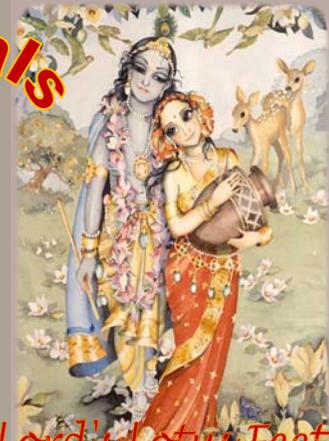




The Eight Petals



In Support of Varnasrama to Attain the Lord's Lotus Feet

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Focus on Civilization



Highlights of the issue:



Civilization is Finished Unless People Take to KC



Civilization Means Elevated Consciousness



The Rationale for Traditional Education



Advanced Civilization



The Land, Cows, and Krsna



False Background of Modern Civilization

Animal Civilization

Srila Prabhupada: Intelligence is shown by self-control. The cats and dogs have no self-control. If a bull or a male cat or dog sees a female, immediately he will rape her, yet he will not be punished. But if a human being does that on the street, he will be arrested at once. The inclination to rape is there in both the animal and the human being, but a human being is supposed to control himself. Indeed, human life is meant for self-control. The more you control yourself, the more perfect a human being you become, and the more you allow your senses to run loose, the more of an animal you are. People do not know this. They want freedom, but in the name of freedom they are becoming animals. This is their so-called civilization. So we have to follow the *Bhagavatam's* instruction and become *kovida*, intelligent. An intelligent person should take up the sword of remembrance of Krishna (*anudhyasina*) and cut the knot of attachment to material enjoyment.



Make Vrindavan Villages

Srila Prabhupada Speaks on Civilization

Slaughterhouse Civilization

Srila Prabhupada:... "Don't kill, don't maintain the slaughterhouse." It's very sinful. It has got very awkward reaction on the society. Stop this slaughterhouse. We don't say that you stop eating meat. You eat meat, but don't take it from slaughterhouse. Or don't by killing. Simply wait, and you'll get... we want to stop these killing houses. It is very, very sinful. Therefore in Europe, so many wars. Every ten years, fifteen years, there is a big war and wholesale slaughter of the whole human kind. And these rascals, they do not see it. The reaction must be there. You are killing innocent cows and animals. Nature will take revenge. Wait for that. As soon as the time is ripe, the nature will gather all these rascals, and club, slaughter them. Finished. They will fight amongst themselves, Protestant and Catholic, Russian and France, and France and Germany. This is going on. Why? This is the nature's law. Tit for tat. You have killed. Now you become killed. Amongst yourselves. They are being sent to the slaughterhouse. And here, you'll create slaughterhouse, "Dum! dum!" and killed, be killed. You know. You showed me?

Bhagavan: Yeah, French guillotine.

Prabhupada: You see. As soon as there is bell, the Roman Catholics began to kill the Protestants. So this is nature's law. You don't require to be sent to the slaughterhouse. You'll make your slaughterhouse at home. You'll kill your own child. Abortion. This is nature's law. What are these children being killed? They are these meat-eaters. They enjoyed. Now they are being killed by the mother. They do not know how nature is working. You must be killed. If you kill, you must be killed.

[Ref. VedaBase => Room Conversation -- June 11, 1974, Paris]



Civilization is Finished Unless People Take to Krishna Consciousness

Srila Prabhupada: Where is that civilization? The mother is killing the child in the womb. Is that civilization? Where is their civilization? It is a less-than-doggish civilization. Dogs will not kill their offspring. Nonsense rascals! They are encouraging the mother to kill the child in the womb, and they're claiming this is a civilization. They are less than dogs and cats. The dogs and cats try to protect their young. Do you know that? The cats carry their kittens from one place to another so that the male cat may not kill them. The tigers also give protection to their young.

Devotee: Even the rats do that.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, a mother's affection for her child is natural. But now the so-called civilized mothers are killing their children. This is your civilization. And this is your religion, your science, your philosophy—everything. This "civilization" is finished unless people take to Krishna consciousness.

[Morning Walk Conversation - July 1975, San Francisco.]



Make Vrindavan Villages

HH Bhakti Raghava Swami Speaks on Civilization Civilization Means Elevated Consciousness



The Aryan Civilization

According to the Vedic teachings, civilized human beings are those who belong to the Aryan culture. The word Arya does not refer to any specific nation or country, as many have been wrongly taught, rather the word is used to designate those who cultivate spiritual awareness, in particular the highest level of spiritual emancipation, *ānanda-maya*, pure devotional service in Krishna consciousness. Our Vedic scholars give the following definition: “Aryan—a follower of Vedic culture. A person whose goal is spiritual advancement. He truly knows the value of life and has a civilization based on spiritual realization.”

There are many versions of the “Aryan Invasion” theory whereby it is explained that India as a nation was once upon a time conquered by a higher developed people called the Aryans. The Founder-Acarya of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada, in representing a long chain of highly spiritually advanced teachers, defines Aryan as those who believe and follow the basic tenets of Krishna consciousness. According to the ancient teachings of the Bhagavad-gita, this supreme knowledge, *rāja-vidyā*, has been in existence since time immemorial; indeed the creation of this material world begins with the highest civilized or God conscious personality named Lord Brahma. However, as people and nations drift away from the Vedic culture, they become more and more degraded or more “uncivilized”.

The modern theory that we have evolved from a non-civilized specie (Darwin’s monkey theory) and are progressing towards a more advanced civilization is opposite of the Vedic view. A few examples should suffice to demonstrate the point.

The Modern ‘Advanced’ Civilization

Whereas people would naturally eat jaggery or gur [similar to molasses but made from boiled down sugarcane juice or similar fruits such as palm or coconut], modern “civilized” people have opted for white “refined” sugar which has been nicely polished using the bones of animals and stripped of its organic properties. Whereas people use to write letters to one another we now have sophisticated machines called computers and cell phones to communicate with which, although seemingly so wonderful and effective, are expensive, detrimental to the eyesight, addictive and adversely altering the way people relate to one another. Whereas we used oil which was extracted from coconut, palm, peanuts or various seeds, using the natural “cold-pressed” method, we now make commercial oils which through “heat-pressed” methods have been stripped of most nutrients including Vitamin E, resulting in creating toxins in the body which bring various deadly diseases, including cancer. Whereas people were localized and use to walk to work (their own fields), a healthier and safer means of transportation, we now drive (or fly) 50 to 100 miles to work not knowing if we will get there or back due to unforeseen dangers in travelling. Whereas young boys use to remain celibate and not mix with the opposite sex thus making them strong physically, mentally and spiritually, now-a-days boys and girls openly mix and create unwanted population, *varna sankara*, causing various anomalies in society and disrupting natural relationships. Whereas we use to rely on seasonal rains for cultivating once during the year, one crop being sufficient to meet our family needs, now, due to greediness, we use bore wells to rape mother three times a year for selling our commercial crops. Whereas farmers



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use to plough the land taking the help of oxen and use to keep cows who gave natural wholesome milk (what modern people now call “raw milk”), modern farmers have been taught to use tractors and similar machines which destroy their soil and to sell their milk which is then pasteurized, homogenized or basically deprived of its natural nutrients. In the name of “advanced civilization”, we have introduced unlimited unnatural and dangerous devices and practices, yet still we are proud to call ourselves “civilized”.

