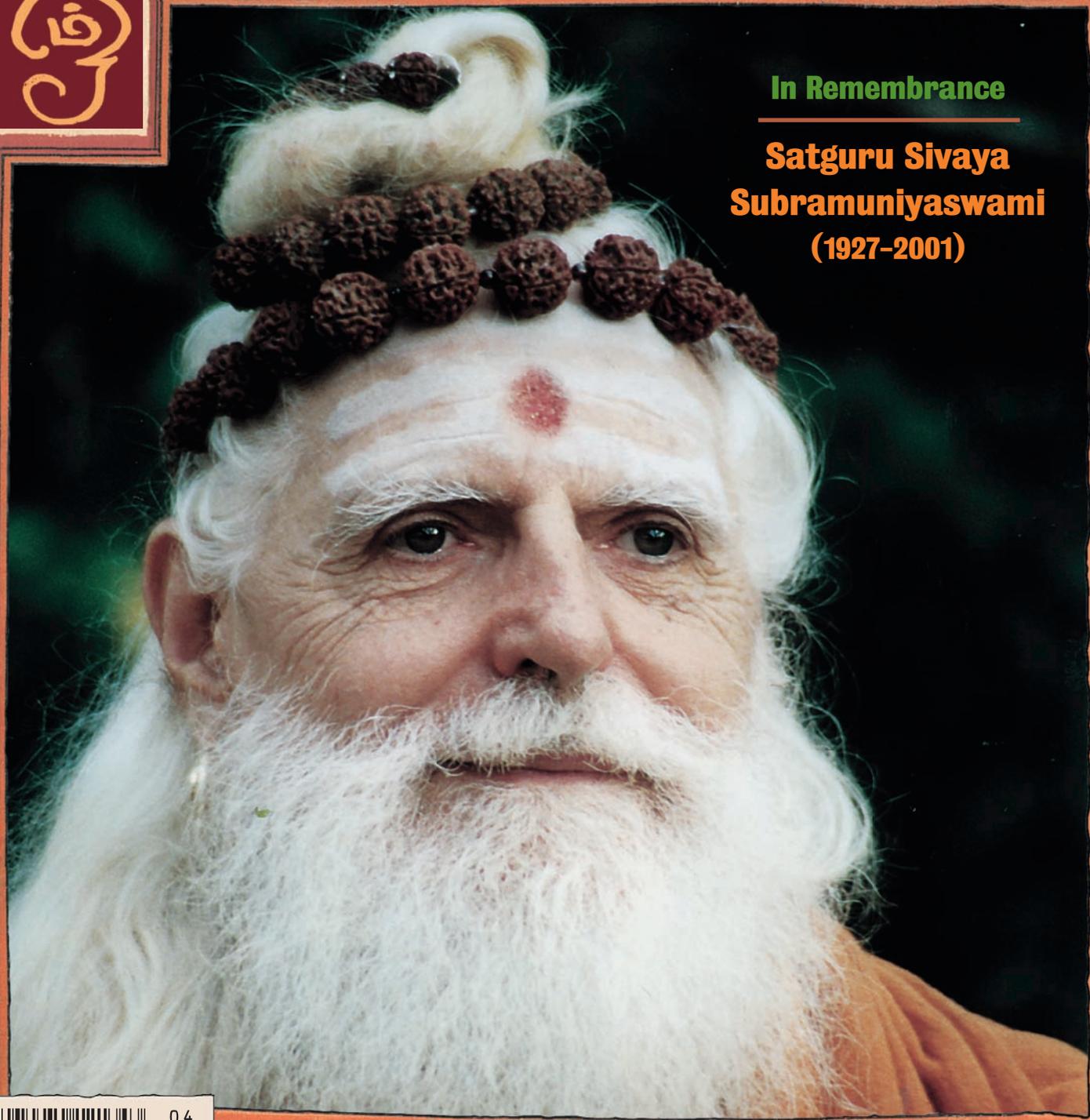


HINDUISM TODAY

April/May/June, 2002-----US \$5.95

Affirming Sanatana Dharma and Recording the Modern History of a Billion-Strong Global Religion in Renaissance



In Remembrance

**Satguru Sivaya
Subramuniyaswami
(1927-2001)**



COVER: Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, founder/publisher of HINDUISM TODAY; (above) Priests of the Sri Siddhi Vinayaga Temple welcome Gurudeva with a shower of flower petals during his 1981 renaissance tour of Malaysia to inspire and uplift the nation's Hindus. The Tamil Aum on the cover and the Sanskrit and Tamil borders on inside pages are from Gurudeva's own calligraphy.

APRIL/MAY/JUNE, 2002 • HINDU YEAR 5104
CHITRABHANU, THE YEAR OF VARIED SPLENDORS


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Letters to the editor, subscription and editorial inquiries should be sent to HINDUISM TODAY, 107 Kaholalele Road, Kapaa, Hawaii 96746-9304 USA. E-mail: letters@hindu.org. HINDUISM TODAY (ISSN# 0896-0801), April/May/June, 2002, Volume 24, No. 2. Editorial: 1-808-822-7032 (ext. 234); subscriptions: 1-808-822-7032 (ext. 247) or (in USA) 1-888-464-1008, e-mail: subscribe@hindu.org; advertising: (USA) 1-800-850-1008, (overseas) 1-808-822-7032 (ext. 233). All-department fax: 1-808-822-4351. HINDUISM TODAY is published quarterly by Himalayan Academy, a nonprofit educational institution; Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, Founder; Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, Publisher; Paramacharya Palaniswami, Editor-in-Chief. USA subscriptions: US\$35/1 year, \$65/2 years, \$95/3 years, \$155/5 years \$1,001/lifetime. Write for international rates. Also distributed through major subscription agencies worldwide. Call 1-808-822-7032 for bulk orders (ext. 233) or permission to publish a HINDUISM TODAY article (ext. 227) or fax 1-808-822-4351. Printed in USA.

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Canada CAD 7.50
Malaysia . . . MYR 10.00
Singapore . . . SGD 7.50

UK GBP 3.75
India INR 85.00
Brazil BRL 10.55

Trinidad . . . TTD 36.00



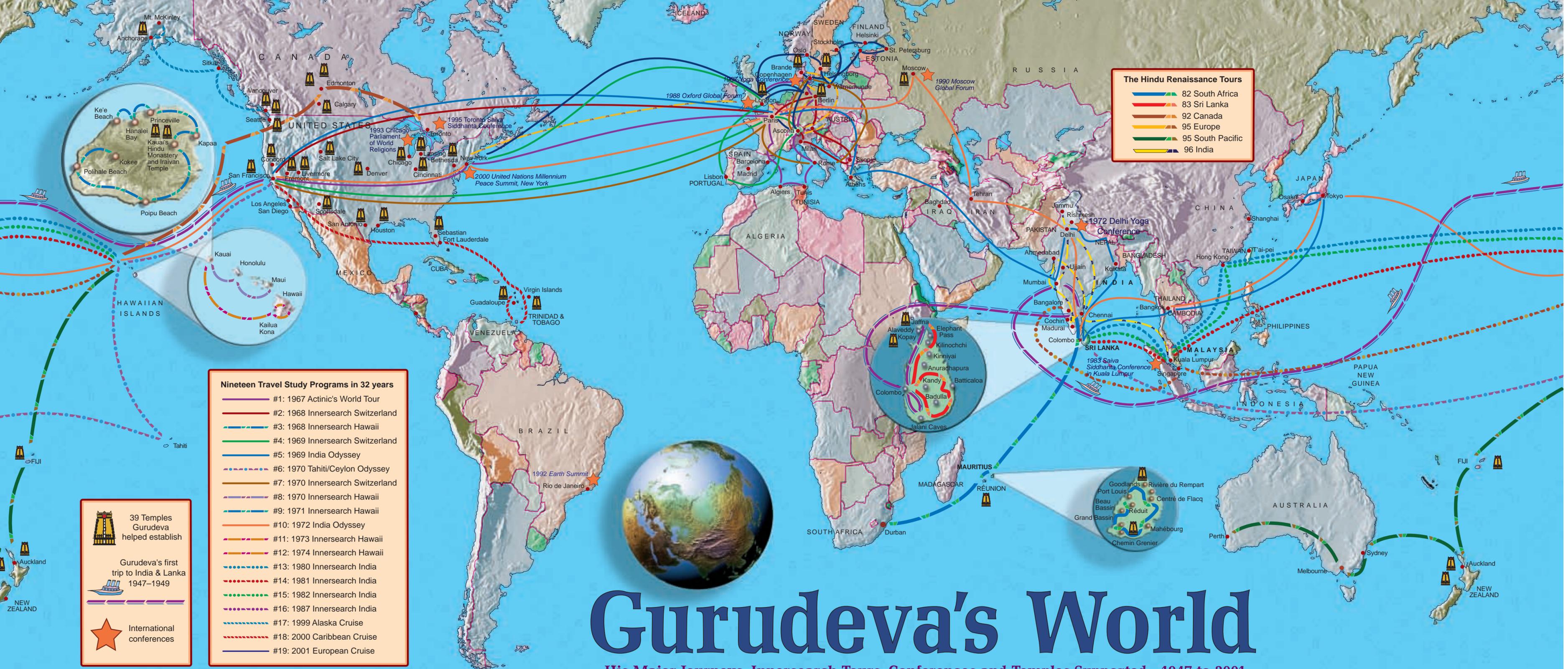
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The Hindu Renaissance Tours

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- #1: 1967 Actinic's World Tour
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39 Temples Gurudeva helped establish

Gurudeva's first trip to India & Lanka 1947-1949

International conferences

Gurudeva's World

His Major Journeys, Innersearch Tours, Conferences and Temples Supported—1947 to 2001

He Gave Us Earthly And Philosophical Tools

Honoring Gurudeva's numberless achievements
and reflecting on his perceptions of the three pillars

BY SATGURU BODHINATHA VEYLANSWAMI

AS MOST READERS ARE AWARE, OUR beloved Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, founder and publisher of HINDUISM TODAY, passed away last November, leaving a half-century legacy of work that sparked a Hindu renaissance and a global fellowship led by a monastic order from five nations to continue his vision.

Gurudeva departed from this world as valiantly as he had lived in it. After spending all of August traveling and teaching in Europe in his dynamic manner, he returned to suddenly learn on October 9, 2001, that he had advanced intestinal cancer. When teams of eminent specialists in three states all concurred that the most aggressive treatments would be ineffective, he declined any treatment beyond palliative measures and courageously decided to follow the yogic practice, called *prayopavesa* in Sanskrit scripture, to abstain from nourishment and take water only from that day on. He left his body peacefully on the 32nd day of his fast, at 11:54 pm on Monday, November 12 in Chitra *nakshatra*, surrounded by his monastics. His death itself was a potent lesson in courage and detachment.

In the first weeks of his fast, Gurudeva initiated me as the new *satguru* and seamlessly transferred his responsibilities to me. Concerned for others, even on his deathbed, days before his Great Union he whispered in assurance, "Everything that is happening is good. Everything that is happening is meant to be." He asked devotees worldwide to carry his work and institutions forward with unstinting vigor, to keep one another strong on the spiritual path, to live in harmony and to work diligently on their personal spiritual *sadhanas*, noting, "You are all over-qualified to carry on."

This entire issue of the magazine is dedicated to this contemporary rishi, each feature focusing on another color in his vivid rainbow of deeds. The world map on the gatefold hints at his global impact. Letters to the Editor carries personal tributes culled from hundreds of communications received in the weeks surrounding his transition. In "Making of a Master" you will read Gurudeva's own account of the training that prepared him for his mission, along with a biographical timeline. In three feature sections we attempt to capture diverse aspects of his genius. "Mystical Master" explores his inner side, profound realizations, visions and yogic teachings. "Renaissance Rishi" focuses on his transforming impact on the Hindu world, reviving tradition, rekindling pride and dispelling misconceptions and misunderstandings. "Gracious Guru" takes you into his tropical ashram, capturing his monastic order and the lives of his congregation.



As you might imagine, it was a rich and enriching experience for those of us who had the privilege of creating this special issue of HINDUISM TODAY. Not just a few tears were quietly shed as we perused thousands of photos and recalled our many years, almost 40, with a being who was our preceptor, mother, father and best friend all rolled into one. But, emotions aside, he raised us to be strong, and he assured

us that he would be helping us "twenty-four hours a day" from the inner worlds. To this we can each now personally attest. With this brief introduction, on with the show! May this commemoration of the life of a rare, illuminated soul, beloved by all who knew him, inspire you to go forth with courage on the path of which he so brilliantly taught, the path of personal self-transformation through *sadhana* leading to realization of God, the Divine within all.

The Three Pillars of Hinduism

As Gurudeva's successor and the new publisher, it is my responsibility to oversee and further HINDUISM TODAY's mission of spreading knowledge of Hinduism worldwide and countering myth and misunderstanding. I had the honor to work closely with Gurudeva for 37 years, assisting him in ministering to his Church members and to the broader Hindu world. During that time, I discerned that his approach to each situation was designed to strengthen what he called the three pillars of Hinduism: the temples, the philosophy and the *satgurus*. He worked systematically, dynamically at this through this magazine, his books and courses, his bold, often fiery, inspired talks, and in private encounters with thousands of devotees and students.

Gurudeva was in touch with dozens of Hindu communities in North America and Europe over the last twenty years. Whenever speaking to them, he would stress the central importance of build-



A. MANIVELU



Garland of Grace: Surrounded by a sea of cobalt energy, Lord Siva wraps a festoon of coral jasmine flowers around a satguru's head. The awakened satguru is one of three pillars which sustain Hinduism, along with our holy temples and revealed scriptures.

ple in Scarborough on July 7, 2000. Temples are indeed the center of our lives, with everything we have coming from them. Through temples the great Gods are able to contact and inspire us to improve our lives, to see God everywhere, to seek love and harmony in all situations, starting in our home and then with everyone we meet. As we become more stable in this harmonious relationship, we are inspired to bring forth the culture, to share what we have so it may be passed on to the next generation."

Temple trustees regularly visited Kauai Aadheenam, primarily to update Gurudeva on the status of their temple, sharing current problems and seeking his advice. Many of these temples had been in existence for ten or more years, had a well-established priesthood and a routine of daily *pujas* and yearly festivals. Gurudeva encouraged the trustees of such mature temples to take the next step of starting a teaching program to educate the younger generation. He knew that in most instances the younger generation has very little understanding of the outer meaning or inner esoterics of the *pujas*; nor do they understand the nature of the Gods. Thus he suggested the trustees regularly invite swamis to visit their temple and give talks on these important matters.

When visiting temples, as well as in personal discussions with Hindus, Gurudeva stressed the importance of acquiring an understanding of the basics of Hindu philosophy, most perfectly expressed in the *Vedas* and *Agamas*, our scriptures of highest authority, but also in many other holy texts. He would point out that Hinduism has four principal denominations—Saivism, Shaktism, Vaishnavism and Smartism—and each is philosophically somewhat different than the others. Thus, he asked Hindus when listening to talks and reading books to determine which denomination within Hinduism is being presented. This core message, heard by thousands, caused many Hindus to reflect more deeply on the question: "To which of these four denominations do I belong?" As a result, Hindus became knowledgeable about their heritage and were more inclined to declare themselves Saivites or Smartas, Vaishnavas or Shaktas.

Gurudeva strengthened the place of the preceptor in Hinduism. He did this by putting forward distinguished swamis and their messages, such as through the Minister's Message page in HINDUISM TODAY, by encouraging temples to invite swamis to come and lecture, and by the example he set in working with his own *sishtyas*, close devotees. Gurudeva gave initiation neither quickly nor casually. Rather, he insisted on an extensive preparation that included study, subconscious purification and penance. He also closely guided the lives of each of his devotees, in recent years making use of e-mail as a most effective way to communicate with such a geographically widespread group. In his latest book, *Living with Siva*, Gurudeva shared his perspective on guiding his *sishtya's* lives: "Preceptors are not entertainers, content to be lauded or bowed down to in adulation. Rather, they must benefit their followers' lives, lessen their karmic burdens and strengthen the family, hold marriages together, as well as seek out potential religious leaders and train them well. They must follow the karmas of each individual and each family year after year, and they must be there for devotees when needed most."

Gurudeva never faulted Hinduism's past and never feared for its present or future. If the temples are destroyed, he would declare, the philosophically adept will see that they are rebuilt. If the scriptures are burned, the *satgurus* will rewrite them, and if the *satgurus* disappear, the Gods in the temples will guide old souls to reincarnate to teach about *dharma* and God Realization.

ing traditional temples, explaining that the temple is needed to preserve Hindu culture. Without temples, he stated, the culture will gradually disappear. He was affirming that Saint Auvaiyar's dictum, "Do not live in a village that has no temple," still applies to us in modern times.

Temple groups often sought his message for the souvenir celebrating their *kumbhabhishekam*, consecration ceremony. In June, 2000, he wrote to Hindus in Toronto: "Many blessings on the occasion of the *kumbhabhishekam* of the Canada Kanthaswamy Tem-

TRIBUTES AND TESTIMONIALS



His Holiness Swami Buaji Maharaj, New York:

The sublime substance of Saiva Siddhanta was succinctly spread all over the world by this saint. How was this possible for somebody who was born and brought up in a totally different culture? It could not be anything other than an unbreakable bond from the previous birth—*poorva janma bandham*. He has done whatever was ordained by God and gone back now and merged with Him. The Kauai Aadheenam will continue his noble work. His books will speak for many, many more years. Iraivan Temple will reverberate with his words for many more centuries. The spiritual awareness brought about by him among the Hindus of Western countries is just amazing. Gurudeva's unique method of explaining the most complex principles in the simplest way was astounding. The most complicated philosophies appeared as the simplest and easiest messages in his hands, but with the same power and essence.

S. Sivapalasingam, Colombo, Sri Lanka:

During the last two decades with my *satguru*, His Holiness had been generous, caring, considerate, loving and compassionate. In March, 1983, at the Subramuniya Ashram in Alaveddy (Jaffna) while Sri Muthusamy Kurukkal performed *homa* rites and Nataraj-nathaswami chanted 1008 Sri Rudra Mantras, my *satguru* placed both palms on my head and uttered the holy mantra "Aum Namasivaya" into my right ear. It was a powerful *diksha* that changed my life.



S. Arunasalam, Alaveddy, Sri Lanka:

There is nothing so distressing as Gurudeva's departure. It is an inestimable loss to the whole of humanity. My heart is full of anguish at the thought that I will not be able to feel his physical presence and read his letters and writings. The only consolation is that he has left behind fourteen swamis in whom he will reside and guide them to continue his work unabated. He was born with a world mission and he has fulfilled it perfectly well.

Mary Earle Chase, Kauai: I last saw Gurudeva at a meeting of our Vision Kauai group which he attended on September 23rd. The group, which includes many of Kauai's leaders, discussed the terrorist attacks—how they might affect us and what we should do. Calmly, Gurudeva urged us to take the opportunity to address the terrorism and

chemical warfare in our own community. By this he meant the terrorism of domestic violence and chemical warfare of drug abuse. Peace begins at home, he reminded us, and where we can make the most difference is in our own community.



Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, Switzerland:

Our powers of perception and presentation are inadequate to describe this Satguru, the glorious and inspiring embodiment of the invincible, indestructible, eternal all-comprehensive Light of Hinduism. Is it not so that if Lord Krishna who as Lord Rama worshipped Lord Siva at Rameshwaram, were here in a physical tenement, He would say that "of all *satgurus*, I am Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami"?



Ravi Duggirala, Memphis USA:

I always respected Gurudeva for being forthright, concise, logical and absolute with his answers regarding anything. Whenever I was around him, I felt this energy. The best way I could describe it was the feeling of walking on the edge of a sword. I remember at the book signing in Memphis. I was standing right next to him. The energy was so intense, like being next to the Sun. I thought to not touch Gurudeva since some gurus did not like being touched without permission. At that exact moment, he leaned into me and put his arm around me. I still remember him smiling at me, and I promise that I could hear him laughing gently in my head. As I write this, emotions of love and happiness flow over me.



Aran Veylan, Edmonton, Canada:

To the Lotus Feet of the Birthless and Deathless One, you have prepared us well for this moment. The *mathavasis* are strong, stainless and united. The *grihasthas* also stand as one. Centuries from now, when these bodies have all long passed, when the fragrance of the blossoming of Gurudeva's mission is carried wherever the wind blows, children will wonder what it must have been like to have been alive at the same time as Gurudeva, to have walked and talked and laughed with him, to have asked questions, and to have received answers.... What a wonderful, precious gift you have given to all of us. Thank you, Gurudeva, for your love and understanding. Thank you for guiding

us through the ocean of karma for the past 30 years. Thank you for guiding our children into adulthood.



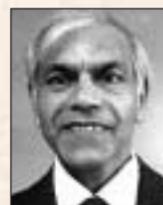
Prithviraj Putten, Member of Parliament, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mauritius:

Our Gurudeva is closer to us all, nearer than breath. He is the sun. We are all blessed to work with him and be under his umbrella for future centuries. He is the life of my life, and I will always remain Eternal to my Gurudeva. Every morning I perform a special *puja* to Gurudeva, placing fresh water on the shrine table, lighting sandalwood, calling the Kailasa Parampara of the Nandi Natha Sampradaya. I then place a slightly opened white rose bud for Paramaguru Siva Yogaswami and another white rose flower for Gurudeva in front of his picture. I then offer *sambrani*, fruit, saffron honey and flower petals to Gurudeva's feet and beard while singing. I finally meditate a bit and read *Merging with Siva* and *Living with Siva*. Gurudeva is the life of all the devotees. He is the Sun and is Effulgent Light. Aum.



Soma Sundaram, California, USA:

Gurudeva, it has been such a privilege and a blessing to be on this Earth plane the same time as you. Thank you for introducing me to my Hindu Gods, my guardian *devas* and my wonderful Saivite religion. Thank you for giving me daily lessons for life, *sutras* for each day of the year, for Shum, Tyeif, for building Hindu temples, for taking me to India, for giving me *Aum Namasivaya* mantra and for the guidance you have given me and my children.



Radheyshyam Dwivedi, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, Inc., USA:

Gurudeva left a rich legacy of exemplary asceticism, compassion and spiritual philanthropy. He had a profound influence on countless individuals through his dedicated scholarship and charismatic teaching. We hold him in the highest esteem as the champion of Hindu renaissance in the Western world.

Arunasalam Sellathurai Swamikal, Sivathondan Society, Jaffna, Sri Lanka:

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami was a spiritual whale of the Occident, a prize

catch in the mystic net of Sage Yogaswamikal. It was a divine act, a divine ordination, beyond the ken of mortals, as subsequent events have proved, supremely great! Astounding! The life, mission and mandate of His Holiness Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami led him to the founding of Saiva Siddhanta Church and a monastic order in Hawaii—a magnificent task! This will ever remain a monument to his spiritual fervor, proclaiming worldwide, East and West, in trumpet tones that the Swamikal was a trail blazer of Lord Siva's choice to glorify the spiritual heritage and essence of Saiva Siddhanta—the universality of Lord Siva!



