

The Cow in Vedic Culture

Our West-influenced intellectuals sneer at the mention of the cow. The same intellectuals first sneered at yoga. Now it is a fashion to do pranayama at cocktail parties. The arguments in the West for cow slaughter are no more uncontested. They also sneered at our sanyasis as 'godmen'. Now they flock to ashrams with their white friends ever since the Beatles. Who knows, they may soon have a cow in their backyards.

India has 150 million cows, each of them giving an average of less than 200 litres of milk per year. If they could be fed and looked after, they can give 11,000 litres, as Israeli cows do. That would provide milk for the whole world. The milk we produce today is the cheapest in the world. With enhanced production we could become the world's largest exporter of milk and it could be India's biggest foreign exchange earner.

For those of us who are desi by pedigree and conviction, I place some facts about the cow in the perspective of modern Hindutva.

The cow was elevated to divinity in the Rig Veda. In Book VI, Hymn XXVIII attributed to Rishi Bhardwaja extols the virtue of the cow. In Atharva Veda (Book X, Hymn X), the cow is formally designated as Vishnu, and 'all that the Sun surveys'.

Indian society has addressed the cow as *gow mata*. The Churning of the Sea episode brings to light the story of the creation of the cow. Five divine Kamadhenu (wish cows), viz, Nanda, Subhadra, Surabhi, Sushila, Bahula emerged in the churning.

Thousands of names in our country are cow-related: Gauhati, Gorakhpur, Goa, Godhra, Gondiya, Godavari, Goverdhan, Gautam, Gomukh, Gokarna, Goyal, Gochar etc.

They signify reverence for the cow, and our abiding faith that the cow is Annapurna.

In 2003, the National Commission on Cattle under Justice G. M. Lodha submitted its recommendations to the NDA government. The report called for stringent laws to protect the cow and its progeny in the interest of the rural economy, a constitutional requirement under Directive Principles of State Policy. Article 48 of the Constitution says: 'The State shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle'. During the First War of Independence in 1857, when Bahadur Shah 'Zafar' was installed as emperor by the Hindus in Delhi for a brief period, his Hindu prime minister, on the emperor's proclamation, made cow killing a capital offence. In Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom, the only crime that invited capital punishment was cow slaughter.

The cow, according to the Vedas, provides four products for human use: (i) *Godugdha* (cow milk): As per Ayurveda, cow milk has fat, carbohydrates, minerals and Vitamin B, and even a capacity for body resistance to radiation and for regenerating brain cells. (ii) *Goghrita* (ghee): The best ghee, it is, as per Ayurveda useful in many disorders. In

yajna, it improves the air's oxygen level. (iii) Gomutra (urine): Eight types of urine are used for medicinal purpose nowadays, among which cow urine is held to be the best. The Americans are busy patenting it. It has anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and antioxidant properties.

It has immune-modulator properties, which makes it useful for immune deficiency diseases. In the classics there are many references to cow urine as a drug of choice. Even the Parsis follow this practice.

Lastly, (iv), Gomaya (dung) is considered as valuable as Gomutra and used to purify the environment, as it has radium and checks radiation effects.

Ancient Hindu wisdom on the medicinal properties of cow urine is borne out by two patents granted in the US for cow urine distillate (Patent numbers 6410059 and 6896907).

Even China has granted the distillate a patent as a DNA protector. A global patent has been granted for cow urine, neem and garlic as a pest repellent and for fungicidal and growth promoting properties for different crops (WHO 2004/ 087618A1). A US patent has been granted for strains from Sahiwal cow milk for plant growth promoter phytopathogenic fungi controlling activity, zootic stress tolerating capability, phosphatic solubilisation capability, etc. And CSIR has filed for a US patent for amrit pani, a mixture of cow dung, cow urine and jiggery, for soil health improvement properties.

These claims were initially made in the Charaka Samhita, Sushrut, Vagbhathi and Nighantu, Ratnakar, etc. They prove the utility of cow dung and urine for sustainable agriculture as well as for disease prevention.

The arguments in the West for cow slaughter are no more uncontested. There are better sources of protein than beef. Any dietician's chart shows that beef with 22 per cent protein ranks below soyabean (43), groundnut (31) and pulses (24 per cent). One kilogram of beef takes seven kg of crops and 7,000 kg of water to produce.

Thus cow protection makes economic and ecological sense. Swami Dayananda Saraswati, convenor of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha, has argued that non-vegetarianism indirectly contributes heavily to greenhouse gases and other pollution.

