

The Reappearance Of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mā



Uttama Puruṣa Dāsa

*Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava (right), the ancestral deities of Śrīla Bhakti-
vinoda Ṭhākura, were discovered in the home of
Sri Duryodhana Dwivedi and his family (above),
where the deities had
been residing for about
fifty years.*



Uttama Puruṣa Dāsa



dhava



Rañjana Dāsa

*The discovery of the ancestral deities
of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.*

by Bhaktarūpa Dāsa

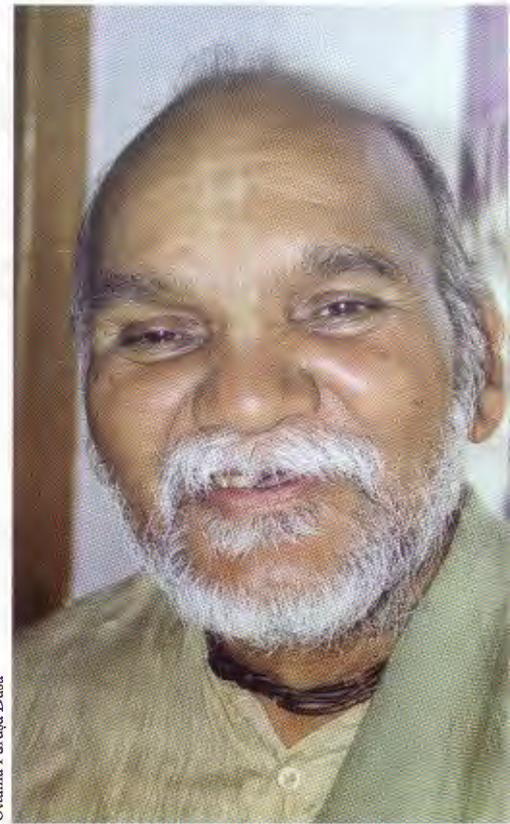
FIVE HUNDRED years ago when Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu launched the *sāṅkīrtana* movement of the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord, He commissioned His closest associates to spread the movement everywhere. On the order of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu traveled extensively throughout Bengal, humbly begging everyone He met to chant the holy names and worship Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Many Bengalis surrendered at His lotus feet, becoming His disciples and adopting the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava way of life. Among these disciples was Krishnananda Dutta, a wealthy landowner residing in Ulberia, not far from present-day Calcutta.

Krishnananda Dutta worshiped deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in his home in Ulberia until his retirement from family affairs. Then, taking the deities with him, he moved to the holy place Puri, Orissa, home of the famous temple of Lord Jagannātha. In Puri, Krishnananda lived a pious and simple life, not speaking to anyone, but chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* the whole day and night and worshipping Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. After living in

Puri for some time, he met the feudal king of Ali State, about two hundred kilometers from Puri. Impressed with Krishnananda's spiritual qualities, the king invited him to live in his state, where he donated an entire village, named Choti (formerly called Choti Mangalpur), to the worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

The descendants of Krishnananda Dutta worshiped Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Choti from generation to generation. Eventually the worship passed into the hands of his descendent Kedaranath Dutta (1838–1914), who is well-known to all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas as Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the great saint who was the first to present the teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu in a modern context.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote hundreds of songs glorifying the Supreme Lord in Bengali, Sanskrit, and Brajaboli (a dialect that combines Bengali, Sanskrit, and Oriya). His songs capture the essence of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy. One, *Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava*, was a favorite of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who would sing it every day just before his public lectures. This song paints



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The research of Professor Fakir Mohan Das (above), one of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's spiritual descendants, revealed that the village of Choti (a part of which appears at top) was the native place of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava

by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

(jaya) rādhā-mādhava,
(jaya) kuñja-bihārī
(jaya) gopī-jana-vallabha,
(jaya) giri-vara-dhārī
(jaya) yaśodā-nandana,
(jaya) vraja-jana-rañjana
(jaya) yāmuna-tīra-vana-cārī

“Kṛṣṇa is the lover of Rādhā. He displays many amorous pastimes in the groves of Vṛndāvana. He is the lover of the cowherd maidens of Vraja, the holder of the great hill named Govardhana, the beloved son of mother Yaśodā, and the delighter of the inhabitants of Vraja. He wanders in the forests along the banks of the River Yamuna.”

Purport

by His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupāda

This is the original nature of Kṛṣṇa. He is Rādhā-Mādhava; He is the lover of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. And—*kuñja-vihārī*—He always enjoys the company of the *gopīs* [cowherd girls] within the bushes of Vṛndāvana forest. *Rādhā-mādhava kuñja-vihārī*. Not only is He the lover of Rādhārāṇī, but—*vraja-jana-vallabha*—all the residents of Vṛndāvana love Kṛṣṇa. They do not know anything else. They do not know whether Kṛṣṇa is God or not. Nor are they very much harassed by the thought “I shall love Kṛṣṇa if He is God.” Instead



Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava of ISKCON Māyāpur traveled with Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1970-71, when he began daily singing Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava before the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam class.

they think, “He may be God or He may not be God. Whatever He is, it doesn’t matter, but we love Kṛṣṇa.”

That’s all. That is called unalloyed love. “If Kṛṣṇa is God, then I shall love Him”—this is conditional love, not pure love. Kṛṣṇa may be God or whatever He may be, but by His wonderful acts the Vrajavāsīs [residents of Vṛndāvana] are thinking,

“Oh, Kṛṣṇa is a very wonderful child. He may be some demigod.”