Maya Ma Tiwari, Candler, USA:

I have felt the Great One's presence in my life, guiding and encouraging me.... Now, more than ever, I feel his Eminent Presence strongly and I know beyond a shadow of doubt that his Light will forever guide my silence. As I sit in my middle years in contemplation of Gurudeva's splendor on this glorious day, my heart aches. I shall miss Him. Like nature herself bringing tears to ancient eyes, here Blue Ridge mountains, Himalayas, speak his simple, pure meaning: Sadhaka Supreme—in whom word and meaning, love and heart had no separation.

Ravichandran Krishnan, Johor, Malaysia:

Though I have known Gurudeva since I was 18, and revered him, I wasn't in tune with his Highness's teachings. Then last year in June at Singapore's Senbagavinayagar's temple visit, I took a day off and waited patiently the whole day to see Gurudeva and touch his feet at all cost! Upon Gurudeva's arrival, during the *arati*; my mind was transfixed and felt engulfed in rays of light. It was like magnetic force, and I lost total consciousness. I felt like I had merged into Gurudeva's light. The feeling is incredible. Now I am a completely different person.



Lavina Melwani, New York USA:

Gurudeva was always so loving, witty and cheerful that he brought a wonderful added dimension to religion, making it joyful and celebratory rather than somber. I can honestly say his writings have made my own religion more accessible to me and my children. He wrote with such clarity that I consult his works when I write about Hinduism. My son and daughter, brought up in America, run to check *Dancing with Siva* any time a question pertaining to rituals and religion comes up in their lives.



Swami Ghananandaji Saraswati, Hindu Monastery of Africa, Odorkor, Accra, Ghana:

Ever since my first contact with His Holiness through the HINDUISM TODAY magazine I have always had informed discourses and exchanges with him. He has always offered very useful advice to me regarding the path of *sannyas*, and I will forever remember him for this. May His soul have its deserved so-lace at the sojourn of the Great Souls.

Devant Maharaj, Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha Inc. Trinidad and Tobago:

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami graced the shores of Trinidad last year and visited the Maha Sabha Headquarters and held discussions with pundits and the general Hindu community here in Trinidad. He has to be considered among the ranks of the visionary Hindu leaders that the world has produced. HINDUISM TODAY remains the only medium that unites Hindus globally. The Hindu universe is indeed a great deal poorer with the loss of such a great and visionary leader. The life and service of Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami will no doubt be a shining beacon for all Hindus to aspire.



A. Vaithilingam, Malaysia Hindu Sangam:

The vacuum left affects the whole Hindu world, and it can never be easily filled. Gurudeva brought Saivism to the world, especially to the Western world, and has also played a leading role in uniting the Hindus of the world. In fact, Gurudeva has put Hinduism on the map of the world.

Chaitanya Christensen, USA: Although Vaishnavas don't usually praise other gurus, I feel this is appropriate, since His Holiness was not an ordinary being. He was born a white American and still demonstrated the universal nature and application of Sanatana Dharma to millions of people all over the planet. He helped bring our ancient traditions into the 21st century, revitalizing them without threatening their integrity in any way. Although his school of Saiva Siddhanta is very orthodox, he skillfully addressed every last contemporary issue from abortion, abuse of women, aging, to media control, consumerism, genocide, genetic engineering, to deforestation and environmentalism.

Kailash Dhaksinamurthi, Minneapolis, USA:

Thank you for so many things in this life. First, your teachings and support have guided me to find my true religion—Sanatana Dharma—when other leaders discouraged

this path, insisting one has to be born a Hindu. You gave me the tools to practice Hinduism: I learned how to do *puja*, how to worship in a temple, how to feel the *darshan* of a Deity, how to participate in the great festivals. Without these tools I would still be a wanderer and seeker. Your teachings echoed the old motto, "Keep it simple, stupid," reminding me to work first on *yamas* and *niyamas*, to learn to be a better husband, for instance, before grappling with existential ontologies.



Maryanne Kusaka, Honorable Mayor of Kauai:

Gurudeva was a shining example of goodness in a world sorely in need of one. He was a wise mentor to many. He was a kind and attentive father to Kauai's children and families of all faiths. He will be ever hovering in our collective soul—a white dove—a vision of beauty and purity. He will continue to show himself in all that is good as we who loved him follow in his radiant light.

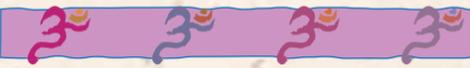


Puvaneswary Roberts, Netherlands:

He helped me to understand the purpose of my life. I am able to see *dharma*, and have the courage to face my karmas. Before, I too asked the question "Why me? What have I done to deserve the loss of my father at age five?" But, now it is my karma, and all of life is a challenge, but I know I have God Siva's presence with me to cope with and overcome the challenges.

Linda Masterson, Kauai, USA:

I cherish the things I have learned from you, Gurudeva: 1) that oneness with God is the supreme human endeavor and that it is an endeavor that the simplest ordinary human can embrace; 2) that a path to God can honor all paths to God; 3) that being devoted to a life of religious service includes being joyful and vibrant and humorous and delighted with life and people; 4) that peace is always in my heart, that my heart is a place of worship and that worship can be constant, with each breath; 5) what it is to be good neighbors, to share celebration and bounty and kinship with our circle of neighbors; 6) to honor public officials, whether I agreed with their policies or not, for the office they were holding was sacred and deserved my respect and 7) that holding a grand vision is not foolish when it is held on behalf of the community interest, that temples to last a thousand years and endowments of \$5 billion are possible when a pure heart and a clear intent is focused on these goals.



Benjamin J. Gayetano, Governor, State of Hawaii: Subramuniyaswami leaves an impressive legacy, including his efforts to reduce violence and his commitment to the future of Hinduism around the globe. He will be sorely missed by his followers and by the residents of Kauai, who affectionately referred to him as Gurudeva.

Mihir Meghani, Hindu Students Council, USA: For years, Hindu Students Council members have read HINDUISM TODAY for news and information about Hindu religious systems, philosophies and issues affecting Hindus. Guruji's books and editorials have guided many Hindu students in their lives. Our association with the swamis under him has helped our organization grow and has reaffirmed our dedication to Hindu dharma.



S. Perampalam, Malaysian Ceylon Saivites Assoc.: Swamiji was the greatest *jnani*, the Lion of Dharma and leader of the modern day Saivite renaissance. He was a wise, revered mentor and a radiant light who defended Hindu Dharma. Swamiji's multifarious accomplishments and his profound leadership inspired intense love and loyalty in his followers.

Hari Bansh Jha, Kathmandu, Nepal: I always looked at him as my guide, master or Guru. He impressed me most in Rishikesh when he said, "Don't feel that you are alone!" This one sentence had a great impact on my life. I don't know how the possible vacuum to be created in his absence will help us in pursuit of our spiritual journey. I feel bereaved.



Dee See Mana, California, USA: Love is all there is and this is what he gave the Hopi Peoples. He was also a protector of my very small projects. And, without all the monks, I would have been defeated so long ago. He has meant much to us, the Hopi, and others in need.

Letters with writer's name, address and daytime phone number, should be sent to:
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Los Angeles Times



SIVAYA SUBRAMUNIYASWAMI
 The founder of Hinduism Today magazine in the U.S. received the U Thant Peace Award in 1978.

S. Subramuniyaswami, 74; U.S.-Born Hindu Spiritual Guide

By ELAINE WOOD
 Times Staff Writer

INDIA WEST
 America's Most Honored Weekly Indian Newspaper

S. Subramuniyaswami Dies at 74

S. Subramuniyaswami, founder of the Hindu Heritage Endowment, died at the age of 74 on Monday, Nov. 19, 2001, in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was a spiritual leader, author, and publisher of Hinduism Today magazine. He was also a prominent figure in the international Hindu community.

Subramuniyaswami's work has been recognized internationally. He was named one of the 100 "Presidents" of the World Religion Council in 1997. He was also named one of the 100 "Presidents" of the World Religion Council in 1997. He was also named one of the 100 "Presidents" of the World Religion Council in 1997.

"All the News that's Fit to Print"

CLI... No. 51,942

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2001

It beyond the greater New York metropolitan area.

75 CENTS

Late Edition
 New York: Today, sunny and warm; high 64. Tonight, cloudy, low 56. Tomorrow, showers, then turning cooler; high 53. Yesterday, high 58, low 43. Weather map appears on Page F4.

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Satguru Subramuniyaswami, Hindu Spiritual Leader, 74

By DOUGLAS MARTIN

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, a native Californian who sought spiritual meaning in India as a young man and became the spiritual leader of Sri Lanka's Hindu, died on Tuesday at his ashram on the Hawaiian island of Kauai. He was 74.



Satguru Subramuniyaswami

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami helped build more than a dozen Hindu temples around the world, including what he called the first Hindu church in the United States. Paromacharya Palastovani, editor of Hinduism Today magazine, said the satguru died on the 32nd day of a fast he had begun after learning he had incurable breast cancer. The satguru (teacher of truth) was a tall, regal man with silver white hair who devoted his life to spreading Hinduism's message. He helped build temples from Denmark to New Zealand for Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka, established four monastic branches and 22 missions in seven countries and founded and published Hinduism Today, a major voice among American Hindus.

In 1986, the World Religious Parliament in New Delhi honored him as one of the five Hindu spiritual leaders outside India who had most dynamically presented Hinduism in the previous 25 years. The paromacharya (another term for teacher) said the satguru was born in Oakland on Jan. 5, 1927. He declined to give the satguru's original name, because he had renounced it and everything else from his earlier life when he became an ascetic, celibate Hindu monk. He is survived by a sister, Carol Griffin of Woodland, Calif.

Organized when he was 11, the satguru was raised by a friend of his would be more comfortable in Western ears. He later lived in Colorado, Arizona and Nevada, where he spent seven years intensively preparing himself spiritually. In 1957, he began teaching in San Francisco, where he founded what the paromacharya said was the satguru's first Hindu temple.

The satguru became what the book Religion Leaders of America called "a pillar of orthodox Hinduism." In 1961, he founded the Hinduism Academy, which promotes the Satguru, or Shiva-worshipping, branch of Hinduism through classes, lectures, retreats, home-study courses and study pilgrimages in India and Hawaii, home of the organization's principal monastery. In 1978, the church's headquarters were moved to the island of Kauai.

When the Sri Lankan civil war between Hindus and Buddhists erupted in the early 1980's, the satguru organized relief efforts. He also provided guidance to refugees scattered around the world. He urged them to raise their children as Hindus in their new countries and helped them start temples. Also in the 1980's, he founded a branch monastery in Mauritius, whose government had invited him to revive a languishing Hindu faith.

He displayed a practical side, once drawing attention in San Francisco with a sign suggesting that titles could be put on credit cards. He also required monks to be adept on Apple Macintosh computers. He became a spokesman for Hinduism at global gatherings, despite representing fewer than three million of the world's estimated one billion Hindus. His influence reflected the reach of his publications, including the approximately 30 books he wrote. For example, he represented Hinduism at the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders in Oakland in 1985, Moscow in 1990 and Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

In 1994, he founded the Hindu Heritage Endowment to provide permanent income for Hindu events, temples and organizations worldwide. In 1995, after returning from a trip to India, he worked seven days a week for three years to complete a trilogy of books exploring Hinduism. The satguru kept his sense of humor to the end. During his last, the last of many he had undertaken as spiritual guests, a colleague asked him how he felt. "Bored," he answered.



HINDU RENAISSANCE TEAM

HINDUISM TODAY was founded January 5, 1979, by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami. It is a nonprofit educational activity of Himalayan Academy with the following purposes: 1. To foster Hindu solidarity as a unity in diversity among all sects and lineages; 2. To inform and inspire Hindus worldwide and people interested in Hinduism; 3. To dispel myths, illusions and misinformation about Hinduism; 4. To protect, preserve and promote the sacred *Vedas* and the Hindu religion; 5. To nurture and monitor the ongoing spiritual Hindu renaissance; 6. To publish a resource for Hindu leaders and educators who promote Sanatana Dharma. Join this *seva* by sending letters, clippings, reports on events and encouraging others to subscribe.

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IN MY OPINION

Reflecting on Gurudeva

How he supported our ancient temple science

BY DR. V. GANAPATI STHAPATI

SUCH WAS THE BRILLIANCE of Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami's personality emanated that in my career as a *sthapati* I really feel blessed to have been closely associated with him. With a stinging pain in my mind on the departure of the immortal soul from among us, yet with a feeling of pride and privilege, I share my thoughts.



I first met him in 1973 when I was the principal of the Government College of Architecture and Sculpture, Mahabalipuram. He visited the college and had discussions on the ancient scriptures of *Silpa Sastra*, *Agama Sastra*. The very sight of the tall figure with a lustrous face and sparkling eyes made me feel that the man sitting before me was not an ordinary soul, but one walking the Earth with an extraordinary vision. As we were discussing, I noticed that Gurudeva was very keenly listening to what I narrated on the ancient *shastras* of India, humbly nodding for each and every one of my elucidations. I felt as though he was counter-checking his own inferences and experiences on the ancient scriptures of India. By then in the background the chiseling sound from the stone workshop of the college was heard quite audibly, and that drew his attention. Himself a born artist—a versatile dancer—he was attracted to the rhythmic sound of the chiseling on the granite, and our discussion was then on the *nada sampradayam*, the concept of sound and the effect of sound frequencies in the attainment of spiritual bliss. Finally, we were discussing his dream project, the San Marga Iraivan Temple, and I was all the more delighted to be entrusted as the *sthapati* to take up the design and execution.

In 1978, I was invited by Gurudeva to Hawaii. Before leaving India, I was told by him that my services were very much needed in many places in America, and after attending to them I should go and meet Gurudeva at his Aadheenam in Hawaii. Surprisingly, just as told by him, I received calls from America to take up several temple projects.

As per his advice for the Iraivan Temple, no machines are employed in the handling of the stones, right from the quarry to the assembling of the finished pieces at the temple site overseen by me. Only the traditional chisel and hammer are employed. He fully agreed with me when told that the use of dynamite to detonate the rock endangers its subtle quality. He had high appreciation for the ancient Indian technology and science of *Vastu* which holds the stones to be living entities, capable of responding through vibrations. Within each and every stone there resides a divine vibration, which accounts for the spiritual ambiance of a temple. He held high regards for the *silpi* stone carvers. The whole of the *silpi* community is indebted to this benevolent guru.

Gurudeva personified the true Hindu culture, and through the establishment of the Kauai Aadheenam in Hawaii, he has laid the foundation for a cultural revival and spread of the rich culture and tradition of Hinduism. In Gurudeva I have always found an enthusiastic admirer of the science of the *Vastu Shastra*, into which he delved deep, drawing remarkable insights on the sacred architecture of the land of Bharat. He generously sponsored my tour of South America, where I discovered amazing, detailed similarities between the ancient architecture there and that of South India.

I humbly submit before the unseen power of Gurudeva, which reverberates in every one of his devotees' hearts, with sincere prayers and wishes that the next designated pontiff of the Aadheenam, Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, along with the band of well-trained disciples left behind by Gurudeva, will see through the successful accomplishment of the temple construction and other divine activities set forth by Gurudeva. During the consecration of the temple, it is my desire to invoke him before the actual ceremony, so that the invisible subtle energy of Gurudeva resonates across the entire temple and renders it ever vibrant.

GURUDEVA'S QUOTES & QUIPS

"Life is meant to be lived joyously!"

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001)

You are not your mind, because you can control your mind with your will.

There are only two things you can really depend on: one is the changeableness of life, and the other is the unchanging Self within you.

The world is divided into two kinds of people: the wise and the otherwise.

Everything is permanent, until it changes.

On corporal punishment of children: Anyone who beats my devotees beats me.

God Siva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality.

When you react to a situation, do not reenact it. Wait until the emotional nature has completely composed itself, then study your reaction.

If you are going to control your income, start by controlling your emotions.

Listen for silence in noisy places; feel at peace in the midst of disturbance; awaken joy when there is no reason.

If you want to know how much you have progressed in your spiritual life, just look back and reflect on the changes.

Even to hear about the Self is good and brings about good karma. Not many will be exposed to the Self.

Vindictiveness comes from insecurity.

It is a gift of God to see ourselves as others see us.

Sitting in a state of meditation, you must be more alive and alert than a tightrope walker suspended without a net on a taut cable

three hundred feet above the surface of the Earth.

As your mind releases its desires and cravings, it releases the hold that it has on you. You dive deeper, fearlessly into this blazing avalanche of light, losing your consciousness. And as you come back into the mind, you see the mind for what it is, and you are free. You find that you are no longer attached because you see that the binder and the bound are one. You become the path. You become the way. You are the light.

Some people desire peace of mind so intensely that they never have peace of mind.

Man is not man, man is God.

You have to want the Self more than your life, because that's what it is—more than your life.

To know the Self God, go into the that of that, then into the that of that, further into the that of That.

If you're standing up, it's confrontation. If

you're sitting down, it's conversation.
On correcting people, including but not limited to children.

I've always been a supporter of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

Anava, or ego, could seem like spirituality, but in reality it's only spirit-duality.

The pilgrimage toward any experience starts with your first concept of it.

For creative things, give time. For productive things, give goals.

Only when man realizes the Self does he attain his full maturity and find completeness.

Mystics walk away from an uncompromis-

ing situation. They don't stick around to make more karmas in this life.

The whole idea of being *adharmic* in order to preserve dharma makes humans the most despicable of creatures. This should be ripped out of Hinduism without mercy as far as I am concerned.

Character is "care actor," the ability to act with care.

A spiritual man always has to have the upper hand on the lower nature.

There is no true path that leads away from religion.

At this time in the Kali Yuga, ignorance is equally distributed worldwide, and wisdom has become an endangered species.

You are a being that has unlimited power within.

No man is my enemy. No man is my friend. All men are my teachers. Some teach me what to do, some teach me what not to do.

Be happy with your achievements, which are done with willpower. That will help accomplish your goals and, further, give you confidence to carry out more tasks.

If anything goes wrong within a marriage, the blame should be on the man. He's the head of the house and should be responsible to ensure everything goes right.

Consistency is the key to the conquest of karma.

Money is cold, so you need to be cool, too, when you deal with it.

The whole path is a total surrendering. All four sects of Hinduism meet in surrender, *prapatti*, to the Divine.

Time is the curvature that makes all people the center of the universe.

The mystery is no mystery to the mystic.

Intelligence is finite, but stupidity knows no limits.

Draw awareness inward, toward the center. When you are elsewhere, you are in one place. When you are the center, you are everywhere.

When looking for tax deductions stops, then true giving begins.

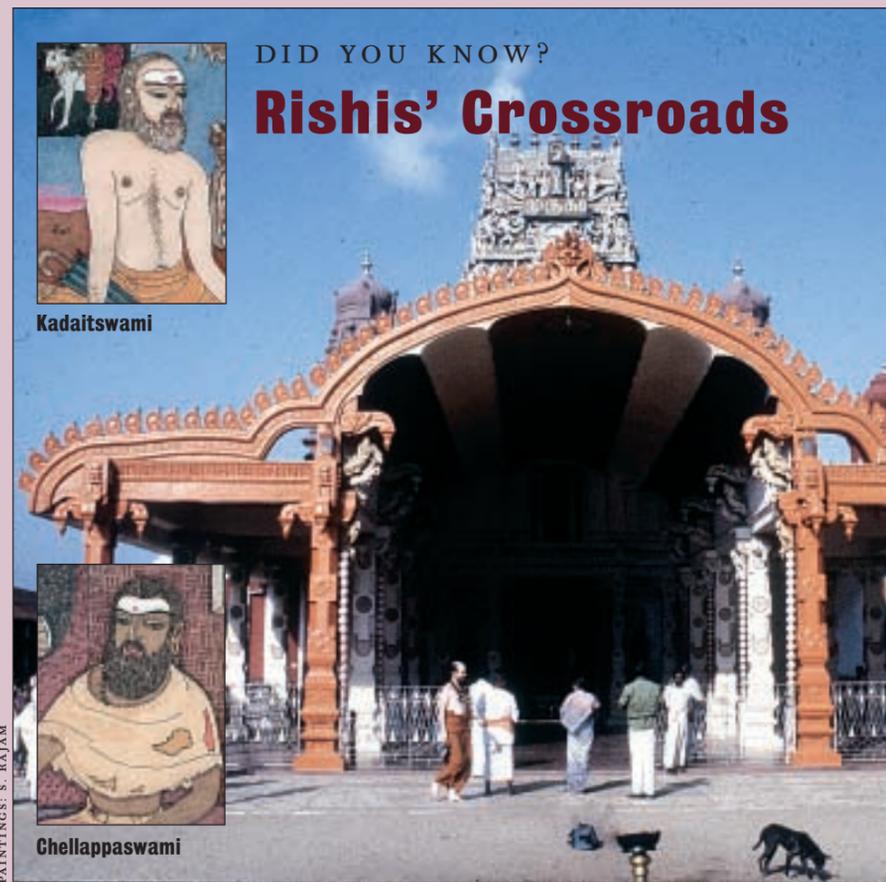
It's as simple as That.

With all His great powers, the one thing Siva cannot do is take Himself out of you.

Siva is the Life of our life.

Q: Gurudeva, how do we talk to you, once you have passed on?

A: Through my successors. Talk to them, and they will talk to me.



Kadaitswami



Chellappaswami



Siva Yogaswami



Subramuniyaswami

DID YOU KNOW?

Rishis' Crossroads

THE MOST RECENT FOUR gurus of the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara, Gurudeva's spiritual lineage, met their preceptors at the famed Nallur Kanthaswamy Temple to Lord Muruga in northern Sri Lanka. Around 1860, Chellappaswami (1840-1915) first saw Kadaitswami (ca 1810-1875) at this sacred shrine. Forty years later, about 1900, Yogaswami (1872-1964) encountered Chellappaswami at the Nallur chariot shed. The sage called out to him, "Hey, who are you?" Yogaswami was transfixed by the inner meaning of that question and the power of his questioner. In 1949, on his way to meet Yogaswami, Gurudeva had a vision of the 77-year-old sage inside Nallur Temple's inner sanctum during puja. An hour later, when they met in person, Yogaswami asked him, "Did you see me?" Gurudeva answered, "Yes. I saw you at Nallur." (photo) Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami at Nallur in 1983.

When shopping one day, Gurudeva quipped, "A good buy is a hello."

There is no good and bad karma; there is self-created experience that presents opportunities for spiritual advancement. As long as we react to karma, we must repeat it. That is the law.