He quotes a UN report from 2006 that says, "Raising animals for meat as food generates more greenhouse gases than all the cars and trucks in the world combined". Ten of billions of animals farmed for food release gases such as methane, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide through their massive amounts of manure. "The released methane", the report says, "has 23 times the global warming potential of CO₂". For these animals to graze, virgin forests are cleared. The livestock industry also needs vast stretches of land to raise mono-crops to feed the animals. The CO₂ that the trees and plants store escapes into the air when they are destroyed.

Growing fodder implies heavy use of synthetic fertilizers produced with fossil fuels.

While this process emits a huge amount of CO₂, the fertilizer itself releases nitrous oxide (N₂O) – a greenhouse gas that is 296 times more potent than CO₂. Alarming though these facts are, all that people have to do is to avoid red meat. There will be no need to breed millions of animals for daily slaughter. The animal population will consequently decline.

A single individual by not consuming meat prevents the equivalent of 1.5 tonnes of CO₂ emissions in a year. This is more than the one tonne of CO₂ prevented by switching from a large sedan to a small car.

So there are a number of reasons to be a vegetarian. People who eat meat think a pure vegetarian diet is optional. But now they have no choice if they are alive to what is happening to this life-bearing planet. There is no justification for eating meat, given the devastating consequences for the planet.

A new fervour for a cow renaissance is necessary. It is constitutional (for India) and we should defend it with all our might.

Cow Urine Can Cure Many Diseases

By Paramahansa Dr.Rupnathji

The cow is a mobile medical dispensary. It is the treasure of medicines. Cow urine therapy is capable of curing many curable and incurable diseases. The holy texts, like Atharva Veda, Charaka Samhita, Rajni Ghuntu, Vridhabhagabhatt, Amritasagar, Bhavaprakash, Sushruta Samhita, etc., contain beautiful description about the medicinal benefits of cow urine. Cow Urine Treatment and Research Center, Indore has conducted a lot of research over the past few years and reached the conclusion that it is capable of curing diabetes, blood pressure, asthma, psoriasis, eczema, heart attack, blockage in arteries, fits, cancer, AIDS, piles, prostrate, arthritis, migraine, thyroid, ulcer, acidity, constipation, gynecological problems, ear and nose problems and several other diseases.

The analysis of cow urine has shown that it contains nitrogen, sulphur, phosphate, sodium, manganese, carbonic acid, iron, silicon, chlorine, magnesium, melci, citric, tartaric, succinic, calcium salts, Vitamin A, B, C, D, E, minerals, lactose, enzymes, creatinine, hormones and gold. A person falls ill when there is deficiency or excess of these substances inside the body. Cow urine contains all of these substances, which are naturally present in the human body. Therefore consumption of cow urine maintains the balance of these substances and this helps cure incurable diseases.

The Indian culture gives special place to the cow. All the 330 million gods have cow as their prime temple (all devas reside in the cow). Deva means to give, the strength to give, the ability to give more and take the minimum. This is known as Devata. The cow

takes very less from us and gives us more. Therefore the Indian people have shown this with the help of strict devotion and dedication. Thus the cow has a prominent place in the Indian life and economy. Wealth, religion, enjoyment and salvation are accomplished with the service of the cow. The Indian farmer used to be known as king, or the giver of grains, due to the tradition developed in India thousands of years back. Our entire life is dependent on the cow.

The whole world takes the cow as their mother. The reason is that the birth-giving mother gives milk to its child only for one or two years, but the mother cow gives milk throughout its life, which is like nectar. A black cow is tied in the Shiva temple, and when we see the Shiva along with the black cow then we are able to overcome the malefic effects of planets in our natal horoscope. When we see the ankles of the cow we protect ourselves from sudden deaths. Circumambulating the cow is equivalent to visiting all of the holy places. As the peepal tree and tulasi plant give oxygen, similarly the cow is the only animal which purifies the air. If one spoon of pure ghee is poured on burning cow dung (in homa) then they can produce one-ton of pure air, therefore ghee made with cow milk is used in sacrificial fires and havans. There is no better method to remove pollution.

Cow milk, butter, ghee and buttermilk are like nectar. The cow dung is not faeces, but a purifier. It helps produce the best quality grains, fruits, and vegetables when used as manure. Cow urine is a divine medicine and is a natural pesticide for crops. Pure ghee made with cow milk poured on burning cow cakes dung, produces a smoke that subsides the effect of poisonous gas. Cow urine contains copper, which is converted into gold inside the human body. It removes all toxicity. Drinking cow milk gives strength and increases the pure qualities in the human mind.

The horns and back hump of the cow are like two powerful pyramids. We receive the strengths of the stars and sun through the medium of cow dung, milk, curd, ghee, etc. The place where the cow is tied does not produce any vastu related ill effects. If there is any malefic effect of any planet, serving the cow with chapatti and jaggery calms down the malefic effect.

