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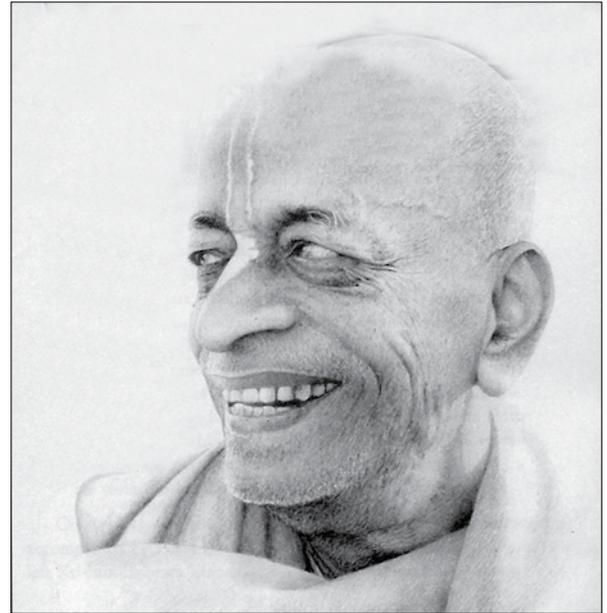
THE CART FESTIVAL

***His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada***

The cart festival this year was very simple. After all, it is a cart with four wheels, but it attracted the people so much because there was his Lordship, Sri Jagannath. Atheistic people may say that the Jagannath *mūrti* is made of wood and the cart is also made of wood, but spiritual bliss can be extracted from anything by simply seeing it in the light of Krishna consciousness. Even accepting the whole affair as wooden, a Krishna conscious person can understand that wood is nothing but a display of Krishna's energy. So it is the Krishna consciousness energy that gives us transcendental bliss, just like it is the electric energy passing through a copper cable which gives us electric light and heat. (Letter to Aniruddha. 7 July 1968.)

Regarding *ratha-yātrā*, it must be done at any cost. I may go or may not go. That is not important. But the *Ratha-yātrā* festival as you have already organized it must always be done. (Letter to Syamasundara. 26 May 1969.)

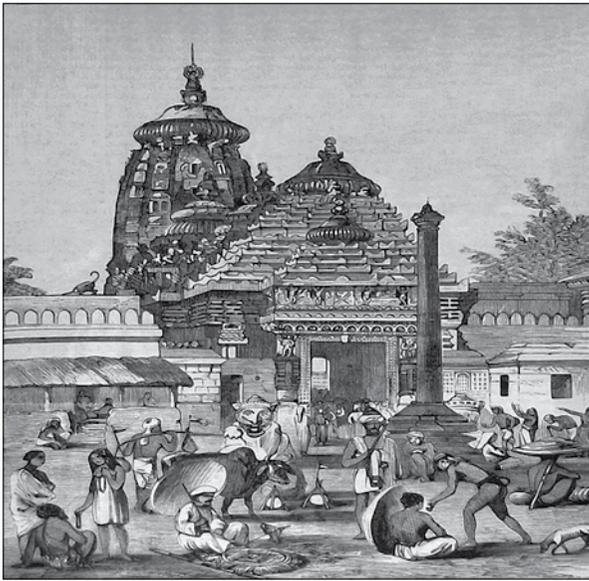
The main item in the *ratha-yātrā* is the cart, so how will you observe the festival without the required cart? If you want to take the deities on



Painting by Anuradha Dasi

*His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

the shoulders of the devotees, that is also nice. But if you convey the deities on a car, that will be very nice. The system of organizing the festival is that the deities are taken to some river-side, if not the seaside, and Montreal has got a very nice river, the St. Lawrence River. The system is that for eight days the deities remain on the seaside, and *kīrtana* goes on, *prasāda* is distributed and people



Jagannath Mandir in Puri, c. 1830

offer flowers, fruits, etc., to the deities. Then on the eighth day the Lord returns to his own place. This is the system, and care is taken to ensure that the great procession is complete with chanting, flowers, etc. If during *ratha-yātrā* you cannot keep the festival on the seaside then take the cart in procession to the river-side and come back on the same day. For the eight days, as far as possible, distribute *prasadam*, especially *khicari*. Then on the eighth day you also organize the ceremony in the same way. Please arrange to take nice photographs of your festival activities as well as of your other *kīrtana* activities. (Letter to Jayapataka. 21 June 1969.)