Desire is the force that drives humanity onward and through all phases of the mind. By changing our desires, we change our life. By changing our life, we change those around us.

Make the mind always remain poised, like a hummingbird over a flower, so that you begin to live in the eternal now constantly, permanently.

Let your mind cognize itself by turning itself back on itself. Become consciously conscious. All you have to do is to watch your mind think.

The Making of a Master

Gurudeva's personal narrative of how he was trained for this life's mission

CONSIDERING SATGURU Sivaya Subramuniyaswami's astounding impact on the Hindu world and on the hearts and minds of each person he touched leaves no doubt that he was a great and unusual soul who incarnated to do this work. "Born for the job," he would often say about himself and his monastic order. What's more, he enjoyed every minute of the journey. In 1970 he spoke candidly of the early training, realizations and experiences that prepared him for his historic accomplishments. Fortunately, those talks were recorded. Here is a transcript of those narratives, followed by autobiographical insights given in 1999.

The first mystical experience that I can remember was as a baby, lying in my crib. All of a sudden, I was conscious of a tall, full-grown man standing over me in a serene pale yellow robe. Then I became fully conscious of being this full-grown man looking



down upon this little baby. Then I was conscious as the baby again, looking up into the face of this great soul. I realized that the tall man in the pale yellow robe was the body of my soul. I realized that as I continued maturing spiritually, the soul body would finally fully inhabit the physical body. This finally happened in a tremendous spiritual experience in Denver, Colorado, in 1956. After that experience, I founded what is now Himalayan Academy.

Conquering Worry: The second mystical experience I remember occurred at about six years of age. I lived with my family in a chalet at Fallen Leaf Lake, near Lake Tahoe, California. In the winter time we had to cross over the land in sleds and snowmobiles (automobiles with skis on the front) in order to go from our home to the town to purchase food and pick up mail.

Quite often the snowmobile would be-

come stuck in the snow. This might delay us an hour or two as my father worked to release it so that we could proceed. Children listened to the radio in those days, just as they watch television nowadays. And I, too, had my own favorite programs. Each time we went to the village, on the way home I observed my thinking faculty being disturbed and worried for fear that we would not arrive home in time for me to listen to my favorite radio program. I hated to miss the sequence of the programs, such as Captain Midnight, the Lone Ranger and Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy.

This was the first time I became aware in the area of the mind that always worries. There I was, though, and I didn't like it. I clearly remember mentally talking to myself and saying, "You are all right right now. We haven't gotten stuck in the snow yet! Have we?" At that early age of six years, I actually saw awareness coming out of the area of the mind that always worries and entering a total consciousness of here and now. Then awareness would leave the now and go into the past, and I would begin to think, "Four



Standing strong: At Madurai Meenakshi Temple in 1983, dressed in traditional handspun robes, holding the staff of renunciation, forehead adorned with holy ash and sacred mark and wearing a golden rudraksha pendant, insignia of his stature as the head of his lineage. (left) Six years old in Lake Tahoe, California.

days ago we were delayed in the snow for about an hour and my father had a very difficult time digging out the snowmobile." I saw my awareness travel into the past. Then I would repeat even more firmly to myself, "I am all right, right now. We are not delayed yet." And again, I actually saw awareness travel right back to the present moment. This became one of my hobbies. The totality of the power of the eternity of the moment began to become stronger and stronger within me from that time onward, until whenever anything came along in the mind substance, I was able to handle it. All this and even more unfolded to me at that early age in such a beautiful and simple way.

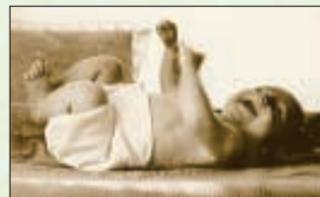
"I Want to Dance!" A few years after I experienced the eternity of the moment, my parents began to go into transition in the reincarnation processes. First, my mother died. A few years later my father went into transition, too. Relatives started to ask me at that time, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" That was a new question to me, because I hadn't thought about it. I didn't really want to do anything. I was just growing up and realizing all the time that I am "All right, right now."

About the age of ten or eleven, I became aware of what I wanted to do when I grew up. "I want to dance," I said. This came from deep within me. Music always moved the inner energy of the inner body and finally the muscles moved and the body would begin to dance.

Dance, incidentally, in Hinduism, is considered the highest form of expression. That is why dance was used for worship in tem-

An Amazing Life, Well Done...

ONCE IN A GREAT while on this Earth there arises a soul who, by living his tradition rightly and wholly, perfects his path and becomes a light to the world. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001) was such a being, a shining example of awakening



and wisdom, a leader recognized worldwide as one of Hinduism's foremost ministers. As a youth, he began his training in classical Eastern and Western dance and in the disciplines of yoga, becoming the premier danseur of the San Francisco Ballet by age 19. Renouncing the

world at the height of his career, he traveled to India and Sri Lanka in quest of Absolute Truth. In the caves of Jalani in 1949, he fasted and meditated until he burst

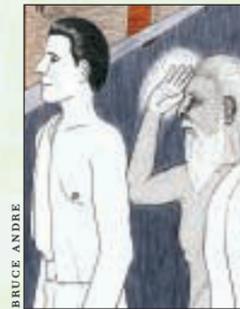
into enlightenment. Soon after, he met his *satguru*, Sage Yogaswami, who gave him the name Subramuniya, initiated him into the holy orders of *sannyasa* and ordained him into his lineage with



a tremendous slap on the back, saying, "This sound will be heard in America! Now go 'round the world and roar like a lion. You will build palaces (temples) and feed thousands." While in Sri Lanka, he founded his Saiva Siddhanta Church, the world's first Hindu church, the core of his multifaceted organization. In late 1949 he sailed back to America and embarked on seven years of ardent, solitary *yoga* and meditation which brought forth fac-



ulties of clairvoyance and clairaudience, culminating in *Cognizantability*, a collection of profound aphorisms and commentary on the states of mind and esoteric laws of life. In 1957 Gurudeva founded Himalayan Academy, and opened America's first Hindu temple, in San Francisco. He formed his monastic order in 1960. In Switzerland, 1968, he revealed Shum, a mystical language of meditation



that names and maps inner areas of consciousness. From 1967 to 1983 he led fifteen Inner-search pilgrimages, guiding hundreds of devotees to the world's sacred temples and illumined

Photos: Three months old; age seven; Fallen Leaf Lodge, where Gurudeva was raised; initiation from Yogaswami in 1949; dancing on stage, '50; Moscow with 70 devotees in 1972; Udaipur Palace, India, 1972

sages. In 1970 Gurudeva established his world headquarters and monastery-temple on Kauai, northernmost of the Hawaiian islands. Beginning in the 1970s and continuing to 2001, he gave blessings to dozens of groups to build temples in North America, Australia, New Zealand, Europe and elsewhere, gifting Deity images to 36 temples to begin the worship. His drive to establish Hindu worship in the West was based on his revelatory mystic visions of the Gods not as symbolic depictions but as real be-

ings who guide and protect mankind, who can be contacted most effectively through temple worship. In 1973, after establishing Kadavul Temple, he clairvoyantly read from inner-plane libraries to bring forth *Lemurian Scrolls* and other esoteric writings to guide his monastic order



and revive the centrality of celibacy and transmutation. In 1975 he conceived the San Marga Iraivan Temple on Kauai as the first all-granite temple established outside of India. In 1977 he intensified requirements for his Western devotees to sever all prior religious, philosophical loyal-

ties, legalize their Hindu name and formally enter Hinduism through the name-giving rite. In 1979 he published *Holy Orders of Sannyas*, defining the ideals, vows and aspirations of Hindu monasticism in unprecedented clarity. In 1979 he founded HINDUISM TODAY, and in the early '80s, after his world



ples of ancient cultures. Through the esoteric forms of dance, you become acquainted with the movements of the currents of the physical body, the emotional body and the body of the soul. The meditating dancer, inspired by music, finds the inner currents moving first, and lastly the physical body. This releases his awareness into inner, superconscious realms of the mind in a smooth, rapid and systematic way.

I started my life in the dance as the dance, and being the dance. A friend of my mother and of my father, who became my first catalyst on the path of enlightenment, was a marvelous dancer. She was a medical student at the Stanford University in Palo Alto who became interested in pre-classic dance forms, the Pavane, the Gavotte and many others. In India she became so enthralled with the Indian forms of dance, the Bharata Natyam, Manipuri and Kathakali schools—that she was invited by the Maharaja of Mysore to live in his palace and study the dance, as well as yoga and the mystical teachings and practices of India. She stayed in India for five years in the early 1920s.

Along with the study of the pre-classic dance forms, I was taught how to walk, how to sit, how to stand, how to exercise the physical body, how to move the body in the ways of the West, and how to move the body in the ways of the East. Thus, I was brought up in Hinduism first through culture, music,

art, drama, dance and all the protocols of Indian life.

I was taught the beginning fundamentals of concentration which precede meditation, how to pinpoint awareness on a given object for a given length of time. My catalyst was a



Blessings ever flowing: Jayanti, 2001, Gurudeva places holy ash on a devotee's forehead, a traditional form of guru benediction

strict taskmaster, to be sure. I think I was a good student, because I was very, very interested. I visited her and studied the dance with her other students twice a week. For four years, every summer at her beautiful chalet on the shores of Fallen Leaf Lake near Lake Tahoe, I studied more intensely. It was there I learned the worship of Lord Siva Nataraja. At the beginning of my teens, this was very important to me, and it led me

into the Vedanta philosophy, which I pursued through listening to lectures of Indian swamis at the Vedanta Society in San Francisco and in reading books. I was most inspired by the life of Swami Vivekananda and his four small volumes: *Raja Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga*, *Karma Yoga* and *Inspired Talks*. I was especially impressed by his masterful poem, "The Song of the Sannyasin."

Later I was trained to be a teacher by this first catalyst, trained to teach other students in the very same way. This happened when I was about twelve years of age. The students I taught were between the ages of six and eight.

Finally, after I had absorbed everything I had to learn with my first catalyst, she introduced me to my second catalyst. My second catalyst was also well acquainted with various forms of mysticism, occultism and meditation. She taught me exactly how one leaves the physical body after putting the body to sleep. I

learned of the astral body and how to work with and develop the experience of leaving the physical body in the astral body, while totally aware of the happening, turn around, look back at the physical body, see the silver cord which connects it to the astral body, and to travel astrally. This catalyst taught me how the inner energies of the seven chakras function as the physical body moves and is inspired through the different types of mu-

sic. She gave me a tremendous training and exercise in the free form movement of the dance, in which one experiences no inhibitions of any kind. This was extremely good for me, at the age of fourteen and fifteen, because it controlled and transmuted the energies of the emotional area.

Soon I started studying with the San Francisco Ballet Company and finally became their lead dancer.

My second catalyst patiently taught me how to center the whole being of the physical body, the emotional body and the spiritual body so that the inner light began to appear. With this catalyst, in Berkeley, California, I had my first inner light experience.

I studied with my second catalyst twice a week during these two most wonderful years. Never asking many questions, I just obeyed what was told to me to the very best of my ability. I was taught this at a very early age: not to ask any questions. I was told one must absorb inner teachings. One has to become aware of where the teacher is within himself and look at what he is saying from that perspective. This is the way that the student learns to absorb inner teachings. Then they awaken within him and he compliments them with his own inner knowing. My second catalyst also taught me how to see into the *akasha* and view great, actinic, inner-plane beings.

My third catalyst was wonderful and patient. She taught me the psychology of the vibratory rates of color and how to read an aura, understand the meaning of each color

and combination of color within the aura and how to equate them with the moods and emotions and thinking faculty of the person. She taught me a method of character delineation in the understanding of human nature, the way people think, the way they act, and the inner, subconscious motivation.

She told me about the guru and said that one day I would meet my guru. But before I met my guru I would have to have realized the Self. She told me that I would find my guru on the island of Sri Lanka and that I must go there and study and that this was

taught how to test students inwardly and outwardly to determine if they were mystically inclined or just intellectually interested in the teaching. Then we went on into the study of thought forms and the feeling and meaning of various thought forms in meditation which one would see through his inner faculty. I began to know what a person was thinking about and his motivation for flowing awareness into that area of the mind where that collective thought substance occurred.

My third catalyst also advanced me through the study of great beings who live in the inner areas of the mind, beings so developed in their nerve system that they no longer need the use of the physical body to function and communicate with humans. Similarly, I studied great beings who have physical bodies but

"Everything in the world and everything in the mind is as it should be—in a perfect state of evolution. Superconsciously, we can clearly see this through the eyes of our soul."

my next step. At that time, I was meditating two hours every day, right by the clock, just sitting there without moving, going in and in, trying to fathom the intricacies of what I had been learning and the purity and simplicity of the Self.

In the second year of training I was intricately taught to understand the actions and reactions of people, how they moved, how they thought, how they acted. I was taught to be so observant with the powers of concentration that I would actually know by the movement of the mind or physical body of someone all about their inner attitudes and how they lived at home.

During the third year of training, I was

function deep in meditation, helping those who meditate as a kind of spiritual mission, as a father and mother would oversee the emotional and physical maturation of their children.

Finally, the day arrived for me to go to the island of Sri Lanka and meet my fourth catalyst on the path. I was delighted. I was going to find my guru. I was going to realize the Self. At twenty years of age, I took the first ship to leave for India after the Second World War and celebrated my twenty-first birthday days before going ashore and walking through the grand Gateway to India in Mumbai. Traveling by train to Chennai and then to Sri Lanka was a remarkable and re-

tours, focused his magazine on uniting all Hindus, regardless of nationality or sect, and inspiring and educating seekers everywhere. That same year, he produced the first edition of his Hindu catechism. His international Hindu renaissance tours in the 1980s brought him face to face with hundreds of thousands of Hindus, most notably in Sri Lan-



lishing technology to supercharge his prolific outreach through scriptures, books, pamphlets, art, lessons and later through CDs and the world's foremost Hindu websites. In 1986 he founded a branch monastery in Mauritius, whose government had invited him there to revive a



languishing Hindu faith. That same year, 1986 New Delhi's World Religious Parliament named him one of five modern-day Jagadacharyas, world teachers, for his international efforts in promoting a Hindu renaissance. Also in 1986 he created Pancha Ganapati, a five-day Hindu festival celebrated around the time of Christmas. In 1987 he published *God's Money* to explain tithing and how it is practiced by members of his Hindu church. 1989 saw the culmination of numerous books and pamphlets that later became part of the Master Course trilo-



gy. In 1990 in Bangalore, he ceremoniously chipped the first stone of Iraivan temple and established a small village to carve it by hand over the next fifteen years. In 1991 he produced the *Nandinatha Sutras*, 365 aphorisms that outline the entire gamut of virtuous Hindu living. In 1994 Gurudeva founded Hindu Heritage Endowment, now a multi-million-dollar public service

trust that establishes and maintains permanent sources of income for Hindu institutions worldwide. In 1995 he published the final edition of *Saiva Dharma Sastras*, drawing on aspects of the American church system to make his organization socially viable and structurally effective. Therein he finalized patterns for the future, including the extended family structure for his missions, and designated as his successors three of his senior



monastics: Acharya Bodhinatha, followed by Acharya Palaniswami and then Acharya Ceyonswami. From 1977 to 2001 Gurudeva nur-

Photos: With the abbot of Kasi Mutt, Tirupanandal, 1982; *Kauai Aadheenam*; presenting his *Hindu Catechism* in Chennai, 1981; defending monism in Malaysia, 1983; chipping the first stone of Iraivan Temple, Bangalore, 1990; discussing Church matters; inaugurating *Hinduism Today* in Delhi, 1995; *darsan* with devotees in Malaysia, May, 2001

tured a staunchly Hindu, highly disciplined, global fellowship of family initiates, monastics and students, training them to follow the *sadhana marga*, the path of yogic striving and personal transformation, and to assist him in his global mission. With this competent team and a sophisticated infrastructure, his Church nurtures its membership and local missions on



five continents and serves, personally and through publications and the Internet, the community of Hindus of all sects. Gurudeva proclaimed this as a Jaffna-Tamil-based organization which branched out from the Sri Subramuniya Ashram in Alaveddy to meet the needs of the growing Hindu diaspora of this century. It gently oversees some 40 temples worldwide. In 1995, in Delhi, the World Religious Parliament bestowed on him the title Dharmachakra for his remarkable publications. The Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders for Human



Survival chose him as a Hindu representative at its unique conferences. Thus, at Oxford in 1988, Moscow in 1990 and Rio de Janeiro in 1992, he



markedly hot experience.

Sri Lanka, 1947: I was happy and awed to meet my fourth catalyst on the island of Sri Lanka. I studied with him for one year and a half. He attained enlightenment in a cave in Thailand by sitting in the morning, eyes fixed upon the sun, following the sun across the heavens until it set at night. He practiced under his guru this most difficult *sadhana*. Then one night in a cave, the cave turned to brilliant light, and a great being appeared to him, giving him his mission and instructions for his service to the world.

My fourth catalyst taught me how to use the willpower, how to get things done in the material world. He was a real father to me. I needed this at twenty-one years of age. I wanted to meditate, but he wanted me to work

to help the village people in reconstructing the rural areas. He would tell me to do many different things that I had to work out from within myself, such as seeing that a new village bridge was put up that had been washed out in a flood, bringing into another village modern saws and carpentry equipment to replace the old tools used in building furniture.

To do this, I had to take a survey of all the carpenters using handsaws in a certain area in Sri Lanka. I went around to all of the villages with a little notebook, writing down names and addresses and the types of saws that they had, for my assignment was to see

that they all would eventually be provided with electric saws.

One assignment like this after another was given to me. This wonderful fourth catalyst of mine worked on the philosophy that you do what you're told, and if you're given an assignment to do, you don't come back with excuses. You go right ahead and finish that assignment.

My practice of being obedient really came in handy with my fourth catalyst. He challenged me. I had to work it out within my-

"In looking back over my life's experiences, all a sum total now, I see the warp and the woof of a woven pattern of dancing, living and merging in the Divine."

self. I was sensitive and couldn't stand being scolded. He was quick to point things out. This was good for me. I didn't ask questions. I did the very best that I could to help the villagers in Sri Lanka to a better way of life.

Every once in a while I dropped the remark, "I want to go into a cave and meditate. I want to realize the Self." He said, "Plenty of time for that. You can go into a cave and meditate after you have finished the next two or three assignments. Anyway, the cave is inside of you." I reminded him from time to time, "You know, I came to Sri Lanka to find my guru." I deeply felt that if I could get away from doing external things and go

into a cave, I really could realize the Self. In fact, I was sure of it. If he would just give me a little time off. But would he? No.

I must confess, I rebelled a little. The rebellion externalized my awareness. It was more difficult to do the assignments that he wanted me to do. I was happy to learn this because I conquered this rebellion within a week and never allowed it to occur again. The biggest enemy on the path is a rebellious nature. I settled down to obey him exactly and directly. I was a very positive person at that time, and remain so today.

I can hear him now. "There's plenty of time for you to meditate. What you have to do next is to go get a school started for Buddhist children in a village where they will not be educated if we don't start a school for them." He sent me to a Buddhist temple. I lived with the priests and talked with them. The school they had was literally falling apart. There were no teachers. The children did not attend anymore. I didn't know what to do, though, to get a school started. I never had done anything like this. So, I just sat there, day after day, meditated, ate what they had to feed me, and slept.

My catalyst came to visit me a few days later and said, "You're doing just the right thing. You're sitting there in meditation. They'll see you in meditation. This will impress them, and the priests will begin to take interest in you. The children will see

joined religious, political and scientific leaders from all countries to discuss the future of human life on this planet. At Chicago's historic centenary Parliament of the World's Religions in September, 1993, he was elected one of three Hindus to the Presidents' Assembly, a core group of 25 men and women voicing the needs of world faiths. Especially in the early 90s he cam-



aigned for fair treatment of temple priests, namely the same respect enjoyed by the clergy of other religions. From 1996 onward, Gurudeva was a key member of Vision Kauai 2020, a group of inspirers (including the Mayor, county council, business and education leaders) that meets to fashion the island's future based on spiritual values. In 1997 he responded to President Clinton's call for religious opinions on the ethics of human cloning. The same year, he spearheaded the 125th anniversary of Satguru Yogaswami and his golden icons pilgrimage around

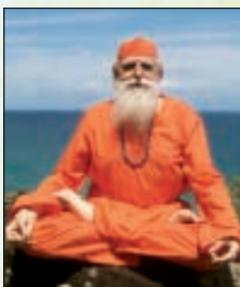


the world, ending in Sri Lanka. During these final years he worked daily in the morning hours in refining the Shum language as his choicest gift to his monastic order. In 1998 Gurudeva began an ardent campaign for the right of children to not be beaten by their parents or their teachers, and help-

ing parents raise children with love through Positive Discipline classes taught by his family devotees as their primary community service. In 2000 he published *How to Become a Hindu*, showing the way for seekers to formally enter the faith, confuting the notion that "You must be born a Hindu to be a Hindu." On August 25, 2000, he received the prestigious United Nations U Thant Peace



Award in New York (previously bestowed on the Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, Mikhail Gorbachev, Pope John Paul II and Mother Teresa). He addressed 1,200 spiritual leaders gathered for the UN Millennium Peace Summit, with the message, "For peace in the world, stop the war in the home." Upon his return to Kauai, 350 citizens and county and state officials gathered to herald his accomplish-



ments on the island and beyond. In November, 2000, he launched Hindu Press International (HPI) a free daily news summary for breaking news sent via e-mail and posted on the web. In 1999, 2000 and 2001 he

Photos: Gifting a Ganesha icon to start a temple in Seattle; opening the Sri Subrahmanya Swami Temple in Fiji, 1994; with the builders of Iraivan, 1999; in meditative pose; ceremony in Kadavul Temple (Bodhinatha to his left); with Kauai's Mayor and police chief, 2001; celebrating life, 2000

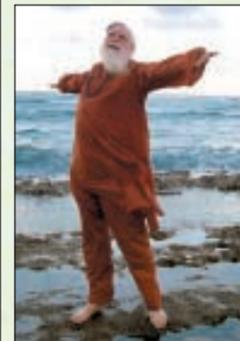
conducted three Innersearch journeys, consecrating new temples in Alaska, Trinidad and Denmark. In 2001 he completed his golden legacy, the 3,000-page Master Course trilogy of *Dancing, Living and Merging with Siva*—peerless volumes of daily lessons on Hindu philosophy, culture and yoga, respectively. For over five decades, Subramuniyaswami taught Hinduism to Hindus and seekers from all faiths. Known as one of the strictest gurus in the world, he was the 162nd

successor of the Nandinatha Kailasa lineage and *satguru* of Kauai Aadheenam, his 458-acre temple-monastery complex on the Garden Island of Kauai. From this verdant Polynesian ashram on a river bank near the foot of an extinct volcano, his monastics continue to promote the dharma together through Saiva Siddhanta Church, Himalayan Academy and Hindu Heritage Endowment,



perpetuating the mission given to Gurudeva by his *satguru* and which Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, his chosen successor, now carries forth. Gurudeva assured them, "When I am gone from this world I will be working with you on the inside 24 hours a day." Gurudeva's greatest *siddhi*, to which thousands of devotees will testify, was his incredible power to inspire others toward God, to change their

lives in ways that are otherwise impossible, to be a light on their path, a mother and father and friend to all who drew near. He personified the pure, blissful soul nature they sought and sensed as the center of themselves.



