Maternal Figures and Engagement in Bhakti in Two Vaiṣṇava Hagiographic Collections: A Matricentric Feminist Reading in Religious Studies

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For reference purposes only: please **do not quote and do not circulate**.

Key figures mentioned

Vallabhācaryā (1479-1531) = theologian founder of "path of grace" (*puṣṭimārga*)
Viṭṭhalnāth = Śrī Gusāīṁjī (1516-1586) = second son of Vallabhācaryā and his successor
Gokulnāthjī (1552-1641) = fourth son of Viṭṭhalnāth ; attributed with the composition of the *vārtā*
Harirāyjī (*ca* 1590-1715 ?) = grand-nephew of Gokulnāthjī, compiler and commentator

Maternal figures mentioned (in the *vārtā* analysed for this conference)

Kṣatrāṇī (woman of the *kṣatriya* class) = a young child-widow (V83 of the 252VV)
Pūtanā = female demon sent in the form of a wetnurse to kill Kṛṣṇa, but he kills her
Vīrbāī = woman who has just given birth (V61 of the 84VV)
Yaśodā = ('adoptive' or 'milk-mother') mother of Kṛṣṇa

Illustrations

In the Powerpoint, illustrations are used for research and teaching purposes. Some are taken from the following collections and books:

Kṛṣṇa and Yaśodā, around 1790, public domain, RCIN 1005113.m - Royal Collection, via Wikimedia Commons
Yaśodā breastfeeds Kṛṣṇa, unknown artists, around 1790, public domain, RCIN 1005113.l - Royal collection, via Wikimedia Commons
Excerpt of a folio of a *Book of Dreams*; Mewar, Rajasthan, Northern India, unknown artists, circa 1720, from the website of Christie's
Hawley, John Stratton. 2019. "When Blindness Makes for Sight" In *Early Modern India: Literatures and Image, Texts and Languages*, edited by N. Cattoni and M. Burger, p. 19-38. Heidelberg : CrossAsia-eBooks.
Children tell Yaśodā that Kṛṣṇa has eaten dirt, unknown artists, public domain, photo credit Edwin Binney 3rd Coll. San Diego Museum of Arts, coll. number: 1990.1072, via Wikimedia Commons
For many more illustrations, also see: Bachrach, Emilia. 2019. *In the Service of Krishna: Illustrating the Lives of Eighty-Four Vaishnavas from A 1702 Manuscript*. Ahmedabad : Mapin Publishing.

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