



Srila Prabhupada as a Universal Social Reformer

¹V. Venu Gopal, ²Dr. Thanigaimalai Thirumalai

¹Research Scholar, Shri Jagdishprasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University.

²Professor, Dep of Philosophy Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha Research Centre Mumbai

ABSTRACT

Abhay Charanaravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami was an Indian spiritual teacher and the founder-acharya (preceptor) of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (SRILA PRABHUPADA) commonly known as the "Hare Krishna Movement". In this paper we're getting to clarify different works achieved by Srila Prabhupada and the ethnic and ideological struggle taken on by the socio-religious moves he made which helped build up national awareness. Along with discussed the recognition he got throughout the Globe, his teachings and also matters increase attachment into your human body and the material environment, the way you can avoid them to greatly help our spiritual lifestyle. Srila Prabhupada can be actually really just a social reformer who asked heads of state, CEOs of leading corporations, and honored teachers, "This Krishna consciousness could get the world joyful."

1. Introduction:

1.1. International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

There is not much I can say as the most incalculable about the greatest soul who is the founding Acharya of the great movement for mankind, revealing the importance of chanting the holy names of the Lord and whose purpose is to deliver the fallen souls of this dark era of conflicts, which is "kali yuga".

It is essential in this world to participate in numerous complications to achieve every degree of enjoyment, and only after doing massive devotional activities is one suitable to enjoy happiness in the God's Abode. Mind you, not everyone can do this.

From our history we know remarkable individuals who led big revolutions to achieve independence or who were highly influential in fighting conflicts. But, Srila Prabhupada's style of revolution is totally unique and stands alone. A mega revolution is to bring about a shift in one's awareness and manage one's thoughts. The teachings of Srila Prabhupada provide humanity a chance at a higher awareness that opens the doors to happy existence and liberates from material bondage. It is free of charge and there are no qualifying requirements.

To fully grasp Srila Prabhupada's mission, it is necessary to know the backdrop and the aims of the world situation.

In the current Kali Yuga, individuals themselves misidentify with their body and are thus caught up in the samsara material cycle. They are in the fast lane trying to make their material life more and more comfortable and hence are accumulating sinful karmas. They are deep into worry, motivated by greed, wrath, envy, hatred etc. Thus, the lucky innocent few are attracted by the alternate road that SRILA PRABHUPADA offers to them. While the faithful are attracted to the mission, they are pulled as Krishna awareness by the scientific explanation of the vedic literature. This mission of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Srila Prabhupada not only provides guidance for peaceful healthy living to the current generation, but also to the entire future humankind, the opportunity to live in a peaceful society free of all sins and immoral activities, which leads to a pleasant and happy life for the practitioner. All material concerns will leave by singing the lord's holy names and life becomes stress-free.

By implementing the four regulatory principles, the practitioner truly sees life altering every day. The food we consume develops the finer tissues of our brain, and by just eating satvic food, known as Prasadam, the eater becomes sattvic with lighter thoughts and therefore easier in controlling its senses and mind. He quickly obtains total spiritual happiness by advancing this manner. The food eater not only has to confront huge immoral karmic reactions because of the murder of innocent creatures and the flesh eating.

Srila Prabhupada was conferred with the title "Bhaktivedanta" before 1947 for his academic studies which let him realise that he has embraced the path of devotional service to the Supreme Lord as an end to all knowledge. Later his popular name Srila Prabhupada, as respectfully addressed by his disciples, denoted "the person who has taken shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord". It also meant "the masters sit at whose feet."

Srila Prabhupada, who realised the necessity of mankind, gave the whole of Vedic knowledge in a manner that was easy to grasp and created many temples that could be accessed free of charge by anyone. The lessons are so important that they may be assimilated very simply into anybody's life and

practised to benefit ultimately. Srila Prabhupada streamlined the whole procedure by altering the substance of these teachings into the regular chanting of the Lord's holy names and following four regulatory rules with samkirtan performances.

Full of faith and full surrender are necessary in order to connect with the supreme consciousness. The ultimate achievement of life is unconditional love for the divine which rewards perfect pleasure and eternal happiness to the practitioner which is reached by breaking free from all karmic reactions binding one to the cycle of birth and death.

Srila Prabhupada thought Vedic studies should start in his infancy and so created the primary and secondary school system of gurukul in Texas, Dallas, in 1972. Today it is being performed in many regions of the world.

By progressing gradually in pure singing and rigorously following the regulative principles one achieves the point of perfection in which the obstacles between oneself and the superself are broken down. Thus in the spiritual realm one discovers his original svarupa or form. Srila Prabhupada explains that whomever has attained this stage can always perceive the Lord's transcendental form. The individual soul has been through so many lifetime of bondage and, once the transcendental form of the Lord is revealed, then all suffering ceases to exist because of the dual nature of the material universe. This is true reformation. The only everlasting reformation.

2. Food Relief Program - SRILA PRABHUPADA - The Global Hare Krishna Movement

The Food for Life initiative, the biggest vegetarian food distribution scheme in the world, is expanding Srila Prabhupada's footprint in over 60 nations. Millions of people across the world are provided free and spiritually cleansed meals every day via this Srila Prabhupada's programme.