Spiritual ambassador: Trinidad youth greet Gurudeva as he disembarks the MS Volendam on Innersearch Caribbean, 2000

you, too." And they did.

Each day as I meditated, more and more children would gather around me at the temple. Then the children from other neighboring villages came to watch me meditate. They stood so quietly. In the meantime, my teacher was talking quietly with the priests, day after day, and telling them the need for education, that they had to get busy and do something about it. Soon all of the children who were watching me started attending the classes that the priests started holding for them, and soon they acquired the habit of coming each day to learn from the priests. A school was started. The priests were happy. The children were happy. My teacher was pleased. I was happy, and I was sent off to my next experience on the path.

I visited and lived in many Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka. I was received by the monks there. I saw how they lived, saw how they dressed, and that influenced in a very strict way the monastic protocols that we later put into action in our own monastic order.

The Caves of Jalani, 1949: One day my training was completed. My teacher flew off to attend a religious conference in Switzerland. I was alone in Ceylon. I thought about the cave again. One of my close Muslim friends took me to the

caves of Jalani, Kurugala Balandha, Sri Lanka, where I met my fifth catalyst on the path of enlightenment.

This catalyst was a Muslim mystic called Mustan, a very wonderful man. They say he never took a bath, but he smelled as sweet as a flower. He was so old; he was so pure. We had a wonderful meeting. When he saw me he said, "I had a dream about you." Then

from Arabic into English, "I had a dream about you, too," and I had written it down. I had been under a training at that time to write down all my dreams. He said, "My dream was during the last full moon." We compared dates. We had both written down the same dream at the same time about our meeting together on the inner planes at night while we slept.

He began giving to me a most wonderful and profound training concerning the use of the third eye. He explained and projected with his mind force the intricate use, development and unfoldment of the faculties of the third eye. He lived in a little cave with a little door on it. One had to walk many steps up the side of a hill to get to it. I lived in a nearby mosque at the foot of the path to his cave.

At night he would take me out and meditate with me on windswept hills where yogis used to meditate hundreds of years ago. He'd make me sit so straight and for a long time. The wind would be blowing against my body. It would be cold. There, in the dead of night, he would say through my translator, "Did you see this? Did you see that? Are you seeing what I'm seeing?" He shared all of this with me. I learned some extremely valuable things about the use of the third eye and the

psychic unfoldment of it through the faculties of the soul, which, in later life, has become an extremely useful and valuable tool in my work today. I really appreciated Mustan, my fifth catalyst on the path.

A muslim saint named Abdul Cadar Duster Jalani lived, meditated and had a school of mysticism there hundreds of years ago. These caves were on top of a mountain some distance from where we lived in the mosque. When penetrating deep into the cave, one sees light in the crevice down in the center of the mountain. In the mysticism of Islam, this is thought to be a direct route to the inner planes, to Mecca. The caves themselves are situated on a cliff that drops three hundred feet to where a jungle lies below. From the caves, wild elephants are seen in the jungle quite easily from time to time. I was taken there by my friend and had a series of meditations there. It was at this time that I realized that this was my cave in which I would one day realize the Self.

I was told by my teachers along the way that I had to get the foundation and the understanding of the various inner and outer areas of the mind in order to have a foundation strong enough to sustain the reaction to the realization of the Self. Each catalyst up to this point had helped me and introduced me in one way or another to my next teacher. This was not planned. I did not look for another teacher.

I expected each teacher to be my last one. In fact, I didn't even think about it. It happened in a nice, natural sequence of events.

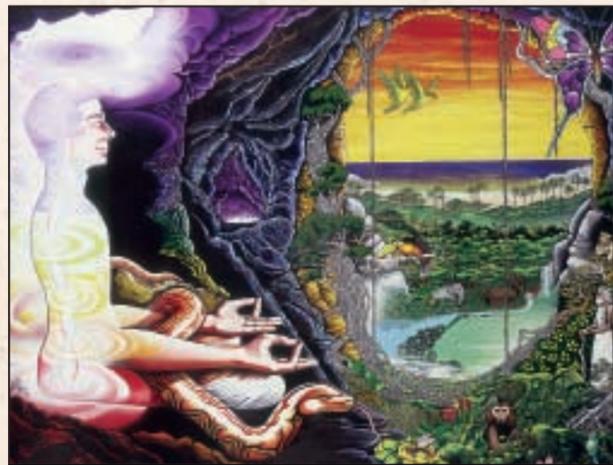
Each teacher had his part in developing the memory faculties, one-pointedness, concentration, stimulating the meditation faculties, the willpower and the cognitive faculties, teaching me to see everything from an inner perspective and looking at the world as if one were the center of the universe.

There was just one thing lacking, however—and I had to do it myself—the ultimate goal, the realization of the Self. It was with joy and burning desire that I approached the caves of Jalani. I had absolutely nothing with me. I had given all of my money to the villagers along the way. I didn't take any food. I had given all of my clothing away, everything. I just went there to be alone.

I said to myself, "I am going to fast until I find this realization that I so want and have wanted for such a long time." I started to fast. The Mustan wasn't there. He had gone away on a pilgrimage. No one was there. There were no pilgrims. I was left alone. I went up and into the cave. I started to meditate. I went in and in and in and in and then

in and in again, and finally I went in and in until awareness became totally aware of itself, and into the control of the breath until the breath breathed no more, and then into the Self, Parasiva.

I came out again into the mind. Villagers had seen me on the cliffs from the villages three hundred feet below. They thought I was some sort of holy man and brought food and all sorts of nice things. We had a big feast. I was hungry. They had come all the way up from the valley. They were so kind. I returned to Colombo, the major city of Sri Lanka, hundreds of miles away, with a Muslim man who also had come on a pilgrimage from some foreign country. He taught me a wonderful chant along the way. I never saw



Enlightenment: Realizing the Self in Jalani Cave, 1949

my fifth catalyst on the path again. He taught me everything I needed to know to complete my training for the realization of the Self during my first series of meetings with him. It was intense. It was strong.

Back in Colombo, Entering Hinduism: Returning back to the city, nothing looked the same anymore. I was in another dimension. Everything was different. I had lost something: the desire for the realization of the Self. I felt complete. I felt alone.

One night, just before sleep, I saw before me a vision of a tremendous peacock tail, open and framing the screen before my eyes. In Hindu mysticism, Lord Murugan rides through the *akasha* on a peacock. This is the way He travels in the inner area of the mind.

The next morning I met the sixth catalyst on the path, my next profound teacher, Kandiah Chettiar. He was the one who was to take me to my guru, but I needed preparation first. He gave it to me. He took me deep into Hinduism. Up to this point I had studied yoga and had a fine exposure to Buddhism in Sri Lanka, but had not been made aware of orthodox Hinduism. He brought me into Hinduism from a deep, inner-plane

perspective, teaching me the mysticism and then the ritual. I began meeting the Hindu Gods, the Deities, inside the inner areas of the superconscious mind, and learning how to relate to them. They were kind to me.

Hinduism is a combination, a collection, of all the teachings and practices of thousands of rishis, gurus, philosophers, mystics and teachers throughout many centuries. Within it are innumerable systems, practices and teachings. If you were to go into them fully, you would find them more complicated than the most complex computer of today. And yet, after my realization of the Self God, Hinduism was as simple as kindergarten to me. Hinduism unfolded from the depths of my being. I had found my religion.

I was happy to find a complete culture that accepted the monistic *advaita* of Vedanta and yet cherished and practiced the many other dimensions of life, celebrated festivals, valued the great yoga called *bhakti*, honored those who performed *sadhana*s, understood the way of *kundalini* yoga, knew the mysteries of penance, including rolling around the temple in the hot noonday sun, and lost itself—or should I say found itself?—in the chambers of the hallowed temples where *darshan* was sought out and the Gods were seen and felt as real beings when invoked by the magical priests to enter the temple at the height of the ceremony.

My sixth catalyst on the path introduced me to the exoteric worship done within the Hindu temple. He told me why they ring the bells and blow the horns and beat the drums. He explained intricately the role of the priests and what they do, why they wear the holy ash, called *vibhuti*, on their forehead, arms and chest. All the whys and hows were explained to me. I saw it all from an inner perspective. I became so sensitive to the vibratory rate of the astrological configurations of stars and the power that they effected upon the Earth during certain times of the year that I was able to tell my catalyst exactly what Hindu Deity would be worshiped at a temple and the very day that particular service would be conducted. I would tell my catalyst, "Come on, we have to go to the temple really fast. The Lord Ganesha is being worshiped today." This enthralled my catalyst, of course.

One day I said to him, "I want to become a Hindu. I feel like I am a Hindu already because that has been my training from a very young age up to this point, but how can you arrange it officially? Will you take me to a very pure priest?" And he said, "Just wait," for he was the one who was destined to take

me to my guru.

Occasionally I would ask him, "Please take me to a priest who has Self Realization." He'd say, "There are no priests in our temples who have the realization of God of which you speak." But I'd say, "I feel deep within me that you are somehow going to work it out so I can become a Hindu." I had no idea in those days of teaching everything I had been learning, or of being a guru myself. I was in the full bloom of my realization. I was going within, coming out into the external area of the mind and then going back within. The core of the within, the Self God, was home base to me. I had a good start in life. I had reached my goal. I was reaping the benefits of all of the good foundation work of concentration, meditation and contemplation that had been given to me at an early age. I was perfectly content, at peace, in my inner life.

One day, my teacher invited me to his home in the northern part of Sri Lanka. It was the first time I had been in an orthodox Hindu home. I was so at home there. It was wonderful. The northern part of Sri Lanka

is quite different from the southern, like being in a different country. The religion is Hindu. In southern Sri Lanka, Buddhism is the religion practiced.

We visited fine temples of the area, the Ganesan temple, the Nallur Kandasamy Temple and many others, taking our time. And all the while I was absorbing the inner atmosphere and being blessed by the Gods themselves as electric vibrations would come

"The enlightened being sees beyond duality and knows the oneness of all. He is the illumined one, filled with light, filled with love."

forth from the temple and flow through my body. I felt wonderful. It was wonderful. I was there. I was expecting to become a Hindu, the peak experience of my life.

Very carefully my teacher began telling me about a "madman" in the area, a guru who was so unpredictable that people were afraid of him. He explained the nature of this man and how to approach him, and the work that he was doing in the area. I was told about how he attained Self Realization

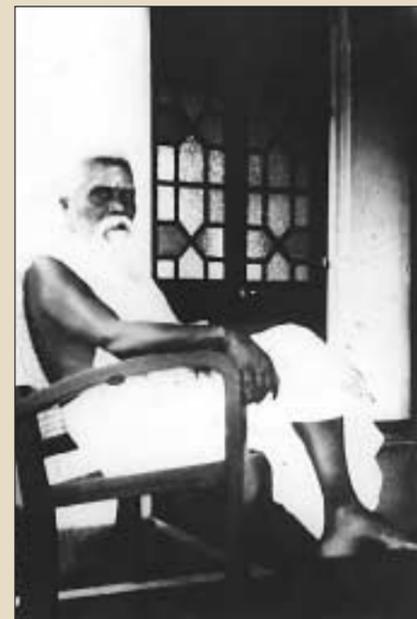
and ran for twenty miles on the power of it, he had worked for it for so long. He was so happy that he had finally achieved this great goal at forty years of age. I would be patient, and the subject would always come around to the guru of the area, Yogaswami. In this way, I learned of him and of his teaching. One day, I was invited to go with my teacher to Yogaswami.

Jnanaguru Yoganathan, affectionately known by the people of the area as Yogaswami, was a magnificent man. No one approached him unless they were in the right mood. Some were literally afraid of him. When within the radius of him, one could feel the atmosphere scintillating. One felt electricity in the atmosphere. Devotees would prepare themselves on the inside so everything was all right before visiting this guru. Just to take him a little bit of fruit, they would sometimes prepare themselves for three or four days. If asked when they would be seeing the guru, they would say, "Well, I'm not quite ready yet to see Yogaswami today... maybe tomorrow." Or, "I will go on a very auspicious day." This was because they did-

The Grand Guru of Sri Lanka

His bold command: "Know thy Self by thyself!"

SAGE YOGASWAMI, the great soul who initiated Gurudeva, was the *satguru* of Sri Lanka for half a century. His very name came to mean wisdom, mystery, spiritual power and knowledge of the timeless, formless, spaceless Self within, Parasiva. He was one of those rare souls, like the rishis of yore, living in the infinity of Truth within all things, which he called Siva. He met his own guru amid a festival crowd outside Nallur temple in 1905. A dish-eveled *sadhu*, Sage Chellappan, shook the bars from within the chariot shed, shouting at him fiercely, "Hey! Who are you?" Yogaswami was transfixed.



Into the face of truth: One of 5 photos Satguru Yogaswami allowed, taken around 1955

"There is not one wrong thing!" "It is as it is! Who knows? Grasp the meaning of these words," the guru roared. Suddenly everything vanished in a sea of light. For Yogaswami, the world was renounced in that instant. After Chellappan's death in 1915, Yogaswami undertook five years of intense austerity, moving about Jaffna and the entire island on foot. Later, people of all walks of life, all nations and paths, came for his *darshan* and blessings. Decades passed and he came to be Illathusid-dhar, the Perfected One of sea-girt Illangai. After years of meditation under an olive tree, he was persuaded

to inhabit a small hut in Colombuthurai made by loving devotees. Here it was his habit to wake early and, in the pre-dawn darkness, light camphor in worship of the holy sandals of his guru. Once the sun rose, he would stride through the countryside, walking many miles each day. He continued this regimen into his nineties. Yogaswami lived from 1872 to 1964, revered equally by Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. Devotees continue to honor him with *padapuja*, worship of the master's feet, which contain the fullness of his enlightenment and hold the promise of our own spiritual freedom. Yogaswami articulated his teachings in hundreds of poems and songs, called *Natchintanai*, "good thoughts," urging seekers to follow dharma, serve selflessly and realize God within. Four great sayings, or *mahavakyas*, capsulized his message: Sarvam Sivam seyal, "Siva is doing it all;" Thanai ari, "Know thy Self by thyself;" Sarvam Sivamayam, "All is Siva;" and Summa iru, "Be still."

n't want him to look through them and point out something that they saw in themselves that they thought he might see. He always knew when people were coming to him before they arrived.

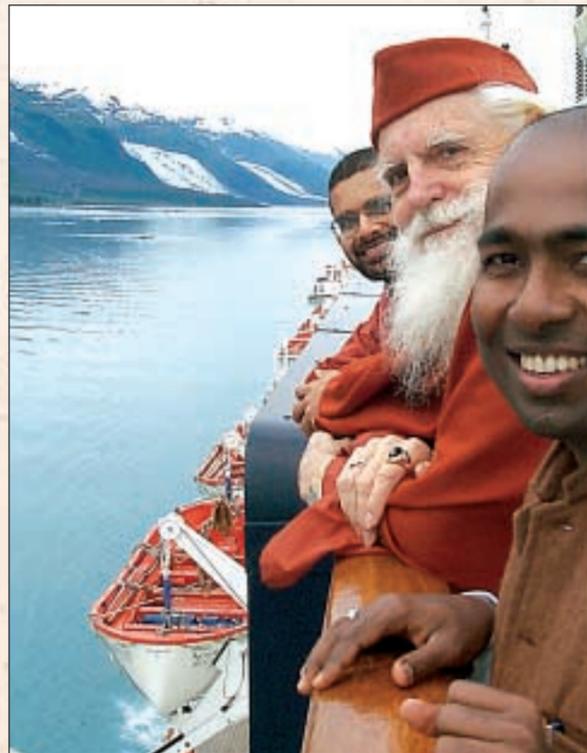
My meeting with him was unusual because I was introduced, and he said, "Come on in and sit down." Everybody else prostrated before him. In the Orient, devotees prostrate in front of a guru, placing the entire body face down on the floor. He said to me, "You come in and sit down. You don't have to do that. You and I are one." Then he started asking me the deepest of philosophical questions. I must have given the right answer each time; he seemed very pleased. As soon as he had asked the question, without hesitation I spoke the answer. Then he gave me the name I hold today, *Subramuniya*. He was my guru, my master. *Subra* means "the light that emanates out from the central source." It just emanates out. *Muni* means a silent teacher, and *ya* means restraint. *Subramuniya* means a self-restrained soul who remains silent or speaks out from intuition, one who speaks out from the inner sky.

He showed me the book he had on Patanjali's yoga aphorisms. I had studied Patanjali, too. We had just a wonderful, deep and inner meeting. He treated me more like a brother. This did not surprise me, though, because I was so far within and not in the consciousness of being surprised, but it surprised everybody else. He made me eat food with him, and we parted. Before leaving, I mentioned to my guru that I had established an ashram in nearby Alveddy and would like to have his blessings. He said, "Fine, good, it will one day become a three-story building, and you are going around the world, and you will feed thousands of people. You are going to build palaces." And he began giving me many different kinds of instructions, such as "You will return to America, and you will roar. And when you come back here, nothing will be gained and nothing will be lost." He said, "Now you go and teach the realizations that you have had." I was used to being told what to do by my six teachers on the path, so I was happy to have this positive instruction. After I left my guru's presence, everyone started relating to me differently.

On the second visit with my guru, we had a beautiful time together, just meditating and enjoying a beautiful flow. Many people came and he had grape juice made for me. On the third visit, we had a beautiful con-

versation about the path. Then, as I was leaving his ashram and he was seeing me out, he gave me the hardest slap on the back that I had ever felt from anybody. With all his might he reached out and cracked me on the spine between the shoulder blades. It was tremendous. I would have fallen on my face if I had not been so tall. Some of the Hindu devotees were startled, too, because that is one of the most powerful ordination initiations ever given. After this initiation, he gave me some powerful instructions.

There are four ways that a guru will initiate or ordain. One is through talking, a very



Living in the now: Relaxing on deck in the North Atlantic with two of his monastics during Innersearch Alaska cruise, 1999

mild way. Another is by a look, and another is through thought. The most powerful initiation is through touch combined with the actual inner power, for through this contact, with intent, he begins to feed and transmit all of his inner knowing and inner power to the disciple. In this way, Yogaswami gave to me all his knowledge of how to be a guru. It later began to unfold within me from him, then from his guru and then from his guru's guru. This is how the spiritual power in a line of gurus is transferred and increased.

I followed his instructions and returned to the United States and settled down to unfolding more and more. Until his death, he communicated with me, year after year, through Kandiah Chettiar. Upon returning

to the US, the first thing I did was to change my name legally to my new Saivite Hindu name. The judge took it in stride and quickly granted the request. I had been given instructions that I was not to do any teaching until I became thirty years of age. Until then I was to observe, have experiences and learn. It was made quite clear to me that when I was thirty my students would start to come, so I waited. It happened just that way. After my thirtieth birthday, my students began to come.

This is how Himalayan Academy started in the United States in 1957. Right after my ordination with Yogaswami, the book *Cognizantability* began to unfold from within me. Later the inspired talk *The Self God* was given to the first group of students, setting the pace of *advaita* philosophy for the West. The *Master Course* was issued, and I began doing my part as a helper on the path.

Yogaswami passed from his physical body in March, 1964. After this happened, I began receiving letters from Ceylon saying, "You have to come back now, because we need you as the guru here," indicating that I was his successor. I felt that my mission was in the West. After several years, however, I decided to go back to Sri Lanka. I always follow my inner direction when it comes, and this came in that same vibration as my first meeting with my guru—slowly and when all conditions were right. This was how the first India Odyssey Travel/Study program formed in 1969. It was because of my desire to return to Sri Lanka. Sixty-five students traveled with me.

In 1957, Yogaswami went around announcing to everybody in Jaffna that I was dead, and he had everyone believing it. It was actually the last of the external self that died at that time, the last of the astral body, for I was beginning to speak out the news of the Self within man.

Great masters like Yogaswami and his guru, Chellappan, work on the inner realms now, helping my students and monks actively and dynamically in their meditations and unfoldment. You might even see them in your dreams. Many students have experienced this. The devotees in Sri Lanka now see me in their dreams, and I see them. These are the times when we go into inner planes together and experience in the psyche, the body of the soul. Aspirants on the path learn and study on these inner planes.

The path of the mystic is two-thirds within and only one-third on the outside area of the mind. The quieter the mystic becomes on the outside, the more active he is in working in inner realms with either his students or others.

On the path, I was fortunate enough, just through evolution, to be exposed to and re-

ceive some of this training. It has brought me to where I am today, watching the patterns repeat themselves time and time again as my students come through their inner unfoldment under my watchful eye. To have the feeling of being in one place, and that everything is happening around you, like a maypole—this is how I feel these

days. I watch the cycles of life as they flow one into another. The physical-plane cycles flow into the astral-plane cycles which flow into the superconscious-plane cycles and back to the physical-plane cycles again as men and women unfold on the path. This state is what I call "doing nothing." Just watching, watching, watching. ☞

Radiant Reflections Shared in 1999

YEARS AND YEARS AGO, over 30, we came to Kauai and finally never left. I chose Kauai, the world's most remote land mass, because I wanted to be close to my devotees in the East (Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, India and Mauritius) and close to my devotees in the West (Australia, Fiji, North America and Europe), while at the same time cloistered from the world at large. Yes, our inner life is more important than our outer life. If we were in San Francisco, New York, Singapore or New Delhi, we could not do this same work as a contemplative order of meditators and teachers, outreaching primarily through publications and the Internet. Kauai is a spiritual place, a vortex of healing energies emanating from its sacred Mt. Waialeale, pristine air and ocean.

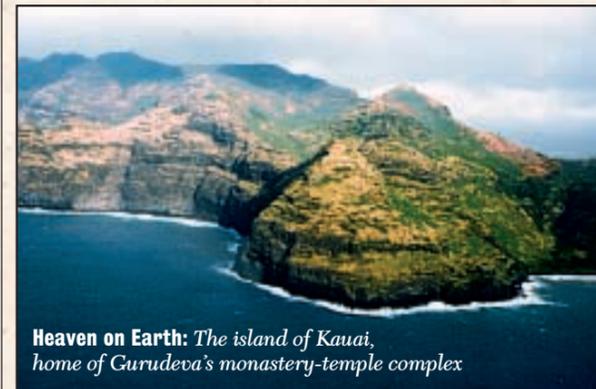
His order of monks: It has been a blessing to have been able to raise two generations of spiritual leaders, my monks, who have made a difference and are continuing to make a difference in today's world—a difference that is lasting because a new paradigm has evolved, that of establishing the traditional culture of the Far East in the West. Yes, the best of the East and the best of the West have come together on the famed Garden Island of Kauai.