The following are some of my personal experiences treating people with cow urine therapy. A person was suffering with cancer and had been told that they would not survive for long; cow therapy was done on many such cases. Out of the many patients, who were suffering with cancer for the last 4 years, many are now leading a healthy life. In the same way, a diabetes patient who was taking insulin and having a sugar level of 488 or 420 did not have the necessity to take insulin after the treatment of cow urine. In the same way AIDS, asthma, psoriasis, eczema, blood pressure, heart disease, prostrate, piles, etc., also have been cured with this treatment.

Premchand Rathore was suffering from asthma and isophilia. He had palpitations and

cough along with phlegm. He is now enjoying a healthy life after taking cow urine therapy. The cough and phlegm reduced. Mrs. Sharda was having varicose veins and dysmenorrhea. She used to have swollen nerves, pain, and swelling as soon as she used to stand up and it was very painful at the time of menses. She was advised to undergo operation for both of these problems. But she went for cow urine therapy and is now healthy. Prakash Paul suffered a heart attack. He had high levels of cholesterol and chest pain. After taking cow urine therapy he is able to walk up to four kilometers, he does not get chest pain and his cholesterol level is also normal. Parimal Singh suffered with cancer of the food pipe four years back, he could not take liquids also. Now he is able to eat and drink properly, he is healthy and working in the rice fields. There are thousands of people who have recovered from serious diseases after taking this therapy.

Today many AIDS patients are taking cow urine therapy. People who were suffering with migraine and headache for the past 15 years have recovered within six months of taking this therapy. In the past few years the Cow Urine Treatment and Research Center, Indore has treated 150,000 people. Out of the total patients 85 to 90 percent were also suffering from constipation. There is an old saying that if the stomach is clean half of the diseases get cured automatically. The patients taking cow urine therapy are able to enjoying sound health within one month of this therapy.

Priya Khurana had a thyroid complaint. Before taking this therapy her T3 level was 4, T4 was 15, TSH was 0.2. After six months of this treatment T4 was 9.97, TSH was 1.35 and today she is free of this problem. This therapy is also beneficial in the case of eczema, ringworm, itching and other skin problems. Old eczema patients have gained a lot from this therapy. Also school and college aged children can be free from the menace of pimples and acne with this simple therapy.

Chemical composition of distilled cow urine:

Nitrogen (N₂, NH₂): Removes blood abnormalities and toxins, Natural stimulant of urinary track, activates kidneys and it is diuretic.

Sulphur (S): Supports motion in large intestines. Cleanses blood.

Ammonia (NH₃): Stabilize bile, mucous and air of body. Stabilizes blood formation.

Copper (Cu): Controls built up of unwanted fats. **Iron (Fe):** Maintains balance and helps in production of red blood

cells & haemoglobin. Stabilises working power.

Urea CO(NH₂)₂: Affects urine formation and removal. Germicidal.

Uric Acid (C₅H₄N₄O₃): Removes heart swelling or inflammation. It is diuretic therefore destroys toxins.

Phosphate (P): Helps in removing stones from urinary track.

Sodium (Na): Purifies blood. Antacid.

Potassium (K): Cures hereditary rheumatism. Increases appetite. Removes muscular weakness and laziness.

Manganese (Mn): Germicidal, stops growth of germs, protects against decay due to gangrene.

Carbolic acid (HCOOH): Germicidal, stops growth of germs and decay due to gangrene.

Calcium (Ca): Blood purifier, bone strengthener, germicidal.

Salt (NaCl): Decreases acidic contents of blood, germicidal.

Vitamins A, B, C, D, E: Vitamin B is active ingredient for energetic life and saves from nervousness and thirst, strengthens bones and reproductive ingredient for energetic life and saves from nervousness and thirst, strengthens bones and reproductive power.

Other Minerals: Increase immunity.

Lactose (C₆H₁₂O₆): Gives satisfaction., strengths heart, removes thirst and nervousness.

Enzymes: Make healthy digestive juices, increase immunity.

Water (H₂O): It is a life giver. Maintains fluidity of blood, maintains body temperature.

Hipuric acid (C₆H₈N₂O₄): Removes toxins through urine.

Creatinin (C₄H₈N₂O₂): Germicide.

Aurum Hydroxide (AuOH): It is germicidal and increases immunity power. AuOH is highly antibiotic and anti-toxic.

