

Canyon District,” published in 1882.

The Shiva Temple and other similar remnants in the western United States are called buttes. Because viewers who look into the Grand Canyon are so overwhelmed by the stupendous vistas with their many features, some might find it hard to realize the Shiva Temple rises over five thousand feet above the places where the Crystal and Trinity canyons below it meet the inner gorge of the Colorado River. If the entire mass of the Shiva Temple could be moved onto equivalent terrain, its rise above would parallel the rise of Mount Washington above the nearby lowland of New Hampshire! The flat top of the Shiva Temple spreads over a mile, and the way its summit surface matches with the terrain levels of the Kaibab Plateau offers proof that it was once but a small portion of a former high plateau level.

Dutton gave the name “Vishnu Temple” to another erosional remnant to the north of the Colorado River, and

there are those who consider this feature to be the most spectacular in the Grand Canyon because of the way it stands as a towering spire.

A third erosional remnant was later named “Brahma Temple” in order to complete the towering triad Dutton had – whether knowingly or unknowingly – founded. The Brahma Temple is also pointed at the top and is easily seen as a person looks northward across the Colorado River from Yaki Point on the south rim of the Grand Canyon. All three temples can be viewed together from Miners Spring.

The great majority of the millions of people visiting the Grand Canyon do not know the Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva temples even exist. Among the few individuals who do know about them, some might not have any idea about the nature of the deities. Their visits could be far more rewarding if they did know this. Reflection on these three gods, combined with feelings of oneness with nature, can lead – in the Hindu sense

of bhakti or rejoicing – to the ecstasy of knowing that you are One with all creation.

Hinduism typically promotes myriads of ways for each person to be a pilgrim having the right and necessity to develop his or her own faith. Like the Christians with their God – the Holy Spirit – Hindus have their Brahman, their Atman, their Universal Spirit. The spirit of creation, which is all-pervading in the universe – which dwells within and everywhere without – is difficult to contemplate. A universal spirit of creation is virtually impossible to create in the vision of humans, yet people still try to attribute this united spirit to individual gods.

It is Shiva, a god who is simultaneously destructive and creative, who wonderfully demonstrates the provision in Hinduism for letting us more egocentric humans feel more comfortable by thinking about many facets of the spiritual with anthropomorphic imagery. All such related thoughts help us obtain increased, yet slight,



Brahma Temple



Shiva Temple



Vishnu Temple