

Constructing a Hindu Black Theology

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Abstract: Black theology is a contemporary mode of theology that critically engages with specific theological motifs in order to affirm the humanity of blacks and emancipate them from white racism. At present, much black theological discourse occurs in Christian contexts, and thus, Hindu religious traditions are bereft of the socially transformative insights that such discourse produces. However, in this paper, I demonstrate that black theological motifs are present within Hindu theological frameworks as well. Specifically, I construct a distinctively Hindu black theology by drawing upon certain theological motifs present within the theological framework of the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta tradition. After constructing this black theology, I demonstrate its socio-theological implications and explain how it can fulfil the black theological aim of liberating blacks from white racism.

Keywords: Black Theology; Hinduism; Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta

Introduction

At present, there is a pressing need to establish racial equity across the globe. In 2020, the untimely death of George Floyd, an African-American who was brutally murdered in broad daylight by a white police officer, sent shockwaves across the U.S. and beyond. Riots surged throughout the globe, and whites and blacks alike joined each other to demand justice for a murder that is unfortunately, not the only of its kind. The message communicated by these riots was loud and clear. The world has had enough of racial bigotry.

Yet, it is worth highlighting that, unfortunately, anti-black racism is also found within India.¹ This is problematic because as recently as 2015, there were at least 40,000 blacks from Africa living in India.² In my personal observations as a Hindu born and raised in America, I have witnessed a great deal of anti-black racism from Hindus living in America as well. As the world becomes increasingly globalized, leading to an increase in the social spaces that Hindus and blacks co-inhabit, we can surmise that instances of anti-black racism on the part of Hindus will continue to increase if these racist sentiments are not curbed or addressed.

Sadly, as history has shown, despite having conceptual resources that could inspire an egalitarian worldview, Hindus have not, in practice, adopted such a view. Thus, while one may find Hindu scriptural texts that encourage individuals to view others with an equal eye, in practice, marginalized individuals within India are still discriminated against and do not enjoy the type of equal rights that one might hope for.³ Furthermore, one can also find various Hindu scriptural or exegetical writings that establish hierarchies of value according to physical contingencies such as race, caste, or gender. It is well-known that the *Manusamhitā* (c. 500 BCE – 200 CE) emphasizes anthropological-hierarchical attitudes above notions of spiritual equality, for instance. However, hierarchical attitudes can also be found within *bhakti*-traditions.⁴ For

instance, the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (c. 9th to 10th century CE) (henceforth *BhP*), which centers around *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa⁵ and is one of the most influential Hindu scriptural texts, states, “the Kirātas, Hūṇas, Āndhras, Pulindas, Pulkaśas, Ābhīras, Śumbhas, Yavanas, Khasas and other wicked tribes are cleansed of their misdeeds by taking refuge of those who have taken refuge of God. To God (Viṣṇu), respects!”⁶ On the one hand, this verse implies that membership within a particular ethnic group does not prevent one from being able to purify themselves through the performance of *bhakti*. However, on the other hand, this verse does designate certain ethnic groups as being wicked or immoral (*pāpa*), thus establishing a hierarchy of value based that is grounded in one’s ethnicity.

Hence, there is scope to combat various forms of inequity, such as racial inequity, within Hindu thought. In attempting to combat such inequity, the Hindu can draw inspiration from Christian theologians who have strived to do the same in their religious tradition. For instance, Christians have developed a form of theology known as ‘black theology,’ which as the name suggests, “is a theology of black liberation” and “the affirmation of black humanity that emancipates black people from white racism, thus providing authentic freedom for both white and black people.”⁷

Black theologians have attempted to dehegemonize black-white relationships by emphasizing passages within the Bible that describe God’s desire to liberate the oppressed. For instance, after citing various Biblical verses, James Cone states “there is no divine grace in the Old Testament (or in the New Testament) that is bestowed on oppressors at the expense of the suffering of the poor.”⁸ Elsewhere, Cone also states, “the hermeneutical principle for an exegesis of the Scriptures is the revelation of God in Christ as the Liberator of the oppressed from social oppression and to political struggle, wherein the poor recognize that their fight against poverty

and injustice is not only consistent with the gospel but is the gospel of Jesus Christ.”⁹ Cone’s emphasis on the Biblical motif of justice and the upliftment of the poor is particularly significant because it challenges interpretations of the Bible that have traditionally been used to justify the enslavement of blacks. For instance, the minister Cotton Mather (c. 17th century) urged whites to teach their slaves that God caused them to become slaves and that they serve Jesus Christ when they work for their white slave masters.¹⁰