SACRED COW

by

By Paramahansa Dr.Rupnathji

The world over, the term "sacred cow" has come to mean any stubborn loyalty to a long-standing institution which impedes natural progress. The term originates in India, where the cow is said to be literally worshiped, while thousands of humans suffer from undernourishment. The common, popular view of India in the West is that of an underdeveloped nation steeped in superstition. Overpopulated, overcrowded, undereducated, and bereft of most modern amenities, India is seen to be a backward nation in many respects by "progressive" Western civilization. "If only India would abandon her religious superstitions and kill and eat the cow!" Over several decades many attempts have been made by the "compassionate" West to alleviate unfortunate India's burden of poor logic, and to replace her superstitions with rational thinking.

Much of the religious West finds common ground with the rationalists, with whom they otherwise are usually at odds, on the issue of India's "sacred cow." Indeed, worshiping God is one thing, but to worship the cow while at the same time dying of starvation is a theological outlook much in need of reevaluation. Man is said to have dominion over the animals, but it would appear that the Indians have it backwards.

Popular opinion is not always the most informed opinion; in fact, this is usually the case. The many attempts to wean India from the nipple of her outdated pastoral culture have all failed. After 200 years of foreign occupation by the British, and after many subsequent but less overt imperialistic attempts, we find that although India has changed, the sacred cow remains as sacred as ever. In all but two Indian states, cow slaughter is strictly prohibited. If legislation were passed today to change that ruling,

there would be rioting all over India. In spite of considerable exposure to Western ideas, one late Indian statesman said, when asked what he thought of Western civilization, "I think it is a good idea. When will they begin?"

An unbiased look at perhaps the longest-standing culture of the world, its roots and philosophy, may help us to see things a little more as they are — even about our own way of life. Sometimes we have to stand back to get the full picture. It is a natural tendency to consider one's own way the best, but such bull-headedness may cause us to miss seeing our own shortcomings. An honest look at the headlines of our home town newspaper may inspire us to question exactly what it is we are so eager to propound.

Perhaps the most appalling aspect of the Western technological influence on India is found in the country's few "modern" cities. Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, and other cities can be most frustrating to the average Westerner. Crude attempts at modernization can be worse than none at all. Although India's technology lacks the polish and sophistication of the West, its employment in crude fashion nonetheless brings all of the adverse effects of a sophisticated form of the same amenities.

Real India is rural India. Village life accounts for the bulk of India's population of 700 million, and best illustrates the nation's ancient culture. The simplicity of India is often mistaken for ignorance, and her peacefulness mistaken for complacency. The serenity of Indian village life is overlooked or mislabeled by those who in the name of progress may really only be operating under the axiom of "misery loves company." Perhaps the people of India live as they do for a good reason: much of what goes along with Western "progress" (the mental anguish which causes us to do the most bizarre things that make many cities living hells) is relatively absent in India's rural lifestyle.

It is particularly difficult for Westerners to appreciate India's worship of the cow. After all, we live in the land of the hamburger. The "American" restaurant abroad is McDonald's. "Ole McDonald had a farm /Did it ever grow!" Western economists often contend that beef alone can solve India's food problems and lay a foundation for a lucrative export trade. This has caused cow worship and cow protection to come under attack for centuries. Cow protection has been called a "lunatic obstacle" to sensible farm management.

India's cow is called the zebu, and an investigation of the controversy surrounding her brings us to the heart of village life in India. The average landholder in India farms approximately one acre. This is nowhere near enough land to warrant the purchase of a tractor. Even if the size of the land plots were increased to make the purchase of machinery cost-effective, the unique weather, a five-season year including the monsoon, would quickly render the tractor useless. After the monsoons, the soil is too soft for planting and must be quickly and efficiently prepared before the soon-to-follow intense heat brings an end to the very short growing season. The loss of even one day will considerably affect the overall yield. The zebu bullocks are ideal in this connection for they can easily plow the soft earth without overly compacting the soil as would heavy machinery.

Farming in India is a family affair, and the labor-intensive approach to cultivation involves everyone. This helps to sustain the family unit, which is sometimes considered to be the wealth of a nation. The staples of the diet are grains: wheat and rice. Most of India is vegetarian. While the bull plows the field, helping to provide the grains, the cow supplies milk from which many dairy products are produced. Day to day, year after year, the cow and bull are the center of rural Indian life.

According to Frances Moore Lappe in her best-seller, *Diet for a Small Planet*, "For every sixteen pounds of grain and soy fed to beef cattle in the United States, we only get one pound back in meat on our plates. The other fifteen pounds are inaccessible to us, either used by the animal to produce energy or to make some part of its own body that we do not eat (like hair or bones), or excreted. Milk production is more efficient, with less than one pound of grain fed for every pint of milk produced. (This is partly because we don't have to grow a new cow every time we milk one.)" If India, with its already strained resources, were to allocate so much more acreage for the production of beef, it would be disastrous. Advocates of modernization maintain that with the application of the latest farming techniques, the yield per acre would gradually increase, thus making it possible for beef to be introduced over a period of time. Such advocates contend that with the introduction of beef into the Indian diet, the population's health would increase, thus furthering productivity. However, it is interesting to note that although India is far from being free of disease, its principal health problems are a result of urban overcrowding and inadequate sanitation and medical facilities. Whereas high blood pressure, heart disease, arthritis, and cancer constitute the greatest health threats in the West, the Indian people are practically free from these afflictions. So the "fact" that India's health would increase with the introduction of beef into the diet is not likely to overcome the "superstition" of the people's religious beliefs which prohibit them from eating meat.