People are generally under the impression that the demigods are all-powerful. The demigods are powerful within this material world, but people do not know that Kṛṣṇa is above all of them. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ saccid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*. The highest demigod, Brahmā, is giving his

a beautiful picture of the pastimes of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s beloved deities Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

After the departure of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava was handed down to his son, Bimala Prasad Dutta, also

known as Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Because Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta was a lifelong celibate and a dedicated traveling preacher, whenever he would visit Choti he would not enter into his ancestral home

there; he would visit the temple of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and stay in the nearby Dassahera Mandap.

Unfortunately, after Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta’s departure from this world the worship became neglected. A neighboring family schemed to lay

opinion: "The supreme controller is Kṛṣṇa."

So, as the residents of Vṛndāvana love Kṛṣṇa without any condition, Kṛṣṇa loves them without any condition.

Giri-vara-dhāri. When the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana stopped the sacrifice to Indra, they were in danger because Indra became very angry. For seven days he incessantly sent very great, powerful clouds and rain over Vṛndāvana. When the inhabitants became very much disturbed, Kṛṣṇa, although He was only a seven-year-old boy, saved them by lifting Govardhana Hill. In this way He taught Indradeva, "To stop your disturbance is the business of My little finger. That's all." So Indra fell to his knees before Kṛṣṇa. These things you'll find in our book *Kṛṣṇa*.

As Gopī-jana-vallabha, Kṛṣṇa's only business is how to protect the *gopī-jana* [*gopīs*]. Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is teaching how to become one of the *gopī-janas*. Then Kṛṣṇa will save us from any danger, even by lifting a hill or a mountain. Kṛṣṇa is so kind and so powerful. When Kṛṣṇa lifted the hill He had not practiced some yoga system. He was playing like a child. But when there was some need, He manifested Himself as God. That is Kṛṣṇa. Not that He has to go and practice some yoga system to become God. No. He is not that type of "God," not a manufactured "God." He's God.

Yaśodā-nandana, vraja-jana-rañjana. Kṛṣṇa likes to be the child of a devotee. As the beloved child of Yaśodā, He is called Yaśodā-nandana. He wants to be chastised by His devotee father and mother,

because everyone worships Him and nobody chastises Him. So He takes pleasure when a devotee chastises Him. That chastisement is service to Kṛṣṇa. If Kṛṣṇa takes pleasure in being chastised, then the responsibility is taken up by a devotee: "All right, I shall become Your father and chastise You." When Kṛṣṇa wants to fight, one of His devotees becomes Hiranyakaśipu and fights with Him. Therefore, become an associate of Kṛṣṇa and develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Yaśodā-nandana, vraja-jana-rañjana. As the *vraja-jana's* [Vṛndāvana residents'] business is how to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's business is how to satisfy the *vraja-jana*. This is reciprocation of love.

Yāmuna-tīra-vana-cāri. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is wandering on the banks of the Yamuna River to please the *gopīs*, the cowherd boys, the birds, beasts, and calves. They are not ordinary birds, beasts, calves, or men. They are on the top level of self-realization. *Kṛta-punya-puñjāh*—after many, many lives they got the position to play with Kṛṣṇa.

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so nice that everyone can go to Kṛṣṇaloka and associate with Kṛṣṇa as a friend, as a servant, as a father or mother, as so many things. And Kṛṣṇa is agreeable to any one of these propositions. These things are described very nicely in our book *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*.

Kṛṣṇa does not go even one step out of Vṛndāvana. The original Kṛṣṇa is in Vṛndāvana. Take advantage of these books, this knowledge, this *prasādam*, and this chanting. Be happy, and go to Kṛṣṇa. It is such a nice thing.

their own claim on the lands belonging to the deities and secretly moved the deities to another village. This family claimed that the deities had become broken and thus, according to traditional practice, had to be submerged in the nearby Birupa River.

In the terminology of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the native place of a great saint is called a *śrīpāt*, and such places are considered worshipable by all the followers of the saint. But just as the village of Choti was deprived for five decades of seeing its proprietors, Śrī Śrī

Rādhā-Mādhava, the village—the native place of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura—became all but forgotten by the spiritual descendants of these two great saints during that time. Now, though, ISKCON devotees from Bhubaneswar sometimes perform *saṅkīrtana* in Choti.

DEDICATED RESEARCHER

Fortunately for us all, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura left information about his connection with Choti in his autobiography. Dr. Fakir Mohan Das, a research scholar and professor at Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, and one of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's spiritual descendants, came across this information. Starting in 1982, Dr. Das visited Choti whenever he had the opportunity, and through painstaking research he eventually uncovered and published the facts about the history of the place for the benefit of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community. But the challenge of reestablishing the worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Choti remained.

Dr. Das was never fully satisfied with the story of how the deities had been submerged in the river, and he continued to make inquiries. Finally, in January 2000, after nearly twenty years of searching, he found Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in the house of a *brāhmaṇa*, Sri Duryodhana Dwivedi, where They had been secretly moved in about 1950. Sri Dwivedi was keen to hear of the international interest that would be generated by Their discovery, and he happily donated Their Lordships to a group of devotees headed by ISKCON Governing Body Commissioner His Holiness Bhaktisvarūpa Dāmodara Swami, under the guarantee that Their worship would be reestablished in Choti on Their traditional lands.

Presently They are being worshiped in Bhubaneswar pending the construction of a new temple for Them in Choti. ☸

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