Peace at home: Entering into the world of religious and political fervor when invited to international conferences as a spiritual representative over the past 20 years made a deep impression upon my mind. It

seems that so little is understood by the leaders of religions and nations. Because of the conflict, in-fighting, there is no time for them to reflect. This has led to the rule at our peaceful ashram that disharmony must be settled before sleep, never carried into the next day, a discipline all my monks follow.

Iraivan, being a *kaivalya*

find the center of themselves. We will preserve it and maintain it so that it is the way Rishikesh used to be, a proper, pure, quiet place where devotees can go within themselves through the practice of *yoga*. There are very few such places left on the Earth now. Kauai's Hindu Monastery is one of them. I see Iraivan as a *yoga* citadel, a place of pil-



Heaven on Earth: The island of Kauai, home of Gurudeva's monastery-temple complex

temple, giving the boon of freedom from past burdens, will welcome all who are on the path to perfection, giving up hurt and suppressed memories that keep them hurting, giving up worldly longing and redirecting their desire to higher realms, throwing down the personal ego as not important to inner life. Why protect it through argument, justification and dominance? Let it go so that the soul may soar in the glory of its naturalness. This is surrender to the Divine.

Iraivan Temple: As I look into the future, I see Iraivan, fully completed, as a center where devotees will come to

grimage for the devout, sincere and dedicated. I see Iraivan as India's message to the world on visitors' day, when Hindus and non-Hindus alike come to admire the great artistry of the *silpi* stone carving tradition. I see Iraivan as a fulfillment of our lineage, our scriptures and our monastery. This is a place where you do not have to invoke God, for God is here, for this is where heaven meets the Earth. So, come to our aloha island soon. Isle be seeing you.

The mission: When I decided to launch HINDUISM TODAY in 1979, my thinking was: to make Saivism strong, we have

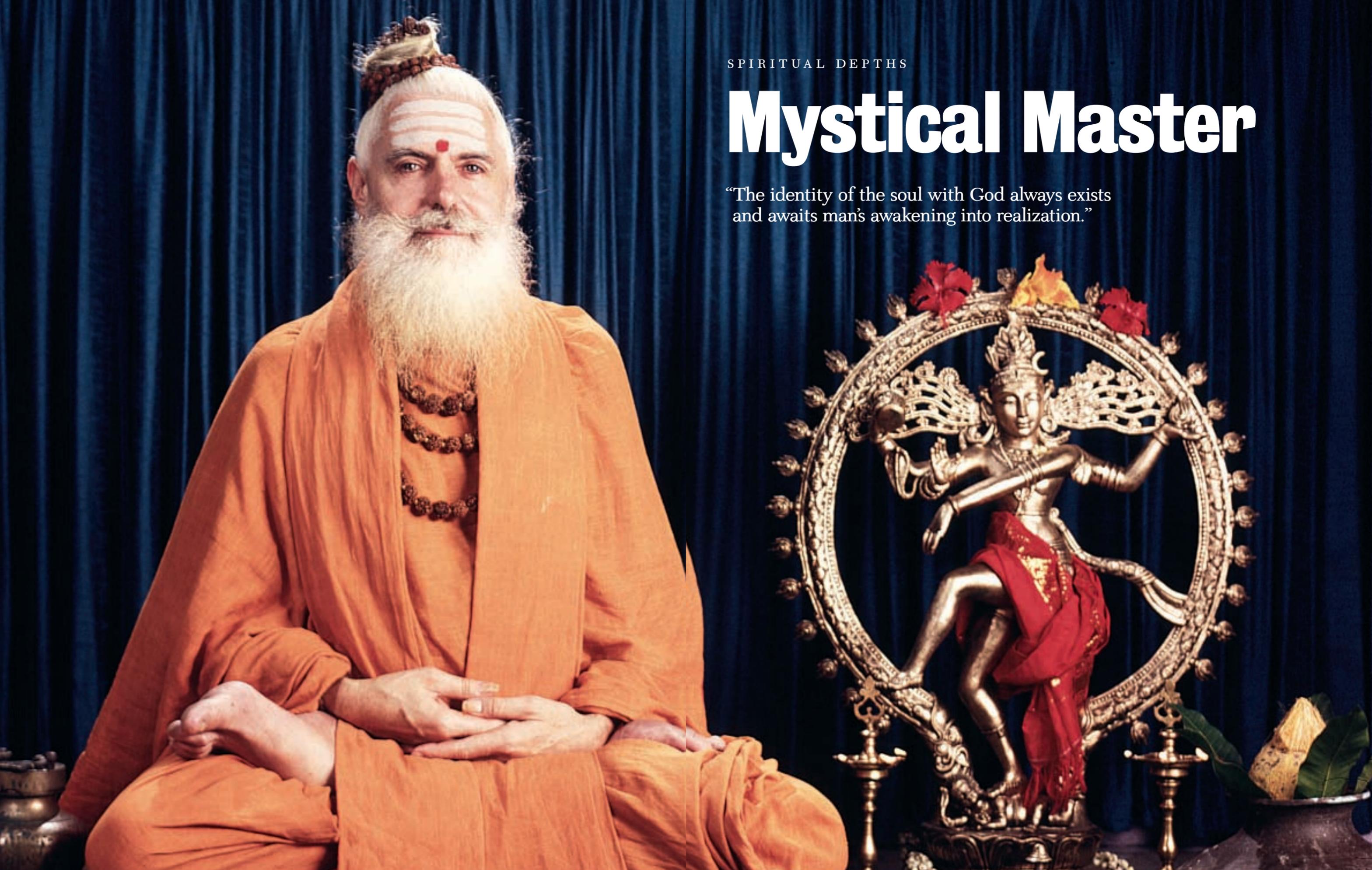
to make all the other three main denominations strong. Because our philosophy is being devoted to Siva in everyone, we support every Hindu sect equally. Our strength is in having oneness with all the Hindus around the world, even though our philosophical, doctrinal and cultural approaches may differ somewhat. This is for the benefit of the overall Hindu renaissance, which is gaining in power as the century turns, for as each becomes strong, that strength benefits the overall body of Hinduism, giving pride, stability and courage to proceed with confidence. This is Hindu solidarity, one of our heartfelt commitments. The other is monistic theism—Advaita Ishvaravada—of Saiva Siddhanta.

Now that uniting all the Hindus is being accomplished through HINDUISM TODAY, at the simultaneous turn of the century and the millennium, new challenges are to be faced. The experiences and accomplishments of the past are the foundation for the accomplishments of the future. Having lived this long in this life, and having had many, many lives preceding it, especially at this time on our planet, when controversy, distrust and intrigue are marketable commodities, I can truly say, I would not have wanted to miss this birth for anything. It has been a fun time, but it would not have been without home base, the Self, as you shall discover and come to know and love and become as you read in my wonderful book, *Merging with Siva*. ☞

SPIRITUAL DEPTHS

Mystical Master

“The identity of the soul with God always exists and awaits man’s awakening into realization.”



stone, surrounded by five smaller boulders. San Marga, the 'straight or pure path' to God, had been created. An inner voice proclaimed, "This is the place where the world will come to pray." San Marga symbolizes each soul's journey to liberation through union with God."

The Teachings

Gurudeva was famous for his strictly traditional approach to religious life. This perspective was a significant part of his spiritual inheritance from Yogaswami. Yet even as a child, he was taught traditional Hindu thought by well-informed teachers. It was the validation of all this through his own personal experience that endowed him with the power to grow into the spiritual leader he was destined to be. First, in study and training, he absorbed the Hindu philosophy and culture from the outside in. Then, through worship and yoga, he unfolded it from the inside out. When he was satisfied that these two processes complimented each other without contradiction, he had the power and confidence to set forth on a life of teaching dedicated to the clarification and practical application of ancient Vedic wisdom.

Asserting that the Gods were real, not just symbols, Gurudeva spoke convincingly of the structure of the second and third worlds, known in Hindu scripture as the Antarloka and the Sivaloka. From his own experience, he colorfully described the beings who live in these realms, what they do and how they can be of practical assistance to devotees requesting their assistance.

Gurudeva was blessed with special *siddhis*, or psychic powers. These, he explained, came to him after his Realization, as gifts to enable him to better perform his work in service to Hinduism, though he received a thorough occult training beginning in his early teens. One of these *siddhis* was the ability to receive verbal messages from inner-plane beings of great wisdom and purified character. Three of the beings, who communicated with Gurudeva from time to time for over 50 years, were Rishi Kalidas, Guru Omkar and Detaza. They helped him in all of his work. In the following excerpt from an unpublished message from Guru Omkar on June 28, 1996, a sense of their identity is given.

"When you teach, you know more. Rishi Kalidas, he released himself of all his bag-

gage [by resolving his karma before his death], and is now free. He deals with the future, I deal still with the past. You go to him for foresight. You come to me for hindsight. Detaza, he's in another field, never been physical, never will, was created when the Earth itself was created, along with numerous others, many of which are under his control."

Gurudeva promoted the yogic perspective of monistic theism, the religious theology (also known as panentheism) that embraces both monism and theism, two perspectives sometimes considered contradictory or mu-



Pada Puja: The sacred rite of washing the guru's feet, here performed for Gurudeva during the festival of Guru Purnima

tually exclusive. He brought uncommon clarity to the pivotal Hindu concepts of karma and reincarnation, affirming that all souls are intrinsically good, that all karmas can be resolved, that Realization—as he had experienced it—can be attained and that liberation from the cycles of birth and death is indeed possible.

He propounded Saiva Siddhanta's four-stage path to God consisting of *charya*, (service), *kriya* (worship), *yoga* (meditation) and *jnana* (wisdom). These stages, he said, are successive and cumulative, each one

preparing for the next. He extolled temples and elucidated proper ways of worship. He also laid out in detail the disciplines of monastic and family life, including specific instructions about the control of sexual force. So that people could "catch the overview" of the world's oldest religion, he summarized Hinduism in nine beliefs and Saivism in twelve. He put forward the *Vedas* and *Agamas* as Hinduism's primary and revealed scriptures, but also acknowledged secondary scriptures like the *Tirumantiram* by Tirumular (ca 200 BCE) and the *Tirukur-al* by Tiruvalluvar (ca 200 BCE).

No one but a true mystic could have promoted these teachings so convincingly. Feeling the power of Gurudeva's experience in all that he said, readers and listeners found themselves unable to doubt him. Such was the magic of his way, the power of his perception.

Personal Disciplines

Gurudeva set an example, living his life in accordance with the principles he taught. He would say something. Then he would do it. Theory meant little to him if it could not be put into practice. Students were amazed at his ability to translate abstract philosophical principle into simple essence—then go one step further to conceive specific *sadhana*s (religious disciplines) designed to put that essence into practice. Take, for instance, the mystical axiom of "clearing the subconscious," so essential in yoga.

"The subconscious mind is the storehouse for the conscious mind," explained Gurudeva. "All the happenings of each day and all reactions are stored up there. When the subconscious is in control, the control is at one rate of vibration. When the subsuperconscious is in control, after the subconscious has become understood, concentrated and cleared of all confusion, the vibratory rate is higher."

Most yoga instructors would have been happy to simply verbalize such explicit insight. But Gurudeva devised a method for putting it into practice. "Ganga Sadhana is a practice for unburdening the subconscious mind, performed by releasing the energy of unwanted thoughts," he says, "while sitting quietly by a river or stream and listening to the Aum sound as the water flows over the rocks. When a thought arises, it is mentally placed into a leaf held in the right hand, then gently tossed into the water. Then a flower is offered to thank the water for carrying away the thought."

Another practice Gurudeva advocated for clearing the subconscious was *vasana dahan* *tantra*, which means "purification of the subconscious by fire."

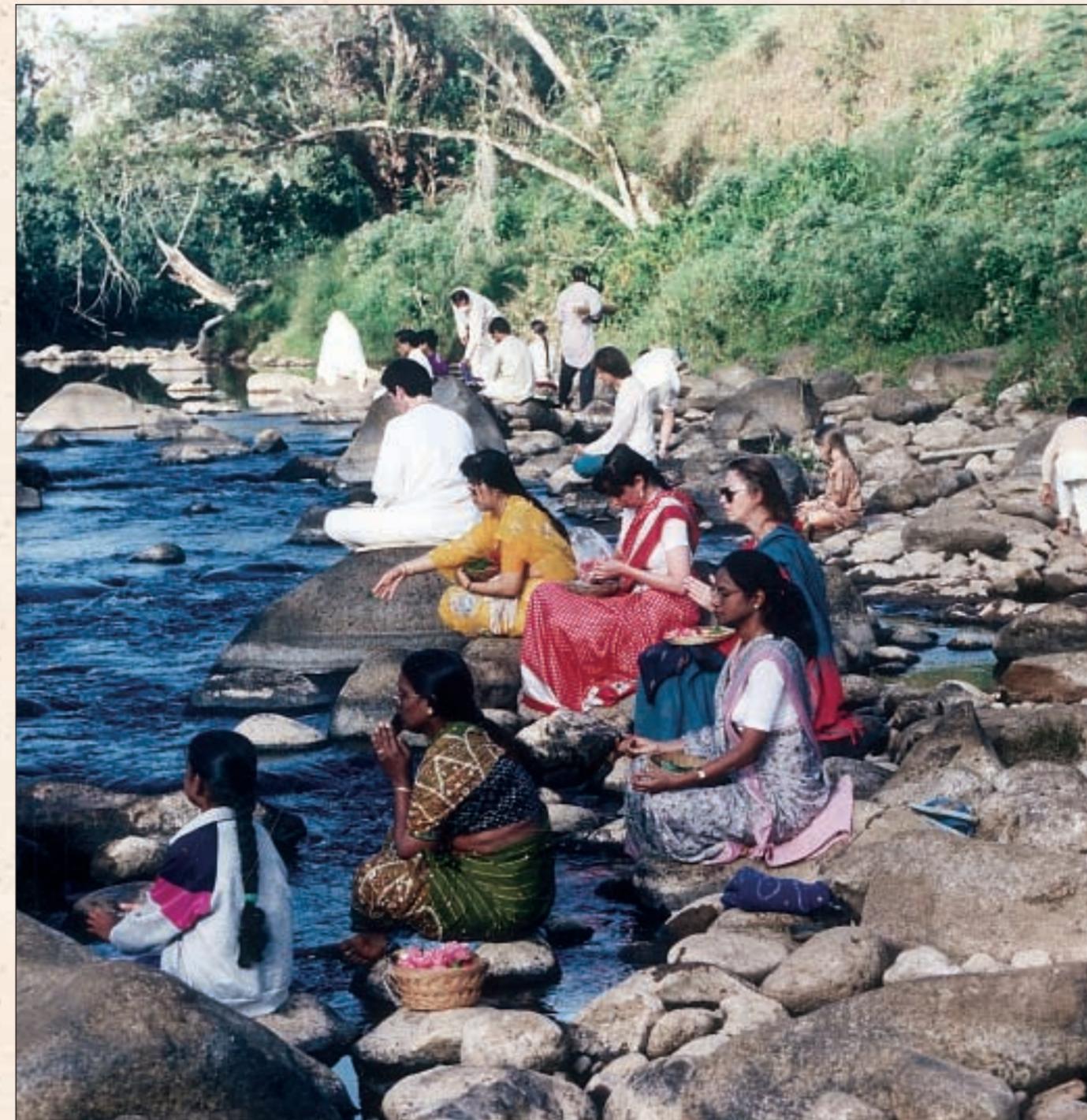
"Mental impressions can be either positive or negative," he explained. "In this practice, we burn confessions, or even long letters to loved ones or acquaintances, describing pains, expressing confusions and registering grievances and long-felt hurts. Writing down

problems and burning them in any ordinary fire brings them from the subconscious into the external mind, releasing the suppressed emotion as the fire consumes the paper."

And it brings results, as one of Gurudeva's monks testifies: "In Jaffna, I saw people killed in front of me, houses looted, homeless refugees, and more. I put each thought of these things in a leaf. For example, if I recalled seeing one of my friends killed, I put

the leaf in the water and prayed for him to get a better next life. Then I felt relief."

Aside from what Gurudeva did, how he helped others and who he was known to be, there was something intangibly magical about him. Because he lived at the center of himself, the Self of all, everyone felt close to him and loved him dearly. For them, his life was like a magnificent rainbow, arched high above the woes of the daily norm.



Getting quiet: Devotees perform Ganga Sadhana by the beautiful Wailua River at Gurudeva's ashram

The Story of Shum

How my language for meditation came to be

BY SATGURU SIVAYA SUBRAMUNIYASWAMI
IN THE SUMMER OF 1968, HIMALAYAN Academy conducted an Innersearch Travel-Study program to Ascona, Switzerland. I was working on a little book called *The Advaitin*. The book was about refined states of experience deep within the inner realms of pure consciousness, just before one merges into the Self and after one comes out of that state. The book was unfolding beautifully, but upon rereading what had been written, I thought, "This is going to be so difficult for beginning students to understand. There are no words in the English language for what I wish to portray. Unless my students have had deep experiences themselves, it will be difficult for them to believe in the reality of the inner man, simply because there are not enough words to describe it."

I then began to feel that using Sanskrit might be necessary to find adequate words to convey the meanings of these refined areas of the mind. I thought these areas should have their own names in the same way that emotions and physical things have their own names in English.

At our Ascona summer retreat, I began looking through several Sanskrit dictionaries to locate certain words that could be used in *The Advaitin*. But in three dictionaries, each translator had translated each of the words in a different way. I threw up my hands at this and said, "This is going to make it more confusing."

The feeling began to come that what was really needed was another language, a new, fresh language, one giving me a vocabulary that we could use to accurately describe inner states of consciousness. Two or three days later we traveled to Venice, Italy, for a few days' excursion. This idea of a new language was still very strongly in my mind. So, I went within and wrote down some instructions to my outer self as to how to proceed and where to go to be able to unfold this language. My instructions were, "You go within the *ooda* current." That is the current of mind flow where language exists.

In following the instructions, my spine lit up in a beautiful pale yellow and lavender

light. The yellow and the lavender intermingled, one color coming in and out of the other. It was just beautiful! But I only found one end of the *ooda* current, so did not have any results in Venice. Three days later, after returning to Ascona, I found both ends of the *ooda* current while working within myself. Within two hours of meditation, the script, the fundamental alphabet of 18 sounds and



Where it all began: Ascona, Switzerland, where Gurudeva deeply meditated to unfold and develop the Shum language in 1969

the syntax—as well as some of the basic vocabulary—all came through. The first word to be uttered was *Shum*. *Shum* now names the language of meditation. As fast as I could, I wrote it all down and ran downstairs to one of the monks shouting, "I have it! I have it! Here is our language!"

Because I thought I needed only a vocabulary of fifty or a hundred words, *Shum* started out in a very simple way. However, in the days that followed, this *ooda* current became stronger and brighter. I didn't tell anyone about this at the time, except for two or three of the Saivite monastics who were with me in Switzerland.

I began working day and night. The structure and script for the language began to refine itself, and vocabulary started coming through right from the inner light. I would see light within my head and see little images or letters in the *Shum* script drop down, one after another, and line up. Vocabulary flowed out like this for two or three weeks.

In Nice, in Southern France, the whole concept of *leoonasee*, the psychic nerve system, and *aleekashum*, the warmth and psychic heat of the body, came through.

Then, later, on our Innersearch in Paris, more *Shum* developed. Upon returning to the United States, I had a vocabulary of about 300 words, and every day even more were coming through. Finally, the images stopped dropping out of the inner light, and I heard the meaning of the words clairaudiently, almost as if someone were speaking to me. Sometimes they would come in reverse—English first, *Shum* second.

The vocabulary and the structure of the language developed very quickly, but what was more important, the perspective of the *Shum* language was now available. I began to realize that each language has its own point of view, or position of awareness, that comes into effect when one is speaking that language. In English and other European languages, our awareness is out in the material world. It seems to be located outside of the physical body, looking back at the physical body. From that perspective, a person, if he is daring enough, might be able to fathom the inner areas of the mind like looking through a little keyhole. But often the external world is so distracting, one does not even bother to try to look within.

The meditative perspective of the *Shum* language is deep within the mind. It is called *shumeef*. In *shumeef*, we have the consciousness that we are the center of the universe. We see light within the spine as the central pole, and then open our eyes and look out into the world.

Shum has grown into a marvelous teaching tool, because within the structure of the language is contained the entire Advaita Yoga philosophy. It has within it the perspective man had to hold to bring back the great yoga of the ancient rishis. As soon as I released a little bit of *Shum* to my students, they began teaching it all over the country. Two universities wanted to teach the *Shum* language in their philosophy departments.

Working with *Shum* benefits the individual's natural spiritual unfoldment. It has the effect of harnessing awareness from straying. It is not a quick cure-all for problems of the subconscious mind, nor is it exclusively a mystical set of mantras, although it can be chanted like mantras.

Shum is mostly spoken within a person. When a meditator has an inner experience, he can call it by name in *Shum* and draw a map for himself, showing how to return to

the same inner state again. *Shum* is not designed to replace secular languages, like French or English, which are conceived to completely address all the detailed needs and concerns of physical and emotional life. Also *Shum*, as a working language, is still in its formative stages.

The following year, we returned to Switzerland and I experienced the tremendous breakthrough of *mambashum*. These are *Shum* maps for meditation that enable a devotee not only to plan out where he is going to go inside before his meditation begins, but also to make memos along the way as it progresses and afterwards when it is done.

That year, *nashumeef moolingmee shum* came through as well. This special collection of *Shum* words opened the door to speaking *Shum* during the day. It became possible to remain in inner states while getting things done around the ashram or in the home, without having to use another language. It was easy and fun. *nashumeef moolingmee shum* made things look simple and allowed one to deal with the world without getting drawn too far out into it.

That same year in India, I did more work on *Shum* at Sandakphu, a tiny camp located

12,000 feet high in the Himalayas, 15 miles from the Tibetan border. There, some of the most profound states were unfolded and recorded as *mambashum*. Sixty-five devotees were with me. Our intense meditations there inspired us deeply.

We found that the study of *Shum* provided concentration practices and powers better than any other system in the mystical arts and meditation techniques. Mystical experiences began to develop between myself and devotees, as we would go into the same area of the mind and experience, hear the same sounds and see the same colors.

The vibration the language makes when a group is speaking it is in itself uplifting. When chanting *Shum*, all one has to do is listen inwardly to the tones of the chakras, and let one or two out orally while chanting. We made a great study of speaking the *Shum* language. Students chanting *Shum* found that just by uttering the tones, awareness was drawn into an expanded state.