Sanskrit, the Language of Advanced Civilization

To really know about what is civilized, traditionally people use to come to India, Bharat-varsa, also known as “*punya bhumi*”, the sacred land or the land of dharma. At one point, this advanced civilization of Bharat use to pervade the entire world. The most perfect of all languages, Sanskrit, was known all over the world. It is referred to as “*deva-nagari*”, the language of the gods. Whereas most languages have a limited number of vowels and consonants, English having a total of 26, the Sanskrit language has the largest, 36 consonants and 16 vowels, a total of 54, all of which are fixed and precise. “*Since the start of human civilization on the earth, people and the Sages both spoke pure Sanskrit language.*”

http://www.thevedicfoundation.org/valuable_resources/Sanskrit-The_Mother_of_All_Languages_partI.htm

What the Acaryas Say

Civilization is therefore not judged by one’s birth, family background or by one’s so called material advancement. Civilization depends on regulated social intercourse guided by developed consciousness. This is the judgement of one great Vaisnava spiritual authority, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura who wrote:

Social Regulation

“As a society or civilization advances, one will find a greater degree of rules for social stability. There is consensus that amongst all civilizations, the Aryans were the most progressive. There can be no doubt that among the Aryans, the people of Bharata were the most advanced in knowledge, intelligence and social organization. One should not lose respect for the Aryan civilization just because with age, it has become weak and dependent on other cultures. Because some ignorant persons dispute the advanced state of the Aryan civilization that does not mean it loses its importance. If one reads the *dharma sastra*, he can understand how much the Aryan civilization of Bharata achieved in implementation of social rules. In fact all serious, thoughtful men must accept that this civilization, through the guidance of sages, achieved the highest state of social regulation in the world.”

From the writing of our acaryas, we find the following explanations regarding the importance of cows, land, education, economy, women, children and the aged:

Cows

Brāhmaṇas are the symbol of spiritual education, and cows are the symbol of the most valuable food; these two living creatures, the brāhmaṇas and the cows, must be given all protection—that is real advancement of civilization. Bg 4.16

vedic Civilization is Self-Realization

Now people are thinking that civilization means constructing skyscraper buildings. But Vedic civilization says, No, that is not advancement. The real advancement of human life is self-realization, how much you have realized your self. Not that you have constructed skyscraper buildings.... Vedic civilization is meant for self-realization,... The Vedic civilization begins from the varnasrama system. In the varnasrama system there is this arrangement: brahmanas [intellectuals, advisors], ksatriyas [administrators], vaisyas [merchants, farmers], sudras [workers], brahmacaris [celibate students], grhasthas [householders], vanaprasthas [retired married people], and sannyasis [renounced monks]. The ultimate goal is that Krsna, the Supreme Lord, should be worshipped.

[Srila Prabhupada in an interview with *India's Bhavan's Journal*, August 1976]



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Land

“This is Vedic civilization—people living simply, on agriculture and cow protection. If you have enough milk, grains, fruits, and vegetables, you can live very nicely.” Journey of self-discovery, 7.1

Work

“In the Third Chapter of Bhagavad-gītā it is clearly stated that one should only work for satisfying Yajña, or Viṣṇu. The perfectional form of human civilization, known as varṇāśrama-dharma, is specifically meant for satisfying Viṣṇu.” Bg 9.24

“But the highest goal of human civilization is to work hard under the guidance of the Lord and become completely dependent on Him. The highest achievement of perfect civilization is to work with valour but at the same time depend completely on the Lord. The Pāṇḍavas were the ideal executors of this standard of civilization.” SB 1.8.37

Education

“The Vedic civilization, however, is based on spiritual education, and spiritual education is the special basis on which Bhagavad-gītā was spoken to Arjuna.... Unfortunately, this spiritual education is completely absent from modern human civilization. No one understands his real self-interest, which lies with the spirit soul, not with the material body. Education means spiritual education.” SB 8.16.19



Economy

Progressive human civilization is based on brahminical culture, God consciousness and protection of cows. All economic development of the state by trade, commerce, agriculture and industries must be fully utilized in relation to the above principles, otherwise all so-called economic development becomes a source of degradation. Cow protection means feeding the brahminical culture, which leads towards God consciousness, and thus perfection of human civilization is achieved. SB 1.19.3

Women

“The association of woman is very much restricted in the Vedic civilization. Out of the four social divisions, the brahmacārī, vānaprastha and the sannyāsī—three orders—are strictly prohibited from the association of women; only the grhasthas, or householders, are given license to have an intimate relationship with a woman, and that relationship is also restricted for begetting nice children.” SB 3.31.39

“Civilized” means treating the cows, humans, and all living creatures the same.

“In the glorious days, or before the advent of the age of Kali, the brāhmaṇas, the cows, the women, the children and the old men were properly given protection.

1. The protection of the brāhmaṇas maintains the institution of varṇa and āśrama, the most scientific culture for attainment of spiritual life.
2. The protection of cows maintains the most miraculous form of food, i.e., milk for maintaining the finer tissues of the brain for understanding higher aims of life.
3. The protection of women maintains the chastity of society, by which we can get a good generation for peace, tranquillity and progress of life.
4. The protection of children gives the human form of life its best chance to prepare the way of liberty from material bondage. Such protection of children begins from the very day of begetting a child by the purificatory process of garbhādhāna-saṁskāra, the beginning of pure life.
5. The protection of the old men gives them a chance to prepare themselves for better life after death.

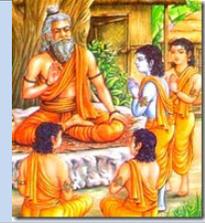
“This complete outlook is based on factors leading to successful humanity as against the civilization of polished cats and dogs. The killing of the above-mentioned innocent creatures is totally forbidden because even by insulting them one loses one's duration of life.” SB 1.8.5

- *HH Bhakti Raghava Swami*



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A Rationale for the Gurukula System of Education



- HG Krishna Kirti Das

A *gurukula* is a traditional school that is run by an acharya, a brahmana who teaches young boys both primary educational topics and moral behavior. *Gurukula* literally means the "house of the guru." From the age of five, boys who have been accepted as students by the acharya go away from their own families to live in his ashram as members of his own family until they have completed their studies. The rationale for this system of education is to produce men who are thoroughly pure and moral in thought and behavior. Since moral behavior is best changed through close association with those who have the the highest nature, and since the *gurukula* system utilizes this principle to a superlative degree, the *gurukula* system of education is necessary for establishing a high degree of moral behavior throughout all classes of society.

