis of Orissa’; see also Talbot, ‘The Story of Prataparudra’.
12. For an analysis of the *bhaktikalpataru* and the historical implications of the theology plotted by the image, see Stewart, *The Final Word*, 234–42.
14. Gosvāmin, *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*; for a translation of the complete text, see the Haberman translation. The 64 acts are summarized in 1.2.73–95 and individually detailed in 1.2.96–245; see also *Caitanya caritāmṛta* 2.20.60–84. For detailed exposition of smarta injunctions for Gauḍyā Vaishnava, see Bhāṭa, *Haribhaktivilāsa*. These are summarized in *Caitanya caritāmṛta* 2.24.240–57, but attributed to Sanātana Gosvāmin rather than Gopāla Bhāṭa (cf. *Caitanya caritāmṛta* 2.23.53–66). For a discussion of the attribution issue, see De, *Vaishnava Faith and Movement*, 136–40; a summary of the text of the *Haribhaktivilāsa* can be found in De’s work, 448–529. For more on the contemporary vaidhī ritual practices, see Joshi, *Le Rituel de la dévotion Kr. s. n. aïte*.
15. For an extensive list, see Gosvāmin, *Brhadādrāhākṛṣṇagāṇadodesādīpikā*. There are scores of similar texts to be found in manuscript collections.
16. The most overt deployment of the *mandala* in architecture can be found in the temple complex at Viṣṇupura; see the excellent analysis by Ghosh, *Temple to Love*.
17. The underlying meaning of *yantra* is instrument or machine, here to aid meditation, whereas *mandala* designates configuration in a circle, orb, or by extension a realm (e.g., political or social). Yantra, then, will refer to the drawing, while *mandala* will refer to its configuration.
18. Siddhabābā, *Gauragovindera aṣṭakāla niyātalī*, insert between 76 and 77. The drawing is apparently taken directly from or developed from information found in a manuscript of unknown provenance titled *Śrī siddhabābā o śrī dhvānacandra paddhati* (no page number is indicated).
20. For the gosvāmin position on the construction of the three *śaktis* of the godhead, see Gosvāmin, *Bhagavat sandarbha*; for summaries see *Caitanya caritāmṛta* 1.4.52–71 and 2.8.115–56; De, *Vaishnava Faith and Movement*, especially chaps. 276–83; and Nātha, *Gauḍyā vaisnava darsana*, 1:49–81.
21. For elaborate lists of mañjars and their activities, see for example, Kṛṣṇadāsa[?], *Mañjart dhvāna*; and Dāsa, *Mañjarīvarāpañārpaṇāpaṇa*.
22. For Kṛṣṇadāsa’s handling of this complex issue, see Stewart, *The Final Word*, 209–12. This favoring of the erotic śrīgāra over vātsalya comes to differentiate Gauḍyā followers from those of Vallabha.
23. For the five *stāyibhāvas*, the foundational building blocks of a devotee’s love for Kṛṣṇa, see for the entirety of the Western Quadrant of Rūpa Gosvāmin *Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu*; 3.1 (śāntī), 3.2 (dāśya), 3.3 (sakhya), 3.4 (vātsalya), and 3.5 (śrīgāra or madhura). For the myriad gradations of the erotic as they relate primarily to Rādhā, see Rūpa Gosvāmin, *Ujjvalantāmanī*. The arguments of both texts are given in synoptic form in *Caitanya caritāmṛta*, especially chaps. 2.8, 2.19–25.
24. Insert between 76 and 77. Analogous to the previous *mandala*, the drawing is labeled *Śrīrāṇavadvāpyāntīlīyagāpitāmāhya*, and is apparently taken from the same manuscript of unknown provenance titled *Śrī siddhabābā o śrī dhvānacandra paddhati*, 42–44.
25. Tradition refers to the six gosvāmins or, on occasion, the eight gosvāmins. Two older devotees by the name of Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha were reputedly the first sent to Vṛndāvana by Caitanya, the remaining figures gradually assembling there over the next several decades, so that within a few years of Caitanya’s death in 1533 CE, the group of eight was complete. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviṛāja was added considerably later and has replaced Bhūgarbha in this configuration, undoubtedly because of his erudition and authorship of the *Caitanya caritāmṛta*, which made gosvāmint theology accessible to Bengali-speaking audiences. In this, Kṛṣṇadāsa actually represents a generational shift. See Jana, *Vṛndāvanera chaya gosvāmi*; and Rāya Caudhuri, *Śrī caitanya o tāhāra pārśadagana*. 
26. The identification of these celestial identities have been more or less stable since the Gaureau nodadesadtipika, but there are some minor differences of opinion. Significantly the eight historical figures in the Caitanya mandala account for all eight of the mañjarī figures in the Kṛṣṇa mandala, but there are minor departures in their placement based on the standard enumerations. Compare, for instance, the Gaureau nodadesadtipika list with those in the anonymous Śīksatattva dīpīkā and Manasi svā. For more on the practices of mañjarī sādhana, see Haberman, Acting as a Way of Salvation. For the most complete descriptions of these and the other many followers of Caitanya, see Maiti, Caitanya parikara, and the encyclopaedia by Haridāsa Dāsa, titled Gaudīya vaisnava abhīdhāna, vol. 3, Caritāvali. See also Harīkrṣa Dāsa, Gaureparṣadara caritāvali. Popular and inexpensive manuals for Vaiṣnava instruction often include these lists with the eternal siddha or svarūpa identity, e.g., Kābāśi, Brhadbhaktitattvasāra, 2: 1088–100.

