Letters to the Editor
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Delightful Similarities

The article "Master Builder Uncovers Striking Similarities in Indian and Incan/Mayan Sacred Structures"[June 1995 issue] was welcomed by me with great delight. Sri Sthapati confirms in many ways what Augustus Le Plongeon, 19th-century explorer, wrote over 100 years ago! He, too, studied the ancient Mesoamerican history, architecture and monuments. I believe that Dr. Le Plongeon had found the truth, or had come close to it. Now, after reading about Sthapati's work, I think he has been fully vindicated. Sthapati states that Mayan, the divine architect of India, must have come from Central America. Of course, the building of temples and what is being done in those temples goes hand-in-glove--the inner and the outer cannot be easily separated. Dr. Le Plongeon postulated that the Mayan temples may be the oldest religious edifices in the world. He also believed that their builders exported their sacred mysteries from Mayan land to India, Chaldea, Egypt, Italy, Anatolia, etc., via colonists and missionaries.

Eva Lachman, Religious Information Service, Burnet Woods, Ohio, USA

Be More Practical

The broad Hindu view of religion is that all paths lead to One God. This would mean that people of all religions are our

brethren, and we can embrace and accept their religious convictions without prejudice. This being the case, why should we not accept conversions of Hindus to other faiths? While mass conversion is regrettable and should be dealt with in a mature way, the conversion of individuals under special circumstances should not be hindered.

The special circumstances I refer to are typically the lack of support groups within the Hindu community. For example, after losing her husband, a young wife gets a lot of support during the period immediately following the death. But gradually everyone goes their own way, and she is left to herself. The Christians become even more supportive at such times--a cynic could say that they seize the opportunity.

My point is that we Hindus should look towards improving our social interactions and face the changing world in a practical manner. The youth should be able to get meaningful answers; the destitute in our society should get more help. But until we are able to establish such capability, we should not begrudge the support our people can get from the Christian or other religious groups.

Sanmugan V Singam, vijia@pop.jaring.my, Minden, Penang, Malaysia

No Saffron Jump Suits!

To Buddhist and Hindus the world over the wearing of saffron is considered as a symbol of spiritual regeneration, presupposing a deliberate attempt on the part of wearer toward a higher and purer life.

To require inmates to wear saffron jump suits, as is now done in many American prisons, is an insult to Hindus and Buddhist the world over. Consider how Christians would feel if prisoners wore the black suit and white collar of a priest. Would they not consider that an insult?

I have embraced Hinduism in my life. In doing so, perhaps I am over sensitive to seeing inmates clad in saffron jump suits. Others may not be bothered by it. It would be interesting to get your feelings and perhaps the feelings of your readers. I have written to President Clinton expressing my view.

Howard B Brown, Norfolk, Massachusetts, USA

More on Pat

Ever since I read Valli Rajan's excellent article on Pat Robertson's attacks on Hinduism, I have been buffeted by mixed emotions of anger, disgust and sorrow at the simplistic and ignorant mind-set that these attacks reflect. As a native of the Telugu region, I resent particularly the diatribes against Godavari river and Rajahmundry village which occupy a precious niche in the Telugu psyche. It is imperative that the attacks from Robertson and his ilk should be vigorously countered by representations to the Justice Department and FCC but also to the Indian embassy questioning their grant of visas to these hate mongers. I would like to commend you for your excellent newspaper and hope that you will continue to serve Hinduism in all its multi-splendored glory.

Mukunda Rao, Buckhannon, West Virginia, USA

Ammachi's Embrace

Thank you so much for the article on Amritanandamayi Ma in your June issue. I hope you will continue to keep your readers posted on the activities of this most remarkable saint.

Ammachi just blessed the San Francisco Bay Area with her luminous presence for nearly two weeks. Many people with no knowledge of Hinduism at all were somehow led to Holy Mother. Her infinitely loving embrace brought tears to their eyes and evoked heartfelt vows to transform themselves in her service. Those of us who have studied the tenets of yoga for years rediscovered that it is in the living presence of great souls like Ammachi that the Sanatana Dharma blazes fully to life. Looking at Holy Mother, we behold the glory of the all pervading Self. It is an awesome sight!

Linda Johnsen, Sonoma, California, USA

Some years back, Mata Amritanandamayi and her devotees came to Mauritius. They held a satsang at Goodlands, my native village. My family and I, full with enthusiasm, went for the darshan of Mother. During hours of bhajans, I kept on watching the bramacharinis who came with Mother. They were dressed in white. I was proud to see that most of them were non-born Hindus. What a pride! I was attracted by them. After the sweet bhajan, Mata was now prepared to receive her "children" for blessings. She took us one-by-one onto her lap. There was much rushing, but Mata calmly said that she would receive and heartily bless everybody present. I waited with great patience for my turn. When she held me close to her, I

thought that if time stopped here, I would have been the luckiest and happiest person in the world. I cannot explain what I experienced that day.

Artee Boodhonee, Rue Paul Langevin, Temblay, France

Servants of Hinduism

Thank you for your guest editorial by Ram Swarup and comments by Sita Ram Goel in Hinduism Today [September 1995 issue]. These tireless workers for the cause of Hinduism, the forefront of the intellectual Kshatriya of the country, have deserved better recognition for their many in depth publications. Your drawing attention to them is a great service to Hinduism. Hopefully it will cause more people to study their books, which constitute a veritable research library on the contemporary challenges facing the religion.

David Frawley, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA

World Wide Web

Over the years, we have waited with much anticipation for our monthly Hinduism Today to arrive in the mail. And each month, we thoroughly enjoy reading its contents. Today, for the first time, we visited the web site for Hinduism Today. We were happy to see that we could re-read past issues and be brought up-to-date and closer to happenings in Hawaii. Also, we thoroughly enjoyed viewing the Aum page--the images brightened our day.

Scott & Tammy Wolfgram, 102520.1443@compuserve,com, Eagan, Minnesota, USA

The Hinduism Today web pages are as beautiful as the magazine itself. Thank you for making this resource available on the Internet. I hope you have been keeping track of the number of hits on these pages, and that you have found plenty of visitors.

Rajeev Srinivasan, rajeev@rahul.net, Stamford, California, USA

Corrections

This is a correction of Swami Pragyananda's address [See page 3, August 1995 issue]. He can be reached at Sai Pragya Dham, Pragya Marg, Saket, New Delhi, 110017, INDIA.