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רעיון זה בהציגם קונספט של טרקטור העתיד בשם "Deuterium". והוא לא ממש דומה ...

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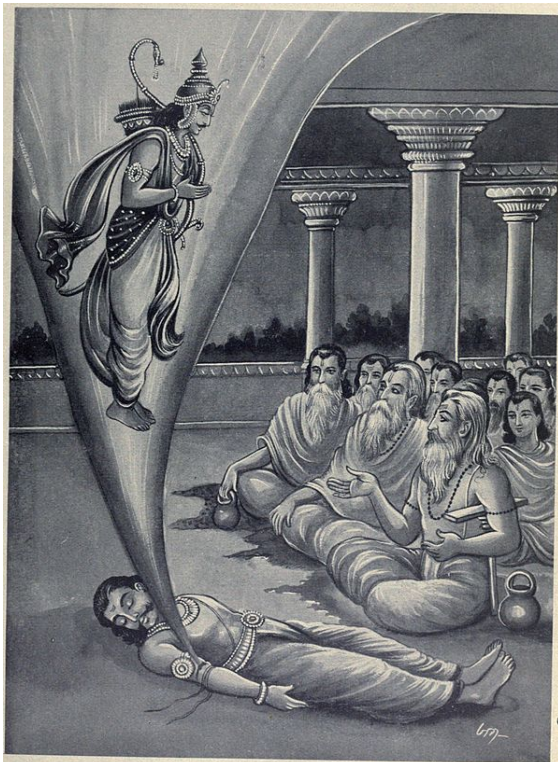
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# Prithu

According to Hindu mythology, **Prithu** (Sanskrit: प्रथु, *Prithu*, lit. “large, great, important, abundant”)<sup>[1]</sup> is a sovereign (*chakravartin*), named in the Vedic scriptures and considered an *Avatar* (incarnation) of the preserver god—*Vishnu*. He is also called **Pruthu**, **Prithi** and **Prithu Vainya**, literally, Prithu — the son of *Vena*. Prithu is “celebrated as the first consecrated king, from whom the earth received her (Sanskrit) name *Prithvi*.”<sup>[2]</sup> He is mainly associated with the legend of his chasing the earth goddess, *Prithvi*, who fled in the form of a cow and eventually agreed to yield her milk as the world’s grain and vegetation.<sup>[3]</sup> The epic *Mahabharata* and text *Vishnu Purana* describes him as a part *Avatar* (incarnation) of *Vishnu*.<sup>[4]</sup>

## 1 Legends



*Prithu appears from Vena's corpse.*

The birth of Prithu is without female intervention. Thus being a *ayoniya* (“born without (the participation) of the *yoni*”), Prithu is untouched by desire and ego and can thus control his senses to rule dutifully upholding *Dharma*.<sup>[5]</sup>

The *Bhagavata Purana* and *Vishnu Purana* tells the story of Prithu: King *Vena*, from the lineage of the pious *Dhruva*, was an evil king, who neglected Vedic rituals. Thus the *rishis* (sages) killed him, leaving the kingdom without an heir and in famine due to the anarchy of *Vena*. So, the sages churned *Vena*'s body, out of which first appeared a dark dwarf hunter, a symbol of *Vena*'s evil. Since the sins of *Vena* had gone away as the dwarf, the body was now pure. On further churning, Prithu emerged from right arm of the corpse. To end the famine by slaying the earth and getting her fruits, Prithu chased the earth (*Prithvi*) who fled as a cow. Finally, cornered by Prithu, the earth states that killing her would mean the end of his subjects too. So Prithu lowered his weapons and reasoned with the earth and promised her to be her guardian. Finally, Prithu milked her using *Manu* as a calf, and received all vegetation and grain as her milk, in his hands for welfare of humanity. Before Prithu's reign, there was “no cultivation, no pasture, no agriculture, no highway for merchants”, all civilization emerged in Prithu's rule. By granting life to the earth and being her protector, Prithu became the Earth's father and she accepted the patronymic name “*Prithvi*”.<sup>[6][7]</sup> However, the *Manu Smriti* considers *Prithvi* as Prithu's wife and not his daughter,<sup>[8]</sup> and thus suggests the name “*Prithvi*” is named after her husband.<sup>[9]</sup>

The *Vayu Purana* records that when born, Prithu stood with a bow, arrows and an armour, ready to destroy the earth, which was devoid of Vedic rituals. Terrified, the earth fled in form of a cow and finally submitted to Prithu's demands, earning him the title *chakravartin* (sovereign). Prithu is the first king, recorded to earn the title.<sup>[4]</sup> The creator-god *Brahma* is described to have recognized Prithu as an avatar of *Vishnu*, as one of Prithu's birthmark was *Vishnu*'s *chakram* (discus) on his hand and thus Prithu was “numbered amongst the human gods”. According to *Oldham*, the title *Chakravarti* may be derived from this birthmark, and may not be indicative of universal dominion. Prithu was worshipped as an incarnation of *Vishnu* in his lifetime and now is considered a *Nāga* demi-god.<sup>[10]</sup> *Shatapatha Brahmana* (Verse 3.5.4.) calls him the first anointed king and *Vayu Purana* calls him *adiraja* (“first king”).<sup>[4]</sup>