The authority of the *gurukula* system rests on the idea that human nature is the primary basis of moral behavior. We can understand this from our experience with petty theft. Although most people who walk into a store feel no urge to steal, a shoplifter for some reason has an irresistible urge. Even though he knows that stealing is wrong, he cannot help himself. Immoral behavior, however, is not limited to petty theft. Greedy business leaders in America have been responsible for much of the current American recession. They already had more money than most people could ever dream of, and they took ethics courses from all the best business schools. Yet like the petty thief, they also could not check their urges. This shows that although one should

Animal Civilization in the Name of Education

"Sarve sukhino bhavantu. This is Vedic culture. Not that "I exploit you, you exploit me, I cut your throat, you cut my throat." This is not human society. And this has begun already. Because you cut throat of the animals - you are very expert, cutting throat-- now you will cut throat each other. This is the... So a sober man, thinking all this downfall of the human civilization, he becomes very unhappy. He becomes, very unhappy. Oh. This human civilization, human being, human form of life, was given by God or the nature for cultivating Krsna consciousness, spiritual. That is not possible in the lower form of life, animals, the cats and dogs. And this is an opportunity given by nature's law. Now we get this body. Now you understand your position, what you are, to understand that you are not this body. So long in the lower grade of life you were under the impression that you are a body, the cats and dogs. They do not know that the body and soul is different. But it is the human form of life to understand that "I am not this body."

That education begins in the Bhagavad-gita in the beginning: *dehino 'smin yatha dehe* [Bg. 2.13]. *Dehi* means the possessor of the *deha* is within the body, not the body is the person. But no education. Throughout the whole scientific world, university education, there is no concern that "I am not this body; I am soul." Such a foolish, rascal civilization is going on in the name of advancement. No protection for woman, no protection of children, no respect for brahminical culture. So it is the animal civilization. Polished animal, that's all...

[Source: Srila Prabhupada: Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.16.21- Los Angeles, July 11, 1974]



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know the difference between right and wrong, that knowledge alone is not enough to produce moral behavior. Those who are predisposed to act immorally will probably act immorally, however good their education has been otherwise. A primary education should thus also strive to improve the nature of its students. This goal is the fundamental rationale for the *gurukula* system.

To understand how the *gurukula* system changes and improves the nature of its students, it is necessary to understand the conception of human nature the *gurukula* system is based on. This conception is found in the *sāñkhya* system of philosophy. According to the *sāñkhya* model, a particular combination of the three modes of material nature (the *guṇas*) determines one's psychological nature. The three modes are goodness, passion, and ignorance (*sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*), and all three are always present in various proportions in all embodied living beings. Usually, one of the modes of nature is dominant, and the dominant mode will significantly color one's psychological predisposition. And this psychological predisposition will usually determine one's place in society as an intellectual, an administrator, a producer, or a worker (*brahmana*, *kshatriya*, *vaishya*, or *shudra*). All societies everywhere have these classes.

Despite psychological predisposition, the modes of nature in any one person are subject to change. As explained by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavad-gīta*, the modes of nature one possesses change through association: *puruṣaḥ prakṛti-stho hi bhūñkte prakṛti-jān guṇān, kāraṇaṁ guṇa-saṅgo 'sya sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*, "The living entity in material nature thus follows the ways of life, enjoying the three modes of nature. This is due to his association with that material nature. Thus he meets with good and evil among various species" (*Bhagavad-gītā* 13.22). The important words here are *kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgaḥ*, that association with the modes of nature causes one's psychological predisposition. This explains why our petty shoplifters and greedy business leaders simply cannot help themselves. *Asat-saṅga*, bad association, predisposes them to immoral habits of thought and action. Classroom instruction in ethics alone cannot help them.



The remedy for *asat-saṅga* is *sat-saṅga*, or good association. Earlier in the *Bhagavad-gīta*, Lord Krishna introduces this truth by saying, *saṅgāt sañjāyate kā maḥ*—from association develops desire (2.62). This is where the concept of *satsang* comes from. The *gurukula* system takes advantage of this principle by making mandatory the residence of students at the acharya's ashram. Because the acharya is a brahmana and therefore in the mode of goodness, or *sattva-guṇa*, his close association will improve the student's own nature. According to the *Bhagavad-gīta* (18.42), the qualities of a brahmana are peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and religiousness. Other members of society should adopt these qualities as far as possible. Politicians and military leaders should be wise and self-controlled. Business leaders should be fair and equitable in their business dealings. And workers should be honest, diligent, and not given to stealing. Through the principle of *satsang*, the *gurukula* system systematically develops moral behavior to the highest degree possible throughout all sections of society.

Of course, day schools will always be the main kind of school. As per the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Nārada Muni himself in a former lifetime had attended a day-school run by a brahmana. The principle of *satsang* is valid in day schools, too. But Nārada, in narrating his life



to Vyāsadeva, credited his spiritual advancement to close association with great saintly persons who he once served during the rainy season.

O muni, in the last millennium I was born as the son of a certain maidservant engaged in the service of brāhmaṇas who were following the principles of Vedānta. When they were living together during the four months of the rainy season, I was engaged in their personal service. Although they were impartial by nature, those followers of the Vedānta blessed me with their causeless mercy. As far as I was concerned, I was self-controlled and had no attachment for sports, even though I was a boy. In addition, I was not naughty, and I did not speak more than required. Once only, by their permission, I took the remnants of their food, and by so doing all my sins were at once eradicated. Thus being engaged, I became purified in heart, and at that time the very nature of the transcendentalist became attractive to me. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.23 – 25)

Nārada's example here nicely illustrates the efficacy of *satsang*, which the *gurukula* utilizes to the highest degree. The difference between day schools and *gurukulas* would be something like the difference between public schools and college preparatory schools, but at the level of primary education and more for the sake of producing morally stalwart members of society. Due to close association with the acharya, *gurukulas* will have an advantage over day schools in their ability to produce men who are pure in thought and habit. This is the rationale for establishing *gurukulas*. This is not to say that the *gurukula* system will completely eradicate vice, but as a social institution it will do much to help control it. Temple leaders and other important people in society should thus bear in mind this purpose and function of the *gurukula* system. And according to this idea, they should establish *gurukulas* for the sake of creating a future class of leaders who are thoroughly moral in thought and habit.

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Advanced Civilization

- Bhakta Chirag Dangarwala



The common understanding of an Advanced Civilization in today's context is to be advanced in technology, having a comfortable lifestyle, earning lots of money and having enough or rather lavish facilities to enjoy the senses to the fullest. This is the yardstick that is generally used to gauge the advancement in civilization. Owing to this yardstick, countries like United States of America, Great Britain etc are considered as First world countries and more advanced in civilization than others. Undoubtedly these countries are advanced as far as material comforts and technology is concerned, however the ancient Vedic scriptures of India have a different perspective on advancement in civilization.