The religious "superstitions" of India are based on the Vedas, which constitute the most voluminous body of literature in the world. The Vedas and their corollaries deal elaborately with theism, describing many gradations of the theistic idea. The idea that one should not eat meat, although central to Hindu philosophy, is only a secondary theme. To a large extent it amounts only to common sense and sensitivity. It is from this basis of sensitivity, an indicator of healthy consciousness, that higher spiritual principles can be appreciated. Actually, the Vedas agree with the West's contention that man has dominion over the animals; however, the West's way of dealing with its dependents is revolting to Indians. After all, we have dominion over our children and oftentimes elders as well, but would we be justified in slaughtering them for food? We become incensed if someone even abuses our dog!

The Vedas do not teach that the cow is superior to the human form of life and therefore worshipable. Rather, she gives so much practical help to human society that she should be protected. Her assistance frees mankind from much of the struggle of life, thereby providing us with more time for spiritual pursuits. Although modern technology may be said to do the same, the fact is that it actually complicates man's life more and more and distracts him from more simple living and high spiritual thinking. We may become so mechanistic that we can fool ourselves into believing that cows or pets have no feelings.

For India, the cow represents the sacred principle of motherhood. She symbolizes charity and generosity because of the way she distributes her milk, which is essential for the nourishment of the young.

India's critics have pointed out that although Indian village life may be simple, it is a marginal existence; it is a life of little surplus. If a farmer's cow turns barren, he has lost his only chance of replacing the work team. And if she goes dry, the family loses its milk and butter. However the situation is not as bad as the technologically advanced may think. In village life, people are more interdependent. Helping one's neighbor is also considered sacred. Sharing is commonplace. All of the father's male friends are affectionately referred to by the sons and daughters as "uncle", while all of the village women are seen as mother. Often the responsibility of caring for and nursing the young is shared by several mothers.

Perhaps the heaviest criticism of the pastoral culture of India is directed at the insistence of the farmers on protecting even sick and aged cows. Westerners find this to be the height of absurdity. At least they could be killed and eaten or sold. But no. Animal hospitals or nursing homes called goshallas, provided by government agencies or wealthy individuals in search of piety, offer shelter for old and infirm cows. This is thought to be a luxury that India cannot really afford, as these "useless" cows are seen to be but competitors for the already limited croplands and precious foodstuffs. The fact is, however, that India actually spends a great deal less on their aging cattle than Americans spend on their cats and dogs. And India's cattle population is six times that of the American pet population.

The Indian farmer sees his cattle like members of the family. Since the farmers depend on the cattle for their own livelihood, it makes perfect sense both economically and emotionally to see to their well-being. In between harvests, the cattle are bathed and spruced up much like the average American polishes his automobile. Twice during the year, special festivals are held in honor of the cows. These rituals are similar to the American idea of Thanksgiving. Although in principle the same, there is a basic difference in the details of how we treat the turkey and how the more "primitive" Indians treat their cows.

India cares for over 200 million zebus. This accounts for one-fifth of the world's cattle population. Critics say that if India does not eat her cows, the cows will eat India. Exasperated critics feel that even the cow is underfed. However, in more recent years, India's critics have come to agree that she is essential to India's economy. Cattle are India's greatest natural resource. They eat only grass—which grows everywhere—and generates more power than all of India's generating plants. They also produce fuel, fertilizer, and nutrition in abundance. India runs on bullock power. Some 15 million bullock carts move approximately 15 billion tons of goods across the nation. Newer studies in energetics have shown that bullocks do two-thirds of the work on the average farm. Electricity and fossil fuels account for only 10%. Bullocks not only pull heavy loads, but also grind the sugarcane and turn the linseed oil presses. Converting from bullocks to machinery would cost an estimated \$30 billion plus maintenance and replacement costs.

The biggest energy contribution from cows and bulls is their dung. India's cattle produce 800 million tons of manure every year. The Vedas explain that dung from cows is different from all other forms of excrement. Indian culture insists that if one comes in contact with the stool of any other animal, they must immediately take a bath. Even after passing stool oneself, bathing is necessary. But the cow's dung, far from being contaminating, instead possesses antiseptic qualities. This has been verified by modern science. Not only is it free from bacteria, but it also does a good job of killing them. Believe it or not, it is every bit as good an antiseptic as Lysol or Mr. Clean.

