

= Prithu =

According to Hindu mythology , Prithu ( Sanskrit : प्रिथु , Pṛithu , lit . " large , great , important , abundant " ) 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 . " 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 . The epic Mahabharata and text Vishnu Purana describes him as a part Avatar ( incarnation ) of Vishnu .

= = Legends = =

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 .

The Mahabharata traces Prithu 's lineage from Vishnu. The Almighty Vishnu created a human named Virajas to rule the earth and bring order to the Humans . Virajas lost his desire to rule the earth after beholding Vishnu and became an ascetic . Virajas ' son was Krittimat , who became an ascetic . Krittimat 's son was Kardama . Kardama 's son was Ananga and Ananga 's son was Atibala . Atibala , also called Anga , conquered the earth and ruled well . Atibala married Mrityu 's daughter , Sunita and had a son named Vena . Vena 's son would be Prithu .

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 " . However , the Manu Smriti considers Prithvi as Prithu 's wife and not his daughter , and thus suggests the name " Prithvi " is named after her husband , Prithu .

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 . 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 N?ga demi @-@ god . Shatapatha Brahmana ( Verse 3 @.@ 5 @.@ 4 . ) calls him the first anointed king and Vayu Purana calls him adiraja ( " first king " ) .

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 .

== = Reign = = =

Prithu became the first true king . He became a Kshatriya after he healed the Brahmanas of their wounds , inflicted by Prithu 's tyrannical father , Vena . After acquiring many presents from the gods , Prithu conquered and ruled the earth as well as the Devas , Asuras , Yakshas , Rakshasas and Nagas in all glory . It was where the Satya Yuga reached its pinnacle . Prithu liberated his father Vena , from the hell called P't , hence all sons are called Putras . Practicing detachment , Prithu ruled according to the Vedas and the Dandaneeti .

His capital is believed to be somewhere in modern @-@ day Haryana . Prithu used his Kshatriya power to make the earth yield its riches . Hence the earth is called Prithvi , daughter of Prithu . Prithu , by mere fiat of will , created millions of men , elephants , chariots and horses . During his reign , there was no decrepitude , no calamity , no famine , no disease , no agriculture and no mining . Prithu enjoyed popularity amongst his subjects , hence all kings are called Rajas . Cows yielded buckets of rich milk when they were touched . Trees and lotuses always had honey in them . People were healthy and happy and had no fear of thieves or wild animals . Nobody died of accidents . Kusha grass was golden in colour . Fruits were always sweet and ripe and nobody went hungry . People lived in houses or caves or trees or wherever they liked . For the first time , civilization and commerce came into existence .

Prithu himself shattered many mountains with his arrows and made the earth even . He had divine powers of creating or disappearing any mundane object with his mental power ; ability to play musical instruments , sing and act . His chariot could travel over land , water and air with complete ease . Mountains made way for Prithu on his chariot and his flagstaff was never entangled when Prithu travelled through dense forests as the trees made way for him . Prithu practised charity and donated colossal amounts of gold to the Brahmanas .

Prithu appointed Shukracharya , the son of Bhrigu and Garga , the son of Angirasa as his preceptors . The Valakhilyas , a group consisting of 60 @,@ 000 thumb sized ascetics and known for their genius , became Prithu 's counsellors .

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 . 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 .

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 experienced Samadhi and voluntarily gave up his body in the forest , and Archi went Sati on his funeral pyre .

== = 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 .

== = 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 . 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 .

= = 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 Shraddha of his father . The town is referred as the boundary between Northern and central India and referred to by Patanjali as the modern Pehowa .

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 Prthu while colonizing the Doab between the Ganges and Jamuna . "