As per *Bhagavad-Gita*, the living entities in this world are not the material bodies which are visible with the eyes, but they are eternal spirit souls possessing different kinds of bodies. It is something like a driver sitting in a car where car is comparable to the material bodies and the driver



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to the spirit soul. So the material body is dead in itself and cannot be animated unless the spirit soul resides in it, just like a car cannot move without a driver.

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe kaumāram ýauvanam ýarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati [B.G. 2.13]*

” As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change”
na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin nāyam bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyah.

ajo nityah śāśvato 'yam ýurāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre [B.G. 2.20]

“For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.”

The above verses from *Bhagavad-Gita*, suggest that the living entity is not the body but is the soul within the body which changes its body from boyhood to youthhood and from there to old age, and the soul does not die or take birth but is eternal.

So from Vedic point of view, the civilization is centered on advancement of the spirit soul and not of the temporary material body. This means that the definition of advancement as per Vedic terms is advancement in spiritual consciousness, which leads one to understand their real identity as spirit souls and eternal loving servants of the supreme soul Sri Krsna or God. As per great thinkers and philosophers of the Vedic science the allotted time of a human being should be utilized in advancing spiritually and accept whatever is needed to keep the soul and the body together to perform Krsna Conscious or God Conscious activity.

Spending more than required time on material advancement is considered to be a waste of time in this all precious human form of life. Since this most intelligent form of life is obtained after passing through 8,400,000 species of life forms in innumerable lifetimes, and spending this time in human body for advancement of temporary material things which will be taken away at death is considered less intelligent. More so, even if materially a person is opulent and very successful, he still cannot feel happy because of his misidentification of the body as the self. Since the soul is the real identity of a living entity, one has to perform activities conducive to please the soul instead of the body, in order to enjoy. For example if the bird in the cage is not fed and only the cage is taken care of nicely, the bird will soon die due to neglect and suffering. So in order to enjoy or eternally feel happy one has to enquire about the characteristics of the soul. According to the scriptures spirit soul is a minute particle of the supreme soul Sri Krsna or God and only by pleasing Krsna the spirit soul can feel happy. Just like, by watering the roots of a plant all the leaves are nourished also.

Coming back to our topic of advancement of Civilization, if we observe closely we find that the modern advanced civilizations are just doing the opposite, they are using their entire energy and time in this human form of body, to build big ” worlds tallest buildings”, great man made monuments to attract tourists , increasing the facilities for sense enjoyment like, casinos, bars, restaurants, movies etc and using all the technology available in order to improve techniques and methods of increasing material comforts. This as per the Vedic yard stick is a mere waste of time, energy and opportunity lost in the human body. The premise for such a behavior is mainly due to the lack of basic knowledge about the self. Today though we have educational institutions which are drawing heavy tuition fees to provide infrastructural and technological facilities, we are still ignorant about our own self and hence there is no satisfaction or happiness, since we are trying to become happy by improving our outer dress only without trying to take care of the real body.

Vedic Wisdom, of which *Bhagavad-Gita* is the essence, can help the misguided population to understand the real interest of every human being and has the capacity to change life for good to provide one with peace and happiness for which everyone is hankering today. It is evident , that our



education have made us good artist rather than knowledgeable persons, what we consider knowledge for example in understanding computer technology , in constructing high rise buildings and etc is a mere art , since by this knowledge we are not able to solve the real problems of life that are birth , death , old age and disease. *Bhagavad-Gita* explains what real knowledge is *vidya-vinaya-sampanne brahmane gavi hastini*

sunī caiva sva-pāke ca paṇḍitāḥ sama-darsināḥ [B.g. 5.18]

“The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste].”

amanitvam adambhitvam ahimsa ksantir arjavam

.....*etaḥ jñānam iti proktaṃ ajñānam yad ato 'nyatha*

“Humility, pridelessness, nonviolence, tolerance, simplicity, approaching a bona fide spiritual master, cleanliness, steadiness and self-control; renunciation of the objects of sense gratification, absence of false ego, the perception of the evil of birth, death, old age and disease; non attachment to children, wife, home and the rest, and even-mindedness amid pleasant and unpleasant events; constant and unalloyed devotion to Me, resorting to solitary places, detachment from the general mass of people; accepting the importance of self-realization, and philosophical search for the Absolute Truth—all these I thus declare to be knowledge, and what is contrary to these is ignorance. ” [B.g. Verses 13.8-13.12]

Above verses describe what true knowledge is and what we receive in our today's educational systems is by far nowhere near to what is defined as knowledge. Also in the Vedic vocabulary ignorance is compared to darkness and knowledge is compared to light, since one cannot see any thing in darkness similarly even after receiving Masters, and PhD degrees from the Vedic point of view we cannot see the reality, since we have not even touched true knowledge about the soul. And there can be no advancement without knowledge or in other words we cannot make any advancement of civilization when we are in ignorance of our identity as spirit souls. So it is imperative that we take to this process of understanding the true knowledge from the Vedic wisdom and *Bhagavad-Gita* As it is which is readily available, and correct our misidentification and wrong notions on advancement of civilization. The modern advancement can be termed as “advancement ” not of civilization but of destruction, by increasing the technology and other material comforts, we have given rise to unemployment, wars, depression, greed, lust , disease and pollution . We have ecologically put nature into imbalance and hence we see the problems we face with the untimely weathers.

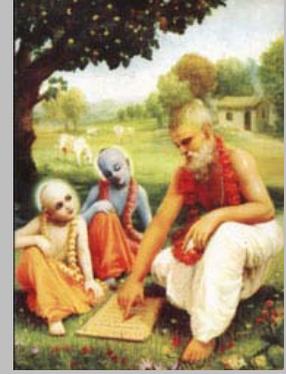
The need of the hour is not a more advanced computer system, but a process to educate people about their identities and encouraging activities pertaining to their spiritual nature, in order to change the consciousness of the human society. The best method recommended to achieve this for this age of Kali is chanting the holy names of God, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare/ Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare collectively and individually as confirmed in the *Srimad Bhagavatam*.

kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ

kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet [S.B. 12.3.51]

“My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.” (Source: <http://www.dandavats.com/?p=8889>)

Modern civilization is centered around animal-killing. Karmis are advertising that without eating meat, their vitamin value or vitality will be reduced; so to keep oneself fit to work hard, one must eat meat, and to digest meat, one must drink liquor, and to keep the balance of drinking wine and eating meat, one must have sufficient sexual intercourse to keep fit to work very hard like an ass. [SB 4.27.11 Purport]



The Land, the Cows, and Krsna

The Social Role of Cows - Hare Krsna Devi Dasi

"In My last birth I was born in the family of cowherd men, and I gave protection to the calves and cows. Because of such pious activities, I have now become the son of a *brahmana*."

—Lord Caitanya (*Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila 7.111*)

Through out history many traditional societies have centered on a particular animal, and the relations the people develop with that animal influence the values of the whole society. We think of the role of buffalo in shaping the lives and values of the Native Americans of the Plains. Similarly, we think of the Laplanders and their reindeer, or even the New England whaling villagers and the whales.

