

Gopinath Prabhu: Religious Integration of ISKCON by Academia

6. July 2009



July 05 2009, Italy: Dear respected devotees at the Oxford Center, after recently reading "[In Defense of Tamal Krishna Goswami](#)", an article exposing the questionable essay written by Tamal Krishna Goswami and Krishna Kshetra prabhu that was published by the prestigious Ivy League Columbia University (in the book form), I feel that certain questions have to be asked in the attempt to clarify your intent and ability to appropriately represent our Acarya, Srila Prabhupada, to the academia.

There is no doubt that Srila Prabhupada wanted devotees preaching to scientists and scholars in order to establish ISKCON (Gaudiya Vaisnavism) as a bona fide religious movement in their circles, and making them into devotees. However it appears that in these days, this dynamic is reversed and the academics and scholars are the ones who ended up preaching to our devotees, who in turn are disseminating these speculative mundane academic systems within our movement.

Instead of giving association, our academic devotees (devotees who enrolled in college in order to receive degrees) are taking association from them. They reversed the roles and became the disciples of academic gurus. This is clearly evident when we see how our leading academic devotees are attempting to pollute our movement while undermining and belittling the teachings that Srila Prabhupada established, with the humanistic sciences given to them by these New Gurus.

They are quietly and incrementally introducing these academically acquired impersonal humanistic ideologies and methodologies in a form of so-called pluralism, egalitarianism, liberalism, corporatism etc. into ISKCON, that are taught to them by academic gurus.

The relationship between Braja Bihari das and his Corporate/Academic Guru, Arnold Zack and his ADR program, which Braja Bihari das effectively imbedded into our society, (in the name of Krsna consciousness) is a well documented fact. We clearly see who the Guru is and who is the student.

The article by [ISKCON Communications Journal](#) makes a nice introduction to Arnold Zack and his ADR program, which acted as a spring board that lead Arnold Zack to facilitations of GBC meetings, etc. Ananda dasi in her Sampradaya Sun article entitled "[ISKCON Dissolve](#)", gives a nice synopsis on Braja Bihari's introduction of the ADR program into ISKCON.

Hridayanada 'Swami' is another stark example of a person who became polluted by inappropriate association with academia. We all witnessed when he started to preach liberalistic acceptance of homosexuality in ISKCON, which clearly transgresses Srila Prabhupada's teachings. His conduct as a sannyasi these days is questionable, at best. On his recent visit to India, he was



flamboyantly parading around Mayapur dham with two female devotees, one on each side, while laughing and joking with them. Just like Visnu who is Enjoying the company of Sree and Bhu (female energies of the Lord). He was not wearing neck beads, brahman tread or, uttaria, sannyasi upper cloth, 'because he does not want to be external.' The question being; is his behavior something that Srila Prabhupada would approve of? I don't think so.

Srila Prabhupada did try to warn Hridayananda....

"... But, if you disturb me, then my mind will be disturbed. I want that what I have established may go on nicely, but I see that some of the devotees are reviving their old 'good' qualities. That is the difficulty. If the old habits come back, then everything is finished. If my mind becomes disturbed in this way, then how can I concentrate on book writing. It is not possible. Better not to inform me anything, and let me sit in Vrindavana."

(Letter to Hridayananda, November 13, 1975)

I'm wondering if the "old habits" and qualities Srila Prabhupada is referring to include the 'JBD' qualities, as well. Hridayananda 'Swami' is the person who wrote a commentary on the unfinished part of Srimad Bhagavatam! Scary!

In the above mentioned essay, Krishna Ksetra prabhu and Tamal Krishna Goswami are proposing the solution to solve ISKCON's 'academically identified sectarianism,' by presenting the conclusion that we should see and accept the Mayavada doctrine, as another valid form of realization of God — equating it with five primary rasas we can have with Krsna – and insinuating that this is a 'mature and advanced understanding' of a person who is on the Raganuga sadhana platform.

Certainly, as an aspiring Vaisnava we offer respect to every living entity, including the imperonalists and atheists, etc. Whilst in their association we do follow the formal social code of gentleman (naimittika-dharma). However we are careful not to intimately mix/associate with them and under no circumstances do we take association from such individuals.

Raganuga sadhana bhakti does not connote the idea that you stop discriminating who is who and what is what (it's all love). The cheap 'spontaneous' devotional service that is proposed by the writers is classified as cheating and termed Sahajiyism.

It appears that if we want to be seen as advanced souls by them and other authorities within academia, we need to accept this academically proposed 'advanced' religious pluralism, or in other words, Spiritual Integration in a form of the academically contrived consortium called "Interfaith".

It is important to understand the role ISKCON Communications Journal (ICJ) is having in the implementation of this academically contrived religious pluralism into ISKCON. If you visit their official web site, the reader can access numerous articles (dating back to the early nineties) advocating the necessity for ISKCON to embrace this religious pluralism in order to ensure its acceptance and survival in the world.

Tamal Krishna Goswami and Krishna Ksetra prabhu are acknowledging the crucial role ICJ is playing in the religious integration of ISKCON. In their essay, Krishna Ksetra prabhu and Tamal Krishna Goswami write: "ISKCON Communications Journal, now in tenth year of publication, forecasts an increasingly healthy intellectual muscularity." The intellectual muscularity they are referring to is evident when you do a search on the new Srila Prabhupada folio. All the pluralistic articles (and many others) are available; this proves the success they are having in imbedding the idea of religious pluralism into ISKCON and its leadership as a necessity.

