



तवकथामृतं तसजीवनम्  
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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## VYASA PUJA AND NANDOTSAVA

*His Divine Grace*

**A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada**

Vyāsa-pūjā means to observe the birthday of the spiritual master. I was fortunately born on this date seventy-three years ago. This day is a very fortunate occasion, because after Krishna's birth, Maharaja Nanda, the father of Krishna, celebrated an utsava, a ceremony. This day is called Nandotsava. I shall speak a little about Nandotsava. Nanda Maharaja was a little elderly when Krishna was born, and some of his friends came to congratulate him, "My dear friend, you have got a son in your old age." Nanda Maharaja said to his friends, "How can you say I am old? An old man cannot beget a child. I am a young man." These things are stated in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Vrindavan is a big village, and Nanda Maharaja is

the head of that village. So all the people came to congratulate the child, this is called Nandotsava.

One Brahmin has spoken a nice verse in this connection. He said śrutim apare smṛtim itare bhāratam anye bhajantu bhava-bhitāḥ — "There are different kinds of Vedic literature, śruti, smṛti, Mahābhārata, Vedānta, etc." He says, "Let others read the śruti, Vedic literatures, Vedānta-sūtra and Upaniṣads. But, aham iha nandaṁ vande — I have come to worship Nanda Maharaja."

"Why have you left everything and come to worship Nanda Maharaja?"

Yasyālinde param brahma — "Because in his courtyard the Supreme Personality of Godhead is crawling. People are searching after what is God, and God is crawling in his yard. So therefore I do not find anyone greater than Nanda Maharaja, and I offer my respects to Nanda Maharaja."

This is the feeling of a devotee. Generally, those who are followers of the speculative process, jñāna-mārga, they finally realize that they are one with the Supreme Absolute Truth — *aham brahmāsmi*. But devotional service is so nice that a devotee is not satisfied thinking, "I am one with the Supreme." Rather, by his service he becomes greater than the Supreme.

Just like Nanda Maharaja. He is not anxious to become one with God. He underwent great penances to become the father of God. That is possible. A devotee is so great that he can pray to the Supreme Lord as his son. It is a very subtle science to understand this spiritual knowledge.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said — *ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā bhūtānām īśvara 'pi san* — although God is unborn and is the Supreme, still, by love, he accepts one of his devotees as his father and appears as his son. So today is a very nice day, that Krishna has appeared. The Supreme Lord has appeared as the son of Nanda Maharaja. So there is some arrangement of *prasādam* on account of Nanda Maharaja. You can distribute that and enjoy. Thank you very much. 🍍

— Vyāsa-pūjā lecture in Hamburg, Germany. 5 September 1969.

## THE TRADITION OF DEVOTIONAL PAINTING FOR LORD JAGANNATH PART 5

### Rasa

The Sanskrit word “*rasa*” literally means “mellow” or “taste”, and indicates sentiment or emotion. *Rasa* is the taste of various kinds of relationships. According to Srila Rupa Goswami in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.5.118), colors correspond to specific *rasas* as follows:

śvetaś citro 'ruṇaḥ śoṇaḥ śyāmaḥ pāṇḍura-piṅgalau  
gauro dhūmras tathā raktah kālo nītaḥ kramād amī

The twelve *rasas* have twelve colors as follows: white (*sānta*, neutrality), multi-colored (*prīti*, general affection), orange (*preyān* or *sakhya*, fraternal), crimson (*vatsala*, parental), indigo (*madhura*, conjugal), light yellow or white (*hāsyā*, humorous), yellow or green (*adbhuta*, astonishment), gold (*vīra*, heroic), purple (*karuṇā*, tragic), red (*raudra*, wrathful), black (*bhayānaka*, fearful) and blue (*bibhatsa*, revulsion).