In each case, without a particular animal the culture of the people would be entirely different. Because of relations to that animal, whether by shooting, herding, or sailing after it, the society encourages attributes such as toughness, bravery, gentleness, or respect for nature.

Vedic culture centers on the cow. In fact, without cows there can be no true Vedic culture. *Veda* means "knowledge"—in the highest sense, spiritual knowledge. And as Srila Prabhupada explains, cow protection and brahminical culture are "the two pillars of spiritual advancement." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.17.20*)

Now, it is easy for even an outsider to understand why brahminical culture is considered indispensable for spiritual advancement. After all, *brahmanas* are the disseminators of spiritual knowledge and the exemplary maintainers of spiritual standards, just like the priestly class in any society. But what about cows? What do cows have to do with spiritual advancement? And why cows? Why not sheep or goats or horses? In



his purport to Lord Caitanya's statement above, Srila Prabhupada gives us the clue. "The words of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the greatest authority, herein clearly indicate that one becomes pious simply by keeping cows and protecting them." How can that be? One reason is that cows are emblems of the mode of goodness.

In Vedic teachings different animals are associated with different material qualities. For example, monkeys, because of their extraordinary sex drive, belong to the mode of ignorance. Lions are said to be in the mode of passion, and cows in the mode of goodness. When humans ally themselves with an animal in the mode of goodness, they themselves gradually rise to goodness, which is favorable to spiritual advancement.

In the opening quote, Lord Caitanya was teasing an astrologer who had determined that the Lord, in His past life, had appeared as an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To have some fun with the astrologer, Lord Caitanya ostensibly denied that He was the Supreme Lord, saying that in His past life He had been merely a cowherd boy, and that only by His pious activities had He now become a *brahmana*. Of course, we know that God is never bound by any pious or apparently impious acts. Being the ultimate cause of all karmic reactions, He Himself is transcendental to such cause and effect. Nevertheless, even in His joking words we find important truthful instructions. Human beings can become elevated by taking care of cows (or degraded by slaughtering them.)

If we examine the specific qualities of the *brahmanas*, persons in the mode of goodness, we can begin to see how those qualities are automatically cultured in a society that relies for its economic base on



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farming and cow protection. In the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.42), Krsna lists the qualities of the *brahmanas*: "Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness." Let's look at how a person might develop these qualities by protecting cows.

Brahminical qualities and cow protection

Peacefulness

Almost universally, cows are seen as an emblem of peace. Even the word "bucolic," referring to a peaceful pastoral scene, comes from the Greek word *boukolos*, which means "cowherd." Unlike dogs and cats, cows are generally not inclined to fight one another, even for food. They are sociable and fond of one another and affectionate to their caretakers. Because cows are naturally peaceful, cowherds tend to take on this quality. Furthermore, one must have a peaceful demeanor for milking cows and training oxen. Cows and bulls are sensitive to human moods. Cows will not give milk if the milker acts upset. Oxen will not learn commands if the trainer is angry. The cowherd has to cultivate peacefulness to get the job done.

Self-control

The most important aspect of self-control for one desiring spiritual advancement is control of the tongue. Prabhupada writes, "Only the animal killer [or eater] cannot relish the transcendental message of the Supreme Lord." (SB 1.3.24) When by caring for cows a person sees how friendly and loving they are, his compassionate nature is aroused. He can easily give up eating meat, not wanting to kill the animals he loves and depends on. Eating only food offered to Krsna also promotes control of the tongue. When the cowherd offers Krsna milk products from Krsna's own cows, and grains and vegetables from His own land, and then takes the remnants in the form of *prasadam*, the cowherd's brain becomes spiritually purified, and the words he speaks become sober and happy in glorification of Krsna. Training oxen is another important aid to sense control. There's a New England saying that you train the boy by having him train a team of oxen. There's truth in that. In Sanskrit *go* means "cow," and it also means "senses." A trainer can see that when the oxen (*go*) do whatever they feel like, they're useless. Once they're trained and controlled, they're useful and happier. The trainer can see that the oxen are proud and happy to work with him when they can control their senses. The comparison with his own senses (*go*) is automatic. The trainer sees that when he trains and controls his own senses to serve Krsna, he too will be happier and more productive.

Austerity

In a society that truly practices cow protection, the bull is fully used for growing food and transporting it. As a valuable member of society, the ox is carefully maintained and protected from slaughter. Economically, using the ox as the means of transport rules out the pileups of wealth that go with trucking things around with coal, gasoline, and nuclear power. Each farmer can farm only so much land with oxen, much less even than with horses. So the use of oxen regulates the scale of production, which helps guarantee that land and wealth are fairly distributed. There are no 1000-acre agribusinesses. And no heaps of wealth to make it easy for people to become entangled in sense gratification. Because the work of caring for the cows and the land is satisfying, artificial sources of

Rascal Civilization

What is this rascal civilization, whole day "Where is money? Where is money? Where is money? Where is money?" Everyone. Busy means "Where is money? Where is money?" Just like the hog, he is busy: "What time...? Where is stool? Where is stool?" That is not civilization. If you remain always busy, "Where is stool?" like the hog, then what is our civilization? Whole day working, night, nightshift, dayshift, whole day, the same, like hog. Get money and then drink wine and eat meat and do all nonsense things. This is their civilization. [Source: Srila Prabhupada: VedaBase => Morning Walk -- October 28, 1975, Nairobi]



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pleasure are not required. As spiritual life develops, austerity and simple living become a pleasure, not a burden. The tendency will be to use any surplus or any natural opulence for worshiping Krsna, not for sense gratification.

Purity

Cows can tolerate a wide range of physical conditions. They thrive in the cold Scandinavian countries, in the hot, dry African plains, in the wet tropical jungles of Latin America. But they cannot tolerate filth. They quickly become diseased if not kept clean. As the cowherd works to keep the cows clean, he or she practices living a clean way of life.

Tolerance

Probably no other animal is as tolerant as a cow. If by your daily care and affection you convince the cow or ox that you are its well-wisher, it won't hold a grudge against you for reprimanding it. It won't attack you. For example, once, by my foolish negligence, one of our milk cows got loose from her stall, and when I walked into the barn I found her eating from a grain cart. I knew she could die from overeating if she didn't stop. So I yelled at her, but she didn't stop. I hit her on the back with a stick, but she still kept eating. Finally, I had to hit her in the face, which I hated to do, especially since it was my fault she got loose. But she stopped eating grain and returned to her stall. In five minutes she was mooing softly for me to come and pet her. She wasn't at all afraid of me, and she wasn't angry at me. I knew a dog or cat or even a child would never have such tolerance.



If a person can develop tolerance for being corrected, it is a wonderful asset for advancing in spiritual life.