– Food Distribution – Srila Prabhupada's views.

Later Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada went ahead with this project of prasadam distribution in Vrindavan, where there were choultries for the distribution of Prasadam. This programme at Vrindavan was the extension of Bombay where food distribution was extensively done. Moreover Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada was so kind hearted that he requested the collection of mill owners in order to cater to the dire needs of the refugees from Bangladesh. This collection of cloth along with food stuffs could solve the terrible needs of the refugees to a considerable extent. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada felt very much happy at an unprecedented encouragement extended to this great project intended to minimise suffering and starvation.

This unexpected success led Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada to take this programme across India and extend it to factories, hospitals, schools, other educational institutions etc.

3 Vegetarianism - SRILA PRABHUPADA - The Global Hare Krishna Movement

Since the food that we consume becomes our brain's finer tissues and so impacts our awareness and personality, it is vital for us to continue to be a principle of what we prepare and eat. Hence SRILA PRABHUPADA promotes vegetarian food, strictly avoiding flesh, fish and eggs, and even coffee, tea, onion and garlic helps good tendency of health. Cooking and eating is highly holy and the whole process must be peaceful and carried out with love. SRILA PRABHUPADA teaches with love the art of cooking with the Lord, presenting with love and devotion the food to the Lord and then sharing with others the rest for his own cleansing and spiritual development.

Vegetarianism is widely encouraged by Srila Prabhupada, and some adherents have created several acclaimed vegetarian recipes. Almost all the major cities of the world, New York, Los Angeles, London, Rome, New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Lima, Melbourne, Sydney, Nairobi, Buenos Aires and many others numbering more than 100 have SRILA PRABHUPADA vegetarian Hare Krishna Govinda Restaurants. The holy cuisine in these restaurants are highly popular everywhere.

The SRILA PRABHUPADA Sunday Feast Program is also well loved and attended by many across the world for both the magnificent discourse and the subsequent great feast.

SRILA PRABHUPADA farm communities, whether in India-Govardhan Eco-village, United States – a rural Gita Nagari farm in Pennsylvania or in London – Bhaktivedanta Manor produces milk gallons that are entirely free of karma and cruelties as cows, bovines and bulls are treated with utmost care and affection without fear of being slaughtered.

4. Women in Prabhupada's Times in SRILA PRABHUPADA - The Global Hare Krishna Movement

The Samkirtan movement of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was unique and extended Krishna's love to everybody regardless of caste, gender, religion, ethnicity and materiality. Srila Prabhupada's movement was founded on the foundation of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's mission and so welcomed one and all. Srila Prabhupada did not consider women as simply a housewife and confined to home activities but encouraged them to use their knowledge and flair in any area of devotion to Krishna. Many of Srila Prabhupada's women followers were assigned great duties and were equal to their disciples. Srila Prabhupada urged the women followers to be strong on the spiritual life path. He thought that women are considered graver, innocent and more loyal, which are the pillars in spirituality.

According to Srila Prabhupada's Vaisnava tradition, Harinam, then Brahman awarded his male students the Brahmachari rank. This allowed them to join and participate in certain spiritual activities that helped them to grow spiritually. In the same vein Srila Prabhupada honestly and without pretensions, offered women engaged in spiritual advancement equivalent and equal importance by granting them both the harinam and the Brahman initiation, giving them the Brahmacharini rank. With equal reverence and gravity, these followers of Srila Prabhupada took part in spiritual activities that helped them progress on their spiritual path in equal terms with their God brothers. There was no prejudice for Srila Prabhupada.

Prabhupada did not pretend by allowing women in the temple and granting them the brahmacharini status, he granted them all the same rights and obligations of the brahmachari in the ashrama of the guru. The same thing applied when he offered them Brahman initiation. The devotees had the same spiritual exercises, the same tasks, the same spiritual growth and the same respect. Everything was then done according to a person's capabilities and spiritual progress, not according to sex. Prabhupada made no discrimination whatsoever.

From Hippies to Goswamis - - Turning point In World History

The initiations of Swami Reformed by the "Matchless Gifts" were a turning moment in world history. The US and Europeans were mlecchas or savages, who ate meat, drank wine, drug and have sex outside of marriage, according to traditional Hindu norms. Such outcasts were not eligible for diksha, the initiation ritual opening the path to freedom. They had to wait until they were reincarnated in households with in higher caste. The Swami disregarded these concerns. Krishna awareness has nothing to do with Hindu rituals, he claimed. All living beings are God's sparks, Krishna's neutral energy (BG 15.7) The disciples needed to know what was expected of them to take their initiation seriously.

- Every initiated devotee must attend discourses both morning and evening.
- Do not suffer from any sort of poisoning, including coffee, tea and cigarettes.
- They are prohibited from having unlawful sexual relationships.
- Strictly vegetarian, must be.
- Should not associate with non-devotees extensively.
- Should not eat non-devotee prepared meals.
- Should not squander time in idle conversations or participate in foolish sports.