Regarding *ratha-yātrā*, we shall choose the most favorable time to hold our celebration. If for our preaching it is going to be more beneficial to hold it in September, then you may do so. (Letter to Madhudvisa Swami. 17 June 1975.) ❀

RATHA-YATRA LILA

Vaishnava Dasa

nīlācale jagannātha rāya, guṇḍicā mandire cali yāya

In Nilacala, Lord Jagannatha's chariot proceeds to the Gundicha temple.

aparīpa rathera sājami, tāhe caḍi yāya yadumani

The crest jewel of the Yadu dynasty emphatically mounts upon a wonderfully decorated chariot.

dekhiyā āmara gaura-hari, nija-gaṇa laiṅyā eka kari

Seeing this, my Lord Gaurahari assembled all his associates together.

mālya-candana sabe diyā, jagannātha nikaṭe yāiyā

Decorating them personally with garlands and sandalwood paste, he brought them near Lord Jagannath.

ratha veḍi sāta sampradāya, kīrtana karaye gorā-rāya

They formed seven groups around the chariot of the Lord, and Lord Gaura Ray performed *kīrtana* in each group.

ājānu-lambita bāhu tuli, ghana-uḷhe hari-hari buli

The Lord raised his hands in the air, and the entire atmosphere resounded with loud sounds of "Hari! Hari!"

gagana bhedila sei dhvani, anyākara kichu nāhi śuni

These loud reverberations filled the entire sky. Indeed, one could hear nothing else.

nitāi advaita haridāsa, nāce vakreśvara śrīvāsa

Nityananda, Advaita, Haridas, Vakreshwar and Srivas were assigned to dance and sing in different groups.



Nāma-tattva

CHANT IN ALL SITUATIONS

Vaiṣṇava-kaṅṭha-bharaṇīya-nāma-māhātmya

*uttiṣṭhatā prasvapatā prasthitena gamiṣyatā
govindeti sadā vācyam kṣu-tṛṭ-praskhalanādiṣu*

*cakrāyudhasya nāmāni sadā sarvatra kīrtayet
nāśaucam kīrtane tasya sa pavitrakaro yataḥ*

The name of Lord Govinda should always be chanted in all situations, such as while waking up, before sleeping, while getting ready to go somewhere, and while going there, and even when one is embarrassed due to hiccups, hunger, stumbling, falling down, etc. In fact, one should chant loudly at all times and in all places the name of Lord Krishna, who is also known as Chakrayudha, wielder of the disc. In such chanting there is no consideration of cleanliness, for the Lord is the ultimate purifier. ❀

— Translated from the *Vaiṣṇava-kaṅṭha-bharaṇīya-nāma-māhātmya*, Sarasvati Bhavan, text No. 72, edited by Mangal Deva Shastri, printed at Eureka Printing Works, Benares City, 1937.





Photo by Bhakta Charles

Lord Jagannath on his chariot in Puri

mukunda svarūpa rāma-rāya, mana bujhi uccasvare gāya
Mukunda, Swarup Damodara and Ramananda Ray raised heartfelt exclamations.

govinda mādharma vāsu-ghoṣa, yānra gāme adhika samtoṣa
By listening to the singing of Govinda, Madhava and Basu Ghosh, everyone felt immense satisfaction.

vāsu-rāmānanda narahari, gadādhara paṇḍitādi kari
Ramananda Vasu, Narahari and Gadadhar also danced and sang ecstatically.

dvija-haridāsa viṣṇu-dāsa, ihā sabāra gāmete ullāsa

Especially, Dwija Haridas, Vishnu Das, etc. found great joy in such singing for the Lord

ei mata kīrtana-nartane,
katho dūra pada-reṇu āśa, kari kahe vaiṣṇavera dāsa

In this way, singing and dancing went on for the pleasure of the Lord. From a distant place, Vaishnava Das hopes to get the dust from their lotus feet. ❀

— Translated from *Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī*, fourth edition, April 2010. Compiled and edited by Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyay. Published by Shishu Sahitya Sansad Pvt. Ltd. Kolkata.