If a Christian black theologian such as Cone can combat oppressive readings of the Bible and offer alternative understandings of scripture that promote black upliftment, we might wonder if it is possible for a Hindu to do the same. However, since black theology is generally considered to be a Christocentric theological undertaking, it has many distinctive Christian doctrines and motifs at the core of its emancipatory projects. For instance, Cone states, “the message of liberation is the revelation of God as revealed in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Freedom IS the gospel. Jesus is the Liberator!”¹¹ Thus, I acknowledge that it can be problematic to conduct black theological inquiry, which has distinctively Christian roots and associations, in the context of a specific Hindu tradition, especially when this Hindu tradition is informed by different metaphysical and soteriological presuppositions than those of the Christian black theologians who have developed and furthered contemporary black theological discourses. Nevertheless, I argue that a Hindu black theology can be constructed in order to support the upliftment of black individuals and also liberate them from racially hegemonic social structures, since although such a Hindu black theology will have different black theological motifs than Christian black theologies, this Hindu black theology can fulfill emancipatory aims similar to those of Christocentric black theological discourses.

In this paper, I primarily investigate the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta tradition (henceforth CVV), a religious tradition that is based on the teachings of Caitanya (1486-1534 CE) and six of his most important followers known as the six Gosvāmins. One of these six Gosvāmins, Jīva (c. 16th century CE) is notable for having put Caitanya’s teachings in dialogue with the systems of soteriological practice and philosophical inquiry known as Vedānta.¹² The CVV is centered on cultivating intensely affective forms of devotional love to the Goddess-God duo Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Based on my research into the CVV I am optimistic that discourses analogous to black theology can indeed be undertaken in Hindu contexts.

Moreover, although my research in this paper pertains mainly to the CVV, I believe that the motifs discussed in this paper have relevance to a wider audience aside from scholars of the CVV or practitioners within the CVV. For example, the specific black theological exercise that I perform in this paper, though performed within the specific doctrinal context of the CVV, can serve as a model for other Hindu religious traditions that emphasize the spiritual equality of finite selves or the importance of developing compassion. Furthermore, I discuss the black theological implications of two foundational CVV scriptural texts that are also two of the most influential Hindu scriptural texts, namely, the *Bhagavad Gītā* (c. 500 BCE – 200 CE) (henceforth *BhG*) and the *BhP*. The insights I mine from these two texts will be relevant to a wider array of Hindu traditions as well. Although I will examine CVV interpretations of these texts, many of these texts’ insights are also pertinent to various religious traditions other than the CVV; however, it is beyond the scope of this paper to demonstrate how other religious traditions can draw upon these insights to in a manner conducive to black theological inquiry.

My aim in doing this black theological exercise within the context of the CVV is to see whether or not there are conceptual resources within this tradition that can be used to support a

more egalitarian worldview and counter certain hierarchical attitudes that may be reinforced by verses such as *BhP* 2.4.18, which was cited earlier. My goal is not to argue that the CVV's scriptural texts and theologians unequivocally support a vision of equality. Rather, I intend to demonstrate that there are ample conceptual resources within the tradition that practitioners can draw upon in order to justify such a vision, even in the face of interpretations to the contrary.

Ontological and Spiritual Equality of Selves

One major motif that informs the development of the CVV-inflected black theology that I develop in this paper is the notion of the ontological and spiritual equality of all finite selves. A pan-Hindu motif, which is present within the CVV, is the dichotomization of the individual into a physical and a spiritual component. Comprising the spiritual component is the *ātman*, or the immaterial spiritual self, who remains ontologically distinct from its physical body though associated with it temporarily. It is also worth noting that each individual, as an *ātman*, is numerically distinct from other selves, though spiritually and ontologically equal to other selves as well.

