he word "mysticism" comes from a Greek word, mysterion, which means "secret ceremony," says Osho. "The people who have touched the unknowable gather together to share. The sharing is not verbal; it cannot be verbal. The sharing is of their being; they pour their being into each other. They dance together, they sing together, they look into each other's eyes, or they simply sit silently together. That's what was being done with Buddha, with Krishna, with Jesus, in different ways.

"The lovers of Krishna were dancing with him. That was a mysterion, a secret ceremony. If you look from the outside at what is happening you will not be able to know what is really the case. Unless you become a participant, unless you dance with Krishna, you will not know what is being shared, because that which is being shared is invisible. It is not a commodity, it cannot be transferred from one hand to another; you will not see anything happening like that. It is not objective. It is the flowing of one being into another, flowing of the presence of the Master into the disciple.

"These kinds of secret ceremonies in India have been called raas; in the tradition of Krishna they are called raas. Raas means dancing with the Master, so that your energy is flowing and the Master's energy is flowing."
as it was in Vrindavan. The objects of love have changed but the source of love remains the same. So whosoever comes near him receives the gift. And this gift is unconditional: nothing is required as a return, nothing is asked as a return.

When love comes through an aware consciousness it is just a pure gift with no condition, and the person who is giving it is happy because he is giving it. The very act of giving is his bliss, his ecstasy,” says Osho in VIGYAN BHAIRAV TANTRA.

“Down the centuries, pilgrims have been going to Vrindavan to experience the ecstasy, the ambience, the environment and vibrations of Lord Krishna. On the banks of the river lies the ancient city Vrindavan a city where the Gods once lived. This is the sacred place where thousands of Krishna devotees from all over the world come in search of the legends of Krishna and themselves on its 5,000 red sandstone temples. It is part of man’s eternal search for himself,” says Osho.

Today, this holy city is lost in a maze of polluting traffic, jostling crowds and ever-present garbage…. a city that now looks as if it’s soul is being drowned out by the sound of its pilgrims and their material ways. But Krishna’s past in evidence on these temples is now in very real danger of disappearing according to research done by an Osho lover and a noted film director, Satyen Wanchoo. Making a documentary film under the banner of Avifauna for the Eco City Project, he discovered that the 19th Banki Bihari, the most popular temple in Vrindavan is now hemmed in by a spillover of a city that’s burst it’s seams. Thousands of pilgrims come here for a glimpse of a rare idol of
Krishna called Thakurji. The Krishna idol was discovered by poet and mystic Swami Ram Das, a poet and the guru of Tansen, a musician at the court of Mughal Emperor Akbar. Tansen’s Guru unearthed this precious Krishna idol in the sacred groves - the Nidhi Van. Now, all that’s left of this sacred grove are a few stunted shrubs. It’s here, in Nidhi Van, that Krishna is believed to have played his flute for his Gopis or his many consorts.

Osho says, “Gopi is a very significant word; it comes from the tradition of the devotee. There are two paths: one is of knowledge, wisdom, meditation, and the other is of love, devotion, and surrender. The word “gopi” belongs to the other tradition, the tradition of surrender. Literally Gopi means the beloved of God. On the path of devotion only God is the man; everyone else is feminine. And everybody is desiring, searching, seeking the lover. Krishna represents the lover and Gopi represents the beloved. The search is not through mind but through heart. The search is not through effort but through surrender, total surrender. So slowly slowly teach her the way of devotion, of love.”

People here believe that Krishna still comes to Nidhi Van every evening to dance with his gopis. Which is why, nobody is allowed to enter here after sundown. The sacred groves then are one of very few surviving legacies from Vrindavan’s past.

Despite the vanishing green space, Vrindavan’s monkeys are flourishing grabbing food from pilgrims and making a ruckus while enjoying themselves. Unlike the monkeys, there is very little respite for the thousands of pilgrims who visit Vrindavan every year. Their Parikrama or walk around the city’s temples is anything but comfortable. Vast stretches along the parikrama route, the main road encircling Vrindavan is devoid of any tree cover. To add to it, is the stench from garbage and open drains. Tonnes of solid waste generated in Vrindavan every day by a population of nearly 40,000 residents and about 150,000 pilgrims. Some of this is just dumped into vacant plots of land, piling up, untreated for years together - a potential breeding ground for disease.

Garbage that is now even filling some of the city’s sacred spaces. Like the Brahma Kund. This is the spot where Lord Brahma, the Hindu God of Creation is supposed to have hidden all the cowherds and cows from Vrindavan in a cave to test Lord Krishna’s powers. Krishna responded by transforming himself into all the missing cowherds so that their families would not miss them. Finally, having realized the true power of Lord Krishna, Brahma the creator returned the cowherds and cows to their protector, Krishna. Humbled by the experience, Brahma is said to have cried enough tears to form a small lake, that was later called the Brahma Kund.

Now, while the Kund is filled with the city’s waste, the lake has completely dried up. The city does have a sewage treatment plant by which 18 wastewater drains from the city are diverted to the sewage treatment plant. However, some drains still empty into the Yamuna. As a result, the riverfront is polluted. Yet pilgrims actually come to this polluted river looking rrying, most residents