Most of the dung is used for fertilizer at no cost to the farmer or to the world's fossil fuel reserves. The remainder is used for fuel. It is odorless and burns without scorching, giving a slow, even heat. A housewife can count on leaving her pots unattended all day or return any time to a preheated griddle for short-order cooking. To replace dung with coal would cost India \$1.5 billion per year.

Dung is also used for both heating and cooling. Packed on the outside walls of a house, in winter it keeps in the heat, and in summer produces a cooling effect. Also, unlike the stool of humans, it keeps flies away, and when burned, its smoke acts as a repellent for mosquitoes.

When technocrats were unable to come up with a workable alternative, they came up with a new argument for modernization. They suggested that the cattle culture be maintained, but that it should be done in a more efficient manner. Several ambitious programs were initiated using pedigree bulls and artificial insemination. But the new hybrids were not cheap nor were they able to keep up the pace with the zebus. The intense heat of India retired many of them well before old age. Although they produced more milk, this also created more problems, because there was no efficient system for distributing the surplus of milk throughout India's widespread population.

India's system of distribution is highly decentralized. Although the solution seemed simple, modernization again met its shortcomings. With bottling plants, pasteurization, and other sophisticated Western methods of distribution, it was thought that all of India could have fresh, pure milk. Behind the automats set up for the distribution of powdered milk, milk, and cream was the expectation that in time, people would begin to appreciate the abundant rewards bestowed by these new modern deities of technology, and worship of cows would gradually disappear. But in the end it was modernization that failed to prove its value.

Pasteurization proved to be a waste of time and money for Indians, who generally drink their milk hot, and thus boil it before drinking. With the absence of modern highways and the cost of milking machines and other necessities of factory dairy farming, it was seen to be impractical to impose the Western dairy system on India; the cost of refrigeration alone would make the price of milk too expensive for 95% of India's population.

Eventually, after repeated attempts to modernize India's approach to farming (and in particular its attitude toward its beloved zebus) it became clear that these technological upgrades were not very well thought out.. They were not to replace a system that had

endured for thousands of years; a system not only economically wise, but one that was part of a spiritually rich heritage. On the contrary, it may well be time to export the spiritual heritage of India to the West, where technology continues to threaten the tangible progress of humanity in its search for the deeper meaning of life.

Happy Cows

The Sanatanist worships cows on religious principles and respects brahmanas [topmost class, the "heads" of society responsible for maintaining religious principles]. The cow's milk is required for the sacrificial fire, and by performing sacrifices the householder can be happy. The cow's calf not only is beautiful to look at, but also gives satisfaction to the cow, and so she delivers as much milk as possible. But in the Kali-yuga, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The cow stands with tears in her eyes, the shudra milkman draws milk from the cow artificially, and when there is no milk the cow is sent to be slaughtered. These greatly sinful acts are responsible for all the troubles in present society. People do not know what they are doing in the name of economic development. more

In grave danger

Cow slaughter does not stir the Hindus to action or even to speak up in protest.

India is the land of Dharma and spirituality, the repository of the ancient Sanskrit scriptures (*Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Vedanta Sutra, Bhagavad-gita, Mahabharata, Ramayana*) and the seat of the world's most ancient civilizations. Vedic civilization, intricately wrought from the principles of *varnashram dharma* (also known as *daivi varnashram*), honored and preserved brahminical culture throughout millennia under the rule of great, saintly monarchs up until some 5,000 years ago, which marked the onset of the age of quarrel and dissension, Kali-yuga. At that time, shortly after the terrible Mahabharata war, the emperor Parikshit Maharaja was ruling Bharata Varsha, and while touring the kingdom, he came across someone tormenting a bull and cow. This incident is narrated in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* Canto 1, Chapter 16, Text 4 (translation and purports by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, ISKCON Founder-Acharya):

TEXT 4

Once, when Maharaja Parikshit was on his way to conquer the world, he saw the master

of Kali-yuga, who was lower than a *shudra*, disguised as a king and hurting the legs of a cow and bull. The King at once caught hold of him to deal sufficient punishment.