Since spiritual selves are held to be ontologically distinct from their physical bodies, it should come as no surprise that texts such as the *BhG* emphasize the importance of viewing the ontological structure of selves as transcendent to the spatio-temporal world. For instance, *BhG* 5.18¹³ states, “the wise look equally upon a learned humble *brāhmaṇa*, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog cooker.” As this verse indicates, the wise do not value the existence of selves according to their contingent physical body, which encases selves but does not constitute their lasting ontological identity. Rather, as CVV theologians such as A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda (1896-1977 CE) argue, the wise see that “differences of body are meaningless from

the viewpoint of a learned transcendentalist” because the ontological structure of all selves is “of the same spiritual quality.”¹⁴ Thus, the notion of equality indicates that although selves are not the exact same as each other (they may differ in terms of their physical characteristics, for example), they are equal in terms of their ontological worth.¹⁵

A motif similar to *BhG* 5.18 is also found in *BhG* 6.9,¹⁶ which states, “one whose discernment is equal amongst benefactors, friends, enemies, neutral parties, mediators, the hateful, kinsmen, the righteous, and even the unrighteous, is preeminent.” Here, just as in *BhG* 5.18, the word *sama*, meaning equal, is used. The medieval theologian Śrīdhara Svāmin (c. 1327-1378 or 1353-1414 CE), whose views are incorporated within the CVV,¹⁷ elaborates upon the meaning of *sama* in this verse and indicates that it means that one is devoid of any attachment or hatred (*Subodhinī-ṭīkā* 6.9¹⁸). Thus, according to the *BhG* and to Śrīdhara, an individual is considered to be preeminent if they can impartially look upon all empirical varieties of selves regardless of how the selves treat this individual. These texts therefore claim that a wise individual does not let the behavior of other individuals obscure their abiding vision of the spiritual equality of all selves, whether these individuals behave favorably or unfavorably towards them.

Further verses in the *BhG* elaborate upon the motif of seeing selves with a spiritual vision that is grounded in equality. For instance, *BhG* 18.20¹⁹ states, “you should know that *sāttvic*²⁰ knowledge is that by which an individual sees one imperishable, undivided nature amongst all living beings.” In contrast, *BhG* 18.21²¹ states, “but you should know that *rājasic* knowledge is that by which one sees all selves to be separate entities of various kinds.” Thus, according to the *BhG*, the highest vision of knowledge is to cognize the undivided spiritual nature within different

selves and not to identify these selves according to their variegated psycho-physiological features, which pertain only to the temporary physical body.

That all selves are spiritually and ontologically equal regardless of their temporary worldly embodiments has several crucial implications for promoting and realizing a vision of social and racial equality. Indeed, Anantanand Rambachan has argued that this notion of spiritual equality can lead to the institution of concrete forms of equality for various marginalized groups such as women, homosexuals, animals, children, and lower caste individuals.²² I too affirm that this specific notion of equality can indeed contribute to the establishment of social equality. How such social equality can be implemented and achieved is indicated in the following discussion.

I argue that the root reason for forms of hegemonic oppression is that humans draw invidious distinctions between themselves and others based on various criteria that are social constructs developed within specific historical contexts. For instance, sexism, racism, and colonialism within the Americas can be seen as consequences or concomitants of oppression based on physiological, socio-cultural, and religious differences respectively. Indeed, much of the patterns of oppression that we have witnessed throughout human history have often involved certain disjunctive processes of ‘othering’ individuals and projecting them as inferior to the socio-cultural group with which one identifies.

Unfortunately, religion has also often been implicated within this ‘othering’ process. For instance, as James Kameron Carter has argued, the origin of “modernity’s racial imagination” began when Western Christians cast both themselves and Jews as distinct racial groups.²³ In this racialization process, Carter explains that the Jews were also held to be inferior to the Christians. Moreover, since Christian culture came to be articulated as the normative Western culture (and

vice versa) and Jewish culture came to be seen as an Oriental culture, the presumed superiority of Christianity over Judaism in turn justified the racial imagination of white supremacy.²⁴

However, I argue that such a tendency to ‘otherize’ individuals, cast them monolithically as an inferior group, and construct and entrench hegemonic social structures in order to dominate over them, is not caused by religion but is instead a deeply-entrenched human tendency, which can *manifest* through, and be reinforced by religion. I argue that even if the ideas and the institutions of religion were absent in a particular socio-cultural milieu, there could be other strategies of stratification that individuals could employ in order to justify systems of exploiting and oppressing others. For instance, one could establish wealth, intelligence, language, or some other marker of self-worth as a normative criterion by which individuals should be evaluated. The groups that possess these arbitrarily valorized and enforced characteristics could then justify their superiority over other groups that possess these characteristics to a lesser degree.