27. Because of the theory of the incarnation of the dhāma, where each historical figure is matched to a figure from the Kṛṣṇa līlās of mythic Vṛndāvāna, it is no coincidence that the mandala printed in the text appear on opposite sides of the same page, with precise placement and identical sizes, so that when you flip the page or hold it up to the light, they appear to be one. In Gaudīya vaisnava abhīdhāna (1:633, insert), Haridāsa Dāsa reproduces a mandala which leaves no question regarding the identifications: the characters from the historical līlā of Caitanya and the nītya līlā of Kṛṣṇa are placed together on each petal of the lotus. There are only minor differences in the placement of the mañjarīs as gosvāmīs, who are at the base of the petals, but encircled. The gopīs are indicated on the tips of the petals, with their Caitanya līlā counterpart in the gopī bhāva listed lower on the petal. Not surprisingly, the opposite side of the insert has the ‘navadvīpa yogapitha’ with the central mantra klim, surrounded by the five members of the pañca tattva within the enclosed interlocking triangles.

28. For a list of the 64, see Vidyārātna, Vaiṣṇavacārā-darpana, 334–5. The mahants are mentioned in various texts from the earliest period, but not so systematically. The Bhaktiratnākara of Narahari refers extensively to this iteration as a group.

29. Ramakanta Chakravarti, whose Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal is the best English source for the period following the life of Caitanya, fails to recognize the role of the mandala in the organization of these groups. He notes that the contemporary Brhatbhaktitattvasāra compiled by Kābāśi (1:664–66) divides the list of mahants into eight primary and 64 additional figures – a configuration that, ‘...is a recent innovation which lacks authority’ (Vaiṣṇavism in Bengal, 188). The authority is, in fact, the structuring of the dhāma as depicted in the symmetry of the mandala – and this is the version we have reproduced above. Chakravarti’s observation seems to rest on the assumption that the earlier writings have a kind of institutional authority apart from this organization of community and guru lineage; yet nowhere does he suggest what this authority is.

30. Because of the different interpretations of divinity – primarily the pañca tattva and the androgynous dual incarnation – the central part of the Caitanya yantra cannot overstepulate the central mantras as the Kṛṣṇa yantra does. It reads simply: klim gaurāya svāhā. Likewise, in the yogapitha produced by Haridāsa Dāsa, the mantra reads: klim gaurāṅgāya svāhā.

31. It should be noted that the role of the gosvāmīs as mañjarīs – those whose complete raison d’être is to aid Rādhā, not Kṛṣṇa – makes them less important figures until the next generation of scholar-devotees venerate them, largely thanks to Kṛṣṇadāsa and the trio of proselytizing students: Śrīnivāsaśārya, Narottama Dāsa, and Śyāmānanda. Not coincidentally their heavenly rōles as facilitators of the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa parallel their earthly rōles as creators of theology and ritual designed to aid the devotee in loving Kṛṣṇa.

32. Metaphoric constructs of related forms demonstrate a tendency for different entailments to project inconsistencies, while remaining fully coherent structurally; this idea of ‘coherent but inconsistent’ stems from the work of Lakoff and Johnson, Metaphors We Live By.