PURPORT

The purpose of a king's going out to conquer the world is not for self-aggrandizement. Maharaja Parikshit went out to conquer the world after his ascendance to the throne, but this was not for the purpose of aggression on other states. He was the Emperor of the world, and all small states were already under his regime. His purpose in going out was to see how things were going on in terms of the godly state. The king, being the representative of the Lord, has to execute the will of the Lord duly. There is no question of self-aggrandizement. Thus as soon as Maharaja Parikshit saw that a lower-class man in the dress of a king was hurting the legs of a cow and a bull, at once he arrested and punished him. The king cannot tolerate insults to the most important animal, the cow, nor can he tolerate disrespect for the most important man, the *brahmana*. Human civilization means to advance the cause of brahminical culture, and to maintain it, cow protection is essential. There is a miracle in milk, for it contains all the necessary vitamins to sustain human physiological conditions for higher achievements. Brahminical culture can advance only when man is educated to develop the quality of goodness, and for this there is a prime necessity of food prepared with milk, fruits and grains. Maharaja Parikshit was astonished to see that a black *shudra*, dressed like a ruler, was mistreating a cow, the most important animal in human society. The age of Kali means mismanagement and quarrel. And the root cause of all mismanagement and quarrel is that worthless men with the modes of lower-class men, who have no higher ambition in life, come to the helm of the state management. Such men at the post of a king are sure to first hurt the cow and the brahminical culture, thereby pushing all society towards hell. Maharaja Parikshit, trained as he was, got the scent of this root cause of all quarrel in the world. Thus he wanted to stop it in the very beginning.

Present-day government encourages slaughter for commerce in domestic and international markets, without regard for the karmic results and not caring for any spiritual principles. India's leaders are no different from other world leaders in this respect. They are not concerned with God or religion except as a tool to manipulate the citizens for their own purposes. Thus brahminical culture is practically no more; the corrupted caste system is the last vestige of *varnashram-dharma*, and it too is dying out.

The personality of religious principles, Dharma, was wandering about in the form of a bull. And he met the personality of earth in the form of a cow who appeared to grieve like a mother who had lost her child. She had tears in her eyes, and the beauty of her body was lost. Thus Dharma questioned the earth as follows.

PURPORT

The bull is the emblem of the moral principle, and the cow is the representative of the earth. When the bull and the cow are in a joyful mood, it is to be understood that the people of the world are also in a joyful mood. The reason is that the bull helps production of grains in the agricultural field, and the cow delivers milk, the miracle of

aggregate food values. The human society, therefore, maintains these two important animals very carefully so that they can wander everywhere in cheerfulness. But at the present moment in this age of Kali both the bull and the cow are now being slaughtered and eaten up as foodstuff by a class of men who do not know the brahminical culture. The bull and the cow can be protected for the good of all human society simply by the spreading of brahminical culture as the topmost perfection of all cultural affairs. By advancement of such culture, the morale of society is properly maintained, and so peace and prosperity are also attained without extraneous effort. When brahminical culture deteriorates, the cow and bull are mistreated, and the resultant actions are prominent by the following symptoms.

India is fast gaining a foothold on the international scene, becoming an economic force on the back of its population, but at the sacrifice of its soul. And what then? When India separates from its spiritual legacy, what will keep it from plunging into freefall?

Then he [Maharaja Parikshit] asked the bull: Oh, who are you? Are you a bull as white as a white lotus, or are you a demigod? You have lost three of your legs and are moving on only one. Are you some demigod causing us grief in the form of a bull?

PURPORT

At least up to the time of Maharaja Parikshit, no one could imagine the wretched conditions of the cow and the bull. Maharaja Parikshit, therefore, was astonished to see such a horrible scene. He inquired whether the bull was not a demigod assuming such a wretched condition to indicate the future of the cow and the bull.

TEXT 8

Now for the first time in a kingdom well protected by the arms of the kings of the Kuru dynasty, I see you grieving with tears in your eyes. Up till now no one on earth has ever shed tears because of royal negligence.

PURPORT

The protection of the lives of both the human beings and the animals is the first and foremost duty of a government. A government must not discriminate in such principles. It is simply horrible for a pure-hearted soul to see organized animal-killing by the state in this age of Kali. Maharaja Parikshit was lamenting for the tears in the eyes of the bull, and he was astonished to see such an unprecedented thing in his good kingdom. Men and animals were equally protected as far as life was concerned. That is the way in God's kingdom.

TEXT 9

O son of Surabhi, you need lament no longer now. There is no need to fear this low-class *shudra*. And, O mother cow, as long as I am living as the ruler and subduer of all envious men, there is no cause for you to cry. Everything will be good for you.