Of course, a spiritual master doesn't beat his disciple with a stick, but sometimes a disciple's ego gets hurt when his actions or beliefs are shown mistaken. The cowherd can learn tolerance from the cows and oxen.

Honesty

Cows are straightforward, and their service demands straightforwardness. It's hard to cheat with them. Either you give them good food, water, and affection or you don't. Either you are punctual for milkings or you're not. Either you keep them clean or you don't. When you make a mistake or get lazy, you'll probably get a quick reaction. You're too lazy to clean out the water tank? Milk production will drop because cows don't want to drink that nasty-tasting water. You forgot about the six o'clock milking? You'll be kicking yourself tomorrow when you have to take care of a cow suffering from mastitis. You'll probably never forget again. Cow protection is a practical way of learning to be honest and conscientious.

Knowledge and Wisdom

Cultivation of spiritual knowledge starts with a healthy brain. For this, milk is essential. Prabhupada explains, "The body can be maintained by any kind of foodstuff, but cow's milk is particularly essential for developing the finer tissues of the human brain so that one can understand the intricacies of transcendental knowledge." (SB 3.5.7) Scientists support this view. They say that vitamin B12 is essential to maintain healthy nerve cells. (The brain is made up of nerve cells.) A vitamin-B12 deficiency can take years to manifest, but it is a deadly serious matter, as explained by nutrition expert Laurel Roberts. "The first signs of damage are a characteristic sore back, numbness and tingling in the feet, and diminished vibration and position sense. Then follow unsteadiness, poor memory, confusion, moodiness, delusions, overt psychosis, and eventually death." The only natural source of vitamin B12 in a vegetarian diet is milk. (Obtaining B12 from meat products creates new problems



because of the adrenalin and toxins one ingests with the meat.) In a peaceful society, therefore, milk is essential to properly maintain brain cells needed for spiritual intelligence. Prabhupada emphasizes this point:

For such important brain tissues we require a sufficient quantity of milk and milk preparations. Ultimately, we need to protect the cow to derive the highest benefit from this important animal. The protection of cows, therefore, is not merely a religious sentiment but a means to secure the highest benefit for human society. —*Light of the Bhagavata*

Thus when the cowherd comes home and takes a cup of hot milk at the end of a day of hard work in the fields, he or she is making the brain fit to contemplate spiritual topics. And the peaceful fields and pastures provide the perfect environment to cultivate knowledge and wisdom.

Religiousness

"Milk is liquid religiosity," says Srila Prabhupada. So what could be more religious than to produce milk and grains to offer to Krsna? Lord Krsna says that a person can understand Him only by devotional service. (Bg. 18.55) And one can perform devotional service by doing one's daily work as an offering to Krsna. (Bg. 18.45,46) No need to be a great scholar. No need to be a powerful warrior, or even a highly talented craftsman. If the cowherd faithfully carries out the

duties of caring for the cows and bulls and producing food to offer to Krsna, he or she will become spiritually satisfied. Besides that, just by seeing the cows every day one can easily remember Krsna and His cows in Goloka Vrndavana, in the spiritual sky. That remembrance is the highest religiousness. Through philosophy and scripture alone a few intelligent people can be motivated to undertake spiritual life. For them to get started on the path back to Godhead may be easy. But most of us are not like that. For us Krsna has very kindly sent the cow and the bull to coach us in developing qualities that will help us in Krsna consciousness. (Source: <http://news.iskcon.com/node/2028>)



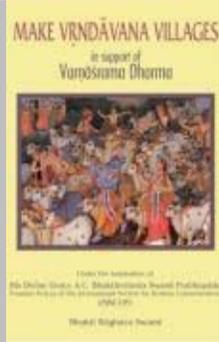
False Background of Modern Civilization

...the root cause of all troubles in the world disease is the mistake of accepting matter for the spirit. This is a false background of the modern civilization. The foundation of life being built on the surface of sand, the whole structure on it is sure to collapse. Because every living being is a spiritual spark, he can be happy only when there is spiritual engagements. India's basic principle of civilization was to keep people engaged in spiritual activities according to different modes of life and therefore India's cultural life is so lofty and valuable which is admitted by our Pandit Ji. As such no amount of material plan can satisfy the spiritual spark and that is the secret of treatment for the world epidemic. [Srila Prabhupada: Letter to Pt Nehru; April 20, 1960; Delhi]



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● **Varnashrama Literature**

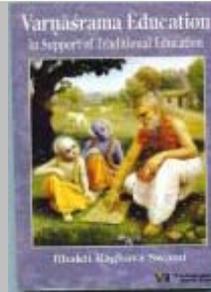


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H.H. Bhakti Raghava Swami, who heads the Varnashrama Ministry, India has authored several books on Varnashrama, including this. This book is meant to serve as a general introduction to some of the basic concepts of varnashrama-dharma. In essence, the subject matter deals with both the topic of education as well as social and spiritual upliftment through a well established and scientifically planned educational system and social structure which encompass all spheres and all dimensions of life.

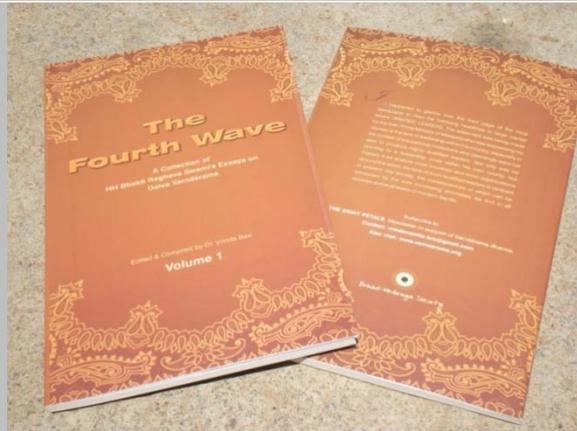
Varnashrama Education

The topic of education, a highly debated and controversial subject among many many educationalists and students alike, has always been of extreme importance and relevance to any society, especially in the most traditional oriental cultures. This books deals with the aspect of Education in the context of Varnashrama.



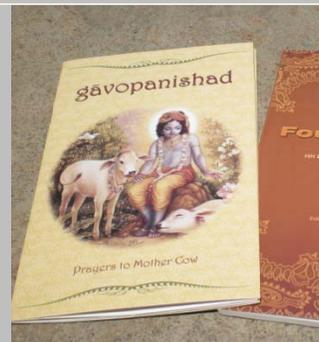
The Fourth Wave

It is a wonderful collection of HH Bhakti Raghava Swami's essays on Daiva Varnashrama addressing a wide range of concerns of daily life beginning from the very definition of the term, dharma, administration, family system, education, food, to technology. The 'Preface' for *The Fourth Wave* has been written by HG Patita Pavan Adhikary, a senior disciple of Srila Prabhupada, a strong daiva varnashrama supporter, a prolific writer, and an astrologer who has the distinction of having served as ISKCON Temple President and Director (Book Reviews) for BBT.