A mantra vibrates the inner areas of the astral body and the soul body. This allows the soul body to come through the astral into the physical. All this does not have to be understood to occur. It will just happen naturally.

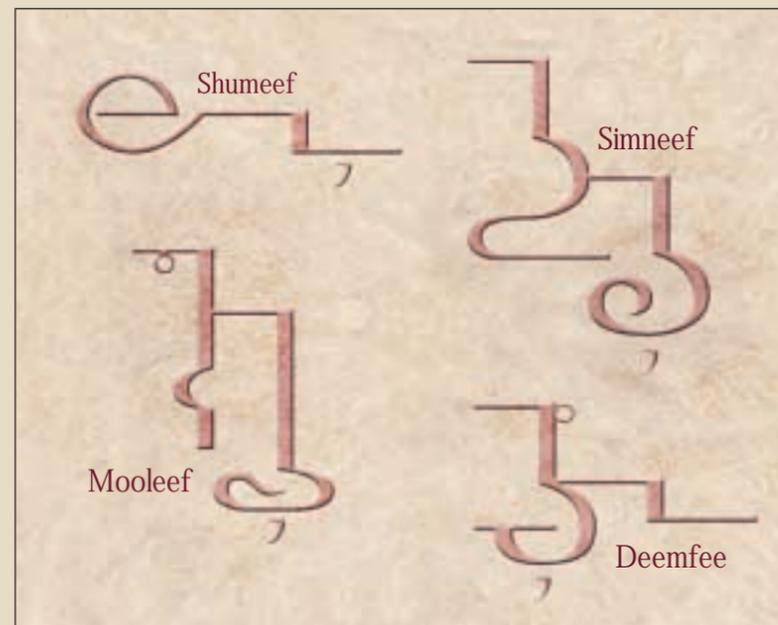
You do not have to consciously know the meaning of a *Shum* chant or even a conversation in *Shum* for it to have an effect on your inner nerve system.

Before the advent of *Shum*, we did not encourage group meditation at Himalayan Academy. During a group meditation, there were usually several who meditated quite well while others let their minds wander here and there, going into a half sleep or becoming distracted. This caused a strange vibration to occur. Now, we have very uplifting group meditations in *Shum*. In fact, at our monastery in Kauai, we begin every day with a long Siva puja followed by a guided group *Shum* meditation which lasts about 45 minutes.

One person, speaking only *Shum*, gently guides the entire group into and out of deep meditation. All individual awarenesses flow into the same areas of the inner mind at the same time. The *Shum* words give a strong and supportive direction to all present. When this begins to happen successfully, the vibration in the room becomes very strong, more potent and intensely more satisfying—for the group helps the individual, and the individual helps the group.

Four Points of View, a Shum Meditation

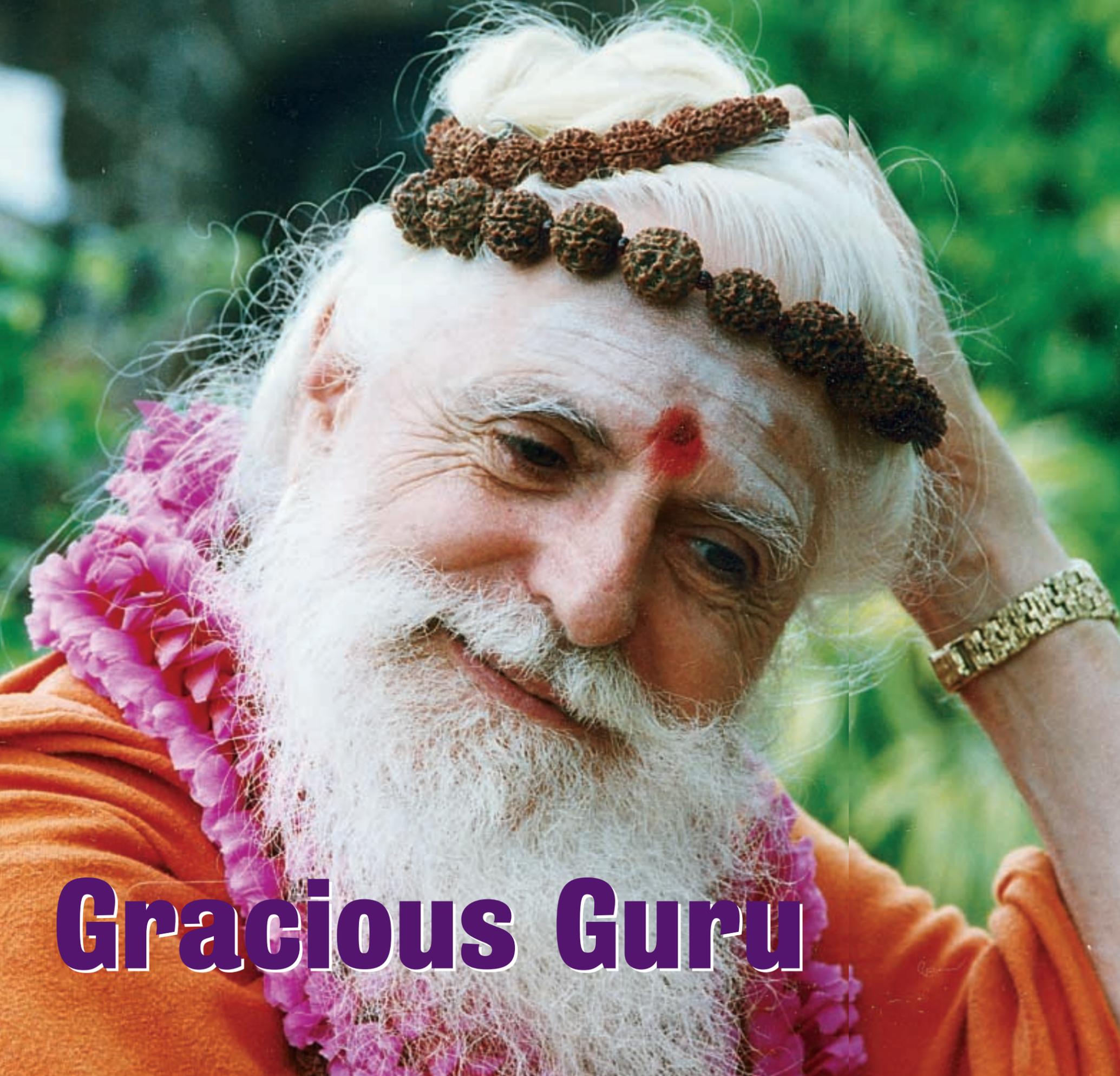
THE SHUM MEDITATION map at right, called a *mamsane*, names the four perspectives or focuses of consciousness. *Shumeef* is the classic meditator's point of view, in which awareness is flowing through the mind, the mind itself being stationary. The *simneef* perspective is the opposite of *shumeef*. It refers to the point of view in which the mind is moving and the intelligence of the person is still, as a scientist observes living matter through a microscope. The *mooleef* perspective is "the way of words," the way of a scholar's intellect. It signifies the ever-deepening knowledge of a maturing mind. The opposite to *mooleef* is *deemfee* which is just now coming into focus on this planet through the newly found abilities of being able to communicate



with Mahadevas, *devas* in the inner worlds, and with beings of all kinds on other planets, such as the Pleiades, in this galaxy and beyond. This communication is a complete un-

foldment of the mind of the individuals who possess the *deemfee* perspective. They are not aware of being the center of all things, as in the *shumeef* perspective. Nor are they

du should be able to experience at will each of these points of view and consciously live in two, three or more at the same time, as did the rishis of yore.



Gracious Guru

GLOBAL FELLOWSHIP

AS SATGURU, I AM IN EXCLUSIVE INTIMATE spiritual communion with each of my devotees. I am at the center of each seeker's life, beating in each heart, aware in each thought, good, bad or indifferent. I keep the threads of every devotee's karma. I am the spiritual voice of dharma in their lives. To those seeking to understand our subtle tradition, it must be openly stated that the *satguru* is the keeper of all the intertwined threads, the repository of all intimate knowledge, the knower of the continuities of all his followers'

karmas and dharmas, the confidant of each one's secret heart, the listener to their most painful confessions in sealed confidentiality, the giver of their mind-quieting penances, or *prayaschittas*, the interpreter of their transcendental, light-filled breakthroughs, visions and dreams, the guardian of the future of each *sisya*." So said Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in the 1995 edition of *Saiva Dharma Sastras, The Book of Discipline of Saiva Siddhanta Church*.

Gurudeva began teaching and picking up these inner threads of devotees' karmas in California in 1957. He quickly cognized the need for an external structure with which to manage and nurture a growing congregation. So, over many years he developed Saiva Siddhanta Church, the first Hindu institution in the world to embrace and mold the Western church structure into a strong religious organization with an ethnically diverse international congregation. Its headquarters is at a traditional South Indian style monastery-temple complex in the Hawaiian islands known as Kauai Aadheenam, or Kauai's Hindu monastery. According to Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, Gurudeva's successor and disciple of 37 years, "Gurudeva always did the same thing. From 1957 to his *mahasamadhi*, his core teachings didn't change, his organizational concepts didn't change, the essence of what he was trying to do did not change. What did change were the people."

As a spiritual leader committed to teaching an Eastern religion in the West, Gurudeva always responded to the people who came forward, which evolved through the decades into a deeply sincere group of Saivite Hindu devotees. "In the 1950s Gurudeva was working with people who had been studying metaphysics and whose background was Christian. In the '60s the group changed. It became young people, some with Christian backgrounds and some with

no religious upbringing, exposed to the concepts of the '60s," said Bodhinatha. "The people in the '50s didn't understand expanded consciousness. People in the '60s knew about it, by reading about it or by personal experience. The whole mentality became one more of inner experience and meditation." Gurudeva's teaching of Eastern concepts was like nectar, and many discovered their spiritual identity in Hinduism.

Beginning in late 1969 and continuing through the '70s, Gurudeva traveled extensively throughout Asia, frequenting India and Sri Lanka to expose his devotees to Hindu culture. While visiting Jaffna on a voyage in 1972, Gurudeva met Sri Sita Ram Shastri, a leader among priests and a renowned mystical pundit of the island nation. Gurudeva told him that he wanted his Western devotees, the truly sincere ones, to become Hindus. Shastri told Gurudeva that it was fine to do. It is within the *sastras*. But it would take three generations before this lineage is fully established. Gurudeva took that prediction seriously. He kept it in mind over the next 29 years as he carefully guided the lives of his first group of householder devotees who had converted to Saivism. The third generation to which Shastri referred is now being born in several of these families.

The core of Gurudeva's Church, the monastic ministers, were the first to enter Hinduism. "Those who were brought up in other religions had to go through a severance process. Some ran into religious conflicts and didn't continue," explained Bodhinatha, who supervised the process. In the late '70s and early '80s Gurudeva and his monastics guided the householders through the same process who wished to continue under the stricter guidelines he had established.

As Western devotees entered Hinduism in the 1980s, born Hindus from Asia started coming forward. If they were Vaishnavas, they, too, had to formally convert to Saivism

and take on a Saivite name. This marked a significant permanent change in the makeup of the congregation. Says Bodhinatha: "We went from teaching yoga to Christians to teaching Saivism to Hindus; from a group based in California to a global group with members on every major continent."

Though students and members came and went through the years, Gurudeva's message did not change. Bodhinatha said, "He started talking about the Self; he ended talking about the Self. He started with knowledge about the monastic path and the family path; he ended with that knowledge."

Gurudeva's vision of a Hindu church never wavered either. He recognized the advantages of the church paradigm as an organized social structure, not to mention the legal and financial freedoms and protections granted in the US. So, with the help of San Francisco attorney Alvin Buchignani, on February 12, 1962, Saiva Siddhanta Church became the first Hindu institution to be granted church tax exempt status by the US Internal Revenue Service.

Gurudeva made his objectives very clear: "We urge members and other devotees to 'Know thy Self' through self-inquiry, meditation, traditional temple worship, scriptural study, guru *bhakti* and selfless service. We strive to bring members, devout *sishyas* of the *parampara*, into a pure, ethical life and guide them toward enlightenment and a direct consciousness of the Divine within."

Membership in Saiva Siddhanta Church is no trivial association. Students are required to study the teachings for several years to become intimately familiar with the mystical monistic-theistic philosophy. They must adjust their lives to traditional disciplines, adhere to a strict vegetarian diet, tithe on their income and follow the character-build-



Pure grace: He danced through life on waves of bliss

ing *yamas* and *niyamas*, 20 Vedic restraints and observances. Paramacharya Palaniswami quips, "The only thing harder than becoming a member of the Church is remaining a member." Indeed, Gurudeva required each to requalify and rededicate himself or herself annually during the Guru Purnima festival in July. And he continually raised the standards, prescribing new *sadhanas* to goad members onward, never, ever allowing them to let down.

Gurudeva recognized a balance between meditation, or internalized worship, and external worship of the Gods as necessary for consistent spiritual unfoldment. He encouraged his followers, and all Hindus, to fulfill the five traditional obligations: daily worship

in the home shrine, attending a temple once a week, pilgrimaging to a far-off temple annually, celebrating festivals and observing the essential *samskaras*, rites of passage. *Samskaras* sanctify crucial events in life: from name-giving to first feeding, beginning of education to marriage, entrance into elderly life to funeral. Gurudeva dusted off and breathed new life into *samskaras*, many of which had been all but left aside in cosmopolitan Hindu society.

He had searched for years for just the right place to establish the ashram that would become world headquarters for a complex Hindu ministry. Having considered locations in Asia and Europe, he landed on the Garden Island of Kauai in December, 1968. This, he felt certain, was the ideal place, situated half way between East and West. In January, 1970, he returned to Kauai and purchased the 1927 Japanese-designed island home turned resort and its surrounding acreage where he and his students had sojourned in '68.

"Kauai Aadheenam is a traditional, male cloistered Hindu monastery," Gurudeva wrote in 1995. "This is the site of the Kailasa Pitham, the seat of spiritual authority for this ancient guru lineage, formerly located in northern Sri Lanka. Here we protect the purity of the faith and decide matters of education, publication, innovation, theology and Church law. Here young men are prepared to eventually take holy orders of *sannyasa*."

Kauai's Hindu Monastery is a full-featured religious sanctuary replete with sacred forests, paths and ponds and two temples: the Kadavul Nataraja Temple founded in 1973, and the San Marga Iraivan Temple conceived in 1975, a traditional, all-granite, Chola style, Agamic Siva temple which will be the crown jewel of the Aadheenam.



Corner stone: Devotees celebrate with Gurudeva and V. Ganapati Sthapati (center) the commencement of jointing work on Iraivan Temple, May 31, 2001

Carving on Iraivan Temple began in 1990 when Gurudeva chipped the first stone. Sri Sri Sri Balagangadharanatha Swami of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Mutt in Bangalore, India, generously provided 11 acres outside the city where hereditary temple architects and site manager Jiva Rajasankara from Malaysia built homes and workshops and dug wells, creating a village where 100 men and their families could carve this elaborate white granite edifice in the traditional way—by hand.

Ten years later, on May 31, 2001, chief temple architect Sri V. Ganapati Sthapati and priest Sri Kandaswamy Gurukkal of Ontario, Canada, presided over the ceremo-

ny placement of the first stone on the giant concrete foundation at Kauai Aadheenam [photo above]. Gurudeva declared at the event, "The vision of the Iraivan Temple as a place of pilgrimage for devotees of Siva throughout the world is becoming clearer and clearer and clearer as the days go on. It is a temple of boon-giving, a life-giving temple, a wish-fulfilling temple. Temples such as Iraivan are built on the sacrifice, *sadhana* and *tapas* of the people that are allowed to participate. Six thousand devotees of Siva from thirty to forty countries have contributed and sacrificed to bring Iraivan Temple to this stage of completion, and it is now being placed upon the foundation." San

Marga Iraivan Temple is now manifesting as the fulfillment of one of Gurudeva's most profound mystical visions.

For over 30 years he shaped the ministry and character of his dynamic monastic order and family congregation and guided Hindu groups worldwide from his seat of authority as guru *mahasannidhanam* of Kauai's Hindu Monastery, his tropical island home. The wholeness of the Aadheenam as it exists now registers as an incredible, indelible experience in the minds of visitors from all over the world. One pilgrim remarked, "Gurudeva has preserved the pure Jaffna Tamil culture and all of its refinements here."

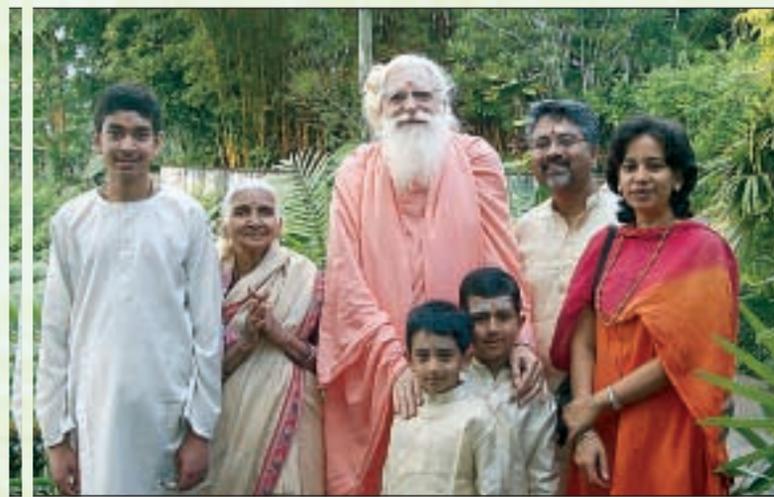
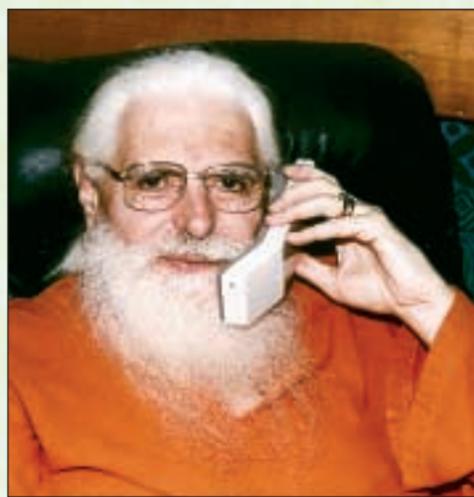
All in a Day's Work

"**A** BALANCED LIFE" WAS Gurudeva's description of his daily routine. He faithfully led the monks' daily two-hour meditation and worship from 5:30-7:30 AM. He spent several hours each morning guiding the lives of his Church members through personal communication—by telephone for many years, until the mid 1990s when he relied mostly on e-mail. Every afternoon was spent personally editing his books, the



legacy of teaching he knew would last far into the future. In the photos here we see Gurudeva: 1) blessing a new calf born

in the monastery's pastures; 2) speaking on the phone with a devotee; 3) greeting the Vivek Dixit family, one of hundreds of families worldwide who consider Kauai's Hindu Monastery a place of pilgrimage and spiritual authority, visiting often to receive the guru *mahasannidhanam's* *darshan* and to seek his advice; 4) giving mantra initiation to Vasanthi Kumaseelan of Klang, Malaysia.



Gurudeva was exceptionally creative, spontaneous and ever available, ready to respond to the needs of devotees as well as those of the wider Hindu world with new projects and publications that kept his team of two dozen monastics "on their toes, a little off balance." Always staying at the center of it all, one of Gurudeva's most unusual, recognizable qualities as a world religious leader was that he was always available, personally greeting and coun-



seling thousands of Hindu visitors to his Aadheenam, speaking intimately with them about their lives, personal aspirations and concerns.

MONASTIC ORDER

His Living Legacy

Twenty-three monks, strong and united

FOR FOUR DECADES SIVAYA SUBRAMUNIASWAMI carefully trained, strictly tested and lovingly molded a small, tight-knit group of men into an effective, orthodox yet joyous monastic order. The Saiva Siddhanta Yoga Order is of the Natha Sampradaya, an ancient tradition of Saiva yoga mysticism that began in the Himalayas and migrated south to Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. It is based on striving for Self Realization and service to Siva, guided by a mystical understanding and practice of *brahmacharya*, celibacy and transmutation of the sexual forces. Personal *sadhana* and the service of bringing Saivism into the modern age by disseminating the deep, inner teachings of Saiva Siddhanta have always remained the foremost work of this group of disciplined monks. They follow strict vows, own nothing, sleep on the floor, work very hard, live a cloistered life, don't visit family or former friends and perform worship, yoga and meditation *sadhanas* for at least two hours each day.

Because they live the simple life of the renunciate, it didn't matter that the Order grew from very modest beginnings. As Paramacharya Palaniswami, a disciple of Gurudeva since 1966 said, "In the early days monks couldn't eat three meals a day, couldn't buy new clothes when old clothes wore out, couldn't pay electric bills and phone bills on time. Gurudeva had to use all of his considerable skills to bring us into having the present-day resources and self-sufficiency that



Hanging out: While taking a walk, Gurudeva stops on a garden path to chat informally with his monastics



Mahasamadhi: Gurudeva's 23 monastic disciples gather at his bedside soon after his passage on the morning of November 13, 2001, recording the solemn event for future generations

we have. And he worked really hard at it."

From an old house in San Francisco to a 458-acre monastery on the paradisiacal island of Kauai, world-renouncing aspirants continued to come forward and dedicate themselves to the search for the Self and service of Siva under Gurudeva's large, graceful umbrella. But why? Palaniswami explained, "They've reached a maturity in their own searching in their spiritual life, in their quest for Truth, their quest for God."

"Each one has his own story," continued Palaniswami. "That story might be that he started at a young age searching through the many paths, trying to reduce them to the one that felt right to him, felt like his dharma. Another, perhaps, had an inner experience and wondered what that experience meant. Someone else might have gone to India and been adopted by the Gods, transformed in a temple and given inward directions. Others might have just met Gurudeva and seen in him the light and the wisdom and the profundity of the Self and wished to experience and taste that beautiful illumination that he wore so gracefully in his be-

ing. This is an order of great discipline and striving, so everyone who comes here comes with that kind of spiritual intensity, spiritual eagerness, and a search for God."

The mix of ethnicities is as diverse as the ways in which Gurudeva's *mathavasis* chose to leave the world and live as Siva's men. Though it began in San Francisco in the 1950s and 60s with American Hindu converts and adoptives, in the 1980s born Hindu aspirants from Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Malaysia began to join the Order, balancing Gurudeva's monasteries with a rich blend of cultural backgrounds.