*Pāṭa-citra* painting follows this śāstric conception of colors, thus making them literally colored with emotion. This is the essence of all art. As expressed by the American philosopher Susanne Langer (1895–1985), “Art is the objectification of feeling.”<sup>1</sup>

*Rasa* also appears as one of the major subject matters of the genre. The Vaishnava philosophies of Odisha and Bengal place great emphasis on *rasa* in terms of relationships between the devotees and the Lord. Some examples of topics in *pāṭa-citra* art that are saturated with devotional mélées are as follow:

**Rāma-līlā:** The pastimes of Lord Ramachandra from the *Rāmāyaṇa* are a frequently depicted theme in *pāṭa-citra* art.

**Kṛṣṇa-līlā:** Krishna's Vrindavan pastimes are a favorite topic of the *citrakāras*. Subjects that are repeatedly expressed from *kṛṣṇa-līlā* include depictions of Krishna's birth, the killing of Kamsa and various demons, the lifting of Govardhan Hill,

### श्रीकृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

the subjugation of the snake demon Kaliya, and the stealing of the clothes of the unmarried *gopīs*.

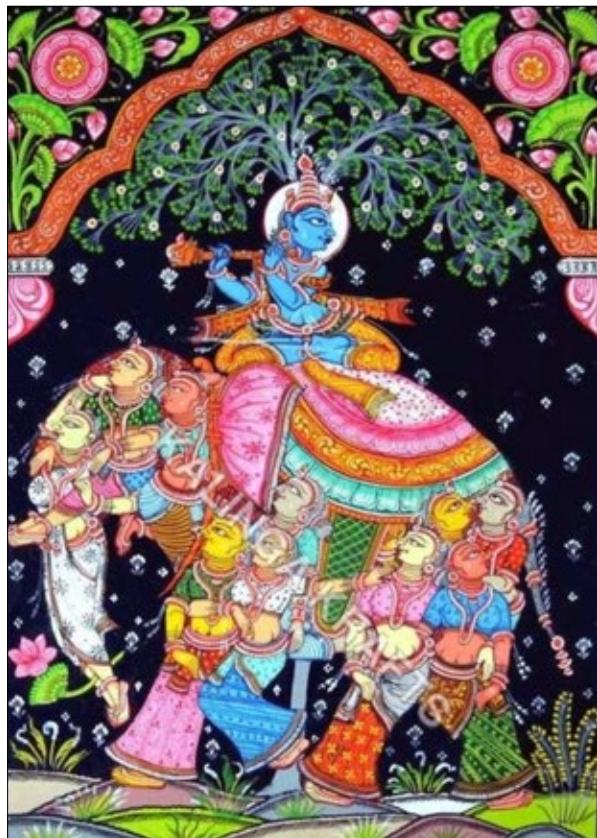
**Rāsa-līlā:** Within the context of Krishna's Vrindavan pastimes, special emphasis is seen on Krishna's pastimes with Radha and the *gopī* damsels in the loving dance pastimes known as *rāsa-līlā*. Frequently painted topics in this category include:

**rāsa-maṇḍala:** Krishna's nocturnal dance of divine love with the Vrindavan cowherd girls. Paintings in this theme generally present Krishna with *gopīs* in small pictures set in a circular motif in the center of which stand Radha and Krishna.

**gaja-rasa:** Krishna riding on an elephant that is made of the joined bodies of the *gopīs*.

**kandarpa-ratha:** (Cupid's chariot). Krishna is depicted riding a chariot that is made of the bodies of the *gopīs*, who act as wheels, pillars and the sides of the chariot. The driver of the chariot is Srimati Radharani. This painting, the subject of which is unique to Odisha, is one of the most popular themes in *pāṭa-citra* art.

**āsva-rasa:** Krishna riding on a horse made of the damsels of Vraja. Srimati Radharani is depicted as the shoulders of the horse, Lalita is the stomach, and the four legs are various *gopīs*.



Unknown artist

Gaja-rasa, Krishna rides an elephant made of gopīs



Unknown artist

Aśva-rasa, Krishna rides a horse made of gopīs

**Illustrations of literary works:** Pata-citra art has been utilized to illustrate many literatures dealing with the intimate *rasa*-filled pastimes of Radha and Krishna. One of the most beautifully illustrated palm-leaf manuscripts in the Odisha State Museum is a copy of Rupa Goswami's *Vidagdha-mādhava* that has been decorated with pata-citra art. Another oft-illustrated literature is Jayadev Goswami's immortal *Gītā-govinda*.<sup>2</sup> For hundreds of years, *Gītā-govinda* has been a major subject for Odishan art. Innumerable dancers, sculptors, singers and pata-citra artists have lent their talents to present Jayadeva's work. The Odisha State Museum has more than a dozen palm leaf manuscripts of *Gītā-govinda* illustrated with pata-citra paintings.