Gavopanishad: Prayers to Mother Cow

Cows, dear to the Lord Himself- Gopala, Govinda - have been integral to the concept of varnashrama and have functioned as the defining features of Vedic social, economic, and spiritual system. This small attractive book contains lovely prayers in the glorification of Mother Cow, complemented by short but interesting information on the significance of cow and panchgavya products. The 'Foreword' to *Gavopanishad* has been written by H.H. Bhakti Raghava Swami himself.



In addition to the above there are many more books in the pipeline and several documentary movies. In order to get more information one can contact: vrindavanlila.brs@gmail.com

For Panchgavya products one can contact: gourgopal.brs@gmail.com



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• Varnashrama News



First Varnashrama Regional Office Opens in Sridham Mayapur [By HH Bhakti Raghava Swami]



January 31, 2011. Hebri. IDVM - First Varnashrama Regional Office in Sri Mayapur

On Thursday, January 20, 2011, the ISKCON Daiva Varnashrama Ministry (IDVM) for India opened its first Regional Office in Sri Dham Mayapur during an official inauguration ceremony attended by a small group of devotees. Located in Room 137 of the Chakra Building, the ministry office will initially service the Eastern Division of ISKCON India and will be overseen by HG Prabhu Nityananda, assisted by Sudama Sakha prabhu from South America.

Present for the inauguration were H. H. Chandramauli Maharaja (visiting sannyasi in Sri Mayapur), HG Pankajanghri prabhu (Head Pujari involved in developing the Mayapur Deity Worship Course), H. G. Samba prabhu (Coordinator for both the Mayapur Master Plan and the Mayapur Varnashrama College) and his wife Saci devi (Teacher in Sri Dham Mayapur), HG Prabhu Nityananda (Overseeing Varnashrama Ministry activities in W. Bengal), HG Sudama Sakha prabhu (Manager for Varnashrama Regional Office), HG Janudvipa prabhu (Student at gurukula), HG Kala Kanta prabhu (Pursuing post graduate studies in traditional agriculture), HG Sri Jiva prabhu (Student enrolled in the Deity Worship Course) and Bhakta Morton (Coordinator for the inauguration).

At the beginning of the ceremony, the devotees present chanted some bhajans which were followed by HG Samba prabhu who spoke on the importance of the varnashrama mission. A letter from the ministry's national office written by the national minister, HH Bhakti Raghava Swami, was also distributed to those present. At the close of the ceremony, prasadam was distributed to the attendees

and to some of the pilgrims in the Dhama. The Mayapur TV was on hand to Video the event which was also televised live.



When Politicians Played Philosophers

[<http://www.zeenews.com/news682935.html>]

January 24, 2011. New Delhi. When the country's netas don't talk politics, the change is welcome. This was evident at a book launch in the capital today when Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit, senior BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi and senior Congress leader Karan Singh talked about a variety of topics related to spirituality, as the audience sat engrossed.

From the continuity of Indian civilization to the existence of cosmic consciousness, interspersed with lively anecdotes and quotes from the Vedic texts, there was no space for the mundane at the event which saw the leaders at their wittiest. While Singh focused on the richness of the Indian civilization with its ancient 'guru-shishya parampara', Joshi, a former Physics professor, correlated science with spirituality. Dikshit, on the other hand, chose to praise the book, saying it would help people move from the mundane to a different world altogether.

"How has Indian civilization survived for centuries despite numerous invasions? It has survived because of its continuous intellectual, spiritual and emotional contact with its ancient past," said Singh.



Hindus were not the Original Inhabitants of India [www.todaysviews.com/?p=1143]

February 1, 2011. Dr. Jamil Khan should be credited for tremendous research on the subject of Hinduorigins outside South Asia. He has consecrated his brilliant research in a book with a strange title. Neither the title of the book, nor the depth of his profound research is done justice by the trivial title "Urdu-Hindu an artificial divide". The book through profound linguistic and historical research presents the topography of Sough Asia from the earliest time to the present day. Perhaps a better title for the book, or for a sequel to the book would be "Rig Veda-The giant Trek: Tracing the Origins of the Hindus in the Middle East". Another possibility of a title would be "Ancient South Asia to present times: Linguistic analysis of Hindu immigration". Dr. Khan spawned the interest in this topic-which we have been exploring for more than three decades.



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• **Mails to the Editor**

(In response to HH Bhakti Raghava Swami's article, "Debunking the Equity Myth" (13th Issue)

Dear Bhakti Raghava Maharaj,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All Glories to Srila Prabhupada.

We are preaching in the modern world in a lot of different countries and among a lot of different constituencies. It can be a real challenge to explain that our ideal of a perfect civilization is one that accepts a variety of unequal social statuses. It sounds to many audiences that we are aligning ourselves with social conservatives who have historically rationalized, tolerated and perpetrated all kinds of injustices. Our target audiences, those who are free enough from their own cultural and religious prejudices to listen to an "exotic" spiritual message, are often likely to be sworn enemies of the conservative and reactionary social forces of the modern world. It may be even harder to go beyond the theoretical explanations of how an ideal society full of acknowledged and formalized external inequality can work nicely, without injustice, and to actually show a working model in practice.

(In our own ISKCON society, we have not yet really developed much of a system for classifying the male devotees into four different varnas, but the women devotees sometimes feel the brunt of being treated according to a lower social status without some of the reciprocal affection and protection and genuine kindness that is supposed to counter-balance their diminished social power.)

In the mean time, establishing a spiritually organized society along the lines of Varnasrama dharma may be a secondary goal of the Hare Krishna movement. Ironically, we can more easily give something higher — chanting Hare Krishna in a mood of ecstatic devotion — while we are still challenged in understanding and explaining, much less implementing, a Vedic system of social organization, which is more basic and subordinate to pure devotional service itself.

...I think there is a need for a lot of frank discussion from various angles about these subjects. We cannot lose faith in the Varnasrama system, but maybe we should not emphasize it much in many settings. We still have a lot to learn about how to make it work well.

- *HG Akurnath dasa*

... I would like to add that we should look at the environmental factors that affect women today. Up until the last half of the 20th century a woman could be confident that when she grew up she would find a husband who would make a lifelong commitment, financially support her, and her children. There is no basis for that confidence today. Women have to assume they will be required to fend for themselves. In Vedic society women could act according to their nature within the family structure. The wife of a brhamana was engaged in sacrifices and lived an austere life, as he did. The wife of a vaishya shared the status and wealth of her husband. We should not expect women today, who have various tendencies, and are left to fend for themselves, to all be satisfied doing unskilled labor so they do not compete with men. And we must admit that in many professional occupations woman are showing themselves quite competent. ...In general, ignoring the reasons for contemporary attitudes is revealed when devotees try to emphasize that woman should simply indulge a man's desire to be superior. Women play a more important role than that in any society. Civilized people give credit to the contribution of all its members. The contribution of mothers in society is not inferior to any other contribution. To become a brhamana requires the training of a brahmaically inclined mother. The mother is every humans first Guru. It has been noted in material science that women are more satisfied in traditional roles when their function is valued. When their function as mothers is not valued and they are seen exclusively as objects for male enjoyment, of course they become dissatisfied. So I do not think anyone will persuade modern women to adopt the traditional roles by telling them they should do so because the Veda's say they should exist simply to satisfy their husbands psychological desire to be in the superior position. And implying that this is the only function women can perform is a distortion of the Vedic position on this issue.