This diversity has proven to be a great asset to the Order, one which helps them fulfill the myriad projects that are part of their greater mission. And theirs is no ordinary, social mission. "Gurudeva felt that there are enough Hindu institutions in the world dedicated to the noble enterprises of social and humanitarian relief. He saw that very few are fully dedicated to the profound enterprise of spiritual, personal transformation of people. To him the highest calling is spreading knowledge of the Self, service to Siva and sacred work, rather than secular work. Building the temples, translating the scriptures and promoting knowledge of the highest form was the highest work to do, and he wanted his monks to do that work." 

To My Dear Monastics...

IN HOLY ORDERS OF SANNYASA, Gurudeva enjoined his monastics as follows: The first part of your life was lived for yourself; the second part will be lived in the service of others, for the benefit of your religion. You have been tried and tested through years of training and challenges and proved yourself worthy to wear the *kavi*, the orange robes, and to fulfill the illustrious Saiva *sannyasa* dharma.

The *sannyasin* harkens close to Siva and releases the past to an outer death. Remembering the past and living in memories brings it into the present. *Sannyasins* never indulge in recollections of the forgotten person they have released. The present and the future—there is no security for the *sannyasin* in either. Like writing upon

the waters, the experiences of the *sannyasin* leave no mark, no *samskara* to generate new karmas for an unsought-for future. He walks into the future, on into the varied *vrittis* of the mind, letting go of the past, letting what is be and being himself in its midst, moving on into an ever more dynamic service, an ever more profound knowing. Be thou bold, *sannyasin* young. Be thou bold, *sannyasin* old. Let the past melt and merge its images into the sacred river within. Let the present be like the images written upon the water's calm surface. The future holds no glamour. The past holds no attachment, no return to unfinished experience. Even upon the dawn of the day walk into your destiny with the courage born of knowing that the an-

cient Saivite scriptures proclaim your *sannyasin's* life great above all other greatness.

Let your life as a *sannyasin* be a joyful one, strict but not restrictive, for this is not the path of martyrdom or mortification. It is the fulfillment of all prior experiential patterns, the most natural path—the Straight Path to God, the San Marga—for those content and ripened souls. Leave all regret behind, all guilt and guile; others will preserve all that you proudly renounce. Let even the hardships ahead be faced cheerfully.

Never fail to take refuge in your God, your guru and your Great Oath. Be the noble soul you came to this Earth to be, and lift humanity by your example. Know it with a certainty beyond question that this is

life's most grand and glorious path, and the singular path for those seeking God Realization, that mystic treasure reserved for the renunciate. True renunciation must be complete renunciation; it must be unconditional. There is no room on the upper reaches of San Marga for mental manipulations, for play-pretend renunciation or half-measure *sadhana*. Let your renunciation be complete. Resolve that it will be a perfect giving-up, a thorough letting-go. Let go of the rope. Be the unencumbered soul that you are. Be the free spirit, unfettered and fearless, soaring above the clamor of dissension and difference. All that you need will be provided. If there is any residue of attachment, sever it without mercy. Cast it off altogether. Let this be no partial renunciation, subject to future wants, to future patterns of worldliness. Give all to God Siva, and never take it back.



Grand opening: Parading to the Panchamukha Ganapati Mandapam at the Saiva Dharmasala in Mauritius, September 14, 1999

FAMILY COMMUNITY

A Worldwide Congregation

A dedicated band of devotees further his mission, starting in their homes

AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF MEN, women and children, the members of Saiva Siddhanta Church, strive for personal, spiritual transformation and steadfastly fulfill the objectives of the Church while living and working in the world, tithing on their income to support the Church, concluding in local mission groups and gathering in homes to worship and perform karma yoga. Gurudeva summarized the path of these tried and tested souls in *Living with Siva, Hinduism's Contemporary Culture*: "If both husband and wife are on the spiritual path, the householder family will progress beautifully and deeply. Their love for one another and their offspring maintains family harmony. However, the nature of their *sadhana* and unfoldment of the spirit is different from that of the *sannyasin*. The struggle to maintain the responsibilities of the home and children while simultaneously observing the contemplative way, in itself, provides strength and balance, and slowly matures innate wis-

dom through the years."

It is this balance that Gurudeva taught his householder devotees to accomplish in his conversations with them, and in *Living with Siva* where he addressed every issue that arises on the family path, from the most spiritually subtle to the most mundane.

Kulapati Deva Seyon, who lives near the monastery on Kauai (only single men under vows live inside the monastery), had this to say: "Gurudeva brought the true and ultimate meaning of *gotra*, or family lineage, to his initiated devotees, whom he saw as his family lineage. While Gurudeva was the supreme monastic, he was never at a loss in advising on the business, social or intimate, personal problems of his initiated families, down to the smallest detail. He knew every family *sishya* on a deep, personal level—their hopes and dreams, fears and shortcomings—and never tired of guiding, helping and serving his congregation."

This fortunate congregation is truly global and diverse, with members in the US, Eu-

rope and over 70 percent in Asia—mostly Mauritius and Malaysia, as well as Singapore and India. Though stretched across the globe, they are no less connected than if they lived in a single village. Take, for example, the cross-national marriage that brought together the Deva Seyon family of Kauai and the Manogaran Mardemootoo family of Mauritius. In 1991, Kavita, Deva's daughter, married Sivakumaren, Manogaran's son. Though half a world away, the two families merged like milk poured into milk. Deva recalls, "Gurudeva's constant blessings and loving care for the needs of our family led us to love and trust those who also loved him. His international global spiritual family became our family as we shared the same goals and priorities in life. In amalgamating our two families, all the big issues regarding the future of our children were already settled, as we shared the same *kulaguru*."

Gurudeva required his Church members to live strictly by the traditional and time-tested protocols of Tamil Saivite culture,

Pluralistic: (clockwise) Jothi Param of California and wife Deepa of South India conduct their daughter's name-giving rite, 2001; the first group of students at the Indo-American Saivite School, Concord, California, 1986; Gurudeva meets in Kauai with devotees from Singapore and Malaysia, 2001

which he detailed in his 365 *Nandinatha Sutras of Living with Siva*. Association with orthodox Saivites of India and Sri Lanka allows Westerners to absorb the subtleties and depths of this refined protocol. Gurudeva also required a home life of *ahimsa*, tolerating neither abuse of a spouse nor corporal punishment of children.

The *Saivite Sastras*, revealed to Gurudeva in 1973, explain that "The guru worked with the families in the same way he worked with a single monastery." Deva Seyon elaborated on that relationship between the monastery and family homes: "The monastery and the families of Saiva Siddhanta Church work closely together on many levels in fulfilling Gurudeva's directives both within the Church missions and with the public at large. The families learn by watching the monks—their attitudes, their commitment, their selfless service." This relationship is born out of the love of striving through daily religious disciplines such as meditation and scriptural study that Gurudeva nurtured in all of his devotees.

The families of the Church forge frontiers in passing on the traditions of our Hindu religion by worshiping daily together in the home shrine, wearing Hindu clothing, raising children nonviolently, holding daily family meetings and spending an evening together at home at least once a week. Groups of families in each area collaborate and help each other live a meaningful Hindu lifestyle in many ways, such as home schooling their children together, hosting pilgrims and special guests and going on pilgrimage together to temples in South India and to the Aadheenam in Kauai.

Kulapati Mardemootoo eloquently summarized Gurudeva's impact on the lives of householder devotees. "Gurudeva has exposed us to a way of life conducive to peace, love and harmony in and outside the home. He has given us the tools to be peacemakers, to shine as examples of good family people and elders who have been endowed with wisdom, able to stand as respected leaders even in the most difficult times. He has taught us by his own life how to be strong in our beliefs and values and succeed in life by planning carefully and living fully in the present. If we now enjoy daily the wonderful experiences of extended and joint families, and we know how to protect and keep our culture and religion alive and prosperous, it is all thanks to our *satguru*."



A Sampling of Sutras on Family Life

GUIDING AND NURTURING CHILDREN

Those who live with Siva personally guide their children's spiritual and secular education. They teach and model respect, share what happens each day, have fun together and shower love and hugs upon them. Aum. (14)

RESTRAINT WITH OTHER WOMEN

Siva's married men, in the workplace and in the world, hold a courteous aloofness toward all women, whether young, older, single, married, divorced or widowed. They reserve their affections for wife and family. Aum. (87)

HOLDING A DAILY VIGIL

Worshippers of Siva perform a one-hour daily vigil, ideally before sunrise, in a clean, quiet place, after bathing and donning fresh clothing and holy ash. This vigil is optional on weekends and when traveling or ill. Aum. (21)

THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

Siva's followers look upon their marriage as a spiritual partnership for the purpose of uplifting each other and bringing through higher souls. It is a union not only of a man and woman, but of two entire families. Aum. (116)

THE WIFE'S DHARMA

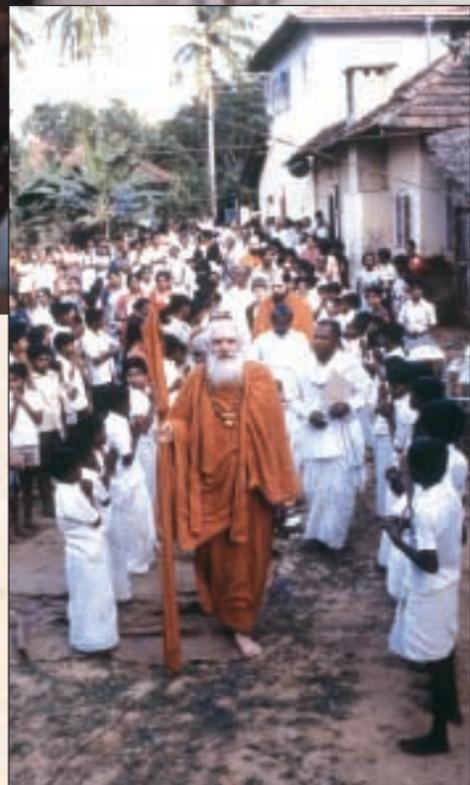
Each of Siva's married women followers strives to fulfill female dharma, perpetuating the race, family and the faith through remaining in the home to nurture, guide and strengthen her dear husband and children. Aum. (132)

TEACHING AND MODELING GOOD CONDUCT

Siva's followers love their children, govern them in a kind but firm way and model the five family practices: proper conduct, home worship, religious discussion, continuous self-study and following a preceptor. Aum. (139)

MISSION

Renaissance Rishi



Sri Lanka: Arriving at his ashram in 1983



Arise! awake! (left) N.K. Murthi translates Gurudeva's message during a rousing 1981 talk to thousands of Hindus at Thiruvanaikoil Temple, Tiruchirappalli, South India; (above) school-children and teachers gather to hear his message in South India in 1983

HINDUISM IS THE GREATEST religion in the world!" Gurudeva thundered from podium after podium during his pilgrimage tours to India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia in the early 1980s. "Stand strong for Hinduism! Be proud to be a Hindu!" he commanded applauding audiences. The pilgrimages, or Innersearch programs, were usually comprised of Gurudeva, six or eight of his monks and 30 or more devotees. The group would travel to the great temples of South India, such as in Chidambaram, Madurai and Palani Hills, and especially through Sri Lanka, homeland of Gurudeva's lineage. All along the way he would speak to standing-room only gatherings at temples, ashrams and public halls,

each pilgrimage carrying a specific message. It was a mission to "convert Hindus to Hinduism," as said Gurudeva's friend and fellow worker for the Hindu renaissance, Swami Chinmayananda, characterizing his own aims. It was a mission to be continued, refined and added to up until Gurudeva's last tour of Europe, weeks before his *mahasamadhhi* in 2001. In the course of it, he met the great saints of India and the world's outstanding community and political leaders, including presidents and prime ministers. Gurudeva taught Hinduism to Hindus from the inside out, beginning with explanations of the deepest spiritual world. "The Third World is where the highest beings, such as Lord Ganesha, Lord Murugan and our Great God Siva, exist in shining bodies

of golden light," he explained again and again during the 1981 India Odyssey. "This Third World is called the Sivaloka. The Second World of existence, or astral plane, is called the Devaloka. The great Gods have millions of helpers in the Devaloka who help each and every one of us. One or more of them is assigned to personally help you in this First World, which is the world of material or physical existence, called the Bhuloka." He would then explain how the *devas* can see the sacred ash upon a person's forehead, how they and the Gods can hear the Sanskrit chanting of the priest in the temple and how the stone icon of the Deity in the temple sanctum is like a telephone connection to the Third World of the Gods. Perhaps his audience had heard such explanations from their

grandmothers or grandfathers, but it was quite a different matter to hear Gurudeva teach from his own realization. The modern renaissance of Hinduism began in the 1800s with the missions of Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj; Ramakrishna and his disciple Swami Vivekananda, founder of the Ramakrishna Mission; Kadaitswami of Jaffna, in Gurudeva's own lineage; Sivadayal of the Radhasoami Vaishnava sect; Arumuga Navalar of Jaffna and Ramalingaswami of Tamil Nadu. It included Eknath Ranade, whose social reform thinking inspired Gandhi; Sri Aurobindo, who sought to advance the evolution of human consciousness; Swami Rama Tirtha, who lectured extensively in America; Sadhu Vaswani, Ramana Maharshi and many more. They were dedicated to bringing Hinduism out of centuries of oppression into its rightful place in the modern era. For all the progress made by these great men, and dozens more since, there remained in 1980 serious obstacles to a true Hindu renaissance. At a time when the "brain drain" was drawing India's best and brightest to America, perhaps it required Gurudeva—one of America's best and brightest—to travel the other way and remind Indians that they had something money couldn't buy: Hinduism, the greatest religion in the world. It was to be a tough mission. First, many Hindus wouldn't even admit they were Hindus. In a lecture in Sri Lanka, he described the problem: "Today there are many Hindus

who when asked, 'Are you a Hindu?' reply, 'No, I'm not really a Hindu. I'm nonsectarian, universal, a follower of all religions. I'm a little bit of everything, and a little bit of everybody. Please don't classify me in any particular way.' Are these the words of a strong person? No. Too much of this kind of thinking makes the individual weak-minded." Gurudeva wouldn't stop there. "They are disclaiming their own sacred heritage for the sake of money and social or intellectual acceptance. How deceptive! How shallow! The word should go out loud and strong: Stand strong for Hinduism, and when you do, you will be strong yourself." Closely related to this lack of self-identity as a Hindu was the popular notion that "All religions are one." Hindus don't need to claim to be Hindus, went this line of thought, because it doesn't really matter what religion you follow, since all are the same. Gurudeva countered, "All religions are not one. They are very, very different. They all worship and talk about God, yes, but they do not all lead their followers to the same spiritual goal. The Christians are not seeking God within themselves. They do not see God as all-pervasive. Jews, Christians and Muslims do not believe that there is more than one life or that there is such a thing as karma. They simply do not accept these beliefs. They are heresy to them." He had his monks research the beliefs of all the major faiths and clearly delineate one from another. Going against a common trend, he

PHOTOS: INDIVAR SIVANATHAN

preached the merits of sectarianism, of each of the great traditions of Hinduism—Saivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism and Smartism—retaining and valuing their unique features. The watered-down, homogenized Hinduism which some were advocating, he warned, would not sustain the individual *sampradayas*, spiritual teaching traditions, which are its core strengths.

One of India's leading writers, Sita Ram Goel, said, "Gurudeva's greatest contribution has been to rescue the word *Hinduism* from being a dirty word and restore it to its age-old glory. He made Hindus everywhere to see themselves as a world community and as inheritors of a great civilization and culture." Swami Advaitananda of the Brahma Vidya Ashrama in India said it this way: "In the present days, when Hindus are ashamed to call themselves so, it has been his work and teachings that have propelled faith and infused dynamism among the millions who lovingly addressed him as Gurudeva."

Gurudeva was astonished at the pervasive Christian influence in India, even though just two percent of Indians were Christians and even though the British had left fifty years ago. He found those in India educated in Christian schools to be anemic Hindus, their faith undermined by the years of study under teachers propounding an alien faith. One Catholic priest in Colombo even told him straight out, "The Hindu children that pass through my school may never become Catholics, but they certainly will never be good Hindus."

Gurudeva had nothing against Christianity or any other religion. He came, after all, from a country where Christians are in the majority. Only rarely in his years of ministry in America did he experience any Christian interference. In his early years, he studied with deeply mystical teachers of several religions, including Buddhists, Muslims and Christians. He knew the finer side of each faith.

What he saw at the Christian schools was bad enough, but the methods of Christian missionaries—trickery, enticement, intimidation—incensed him. He opposed this devious side of Christianity wherever he found it and told the Hindus worldwide to stand by their religious rights as Hindus. "When an elephant is young," he said time and again, "the *mahout*, trainer, can control it with a small stick, and the elephant learns to fear that stick. When the elephant is big, he still fears the stick, even though he could pick it up and the *mahout*, too, and toss them far away." By this same psychology, Gurudeva said, Hindus had become meek and submissive under years of Christian rule and unwilling now to mount serious protest to continued Christian oppression, even when the political power which made it possible in the first place was gone. His advice was not to at-

tack the Christians, but to disengage from and ignore them. He told Hindus to take their children out of Christian schools and to close their doors on Christian missionaries who came to their homes to proselytize.

A few Hindus opposed Gurudeva, unsure of what he was trying to do, or feeling perhaps that their "turf" was being invaded by an outsider. In 1999, he told his students on the Alaska Innersearch program about this time. "We did not fight them—'them' is 'us'—but let them find out that we were all working for the same thing, the upliftment of Hinduism." And over the years they did, until Gurudeva humorously lamented, "I am so disappointed in my enemies. Not one has ever been able to stay mad at me."

Gurudeva preached—and practiced—cooperation among Hindus. Three harmful habits stood in the way: attacking leaders, tolerating detractors and disharmony among boards and committees. "It is important that you refrain from the pattern that if one person in the community comes up, cut him down, malign him, criticize him until all heads are leveled," he said. "In modern, industrial society everyone tries to lift everyone else up. People are proud of an individual in the community who comes up, and they help the next one behind him to succeed as well. They are proud of their religious leaders, too. Not so here in India, because if anyone does want to help out spiritually they have to be quiet and conceal themselves, lest they be maligned. Nobody is standing up to defend the religion; nobody is allowing anybody else to stand up, either. This has to change, and change fast it will."

"Swami bashing" was another sport Gurudeva would not tolerate. Its origins were easily detected—Christian missionaries on one side and communists on the other, each for their own reasons wanting to discredit the swamis. Gurudeva later said, "When swami bashing was in vogue years ago, swamis took it seriously. They got to know each other better, stood up for each other and put a stop to the nonsense." Gurudeva made a point of meeting as many of the swamis of India as possible. He stayed in contact with them, too, especially through HINDUISM TODAY, and gathered their views on dozens of issues to formulate an all-Hindu stance and to empower spiritual leaders.

His perceptions about detractors were more subtle, and came to the fore as his renaissance mission matured in the late '80s and '90s and encompassed Hindus of the diaspora in dozens of countries. It was the result of years of experience with Hindu and non-Hindu organizations. The detractor, he explained, was the person who joined a religious group to socialize, but did not really support its aims. Such people, he said, can completely stymie a group's efforts. "At meetings they are quite competent to tell in



compelling terms why a project that all wish to manifest is not possible," he said. "They are equally capable of making everyone question the mission of the organization and their part in it."

It was a subtle perception, but perfectly clear for those facing detractors, such as a committee in the UK formed to build a Hindu temple. They even had one Christian and one communist as board members. Their purpose, one trustee memorably wrote, was "to infiltrate, dilute and destroy" the purpose of the committee. On his next visit to London, Gurudeva saw to it that the detractors were excused from the board.

Weeding out detractors was only a first step in making Hindu organizations, especially temple boards, more effective. Some in the West were famous for their rancorous meetings, with some disputes even spilling into the local courts, to the great embarrassment of the community. When trustees approached Gurudeva for advice, which many did, he emphasized the absolute necessity of harmony among board members, the same harmony he demanded of his monastic order. "Why," he would ask, "can't a board comprised of professional doctors and engineers get along in a professional manner? Do they have to forget their diplomatic skills mandatory at their regular jobs?" The advice was helpful to many communities, who

realized that no good work, especially the construction of a Hindu temple, was going to come out of meetings where tempers flared. Anger, jealousy and ego, he said, will derail any spiritual project.

He stood ready to defend the priesthood who serve in the Hindu temples around the world. He defended the rights of the Sivachariyas, the highest order of Saivite priests. One of their leaders, Sri T. S. Sambamurthy Sivachariyar, wrote, "His support to us was great. At a time when many organizations and even governments were discouraging us, he always raised his voice on behalf of us around the world at difficult times."

Gurudeva criticized those who claimed social superiority by virtue of caste. He said, "I don't understand how some people claim they are brahmins because their fathers are brahmins. They don't know the religion, and they can't do the worship. It's like someone saying, 'My father is a doctor, so I'm a doctor. Let me operate on you.' No way."

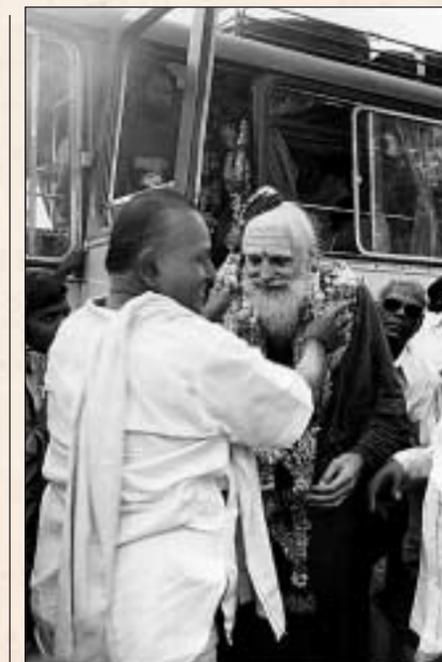
In Europe and America he advocated proper treatment of the priests, especially that they be given decent salaries, proper working conditions, reasonable hours and good housing. He wanted them to be represented on temple boards and be given the respect and position that priests and ministers of other faiths enjoy in the West, akin to that of a doctor or a lawyer. It wasn't his

most popular suggestion, especially to temple boards comprised of "brahmins." As an alternative, he encouraged priests to start their own temples, which a few have done and more plan to in the future.

He addressed a special part of his message to his fellow Saivites to dispel the common misconception that Lord Siva should not be worshiped in the home, and that the worship of Siva would make one poor. "Nonsense," he said, "Lord Siva is the God of Love" and explained that worship of Siva would bring every benefit, including wealth.

He wanted all the Gods brought "out of exile" and encouraged Hindus of each sect to make their home shrine the most beautiful room in the house. He reserved a special condemnation for those Hindus in the West who put their shrine in the closet, easily hidden when a guest visited. The house should proudly and openly reflect its religion and culture of the residents, he taught.

At a time when vocal advocates of a militant Hinduism arose, Gurudeva stood firm in defense of *ahimsa*, nonviolence, as an essential principle. Yet, he was not a pacifist. He endorsed the right of nations and individuals to self-defense. But he could foresee the negative karma and endless cycles of retribution in store for those who advocated violence, taking the law into their own hands to achieve their goals or to right past wrongs.



