

## “Art of Terracotta Gopal Mondir at Mellock in West Bengal”

Dr. Ashis Kumar Pradhan

### Abstract

Gopal is the Supreme Person to the people. Gopal is the infant/child form of Lord Krishna. India is the nation with many spiritual mythologies. Respectively every idol plays a significant role in all of them. Madanmohan-jiu Temple is situated in Mellock, near Samta in the Indian state of West Bengal and is locally famous as Gopaler Mondir which literally means the temple of Gopala.

The temple is a great, attractive, terracotta decorated, dilapidated temple of Radha & Madangopal-jiu and was constructed in 1651 AD by a wrestler, Mukundaprasad Roychoudhury, who was a family member of the Roy Zamindars, who then governed the village of Samta. It was previously situated on the banks of the Rupnarayan River but nowadays the river has altered its path. This is one of the biggest atchala (roof with 8 slopes) temple in Bengal. Presently, the condition of the temple is derelict, however, the renovation has been in progress at present-day.

The village of Mellock has a history phases backbone centuries. Both the village and the temple are located on the rows of river Rupnarayan.

Mukundaprasad Roychoudhury was very strong and well-built. The road was linked to the barrage by a small wooden bridge to the temple. Mukundaprasad would carry two heavy stone dumbbells in his arms to the temple, crossing the wooden bridge. Neither, did him use to get tired, nor, the wooden bridge use to break. One of the stones is still kept in the campus of the temple.

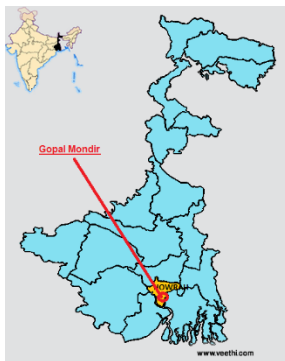


Fig-1 India, W.B. Map & Location Mandir



Fig- 2 Resent Goddess Gopal Mandir



Fig-3 Goddess Gopal & Radha



Fig-4: God Hanuman

Fig-5: Singhabahini Masi

Fig-6: Gopal Mandir Terracotta Design Work - i

### Design and culture

Main entrance by three arches is on the south face. Dual additional entrances, one each on the west and east outsides.

The temple is around 40 feet in height. Earlier the flow of river rupnarayana alongside the temple. But in recent times the river ongoing eroding the shores, threatening the temple and communities.

The temple has figure of sculptures and designs that represent the influence of the beliefs, art, music, and literature of various generations of the Zamindars such as the Roys' Zamindars.



Fig-7: Terracotta Design Work – ii



Fig-8: Gopal Mandir Terracotta Design Work –iii



Fig-9: Gopal Mandir Terracotta Design Work - iv



Fig-10: Design Work – v



Fig-11: Design Work–vi



Fig-12: Terracotta Design Work – vii



Fig-13: Terracotta Design Work– viii

### Spirit



The goddess worshipped in the temple is Radha and Madangopal Jiu and the idols are made of shiny black stone. The idol is around Radha 1 feet and Madangopal 1 and 1/2 feet tall.

### **Holi and Dol Yatra Festivals**

Celebrate the local Holy and Dol Yatra is held every year on a Purnima (full-moon day). However, here it is celebrated a day after the full moon day. On the day of Holy the idol is carried to a nearby house by an ancient wooden palanquin. Unusual rituals are performed and at evening it is brought back to the temple in a traditional technique, in which the road is surrounded by burning bonfires and the people have to make their way and carry their Lord through the road. Accidents do happen in this kind of festival but no loss of life has been recorded so far.

### **Stories**

“The life of Krishna is divided up into three distinct parts. There’s the stories of the baby Krishna and his mischievousness and miracles, then there are the stories of the teenage Krishna and his way with the cow herding girls (gopis), and then there is the middle aged Krishna who guides Arjuna on the path to self-realization in the Bhagavad Gita. He is said to have been born in the summer of 3228 BCE (his birthday, Krishna Janmashtami is celebrated every summer by Hindus) and he died in 3102.”

..... <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/whitehindu/2013/08/who-is-krishna/>

### **Janmashtami**

Arranged the day of Janmashtami also special pujas are held.

### **References:**

1. I am Krishna – The Master of Mind and Life by Deep Trivedi.
2. Krishna: The Man and His Philosophy- Talks given from 20/7/70 to 5/10/70, Original in Hindi.
3. God is a Black Woman: Graphical Rendering of a Creation Myth - Yara Polana December 2013
4. Pictures by author.
5. Bhagavad-Gita As It Is - Macmillan 1972
6. Europe Asks: Who is Shree Krishna by Bipin Chandra Pal - 2017

### **Website:**

1. Maps - <https://www.veethi.com/places/west-bengal-howrah-district-622.htm>
2. <https://www.apnisanskriti.com/temple/madangopal>



3. <http://www.templeadvisor.com/temples-in-india/hindu-temples>
4. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gopal\\_\(Krishna\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gopal_(Krishna))
5. <http://hinduphilosophyholypilgrimage.blogspot.in>
6. <https://www.boldsky.com/yoga-spirituality>
7. <http://www.templeadvisor.com/temples-in-india/hindu-temples>