The epic *Mahabharata* states that *Vishnu* crowned Prithu as the sovereign and entered the latter's body so that everyone bows to the king as to god *Vishnu*. Now, the king was “endowed with *Vishnu*'s greatness on earth”. Further, *Dharma* (righteousness), *Shri* (goddess of wealth, beauty and good fortune) and *Artha* (purpose, material

prosperity) established themselves in Prithu.<sup>[11]</sup>



*The Sanatkumaras preached Prithu about devotion to Vishnu*

The Atharvaveda credits him of the invention of ploughing and thus, agriculture. He is also described as one who flattened the Earth's rocky surface, thus encouraging agriculture, cattle-breeding, commerce and development of new cities on earth.<sup>[4]</sup> In a hymn in Rigveda, Prithu is described as a rishi (seer). D. R. Patil suggests that the Rigvedic Prithu was a vegetarian deity, associated with Greek god Dionysus and another Vedic god Soma.<sup>[12]</sup>

Bhagavata Purana further states that Prithu performed ninety-nine ashwamedha yagnas (horse-sacrifices), but Indra, kings of the demi-gods, disturbed Prithu's hundredth one. The yagya was abandoned, Vishnu gave Prithu his blessings and Prithu forgave Indra for the latter's theft of the ritual-horse. It also states that the Four Kumaras, the four sage-incarnations of Vishnu, preached Prithu about devotion to Vishnu. After governing his kingdom for a long time, Prithu left with his wife Archi, to perform penance in the forest in his last days. He died in the forest, and Archi went Sati on his funeral pyre.<sup>[13]</sup>

### 1.1 Wives and children

Apart from Prithvi who is sometimes considered the daughter or wife of Prithu, Prithu has a wife called Archi and five sons. Archi, emerged from Vena's body, along with Prithu and is considered as an avatar of goddess Lakshmi, the wife of Vishnu. Prithu's son Vijitswa, became the sovereign and controlled the middle of the kingdom. Prithu's other sons, Haryarksha, Dhumrakesha, Vrika and Dravina ruled the east, south, west and north

of kingdom respectively.<sup>[9][13]</sup>

## 2 Symbolism

O'Flaherty interprets the myth of Prithu—his transformation from a hunter who chased the earth-cow to the herdsman-farmer—as a transition in Vedic or Hindu people from eating beef to having cow's milk and cultivated vegetables and grain instead of beef.<sup>[14]</sup> David Shulman compares Prithu with the Vedic deity Rudra-Shiva. Prithu, like Rudra, is an ideal king, but with a violent side. Prithu's actions of chasing the earth-cow as a hunter and finally milking her, display this terrifying side of the king. Both, Prithu and Rudra, are closely associated with sacrifice.<sup>[15]</sup>

Of course, as is universally perceived, man struggles to mold phenomena, which is at odds with his or her belief systems, into a more conforming form. In the case of scholars, such molding is done by careful speculation executed after amassing considerable knowledge of various fields. Also, British agenda has been proven to define scholarly interpretation and translations more than inherent intellect of the scholar himself. As such, interpretations should be taken with a grain of salt or ignored altogether.

## 3 Celebration in Indian society

Chinese scholar Hiuen Tsang (c. 640 AD) records the existence of the town Pehowa, named after Prithu, "who is said to be the first person that obtained the title Raja (king)". Another place associated with Prithu is *Prithudaka* (lit. "Prithu's pool"), a town on banks of Sarasvati river, where Prithu is believed to have performed the Shradha of his father. The town is referred as the boundary between Northern and central India and referred to by Patanjali as the modern Pehowa.<sup>[16]</sup>

Shriman Narayan, one of the protagonists of Indian Panchayati Raj movement, tracing its origin, writes: "It is believed that the system was first introduced by King Prithu while colonizing the Doab between the Ganges and Jamuna."<sup>[17]</sup>

## 4 References

### 4.1 Notes

- [1] Monier Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary (2008 revision)
- [2] Singh p.1712
- [3] The Vedas use the Sanskrit word *annam* meaning generic

“food-stuffs”. “Annam”. Bhaktivedanta VedaBase Network. Archived from the original on 24 June 2010.

- [4] Singh p.1713
- [5] Pattnaik, Devdutt (2001). *The Man Who Was a Woman and Other Queer Tales from Hindu Lore*. Haworth Press. p. 55. ISBN 9781560231813.
- [6] For Bhagavata Purana, see
  - O'Flaherty pp. 90, 184
  - Pattnaik, Devdutt (2000). *The Goddess in India: The Five Faces of the Eternal Feminine*. Inner Traditions / Bear & Company. p. 43. ISBN 9780892818075.
- [7] For Vishnu Purana W. J. Wilkins (March 2004). *Hindu mythology, vedic and puranic*. Kessinger Publishing. pp. 11–3. ISBN 978-0-7661-8881-5.
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- [10] Oldham, C.F. (1988). *The Sun and the Serpent: A Contribution to the History of Serpent-worship*. Asian Educational Services. p. 74. ISBN 9788120604162.
- [11] Gonda, Jan (1993). *Aspects of Early Visnuism*. Motilal Banarsidass Publ. p. 164. ISBN 9788120810877.
- [12] Singh p.1714
- [13] Srikrishna Prapnnachari. *The Crest Jewel: srimadbhagawata Mahapurana with Mahabharata*. Srikrishna Prapnnachari. pp. 94–100. ISBN 9788175258556.
- [14] O'Flaherty pp. 89–90
- [15] O'Flaherty p. 91
- [16] Singh pp.1713–4
- [17] P. 14 *Panchayati Raj* By Pratap Chandra Swain

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- Nagendra Kumar Singh (1997). *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*. Anmol Publications. ISBN 978-81-7488-168-7.
- Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (1995). *Other Peoples' Myths: The Cave of Echoes*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0-226-61857-9.

## 5 External links

- Srimad-Bhagavatam-text: Publisher ISKCON



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