

[Letters to the Editor](#)

Category : [February 1996](#)

Published by Anonymous on Feb. 02, 1996

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Vedic Knowledge

Hinduism Today's issues from Nov. '95 through Jan. '96 indicate yet a new level of excellence and expansion for the paper. The addition of articles on Vastu Shastra, Ayurveda and Jyotish nicely round out the paper, educating readers to these great Vedic sciences. The January issue's Jyotish forecast is an excellent example of this. It is a great hope to see regular features on these three sciences, affording readers practical insights that allow for integration of these ancient teachings in their daily lives. Perhaps Lord Ganesha has affected our thirst for deeper and wider Vedic knowledge?

Swami Sada Shiva Tirtha, Bayville, New York, USA

Self-Alienated Hindus

In recent modern history, there appeared a class of Hindu-hating Hindus who knew all the bad things about Hinduism. Early invaders ruled through the sword. The British ruled through Indology. They took over our education and taught us to look at ourselves through their eyes. They created a class Indian in blood and color, but anti-Hindu in its intellectual and emotional orientation. This is the biggest problem that rising India faces--the problem of self-alienated Hindus, of anti-Hindu Hindu intellectuals.

It is widely agreed that India's Independence struggle derives from Hindu renaissance, but it is not equally realized that it can also only be sustained by it. Hinduism is the principle of India's self-renewal. Anything that hurts that principle hurts India, hurts its civilizational role, therefore hurts future religious humanity. India rose through Sanatana Dharma and it is also to rise for it.

Ram Swarup, Voice of India, New Delhi, India

Stop Animal Slaughter

The mind is affected by the food we eat. The increase of slaughterhouses is resulting in merciless killing of millions of innocent animals every day. The cries of agony and pain of dying animals is polluting the atmosphere, continually sending waves throughout the world that disturb the peace of mind of human beings. In such an atmosphere, attempts at world peace can never be really successful. Hence the world must realize the dire need of stopping the killing of innocent animals and adhering to the principles of nonviolence and vegetarianism.

Mohan Lal Gupta, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

Many Ways to Serve!

This, too, is a miracle. While finishing reading the Ganesha and Milk Miracle articles in Hinduism Today[Nov. '95] and six other Indian newspapers, we received a letter from Anekal, Karnataka, India, telling of a similar miracle that happened during the same time period in their temple.

We are placing Hinduism Today and six Indo-American publications--India West, India Post, News India Times, India

Abroad and India Monitor--in the Marion Public Library on a regular weekly basis after our use. We are pleased to place these newspapers in the library.

Mr. & Mrs. Gopal Raju, Marion, Indiana, USA

The Hinduism Today staff thanks you for your service to the community and to Hinduism. Keep it up!

Gems For the Future

Today I collected all the Hinduism Today from 1991 to date from my library and sorted out the central pages and filed them in one place. I am compiling a book, Hinduism Through The Ages. The project is imaginary, but keeps the sparks of enthusiasm alive in me as long as I may live beyond 81, my present age.

So much of Hinduism I have read, imbibed from my childhood, reading the translation of the Vedas from my father's library during my school days. The spirit of Vedas, yoga and Hinduism overtook me and carried me forward, but today I found gems of Hinduism in your center page and editorials worth preserving for the coming generation. No single soul can accomplish what your paper has done and compiled for posterity.

My humble gratitude goes to Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami for taking up this noble task which without his initiative and efforts would have not come to light.

Ved Gandotra, Coral Springs, Florida, USA

Agamas Published

We are planning to publish all the Saivagamas. So far we have published five Agamas, viz., Sukshmagama, Chandrajnanagama, Makutagama, Karanagama and Parameshvaragama. These are having Sanskrit and Hindi translation. We are also planning to publish these Agamas with English translation. Chandrajnanagama, has already been published in English.

Gangadhar Kendadamath, Sri Jangamawadimath, Varanasi, India

Saffron Jump Suits

Recently I wrote to President Bill Clinton against the use of saffron colored jump suits as inmate clothes. Here is the response from Federal Bureau of Prisons for you and your readers.

Howard B Brown, Norfolk, Massachusetts, USA

Bureau chaplaincy staff have consulted the Buddhist monks at the Institute of Buddhist studies in Berkeley, California, and also with the Vedanta Society in Los Angeles, California. The Buddhist monks have never given any thought to the issue you raise. They expressed no concern nor did they see any negative relationship between inmates wearing saffron jump suits and the color of the robes used by them.

The Vedanta Society states that the Hindu religion does not refer to the color as saffron, but rather as gerua. A white robe is soaked in water and then mixed with pigment of the earth to obtain a color. This will depend upon what part of India you are in and the pigment of the earth in that location. This symbolizes humbleness and the servanthood aspect of the

Hindu priest. They also stated the legend that this means was chosen by Buddha in 500 bc because it was, ironically, the same color as worn by the prisoners of those days.

Peter M. Charlson, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Washington, DC, USA

Course 9014 Update

Your account of the teaching of Hinduism in Mauritius that appeared under the caption "Course 9014: Hinduism" in your August '95 issue would have been welcome had it not contained certain inexactitudes.

Here are the real facts. The course started nearly two decades ago as a result of my humble efforts. The syllabus was the joint work of Cambridge and Mauritian educationists. As regards teachers, your correspondent should have known that almost all classes offering the above are taught by "qualified" teachers or graduates as required by law.

Thanks to these activities the course is "increasingly popular" as noted by your correspondent, I am thankful for his kind words about me and for finding the course a "real asset." Had he made a proper inquiry or even met me before writing, he would not have published such an incomplete and partly distorted account that has done more harm than good to our work, as proved by the letters and inquiries received here from USA and elsewhere.

Yogi Rummun, Hindu Movement, Mauritius

Miracle in New Zealand

November 28th was my birthday, and I wanted to make the milk offering to Lord Ganesha. I was told that the milk miracle had created a controversy in the local Hindu community, and in order to keep the peace and maintain harmony, the temple president had decided to quietly stop making any further such offerings. However I was given a special dispensation because I had asked and because it was my birthday. I am glad to report that the milk was accepted, as on all the previous occasions. This was my fifth time--call it spiritual greed if you like! I am glad that it has gone on as long as it has, and that when a controversy did arise, the preservation of harmony and the good atmosphere that the temple has, was accorded the highest priority.

Jeremy Traylen, New Zealand, jeremy.traylen@vum.ac.nz