33. For the four types of mokṣa or mukti articulated by the gosvāmīs (sārṣṭi, sārūpya, sāmīpya, and sālokya), see Caitanya caritāmṛta 1.3.15–16; 1.4.36–37; 1.5.26; 2.6.239–43; 2.19.24.224.śl.66; 3.3.śl.12. As Kṛṣṇadāsa reported in 2.9.243–44, Caitanya eloquently referred to all of these forms of mukti to be ‘equal to hell’ in an argument with vedāntins in southern India.

34. The oldest guides are the mahāṁyas and stava which sing the glories of Vṛndāvana in Sanskrit metrical forms; the examples are myriad, but the earliest titles most relevant to Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas include the oft-printed text by Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, titled Vṛndāvanamahāmīrtam. Other older texts include: Kavikarnapūra, Anandavṛndāvanacampū, Raghunāthadāsa Gosvāmīn, Stavāvalī, which includes aṣṭakas on Govardhana and...
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Rādhākunda; Rūpa Gosvāmin, *Stavamālā*, which includes *aśtakas* on the Yamunā, Mathurā, Govardhana (2), and Vrindāvana; and Viśvanātha Cakravartī, *Vrajaratricintāmaṇiḥ*.

35. As noted in Stewart, *The Final Word*, 315, footnote 63, I have in my possession a pocket sized edition (measuring 3.25′′ × 4.5′′ or trigesimosecundo [32mo] by American book size) of this chapter published separately as Narahari Cakravartī, *Srīkṛṣṇa Ṛṣṭikāra (śrīdhāma parikrama) o śrīnavadvīpa parikrama*. For the most detailed precise explanation of the pilgrimages and the sites, with full mythic background on every geographical locale, see Entwistle, *Braj*. For a lively exploration of the forest pilgrimages, see Haberman, *Journey through the Twelve Forests*.

36. There are scores of inexpensive contemporary guides that emphasize different places, events, and sequences of pilgrimage; e.g., Bābā, *Vraja mandala darśana: parikrama*; Dāsa Bābājī, *Vrajamandala paricaya*; Dāsa, *Vraja dhāma*, especially vol. 1, pt. 1: *Paricaya o parikrama*.

37. This map was interleaved with the manuscript, but was prepared separately, for the titles are in English and the format is considerably larger, 8.5′′ × 8′′. There are, however, numerous features in common with the other maps that suggest the same author. The point, however, does not depend on the authorship.


39. This series of four anonymous maps was enclosed with the manuscript noted above, but are of obviously different provenance, based on the size of the maps and the differences in scribal hand. The dimensions are 11.25′′ × 8.25′′.

40. The three dimensionality of the *mandala* has been well documented in architecture; see Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*; Hudson, ‘Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa in Theology and Architecture’, and his posthumously published *The Body of God*. For *mandalas* in the actual configuration of engineering techniques for temple construction, see George, ‘Constructing Constructs’. I have also encountered a number of *śrīyantra mandalas* in three dimensions as votive objects.

41. Among the numerous guidebooks, which are usually replete with simple maps and photographs, see Śrāmaṇa, *Navadvīpadhāma*; Ṭhākura, *Navadvīpa bhavatārāṅga*; and Dāsa Bābājī, *Gaudīya vaisṇava tīrthe paryātana*.

42. Siddhabābā, *Gauragovindera aśtakāla nityalīlā smarana guṭikā*, insert between 6 and 7.

43. This is not as fanciful or devotionally driven as it might at first appear because current day Navadvīpa sits entirely on the western banks of the river, whereas in Caitanya’s time it sat on the eastern banks, courtesy of the river’s change of course.

44. This series of four *mandalas* (Figures 17–19) appears to have been drawn by the same hand as those for Vṛndāvana (Figures 12–15). The dimensions are approximately the same, 11.25′′ × 8.5′′.

45. By the logic of the *dhāma*, because Nityānanda is Caitanya’s brother, Nityānanda’s father Hāḍāi Pandita should hold a place as Caitanya’s father, hence Hāḍāi Pandita shares quarters with Caitanya’s biological father, Jagannātha Miśra. That Advaita’s father is included, suggests that Advaita is also considered Caitanya’s brother, but I have never seen this intimated in any text or interview.


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