Letters
Category : August 1998
Published by Anonymous on Aug. 02, 1998

Letters

Thank You for Bridging

As someone who grew up in the West and lived as Western a life as one can live, I want you to know how much I love Hinduism Today. I fell in love with India for India, not because of Hinduism. I, in fact, knew nothing about the religion and culture. I knew only that I never wanted to leave the banks of Mother Ganga. I am learning about it slowly, for I am simply letting it seep into my cells rather than trying to memorize facts. Your magazine is one of the few written pieces on Hinduism that I simply devour. It contains just the right amount of religion, spirituality and dogma with a sense of appealing to those of us who may not be already convinced of the facts. Thank you for being a wonderful bridge between me and this glorious culture in whose midst God has graciously put me.

Phoebe Garfield, ihrf@giasdl01.vsnl.net.in

Rewriting Indology

You have done a valuable service by bringing it to the attention of your readers through your very fine article [Cracking the Indus Valley Code, language, May, '98]. In nearly two centuries of existence, Indology has given us: 1) the Aryan invasion; 2) turned the maritime Vedic people into Steppe nomads who had never seen the ocean; and 3) Proto-Dravidian as the language of the Harappans! We must go directly to the public with our findings. We must develop an independent

school of thought that serves as an alternative to Indology, challenging it on its own ground.

Prof. Navaratna S. Rajaram, Basavanakudi, Bangalore, India

Sacred Landscapes

In my research i have come across sacred plants but have not discovered any information on the design or layout of sacred Hindu landscapes [India's Savior of Sacred Plants, ethnobotany, May, '98]. Much has been written on the temple architecture, unfortunately the landscape appears to be neglected. I would be delighted to hear from anybody who has information on this subject.

Tony Tapar, Coventry, England, UK
tony@mail.globalnet.co.uk

Dear India...

What in the world are you doing? I am shocked, surprised and so very disappointed [at your nuclear test]. In my mind India has always been the bastion of peace on this planet. The rest of us just needed to catch up with your enlightened ways in order to make this a better place. Now, you've given yourself two huge, awful black eyes. Then you stand up and say, "Hey, look at me! Don't I look tough, powerful and strong?" No, you've only lost face and hurt your own precious land. You've invited horrible destruction for your own people and all the citizens of this planet. In the eyes of the world you are like a peaceful old man suddenly slipping into the violent throws of senility. Snap out of it! Wake up before it's too late.

Damara Shanmuga, San Diego, California, US.
dshanmug@flash.net

New Century's New Year

Your readers might be interested in knowing that April 14th this year was the commencement of the 52nd century of the Hindu calendar--the Kali Yuga. It is the year 5100. This is the solar New Year in the Hindu calendar and every year it is widely celebrated in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and many other South East Asian countries.

Naresha Duraiswamy, Colombo, Sri Lanka
nduraiswamy@worldbank.org

Hail Vegetarianism!

I decided not to eat meat or fish because I've considered it not to be ethical. However, my family discovered it, and all I could hear about it was that I was becoming mentally insane, not a normal person, and I was being influenced by someone with strange ideas. I think this is an example about how backward the so-called "rational and humanist" West still is. It is funny to see how many people love their dogs and cats, smile in front of a monkey or are horrified by the killing of seals. It is also curious how many people consider abortion as a crime, while happily eating a killed pig or cow, if not worse. This logic dominates an entire society.

Nuno Pestana, Copenhagen, Denmark
npestana@contacto1.icep.pt

Credit Wrongly Favored

I lived at the child protection center (CPC) that you mentioned as the sole program working with the Deuki population in Nepal [In God's Name, inhumanity, Dec., '98]. You recognized Krishna Poon of Snehi Women's Awareness Center (SWAC) in Baitadi as the NGO working with Deukis. In fact, Poon has no relationship with the CPC, and in the two years that I've lived there, Poon has never visited or had any involvement with the

CPC or this community. The NGO responsible for the management of the CPC is the Tripura Sundari Village Development Association/Nepal (TSVDA/N). TSVDA/N, with UNICEF support, and the community in Melauli, has struggled together to make the CPC a success. Unfortunately, it is a rare occasion where reporters and photographers that wish to report on the Deuki system take the appropriate time and care to represent (or even visit) the community as it is today.

Allison Cohn, Peace Corps Volunteer, Baitadi, Nepal
pcvnepal@wlink.com.np

Safeguard is Not Guarding

How can the directors of the Hindu House profess to be devoted to bridging the caste divides in Mauritius, as reported in our local press, when they have been involved in recent years in some of the most appalling caste lobbying in the history of this country? Far from uniting Hindus, the Hindu House is yet another divisive factor for us. It is encouraging the sectarian winner-take-all mentality among castes and regional groups. There is a crying need for genuine promotion of cultural activities in the Hindu community. Hindu youths in Mauritius are, from childhood on, discouraged from taking part in artistic activities. Parents fear this may distract them from our rat race educational courses. The result is that too many Hindu youth grow up to become money-minded philistines. Who will save us from this sad state of affairs?

B. Govindrao, Poste Lafayette, Mauritius

About That Sari

Thank you for the wonderful articles, information and photos of the beautiful saris. They are, as you stated, wonderful works of art which can be worn to express so many thoughts and ideas.

I have never worn one, but you have inspired me to try.
Peshala Varadan, Rockville, Maryland, US
Margaret_Riley@dbm.com

Correction

In your April, 98 issue of Hinduism Today [Briefly] you stated, "Over 75 Trustees and Head of Temple gathered in Udupi, Kerala." Udupi is not in Kerala, but in the state of Karnataka.
P. Vasudeva Prabhu, Jersey City, New Jersey, US

Letters, with writer's name, address and daytime phone number, should be sent to:
Letters, Hinduism Today
107 Kaholalele Road
Kapaa, HI 96746-9304 USA
or faxed to: (808) 822-4351
or e-mailed to: letters@HinduismToday.kauai.hi.us

Letters may be edited for space and clarity and may appear in electronic versions of Hinduism Today.