

SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN THE BRAJ REGION DURING 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

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This study comprises of eight chapters, an introduction and conclusion. It has three appendices containing maps tables and photographs.

In the introduction is discussed the Geography of Braj region, growth of the cult of Krishna, Radhaism and eventually the development of Brajmaie Krishnaism and its characteristic features.

The first chapter; *Sects of Brajiya Krishnaism; differential in the harmonious* introduces the various Krishnaite sects of medieval Braj. Second chapter, entitled, *Braj Yatra; the pilgrimage of fashion fusion of Brajmaie Krishnaism*; besides giving details of rules and regulations of the *Braj yatra* and its extent, highlights the derelict agenda of the *yatra*. Aspects of ecological–spirituality that the *yatra* promulgated have been scrutinized with exactitude.

The third chapter is entitled *Raslila the lifeline of Brajiya Krishnaism*. This embodies and esoteric study of the spiritual rationale behind *Raslila–anukaran*, the medieval Braj theater

The forth chapter; *Rasikeshwari Radha and her anshas; Femininity in medieval Braj*, is an itemized study of the maturation of Radhaism in medieval Braj and its impact on the position of women in general.

Chapters, *Shudras in Krishnaism* and *Goseva in Brajiya Krishnaism*, deal with important social aspects of Medieval Braj culture. The sixth chapter *Sectarian con sanguinity in Braj of 16th and 17thC*; studies the pacific coexistence of autonomous or even apparently bifurcated or estranged social assemblages.

The seventh chapter *Festivals, Fasts and Fairs of Brajmaie Krishnaism*, serves parallel objectives of listing the festivals and prominent fairs of the region and of discerning the

shrouded innuendo of some festivities.

The last chapter *Mandirs of Braj; Dialogues in stone*; tracks down the antiquity and architectural attributes of the principal temples instituted in medieval period.

The conclusion comprises of deductions which pre dominantly are interpretations of whatever was observed and perceived in the research programme.

This study in an endeavor to drill beyond a cosmetic skin-deep look at the developments which took place on the socio- cultural front of Medieval Braj and to make a perforated survey of what transpired behind the apparent.