- *HG Sita Ram Das*

It is true that Iskcon is catering to a larger community and people. Nothing can change overnight. We can not expect an ideal society with all varnas and ashrama in place. It takes a lot of effort and understanding.



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I feel that it will be a difficult task to implement varnashrama when we eclipse ourself with ideas like “A devotee is always on liberated platform or beyond the rules of varnashrama”. I feel these kind of concepts and theories are irrelevant to a beginner and sometimes even cause distraction and chaos. These concepts may be the siddhanta of bhakti but not taken with correct understanding, I feel.

The bottom rule or symptom of Krishna Consciousness is to “Always remember Krishna and never forget Him”. This is common for all people in all varna and ashrama. But there are other rules which one must follow.

Just like a devotee is bound by the local laws of government and that He must pay his taxes, he is similarly well bound by laws of karma and varnashrama too. Grihastha devotee remembers Krishna all the time, so does a sanyasi too. But this doesn't warrant a sanyasi to marry. The rules of sanyasi and grihastha are eternally different irrespective of them being Krishna conscious. We consider a Krishna conscious Sanyasi as fallen if He has desires for marriage or gets married? We might find such devotees still continuing to practice Krishna consciousness. If their KC has not dwindled, then why do we consider those sanyasis fallen? We consider them fallen because sanyasa vows were part of their sadhana in Krishna consciousness. One can revive one's KC at any status of his life irrespective of His varna and ashrama. However rules of varna and ashrama are integral to the rules of KC.

Just like medicine has a diet, so does KC has varnashrama. To consider a devotee in terms of their varna and ashrama is a big offense. But this doesn't mean a devotee keeps changing varnashrama or not follow at all according to his/her whims under the pretext of serving a higher purpose. Indeed even sanyasis and babajis have their own rules and regulations apart from this bottom rule. Religion means dharma. Dharma means *Sva Dharma*. *Sva Dharma* means *Varnashrama Dharma*. Philosophy without Religion is mental speculation. Krishna Consciousness without Varna and Ashrama is an imagination. Hence I believe Srila Prabhupada indicated that establishing Varnashrama is the other task in His mission.

We are not babajis. The society needs brahmanas, Kshatriyas ..

- *Scooty.Ram prabhu*

(In response to Vrndavanlila dd's article, “Is Unemployment Equivalent to Murder?” 13th Issue):

...In India, peasants commit suicide because of not being able to repay their debts, which is also to be analyzed in relation to severe draughts which prevents them to have enough crops and thereby sufficient income...

As we can see, something is definitely going wrong in our world... Over industrialization has generated so much pollution and global warming that an area larger than Germany and France combined is being flooded in Eastern Australia...! Peasants run into debts to buy tractors, fertilizers, and even transgenic seeds which they cannot produce on their own anymore, becoming henceforward dependent on international trusts... Huge parts of agricultural land in Madagascar has been leased to a big Korean farming company, meant to supply the increasing needs of the Korean population...Facing both national and international unbalances, we have to “think globally and act locally”...Srila Prabhupada's Vedic model of “simple living and high thinking” is certainly the only feasible model on the long run...Now, our challenge is to make it attractive. We also must be capable to recommend a gradual transition, not to be perceived as fundamentalists, while still having some pilot projects showcasing how this is possible and how it functions nicely.

Simultaneously, we have to think about the implementation of this new sustainable model of society, in such a way that we can engage all varnas and ashramas, and not just vaisyas and sudras. So, an exclusive approach of going back to the villages to lead a very frugal life may not sound so attractive to the rising Indian middle class and to the leading upper class. In this regard, Srila Prabhupada had his own definition for a capital like Paris; he said: “Paris means immense opportunity for preaching”. When he traveled to the West, he didn't start with the countryside to convince the rural population and preach them to give up tractors and go back to horse and bull power! He went to the cities and convinced spiritually inclined people about the ultimate goal of life...

Wishing you all the best,

- *HG Puskaraksa Das*



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Srila Prabhupad would often point out the flawed conception of “advancement” of civilization that is touted as modern society. For example, previously people in an agrarian society could sustain themselves living in villages, growing the food that they would consume, weaving the cloth that could be used for making clothes. One did not require a car, a bus, or a train to travel many hours each day to and from work. With the development of machines to wash clothes and dishes, one had to work to get money in order to pay for these things. In the final analysis, one’s most valuable asset, “human time” is lost in the complicated complicated modern life style. So Srila Prabhupad would question: “where is the advancement in such a lifestyle? The alternative option that Srila Prabhupad time and again would propose is “simple living and high thinking.” This helps us to appreciate that there is no necessity to chase after the illusory goal of material advancement. It is not a “sour grapes” proposal, that is...since one is not so fortunate to possess modern amenities, then simple living is a worthy goal. Rather, simple living has the potential to save so much time for us, leaving that time for high thinking. Mahatma Gandhi tried to encourage cottage industries in the village of India during his time in order to accomplish self-sufficiency in the villages. As mechanization of farms evolved, so many villagers lost the opportunity to work, and they moved to the cities like Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta. We have seen how so many displaced farmers were thus forced to live on sidewalks, pulling carts that donkies would pull in the past. These are all things to ponder in our preaching work...and if done properly, it creates a yearning for spiritual life and spiritual practices.

- *HG Pusta Krishna Das*

Hare Krsna mataji,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

WOW! Once again such a lovely and gripping news letter! Its just getting better and better by the day!...

I too pray to the Lord to continue to bless you with excellent health so that you may go on with this wonderful service to bring Varnashrama Dharma to the forefront.

Hoping to get more of your precious association!

With Love,

- *HG Manasaganga dd, Hyderabad.*

Dear Vrindavanlila Mataji,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Thank you for your newsletter and all the fine work you and your colleagues are doing. I would like to introduce to you an effort parallel to yours in the matter of promoting varnashram, which is namely my organization, the Samprajña Institute. (Our website: <http://samprajna.org>) Our focus on the promotion of varnashram dharma is more in terms of theory--especially in engaging today's most prominent philosophies on political-economy such as democratic liberalism, capitalism, and socialism. Our belief is that unless these philosophies are successfully challenged, they will remain prominent in the minds of people and it will be nearly impossible to establish varnashram on any appreciable scale....

Your servant,

- *HG Krishna Kirti Das*

The mails/ articles can be posted to eightpetalsnewsletter@gmail.com or vrindavanlila.brs@gmail.com

Focus for the next issue -

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Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare



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