Srila Prabhupada's Service to the Humanity :

In modern times more people are so spiritually blank that don't know that they are believed spiritual children of the greatest father and that an eternal blissful life is their natural right, if they just reawaken their love for godhead. In the world everybody has lost the spiritual culture.

- ❖ AC Bhaktivedanta Swami gave reforms to the society.
- ❖ Providing standard and scientific spiritual upliftment by education free to everyone regardless of caste, creed, nationality, religion, race, gender. Offering alternative culture it attracts and enables people to practice reformatory spirituality in practical yet powerful way in modern times and thus lead deeply meaningful way of life.
- ❖ Spreading reforms over the worldwide non-sectarian, proved time tested singing the Lord's holy praises. Hare Krishna mahamantra in particular.
- ❖ Helping lakhs of people break free from the self-destructive drives of eating meat, drinking alcohol, gambling and illegal sex by offering them higher happiness and protecting from immense suffering in this life and future life.
- ❖ Conducting the world's biggest vegetarian food relief program Annamrutha and food for life. And distributing free nutritious sanctified food (prasadam). Food that nourishes the body and the soul to lakhs of needed people all over the universe including in war torn areas.

BhaktivedantaInstitute :

By 1973, Prabhupada had initiated several scientist-disciples and founded the Bhaktivedanta Institute, whose mission was to establish the Vedic view point as scientifically defensible. During a morning walk in Los Angeles he told them " Our internal affair is to worship the Supreme Lord Krishna. But externally our affair is to make sure to establish that life comes from life. If we don't then the scientific community will misguide all. Since you are following the truth it will be successful but you have to present it in a scientific and modern way. Encouraging – and initiating – scientists became seminal component of Prabhupada's campaign to establish the Vedic viewpoint in the West.

Social Reforms on line with age old Vedic tradition.

Srila Prabhupada continued faithfully representing and extending the social reforms that were propagated by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who emphasised a direct link with the supreme Lord which transcended priestly traditions and rituals and reached to one and all irrespective of caste, race,

Srila Prabhupada's contribution to the re-spiritualization of the modern human society albeit facing the most adverse, unfavorable, risky and challenging circumstances under which he founded and propagated this movement, makes his accomplishments most miraculous and inconceivable.

Srila Prabhupada teaches its followers the practise of devotional service, or bhakti-yoga, which involves a rigorous renunciation and austerity procedure to achieve the spiritual objective of self-fulfilment.

As part of the devotional ritual the devotees of Srila Prabhupada are supposed to recite the Hare Krishna maha-mantra at least 16 times around the beads. This and other activities of devotion should be conducted before dawn in the Brahma Muhurta everyday as a morning programme.

Srila Prabhupada also began daily morning and night discourses for Srimad Bhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita, hearing that allowed his followers to achieve soul purity, reviving their lost contact with the Lord, thereby achieving their original nature of eternity, happiness and wisdom.

Persons joining Srila Prabhupada were undergoing major changes in their exterior style and look and also underwent huge internal upheaval. They were slowly coming out of the realm of maya and coming under the divine jurisdiction of God. Srila Prabhupada allowed having direct spiritual experience of God and not just book knowledge. Srila Prabhupada was respiritualizing the entire human society.

The task of replanting the Vedic tradition its teachings, practices and culture into the modern west was impossible. Srila Prabhupada understood it was an uphill task, with many hurdles and obstacles but he remained ever dependent on Krishna and guru and always confident. Although there were many initial failures he carried on undauntedly with full enthusiasm.

Srila Prabhupada taught that according to the purity of thought and behaviour, spiritual development. This signifies full control of one's thoughts and senses. Therefore, it became very important to practise very stringent sadhana. False ego and jealousy caused everything to collapse, and so great sadhana was obligatory.

The ultimate goal of spiritual practices as taught by Srila Prabhupada is to achieve pure love of God by always engaging in the Lord's service. Srila Prabhupada personally exemplified this by leading such a life. The initiated devotees are to strive to achieve such high ideals by strictly following the regulative principles if not out of spontaneous love for the lord but as obedience to guru, parampara and shastra.

Vedic farming :

Srila Prabhupada stressed self-sufficiency. He considered modern civilization as artificial and avoidable. Simple living and high thinking was the policy. So New Vrindaban, a self-sufficient eco-friendly, God centric community living was started. Later many such centres were set up. Here the living was in harmony with nature and not of exploitation.

- Cow protection and wellbeing for animals
- Bio-free slaughter-free milk farming
- Efficient handling of water and waste
- Development of local communities on the farm
- Harvesting of rainwater
- Sustainable use of energy
- Education for children and adults

Bhaktivedanta Book Trust

Srila Prabhupada's writings were another extremely important gift. He has written almost 70 books of authorised interpretations and claims of Indian intellectual and religious classics. The most commonly read edition of the Gita is his Bhagavad Gita As It Is. It was translated into almost 70 languages. Srila Prabhupada created the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in 1972 to print all his vedic literary works, currently the world's leading publisher of Vedic books. The works of Srila Prabhupada altered the lives of millions, from a life of materialistic inclinations to firmly following God's precepts

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