One small aspect of this proposed Religious Pluralistic Integration of ISKCON by Tamal Krishna Goswami and Krishna Ksetra prabhu in the essay is Hinduization. The writers suggested in their paper that we need to 'tone down' Srila Prabhupada's teachings in order to appease Hindu Diaspora sensibilities. We see that this 'toning down' is already taking place. Especially in England, where the writers wrote this essay. Over the past couple of years we read numerous articles on the Sun written by stalwart Mahavidya prabhu, where he is expressing his concerns regarding the systematic Hinduization of ISKCON. He provided ample amounts of documented evidence exposing the Management of Bhaktivedanta Manor and the Soho temple,

while asking them to provide an explanation for these pluralistic integrations, which are completely against Srila Prabhupada's teachings. To this day he has not received appropriate answers, besides getting BANNED, for asking all these questions. (He became an example of the new form of "monkey on the stick" — if you bother us with questions that we don't like, this is the punishment.)

May I suggest to Mahavidya prabhu that instead of asking local myopic managers (arms of the body) for the explanation, (there is a good chance that they don't know the real answers), he should refer these questions at the Oxford academia who are the head or brain of the body, as they are the ones advising and guiding ISKCON with this brilliant idea of Religious Pluralism. Start with Krishna Kshetra prabhu, since Tamal Krishna Goswami is not around anymore to provide such answers.

In their essay, Krishna Ksetra prabhu and Tamal Krishna Gowami are advocating that a judgment on the above academically proposed pluralistic solution can only be made with your own sense perception, (pratyaksa), whereas the uneducated ISKCON members and Gaudiya Vaisnava preceptors minimized this form of obtaining knowledge, as they considered it inaccurate due to the 'alleged' four defects of the living entity.

After acquiring an academic degree, you become properly trained and accepted in academia's circle. This academic circle believes that they are of such high intellect that they are above the four defects of the living entity, and it is only through their guidance, which comes from their gigantic collective knowledge base, that we can properly comprehend the Vedas and the previous Acaryas (this includes 'simplistic' teachings of Srila Prabhupada) and see the fundamental flaws which exist, and therefore make the necessary changes to make their purport have rational and relevant meaning according to time, place, and circumstance within the modern context.

Tamal Krishna Goswami confirms the need for such rational/relevant reinterpretation in his writings on Hare Krishna at Southern Methodist University:

"But when the guru departs, sadhu and sastra can take on a new import, as those who succeed him become the new interpreters of past precedents, scriptural law and the new set of circumstances."

Achyuta prabhu, in his article entitled, "[Krishnabhishek and Basu Ghosh: Apologists or Brahma-bhuta Souls?](#)", posits some very interesting questions regarding 'unknown reasons' for not publishing Tamal Krishna Goswami's final dissertation. The argument that the thesis was not completed hence is not ready (but it will be soon) is ridiculous. Tamal Krishna Goswami's personal mentor contradicts this statement with his own words from seven years ago, in Tamal Krishna Goswami's obituary. Professor Julius Lipner (Tamal Krishna Goswami's mentor) in Tamal Krishna Goswami's obituary writes:

"When Goswami's life was tragically cut short, his thesis was almost finished. He placed the last chapter of his dissertation on my desk before he left for India. We were due to discuss it the week after his return. It is my intention to seek to publish the thesis in his name after due formalities have been seen to."

It is clear from Professor Lipner's statement that the thesis was already completed and he wanted it to be published. Why was this not done? Why such an unwillingness to make it public?

The tardiness of his followers to publish his completed final dissertation to the devotee community suggests they have something to hide. The only way to prove that they have nothing to hide and they are simply too lazy is by immediately publishing his final copy, which was presented to his mentor. Professor Julius J. Lipner, along with their new, possibly sanitized version.

Mukunda prabhu in his article entitled, "[The 'Jewish Background Devotees' Demographic in ISKCON Leadership](#)" writes:

"We know that these JBD's are being very secretive in publishing their views and opinions. If you logged onto the ISKCON administered Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies website, you will find Dr. Kenneth Valpey's (Krishna Kshetra prabhu's) papers are presented in a list of many other lecturers. The only problem is that his papers are not downloadable nor are Madhavi Nevader's A Jewish understanding of

monotheism in the Hebrew bible: In conversation with Hindu perspectives. Both Dr. Kenneth Valpey's and Madhavi Nevader's are not, but the other lecturer's lectures are freely available and easily downloadable."

Mukunda prabhu has provided us with an important website of the [Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies](#) (this centre is operated by ISKCON academic devotees), where he points out that ISKCON guru, Krishna Ksetra prabhu's and other devotee's lectures are conveniently not available for download, whilst all the lectures of others guests speakers are. This begs the questions; Why such a secrecy? What are these academic devotees hiding? What are they teaching/preaching? Why don't they want the devotional community to be able to access their works?

I acknowledge there may be academic devotees who are teaching/preaching pure Krsna Consciousness to the academia, as per Srila Prabhupada's instructions, but unfortunately we never hear about their preaching activities. For the Institution believes that only the devotees with big positions and titles are the real preachers and the real representative of ISKCON.

Note: If you notice the ethnic background of the academic individuals in question that are mentioned in this letter, there is one apparent commonality they share. All the above mentioned individuals are coming from a similar ethnic background. Perhaps these individuals would care to share an explanation with us as to why, being a minority, there are a statistically disproportionate number of them in academia? What is their rationale for such an obvious anomaly?

Hridayanada Goswami – Howard Resnick

Tamal Krishna Goswami – Thomas G Herzig

Krishna Ksetra das – Kenneth Valpey

Braja Bihari das – Brian Bloch

Julius J. Lipner – mentor of Tamal Krishna Goswami

Arnold Zack – mentor of Braja Bihari das

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