PURPORT

Protection of bulls and cows and all other animals can be possible only when there is a state ruled by an executive head like Maharaja Parikshit. Maharaja Parikshit addresses the cow as mother, for he is a cultured, twice-born, *kshatriya* king. Surabhi is the name of the cows which exist in the spiritual planets and are especially reared by Lord Sri Krishna Himself. As men are made after the form and features of the Supreme Lord, so also the cows are made after the form and features of the surabhi cows in the spiritual kingdom. In the material world the human society gives all protection to the human being, but there is no law to protect the descendants of Surabhi, who can give all protection to men by supplying the miracle food, milk. But Maharaja Parikshit and the Pandavas were fully conscious of the importance of the cow and bull, and they were prepared to punish the cow-killer with all chastisement, including death. There has sometimes been agitation for the protection of the cow, but for want of pious executive heads and suitable laws, the cow and the bull are not given protection. The human society should recognize the importance of the cow and the bull and thus give all protection to these important animals, following in the footsteps of Maharaja Parikshit. For protecting the cows and brahminical culture, the Lord, who is very kind to the cow and the *brahmanas (go-brahmana-hitaya)*, will be pleased with us and will bestow upon us real peace.

Nowadays, government is voted by the people, so it is up to the people to agitate for what they want from government. If government is toothless and does not give adequate protection to the citizens or give support to religiosity, then the people can blame only themselves.

There are some persons and groups who are taking things into their own hands by looking after cows in *go-shalas*, but this is on a very small scale, and it is not the best solution. Their operation is costly and depends mainly on donations from well-wishers, and they do not bring in any revenue from sales of milk. A more successful program would be to set aside a quota from temple proceeds and government coffers to establish viable dairy projects that can serve as economic models in rural communities all over India. These will serve to raise the cow's status in society, demonstrating practically the importance of cow protection not only for religion but for economic prosperity as well. Some years back I happened to see a television documentary about a highly profitable dairy project in Hawaii. Not only did they sell milk, but they utilized the cow's manure to grow spirulina and for a subsidiary horticulture business. Methane from the cow's dung generated enough electricity to power the farm operations. Let some of India's intelligent businessmen (*vaishyas*) invest in similar projects with the support of the government and temples. Surely out of India's 2 billion people there are some brains with the required ingenuity to come up with schemes that will work for India's varied climates.

Rupnathji said that by combining western technical know-how with the spiritual knowledge and culture of the East, the world can make material and spiritual advancement simultaneously. The West is spiritually blind, and the East is technologically lame, but if the blind man agrees to carry the lame man, he can get direction how to go from the lame man's eyes, and together they can reach their destination.

Currently there is a shortage of cow's milk in India; people are instead raising buffalo. Buffalo milk is ubiquitous, but it is inferior to cow's milk in nutritional value. Cow's milk promotes excellent health and development of finer brain tissues, and there is no substitute for it in religious ceremonies and deity worship which call for cow's milk and other products made from pure cow's milk, such as yoghurt, butter, ghee and fresh cheese (*paneer*). India alone is a huge market. Surely domestic demand would be sufficient to drive profits from increased milk production.

Of course milk production depends on a breeding cycle also, and the birth of calves means some will be bulls. So what to do with the bulls, if they are not sent for slaughter? First of all, if cows are nicely looked after, they will continue to give milk long after the birth of a calf; they do not need to be repeatedly impregnated every year or two years. As for the bulls, they can be engaged in work on farms, as was traditionally done before the introduction of the tractor, and they can be used for transport in rural areas. If dairy projects are implemented intelligently, a part of the profits can be set aside for the maintenance and protection of the bulls and cows who are no longer productive. It should be considered a necessary part of the cost.

So these are some suggested alternatives to the current do-nothing response of the Hindu communities in India. All it takes is to raise the voice and crack the brain. The politicians are scared of the people's roar, so let them hear about it. There is no excuse for the slaughter of cows, not in India, not anywhere, but in India least of all.

According to *Mahabharata*, 650 million people died in the war at Kurukshetra. When Krishna was asked why, He explained because Draupadi, when forcibly brought to the assembly hall in Hastinapura, where Dushasan attempted to disrobe her publicly, pleaded to the elders to speak up the truth against the injustice, yet they all kept quiet. Therefore, all these kings and their subordinates had to share the burden of the sinful reaction to their silence, and all were killed on the battlefield. So when the spiritual leaders and political leaders simply stand by and allow the slaughter of cows, they and all their subordinates likewise will have to bear the karmic reactions.

This beef export business poses greater danger to the future of India and its Vedic tradition than terrorists. After all, terrorists strike infrequently and in not more than a few locations at a time, and maybe a hundred persons might be killed, but nature can wipe out whole towns, cities and villages by natural disasters like drought, famine, pestilence, earthquake, typhoon, flood, fire, disease in response to sinful killing of cows and not only nature, but wars, where thousands of the nation's young men are sent out to combat and are killed. How much the real patriots, the real nationalists, the real Hindus do love their Motherland will be seen in just how loudly they protest the killing of cows and export of their flesh.