PRAYERS TO LORD JAGANNATH

Srila Sanatan Goswami

śrī-jagannātha nīlādri-śiro-mukūṭa-ratna he
dāru-brahman ghana-śyāma prasīda puruṣottama

O Lord Jagannath, the crest jewel of the Niladri hill! O supreme Brahman in a wooden form! O dark-hued Lord Shyam! Please be merciful upon me, O Lord Purushottam!

praphulla puṇḍarikākṣa lavaṇābdi-taṭāmṛta
guṭikodara mām pāhi nānā-bhoga-purandara



Lord Jagannath comes out of the temple

Photo by Bhakta Charles

O Lord with full blooming lotus eyes! O nectar of the sea-side city! O you who have a pebble (*śālagrāma-śilā*) in your belly! O enjoyer of varieties of food offerings! Please protect me!

*nijādhara suhādāyinn indra-dyumna-prasādita
subhadrālālana-vyagra rāmānuja namo 'stu te*

To your dear devotees you give the nectar of your lips (in the form of *mahā-prasād*). You satisfied King Indradyumna (who prayed for your appearance). You are very eager to protect your younger sister Subhadrā. O younger brother of Baladeva! I offer my respects at your lotus feet.

*guṇḍicā-ratha-yātrādi-mahotsava-vivardhana
bhakta-vatsala vande tvām guṇḍicā-ratha-maṇḍanam*

You are always expanding your grand festivals such as *guṇḍicā-ratha-yātrā*. O you who are kind to your devotees! O ornament of *Ratha-yātrā*! I offer my obeisances unto you!

*dīna-hīna-mahānīca-dayārdrikṛta-mānasa
nitya-nūtana mahātmya-darsin caitanya-vallabha*

O Lord who is very dear to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu! Towards the most downtrodden, fallen rascals, you assume a most merciful mood and thus you display a wide variety of great and eternally fresh pastimes. ❀

— Translated from *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-līlā-stava* 398–402. Sanskrit taken from Gaudiya Grantha Mandira. (<http://www.granthamandira.com>)



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Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

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PRAYERS TO THE BHAGAVATAM

Srila Sanatan Goswami

*sarva-śāstrābdhi-pīyūṣa sarva-vedaika-sat-phala
sarva-siddhānta-ratnāḍhya sarva-lokaika-dṛk-prada*

*sarva-bhāgavata-prāṇa śrīmad-bhāgavata-prabho
kali-dhvāntoditāditya śrī-kṛṣṇa-parivartita*

O *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*! O nectar churned from the ocean of all the Vedic scriptures! You are the most prominent transcendental fruit of the Vedas and are enriched with the jewels of all philosophical conclusions. You grant spiritual vision to all people of the world and are the very life-breath of the *vaiṣṇava* devotees. O Lord, you are the sun which has risen to dispel the darkness of kali-yuga. Actually, you are Lord Krishna, who has returned among us.

*paramānanda-pāṭhāya prema-varṣy-akṣarāya te
sarvadā sarva-sevyāya śrī-kṛṣṇāya namo 'stu me*

O *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*! I offer respectful obeisances unto you. By your recitation one attains transcendental bliss, because your syllables shower down pure love of God. You are to be served by everyone, always, for you are an incarnation of Lord Krishna.

*mad-eka-bandho mat-saṅgin mad-guro man-mahā-dhana
man-nistāraka mad-bhāgya mad-ānanda namo 'stu te*

O *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*! O my only friend, companion, and teacher! O my great wealth and deliverer! O my good fortune and bliss! I offer respectful obeisances unto you.

*asādhu-sādhutā-dāyinn atinīcocca-tākara
hā na muñca kadācin mām premmā hṛt-kaṇṭhayoḥ sphura*

O *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, O bestower of saintliness to the unsaintly! O uplifter of the most fallen! Please never leave me! Accompanied by pure love of Krishna, please manifest yourself in my heart and throat! ❀

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