The above examples display some of the many ways in which pata-citra art has been a medium of expression for *rasa* and for the Vaishnava literatures of Odisha, Bengal, and Vrindavan. 🌸

#### Notes

1 Article titled, "Mind, An Essay on Human Feeling", (1967).

2 This Sanskrit poem is considered to be a favorite of Lord Jagannath, who is said to be so fond of it that every night he wears a special dress known as *gītā-govindam khandua* — a twelve-foot-long red silk cloth on which *Gītā-govinda* has been inscribed.

## MAHAPRABHU'S DANCING UPON KRISHNA'S APPEARANCE

*Adapted from Srila Narahari Chakravati Thakur's  
Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara 12.3148-3168*

One day while sitting in the house of Srivas Thakur, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu laughed and told the devotees, "Tomorrow is the birthday of Krishna." Knowing the mind of Prabhu, Srivas and others at once understood that since tomorrow would be Janmastami, Vishwambar would dance in the dress of a cowherd boy [on the Nandotsava day]. With supreme happiness, Srivas and the other devotees began preparing the necessary items. That day, the house of Srivas was filled with joy as the auspicious *abhiṣeka*,

bathing ceremony, of Lord Krishna was performed. After the *abhiṣeka* they spent the entire night absorbed in the pleasures of *sāṅkirtana*.

At the end of the night, Lord Gaurachandra thoughtfully adopted the dress of a cowherd boy. Nityananda Prabhu, who is expert in this dress, also decorated himself as a fresh young cowherd boy. Seeing Lord Gaurahari in that dress, no one could keep their patience. Ramai, Sundarananda, Gauridas and others also decorated themselves as cowherd boys, with no limit to their beauty. They all took earthen pots full of yogurt and butter, tied strings around the necks of the pots, and then tied the pots on both ends of a stick. Placing those sticks on their shoulders, they entered into the compound of Srivas. Absorbed in the mood of the cowherd boys, Srivas and Adwaita scattered curd and turmeric in the compound. Full of joyous dancing, singing, music, and joking, the home of Srivas was transformed into the abode of Nanda Maharaja.

[Narahari Chakravati has composed the following song about this pastime:]

Kāmoda rāga

*gorā mora gokulera śāśi  
krṣṇera janama āji kahe hāsi' hāsi'*



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#### श्रीकृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

My Lord Gauranga is the moon of Gokul. Laughing again and again, he says that today is the birthday of Krishna.

*se āveśe thira haite nāre  
dhari gopaveśa nāce ullāsa antare*

In an introspective mood, he has adopted the dress of a cowherd boy and is dancing in a way that delights the heart.

*nitāi gopera veśa dhari'  
hāte laiyā lagūda nācaye bhaīgi kari*

Nitai has also accepted the dress of a cowherd boy. Carrying a stick in his hand, he dances in various ways.

*gaurīdāsa rāmāi sundara  
nāce gopa-veśe – kāndhe bhāra manohara*

Gauridas Pandit and beautiful Ramai [the younger brother of Srivas Pandit] look enchanting as they dance in the dress of cowherd boys, carrying clay pots on their shoulders.

*śrīvāsa advaita gopa-veśe  
chaḍāya haladī dadhi manera ullāse*

In the dress of cowherd boys, Srivas and Adwaita joyfully throw turmeric and yogurt.

*keha keha nānā vādyā vāya  
mukunda mādhava se janama-lilā gāya*

Varieties of music were played, and Mukunda Das and Madhava Das sang about the birth pastimes of Krishna.

*kare sumāṅgala nārīgaṇa  
śrīvāsa ālaya yena nandera bhavana*

The ladies made many auspicious sounds as if Srivas' house was the palace of Nanda Maharaja.

*jaya-dhvani kari bāre bāre  
dhāya loka – dhairaya dharite keu nāre*

Again and again the devotees shouted, "All glories! All glories!" No one could keep their patience.

*kata sādhe dekhe āñkhi bhari'  
śobhāya bhuvana bhule bhāne narahari*

Eagerly gazing on these pastimes, so many people felt complete satisfaction of their eyes. Narahari says that the whole world is enchanted by that beauty. 🍍

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