However, when individuals adhere to the notion of spiritual equality as proclaimed by scriptural verses such as *BhG* 5.18, individuals can begin to actively break down the hierarchical divisions produced and sustained by the categories of race (along with economic status, race, caste, gender, etc.) and view others as their spiritual equals regardless of any arbitrary physiological or socio-cultural characteristic that they or others may be associated with. For instance, a white man could look upon a black woman and see that she, as embodying a transcendent spiritual self like his own spiritual self, is ontologically equal to himself. Thus, with this spiritual vision, this man can look beyond this woman’s physiological differences and treat her respectfully as a fellow spiritual self. This same reasoning also applies to animals, individuals of a different race or caste, etc.

The Importance of Compassion

Another motif within CVV theological texts is the importance of developing compassion. For instance, *Caitanyacaritāmṛta*²⁵ (c. 16th century CE) 2.15.162-163²⁶ illustrate the compassion that individual Caitanya Vaiṣṇavas are encouraged to develop. These verses state that the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava named Vāsudeva Datta requests Caitanya to transfer the sins²⁷ of all selves to him, even though this transferal entails that Vāsudeva Datta will have to suffer tremendously on these selves' behalf. From this brief episode, we can observe that an ideal Caitanya Vaiṣṇava like Vāsudeva Datta possesses immense compassion for selves and is willing to suffer excruciating pain in order to relieve them of their miseries.

The *BhP* also contains several verses that exhort its readers to develop compassion (*karuṇa*). *BhP* 6.2.36 indicates that compassion is a spiritual virtue that one should cultivate²⁸ and *BhP* 3.27.8 contains a scriptural imperative for individuals to develop such compassion.²⁹ *BhP* 9.21.3-13 describe the story of Rantideva, whose life serves as a paradigmatic example of the compassion that adherents of the *BhP* are encouraged to develop. These verses explain that Rantideva, though having fasted from food and water for forty-eight days, had distributed newly acquired food to various guests that visited his home.³⁰ At *BhP* 9.21.12,³¹ Rantideva states, “From God, I do not desire the highest destination, which includes the eight perfections of yoga, nor freedom from material existence. I desire to obtain the pain of all the embodied living beings while I stay among them as the person through whom they become without misery.” Thus, as Rantideva’s story illustrates, the ideal of compassion is valorized as a saintly quality, and cultivating it is valued even above one’s own soteriological pursuits.

Examples of Spiritual Principles Within the CVV

The CVV also has real-world examples of its spiritual principles being applied in order to foster a vision of spiritual equality. For instance, Prabhupāda warmly embraced his African American disciple Bhakti Tirtha Swami, when Prabhupāda heard about this disciple's efforts to promote the teachings of the CVV.³² This simple gesture indicates that Prabhupāda, who hailed from a socially conservative cultural milieu (20th century colonial Bengal), did not view Bhakti Tirtha Swami as someone who was untouchable or who had low ontological worth. In fact, the affection that Prabhupāda displayed to Bhakti Tirtha Swami was rarely given to Prabhupāda's other disciples, including those who were white or Indian. Moreover, it is highly significant that later, followers of Prabhupāda gave Bhakti Tirtha Swami initiation into the *saṁnyāsa* order, for this is the highest rung on the Vedic social ladder and is not awarded to individuals easily.

Furthermore, there are other instances where Prabhupāda treated other marginalized groups with the same care as his non-marginalized disciples. For example, when asked by an American female disciple if she should adopt a traditional maternal role as the caretaker of her husband and children, Prabhupāda encouraged her to instead write newspaper articles and thus promote the teachings of Kṛṣṇa-*bhakti* through her literary talents.³³ Prabhupāda also enabled and encouraged his female disciples to perform activities that were outside the scope of their traditional gender roles at the time. He a), established a celibate community (*brahmacāriṇī āśrama*) for unmarried women, b), initiated women into the chanting of the *gāyatrī mantra*, and c) made them priests in his U.S. temples, Notably, a)-c) were unique contributions to Caitanya Vaiṣṇava praxis at the time.³⁴ While these activities would not strike us as particularly socially progressive today, it is worth noting that Prabhupāda hailed from a socially conservative socio-cultural milieu in colonial West Bengal in the 20th century, and hence, these are socially progressive for his times.

Addressing Challenges

Having outlined a distinctive CVV-inflected black theological framework, I now address various challenges to this framework. One such challenge is that a model of spiritual equality does not always translate into concrete social change. As I have previously mentioned, hierarchical attitudes prevail within Hindu thought despite the presence of verses such as *BhG* 5.18. Hence, we might wonder if the black theological framework I have outlined in this paper lacks any practical utility and is merely food for thought for armchair theologians, or whether this framework can meaningfully lead to racial equality. I am optimistic that this framework can contribute towards furthering racial equality. First, as I have mentioned, there are numerous examples of contemporary CVV theologians such as Prabhupāda who did view their marginalized followers with a vision of equality, thus suggesting that when individuals acquire an awareness of the CVV's spiritual motifs, they become influenced in positive ways.

Furthermore, I offer one explanation why Hindu notions of equality have not led to social progress, namely, that the voices that emphasize and promote the vision of spiritual equality are underrepresented within the arena of Hindu discourse. Although there are scriptural verses such as *BhG* 5.18 that promote spiritual equality, there are various other Hindu scriptural or exegetical writings that emphasize hierarchical attitudes above notions of spiritual equality. When these latter types of writings are given more emphasis or primacy, then one would expect hierarchical attitudes to persist within Hindu universes. However, if scriptural verses that emphasize spiritual equality are given greater attention and focus, then it is reasonable to think that the prevalence of hierarchical attitudes would decrease. Thus, at the least, by highlighting the various conceptual resources within the CVV that promote a vision of equality, I hope to have contributed to such a

shift in focus, so that the scriptural passages emphasizing equality can feature more prominently in the spotlight.

Conclusion

Thus, I maintain that the CVV's theological framework can be utilized to construct a type of black theology. Although this CVV-shaped black theology, when hermeneutically relocated within the contexts of the CVV, has to be sensitively redefined according to new theological parameters, I argue that this distinctive CVV-inflected black theology is nevertheless analogous to its Christian equivalents. Thus, just as black theology has gradually begun to exert its influence upon Christian theology and praxis at large, I am optimistic that creative Hindu reformulations of black theology too can begin to achieve a similar influence within Hindu milieus.

¹ Rahul Sambaraju, "We Are the Victims of Racism': Victim Categories in Negotiating Claims About Racism Against Black-Africans in India" *European Journal of Social Psychology* (forthcoming). <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2751>.

² Shubhomoy Sikdar, "Africans Allege Racism, Locals Blame 'Loud Habits'" (2016) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/Africans-allege-racism-locals-blame-%E2%80%98loud-habits%E2%80%99/article14388044.ece>.

³ Lance Nelson, "Cows, Elephants, Dogs, and Other Less Embodiments of Ātman: Reflections of Hindu Attitudes Toward Nonhuman Animals." In Paul Waldau and Kimberly Patton (eds.), *A Communion of Subjects. Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 179-193.

⁴ These traditions center on devotion (*bhakti*) towards deities such as Viṣṇu.

⁵ The *BhP* considers Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Deity, though it recognizes that Kṛṣṇa can assume a variety of supramundane bodies or forms through which he can manifest his divine presence. The text would regard Viṣṇu to be one of these forms.

⁶ *BhP* 2.4.18 - *kirāta-hūṇāndhra-pulinda-pulkaśā ābhīra-śumbhā yavanāḥ khasādayaḥ / ye 'nye ca pāpā yad-apāśrayāśrayāḥ śudhyanti tasmai prabhaviṣṇave namaḥ* // Cited from Kṛṣṇaśaṅkara Śāstrī, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa With Multiple Sanskrit Commentaries* (Ahmedabad: Śrī Bhāgavatavidyāpīṭha, 1965-1975), 149 of book 2.

⁷ Dennis Wiley, "God" in Christopher Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 81.

⁸ James Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2012), 62.

⁹ *Ibid*, 74.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 44.

- ¹¹ James Cone and Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Theology: A Documentary History: 1966-1979* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), 101.
- ¹² See Ravi Gupta, *The Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta of Jīva Gosvāmī: When Knowledge Meets Devotion* (London, UK: Routledge, 2007).
- ¹³ *vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini / śuni caiva śva-pāke ca paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ* // Cited from Graham M. Schweig, *The Bhagavad Gītā: The Beloved Lord's Love Song* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2007), 295.
- ¹⁴ A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, *Bhagavad Gītā As It Is* (Los Angeles: Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1974), 383.
- ¹⁵ Here, it is worth drawing a distinction between 'equality' and 'sameness.' Equality, which the *BhG* advocates, values diversity, whereas a desire for 'sameness' can lead to hegemony and oppression.
- ¹⁶ *suhṛn-mitrāry-udāsīna-madhyastha-dveṣya-bandhuṣu / sādhuṣv api ca pāpeṣu sama-buddhir viśiṣyate* // Cited from Schweig, *The Bhagavad Gītā*, 269.
- ¹⁷ Gupta, *The Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Vedānta of Jīva Gosvāmin*, 67-68.
- ¹⁸ Śrīdhara provides the following gloss for the compound *sama-buddhir*: *eteṣu samā rāga-dveṣādi-śūnyā buddhir yasya sa tu viśiṣṭaḥ* | Cited from Shastri Jeevarama Lallurama, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (Mumbai, The Gujarati Printing Press, 1912), 463.
- ¹⁹ *sarvabhūteṣu yenāikaṃ bhāvam avyayam ikṣate / avibhaktam vibhakteṣu taj jñānaṃ viddhi sāttvikam* // Cited from Schweig, *Bhagavad Gītā*, 319.
- ²⁰ *Sāttvic* knowledge pertains to *sattva*, which is one of the *guṇas*, or qualities of physical nature. The *guṇas* are divided into the following tripartite classification: 1) *sattva* (goodness) – considered to be the most superior *guṇa*. *Sattva* is illuminating and pure. 2) *Rajas* (passion) – considered to be the second most superior mode. *Rajas* is characterized by passion and attachment. 3) *Tamas* (darkness) – considered the lowest mode. *Tamas* is characterized by madness and lethargy.
- ²¹ *prthakvena tu yaj jñānaṃ nānā-bhāvān prthag-vidhān / veti sarveṣu bhūteṣu taj jñānaṃ viddhi rājasam* // Cited from Schweig, *Bhagavad Gītā*, 319.
- ²² Anantanand, Rambachan, *A Hindu Theology of Liberation: Not-Two Is Not One* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014).
- ²³ James Kameron Carter, *Race: A Theological Account* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.* Also, Carter does not provide specific dates for when this racialization process occurred.
- ²⁵ One of the most important texts within the CVV.
- ²⁶ *Caitanyacaritāmṛta* 2.15.162 - *jīvera duḥkha dekhi' mora hṛdaya bidare / sarva-jīvera pāpa prabhu deha' mora śīre* // *Caitanyacaritāmṛta* 2.15.163 - *jīvera pāpa lañā muñi karoṇ naraka bhoga / sakala jīvera, prabhu, ghucāha bhavaroga* // Cited from A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta: Madhya-līlā* (Los Angeles, CA: Bhaktivedānta Book Trust, 1998), 2383-2384.
- ²⁷ In a Caitanya Vaiṣṇava context, sin (*pāpa*) does not connote the idea of original sin but can be understood as a self's misdeeds, which have a corresponding *karmic* consequence.
- ²⁸ Ganesh V. Tagare and J. L. Shastri, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa Parts 1-5* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1950), 787.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 381.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1232-1233.
- ³¹ *na kāmāye 'ham gatim īśvarāt parām aṣṭarddhi-yuktām apunar-bhavaṃ vā / ārtim prapadye 'khila-deha-bhājām antaḥ-sthito yena bhavanty aduḥkhāḥ* // Cited from Śāstrī, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, 447 of book 9.
- ³² Radhanath Swami, "Radhanath Swami on 'A Life of Compassion, Dedication and Love – His Holiness Bhakti Tirtha Swami Maharaj.'" (2005) <https://www.radhanathswami.net/yearwise/2005/radhanath-swami-on-a-life-of-compassion-dedication-and-love-his-holiness-bhakti-tirtha-swami-maharaj>
- ³³ Kim Knott, "Healing the Heart of ISKCON: The Place of Women." In Edwin F. Bryant and Maria L. Ekstrand (eds.). *The Hare Krishna Movement: The Postcharismatic Fate of a Religious Transplant* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004): 299.
- ³⁴ Knott, "Healing the Heart of ISKCON", 301 and Tamal Krishna Goswami and Ravi M. Gupta, "Krishna and Culture: What Happens When the Lord of Vrindavana Moves to New York City." In Thomas Forsthoefel and Cynthia Anne Humes (eds.). *Gurus in America* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2005), 89-90.