Welcome: (left) Children and adults in South India were delighted to receive Gurudeva at their village temple; (above) A. P. C. Veerabhagu of Tuticorin garlands Gurudeva upon his entrance to the South Indian town

This was not always the popular stance, but with scripture and the majority of swamis backing him up, one heard fewer and fewer Hindus advocating violent solutions.

Gurudeva didn't just advise communities what should be done; he set about doing it, especially through his publications. The books filled the gap for well-written explanations on Hinduism. Swami Bua, age 115, wrote, "Gurudeva's unique method of explaining the most complex principles in the simplest way was astounding. That was how he could reach more people. The most complicated philosophies appeared as the simplest and easiest messages in his hands—but with the same power and essence."

Gurudeva's renaissance message included Hindu pride, clear and public religious identity, correct religious understanding, reverence for scripture, respect for religious leaders, home worship, opposition to conversion, preservation of traditions, harmonious working together, interfaith harmony, Lord Siva as the God of Love and Hinduism as best suited of all religions for the modern, technological age. He dispelled many myths and misunderstandings about Hindus among Hindus and non-Hindus alike. He advocated a strong and loving Hindu home, encouraging mothers to not work but raise their children full-time and for parents to not use corporal punishment on children. He projected this message with clarity, boldness, love and humor, and he made a difference, redefining our modern Hindu world. 🍽️



RENAISSANCE GURU

A Global Touch

Gurudeva brought an articulate, dynamic Hindu presence to world religious conferences

GURUDEVA ONLY OCCASIONALLY attended conferences, though he was often invited. He found significant the Global Forums of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival in Oxford (1988), Moscow (1990) and Rio (1992), the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago (1993) and the Millennium Peace Summit of World Religious and Spiritual Leaders at the UN in 2000. "Russia was the most interesting of the Global Forums," Gurudeva reminisced last year. "It was sort of a captured group. You couldn't go out of the hotel or conference hall, because it was so cold." Day after day the religious leaders and the political leaders (from 57 nations) discussed the problems of the world. "We found out humanity is on the endangered species list," said Gurudeva, "right along with the whales and birds, and it was kind of embarrassing to find that out."

He created quite a stir at this meeting when one of the religious leaders was slighted. It occurred at a plenary session opening blessing. After an elegant African priestess concluded the

opening prayer, the panel moderator said, "Now let's get on to the real business of the day." Gurudeva took exception to this remark, telling the organizers that they had invited the spiritual leaders to work with the political leaders, but instead had them come up and give some little prayer, then insult their presence and diminish their participation. "She is the real business of the day," he scolded them, "as much as everything else, and you've really offended every spiritual



World meetings: (above) Most of the 450 participants of the 1988 Global Forum in front of the 18th century Peckwater Quad at Oxford University, England; (below) 2,500 world religious leaders gather at the United Nations in August 2000

tradition by pronouncing that we're just here as wallpaper to your meeting." The chairperson apologized, and the rest of the week spiritual leaders were eagerly brought forward and honored properly.

While he found value in conferences, and had his HINDUISM TODAY staff assist organizers, he found the meetings inefficient, boring, repetitive and woefully lacking in follow-through on the issues discussed after the event was over. He complained about meeting the same people time and again, making the same well-meaning resolutions, then forgetting all about it. He tried to keep the group of 25 "presidents" of religion, of which he was one of three Hindus, going after the Chicago Parliament of the World Religions. He felt this group could occasionally make statements on important issues. But there was little interest, and nothing came of it, despite his repeated efforts.

Kusumita Pedersen, a devotee of Sri Chinmoy and on the staff of the Global Forum, Parliament and UN organizing committees, commended Gurudeva's participation at the international conferences for "his powerful spiritual presence and his great clarity and commitment in engaging the issues. Also, his behind-the-scenes contribution has made a little known but historic difference to the development of interfaith work in the last generation."

Stop the War in the Home

Excerpts from Gurudeva's 2001 Message at the UN

WHEN ASKED BY THE United Nations leaders how humanity might better resolve the conflicts, hostilities and violent happenings that plague every nation, I answered that we must work at the source and cause, not with the symptoms.

To stop the wars in the world, our best long-term solution is to stop the war in the home. It is here that hatred begins, that animosities with those who are different from us are nurtured, that battered children learn to solve their problems with violence. This is true of every religious community. Not one is exempt.

This is a global problem, in all communities, but I believe that Hindus have the power to change it because our philosophy supports a better way. If we can end the war in our homes, then perhaps we can be an example to others, and this will lead to ending war in the world. People will choose a different path.

Sadly, in this day and age, beating the kids is just a way of life in many families. Nearly everyone was beaten a little as a child, so they beat their kids,

and their kids will beat their kids, and those kids will beat their kids. Older brothers will beat younger brothers. Brothers will beat sisters. You can see what families are creating in this endless cycle of violence: little warriors. One day a war will come up, and it will be easy for a young person who has been beaten without mercy to pick up a gun and kill somebody without conscience, and even take pleasure in doing so.

I've had Hindus tell me, "Slapping or caning children to make them obey is just part of our culture." I don't think so. Hindu culture is a culture of kindness. Hindu culture teaches *ahimsa*, noninjury, physically, mentally and emotionally. It preaches against *himsa*, hurtfulness. It may be British Christian culture—which for 150 years taught Hindus in India the Biblical adage, "Spare the rod and spoil the child"—but it's not Hindu culture to beat the light out of the eyes of children, to beat the trust out of them, to beat the intelligence out of them and force them to go along with everything in a mindless way, then take their built-up anger out on their chil-

dren and beat that generation down to nothingness. This is certainly not the culture of an intelligent future. It is a culture that will perpetuate every kind of hostility. Corporal punishment is arguably a prelude to gangs on the streets and those who will riot on call.

Now, is this the Hinduism of tomorrow? We hope not. But this is the Hinduism of today. It can be corrected by all of you going forth to bring peace within every family and every home. If you know about the crime of a beating of a child or a wife, you are party to that crime unless you do something to protect that wife or to protect that child.

In the past 85 years we've had two world wars and hundreds of smaller ones. Killers come from among those who have been beaten. The slap and pinch, the sting of the paddle, the lash of the strap, the blows of a cane must manifest through those who receive them into the lives of others.

We do know a few Hindu families who have never beaten their children or disciplined them physically in any way. We ask them "Why?" They

say, "Because we love our children. We love them." "So, how do you train them, how do you discipline them?" "Well, we have them go into the shrine room and sit for 10 minutes and think over what they did wrong, and they come back and we talk to them. We communicate. We encourage them to do better, rather than making them feel worse."

Holding the family together can be summed up in one word: love. Love is understanding. Love is acceptance. Love is making somebody feel good about his experience, whether the experience is a good one or not. Love is giving the assurance that there is no need to keep secrets, no matter what has happened. Love is wanting to be with members of the family.

When harmony persists in the home, harmony abides in the community, and harmony exists in the country. When love and trust is in the family, love and trust extend to the local community, and if enough homes have this harmony among members, the entire country becomes stronger and more secure. Let us determine then to call a truce in every Hindu home, then a truce in our communities leading to a longed-for truce among nations. This is something each and every one of us can do to put an end to wars.

Uniting the Hindu World

From modest beginnings, HINDUISM TODAY evolved into a world-class magazine

BY LAVINA MELWANI, NEW YORK

IN THE EARLY 1980S," GURUDEVA told me, "I made several world tours, visiting Mauritius, Sri Lanka, India, South Africa, Malaysia, England and other countries, and speaking to hundreds of thousands of people. I discovered that Hindus in each country were totally unaware of, or did not care, what was happening within the realms of their religion in other places in the world. Out of these tours came the mission of HINDUISM TODAY to strengthen all the many diverse expressions of Hindu spirituality and to give them a single, combined voice because everywhere else their voices were individualized. Through this magazine, we delineated the boundaries of Hinduism and placed this great and oldest religion alongside Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Jainism, Sikhism and the many other religions of the world. We showed the strength of Hinduism in articles by top writers and some of the finest photographers in the world, such as for our articles on the Kumbha Mela, the largest human gathering ever on planet Earth. We have been able to bring forward and honor a 'Hindu of the Year' and to listen to the wis-

dom of swamis and swaminis every month in our 'Minister's Message.'"

"Every religious order has a mission," Gurudeva went on. "Instead of starting an eye-clinic or an orphanage, we created a global publication to advance the cause of Hinduism and record its modern history. Through the years, we went through many learning curves to bring HINDUISM TODAY up to the standard it is today. It is the only religious magazine that we see on newsstands these days, right alongside *Newsweek* and *Time*." He commissioned his monks to promote all Hindu denominations in the magazine, to report "everybody's good work" and to never use the magazine solely for the promotion of our own mission and purposes.

Paramacharya Palaniswami, the editor of HINDUISM TODAY, elaborated for me upon Gurudeva's vision. "Opening up many books on Hinduism, they are so cluttered with technical terms, obscure references and other languages that the average seeker would go about three pages and not pursue it further." HINDUISM TODAY wanted to say all the important things, the profound things, but in an interesting voice which all could understand and appreciate. While Hindus

living in India are surrounded by their culture and faith, HINDUISM TODAY's mandate was to also reach the millions of Hindus who are trying to keep their faith alive in far-off places surrounded by different cultures. In isolated, alien townships and cities, shared words can provide courage, enthusiasm and energy to keep true to a faith. HINDUISM TODAY tells the world about India's cultural riches: ayurveda, classical dance, literature and drama, the healing power of meditation and yoga and the virtues of vegetarianism. To those who are Hindu and to those merely attracted by the principles of Indian spirituality, it offers a common platform, a feeling of family, a source of good vibrations. "Affirming Sanatana Dharma and recording the modern history of a billion-strong global religion in renaissance" is its mission statement.

HINDUISM TODAY reaches Hindus in 60 countries. Readers also include seekers of every ethnic group and religion who are attracted to the sublime philosophies of Sanatana Dharma. Surprisingly, a few subscribers are clergy and theological students of other major religions. For second-generation Indians growing up in foreign lands the magazine provides answers to perplexing questions in an intelligent and easily accessible way. It helps the children who have to deal with classmates who ask questions like, "Why do you worship cows?"

Back in 1987, the late Ram Swarup, then India's foremost spokesman for Hinduism, clearly caught Gurudeva's vision: "I personally believe that HINDUISM TODAY is doing God's work," he wrote. "Posterity will realize that it was an important landmark in the history of the reawakening of Hinduism. It is already helping the Hindus of the American hemisphere to retain their self-identity. It is also an inspiration to many of us here. It must remain the mouthpiece of the Sanatana Dharma and renaissance Hinduism and carry this message to all who care for it."

After John Dart of the *Los Angeles Times* listed HINDUISM TODAY as a prime source in his book, *Deities and Deadlines*, the mag-

azine has fielded calls from religion editors around the country, including from *Time* magazine. Most surprising to the staff, however, was a request from Houghton Mifflin, one of America's largest publishers for children's textbooks in middle and high schools, to vet its chapters on Hinduism for a civilization series for sixth graders destined for school rooms where half a million 13-year-olds will study it in the United States. Houghton Mifflin had called Harvard to critique the chapters, and Harvard referred them to HINDUISM TODAY. Recalls Palaniswami, "The two chapters were awful, devastatingly bad, even wrong in places. We ended up rewriting the whole thing, and also provided graphics. The chapters on other religions had really nice graphics, but for Hinduism they had found a horrible, monster-looking Siva for these young children to study. We sent them elegant, graceful images that Hindus would be proud to see." To the amazement of the magazine team, the publishers adopted the rewritten chapters, and as a result American kids will have an authentic and compelling introduction to the world's oldest religion, not some demeaning stereotype.

Many religious journals walk a tightrope between propaganda and journalism, but HINDUISM TODAY has always chosen the harder path of insightful reporting. Says Palaniswami: "Happily, we are not just 'another bhakti rag,' as one reader observed. While remaining upbeat, we do try to tell readers even about the painful underbelly of one-sixth of the human race's religion, Hinduism, to make it real and not paint an unrealistic or Pollyanna picture. It's important to express things in that way; otherwise people stop listening." Gurudeva added, "We only report the news after verification, and we al-

ways show both sides of controversial issues." They're not afraid to discuss tough social topics like wife battering, bride burnings, child abuse or the fact that Indian girls have the highest suicide rate. Interviews with strong Hindu women such as Madhu Kishwar, activist editor of *Manushi*, animal rights activist Maneka Gandhi and prison reformer Kiran Bedi are part of the consciousness-raising features.

While the core team is composed of monks, HINDUISM TODAY has over 100 journalists and dozens of photographers and artists working for it worldwide. These people live in the community and understand the problems modern Hindus face. The majority of contributors are Hindu women.

Beginning in November, 2000, the magazine added a daily e-mail news summary service, Hindu Press International, as a

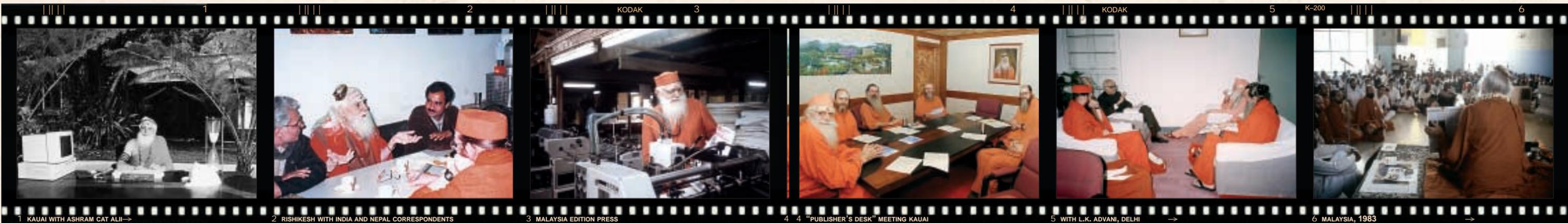
means to distribute the constant stream of stories about Hinduism appearing in the world press. A team of a dozen work to find news on the Internet and in print and distill it to one-paragraph summaries. HPI has filled a gap for the magazine by providing a means to instantly release timely stories and others unsuited to the magazine format.

Over the years HINDUISM TODAY has picked up the cudgels on behalf of persecuted Hindus in Fiji, Dubai, South Africa, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Kashmir. Without being highlighted in the press, these victims would have disappeared from human memory. There have been stories about Nepal, the only Hindu nation, being stormed by foreign missionaries. There were only 25 baptized Nepalese

Christians in 1960. The figure by 1994 had grown to 120,000. One rarely sees such stories in the press. With its countless success stories of important CEOs, artists, entrepreneurs and intellectuals unabashedly Hindu, HINDUISM TODAY has pinpointed role models for a new generation to follow.

Gurudeva's legacy highlights all that is good about Hinduism, with none of the infighting or fundamentalism. Always contemporary, witty and able to solve problems, he bridged cultural and language barriers and presented Hinduism in an accessible way to mainstream Americans and first generation Indian-Americans alike. Ma Yoga Shakti, a New York-based spiritual teacher, called him a Hanuman of today. Indeed, through his innovative and untiring efforts, he carried the pennant of Hinduism aloft in America. 

To inform, to unite: (above) A colorful and unusual view of the world as seen through the logo of *Hinduism Today*, a contemporary swastika stylized as quotation marks to represent the written word



1 KAUAI WITH ASHRAM CAT ALI →

2 RISHIKESH WITH INDIA AND NEPAL CORRESPONDENTS

3 MALAYSIA EDITION PRESS

4 "PUBLISHER'S DESK" MEETING KAUAI

5 WITH L.K. ADVANI, DELHI →

6 MALAYSIA, 1983 →



Changing faiths: Artist S. Rajam depicts some of the steps a soul takes in becoming a Hindu by “ethical conversion” (clockwise from upper left): confronting previous religious leaders to inform them of this change; Lord Siva looks on; an aspirant studies the philosophy of Sanatana Dharma; a convert learns to wrap a sari; a Chinese seeker worships Lord Ganesha; priests conduct the homa rites for the the name-giving sacrament.

He recommended the same conversion procedure for Indians who had converted to other faiths, especially when they—or their forefathers—converted because of pressure or practical expediency. “Born Hindus,” he observed, “have accepted new religions in order to have food on the table, to gain access to schools for their children or to a hospital for health care, to qualify for employment or a promotion, to protect their lands from

confiscation or their families from harm. This is not just a matter of history. It continues today.” Often after a few years, such people want to return to Hinduism, but the Hindu community will not accept them back. Gurudeva revived the ancient ceremony of *vratyastoma* to formally sanctify their reacceptance into the community.

Gurudeva did not condone the activities of Christian missionaries in India. Often he requested his HINDUISM TODAY staff to look into one or another unethical practice reported to him. He raised the conversion issue directly with missionary organizations, with governments and at international conferences. He held the organizations accountable for deception and enticement. “Doctors and lawyers have ethical guidelines concerning their patients and clients,” he wrote. “This is not always true among religionists. They can and often do disdain one another. Ethics must be established among all the religionists of the world. They must nurture an appreciation for each other, not merely a tolerance. Religious leaders, above all, must remain fair, despite their enthusiasm.”

To stem the tide of conversion, he said, education of Hindus in Hinduism must be a priority. “You cannot convert a Hindu who knows his religion.” His book *How to Become a Hindu* has found a ready audience in India. Reviewers suggested it should be called *How to Become a Better Hindu*. Gurudeva’s campaign for systematic conversion has opened the door to Hinduism for thousands of seekers and changed the way born Hindus regard newcomers and those returning to the faith.

INTERFAITH MATTERS

Conversion by Conviction

The ethics and issues of changing religions

CONVERSION IS NOTHING NEW FOR Hinduism. The advent of Jainism and Buddhism in India in 600 BCE resulted in the conversion of millions of Hindus. Centuries later, revivals resulted in the reconversion of millions of Jains and Buddhists. In modern times, conversion to or from Hinduism remains a major issue, often resulting in extreme disharmony within families and towns. We have Hindus switching as a result of enticement or deception. We have Indians who converted wanting to return to Hinduism. And we have non-Hindus from lands outside Bharat requesting formal entrance into our faith, including those who have married a Hindu.

Gurudeva addressed each of these issues, ultimately formalizing his experience and suggestions for “ethical conversion” in the book, *How to Become a Hindu*. As with his approach to most topics, he started with a mystical insight. In ancient times, people tended to reincarnate right within the same village and religion time and again. “Now,” he said, “with modern-day travel and worldwide communication, this tightly knit pattern of reincarnation is dispersed, and souls find new bodies in different countries, families and religions which, in some cases, are

foreign to them.”

For such a person, the “Eastern soul in a Western body,” he proposed a thoughtful and peaceful method of self-conversion. He required his own devotees wanting to convert from a previous faith to study that faith and explain convincingly, point by point, why they no longer believed it. He sent them back to their churches, synagogues, etc., encouraged them to attend services for a while and speak with their ministers. Every chance was given for them to change their mind, or to have someone change it for them. If they passed this test, they were required to demonstrate their knowledge of Hinduism through a series of exams, legalize their new Hindu name, then enter the faith formally through the name-giving rite, *namakarana samskara*, in a temple ceremony. There were also many among his devotees who had no previous faith, even though they grew up in the West. In their case, they adopted Hinduism as their first religion through the study of it and the name-giving ceremony, without the need to “convert.” Gurudeva strongly enjoined Hindus to welcome sincere converts and adoptives into their midst and not shun or ignore them, as is often done.

BREAKING GROUND

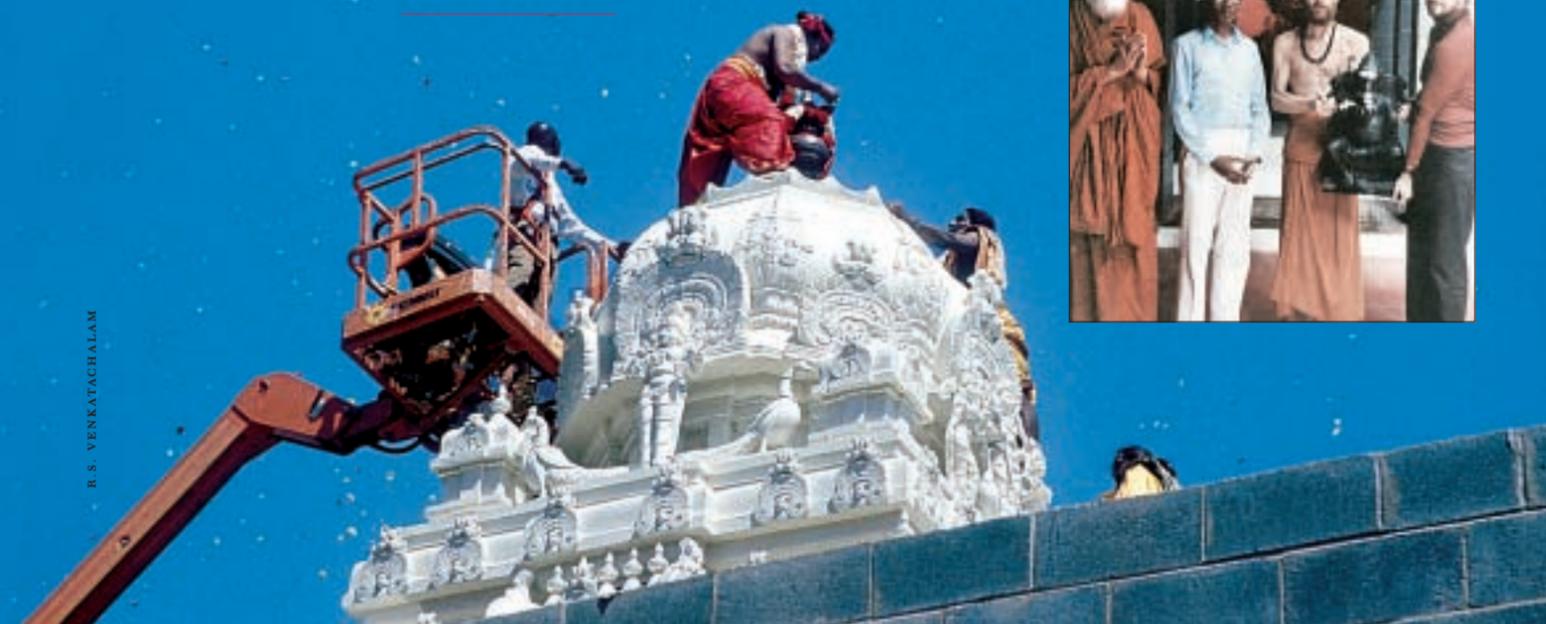
Build Those Temples!



Consecration: Gurudeva climbs down a makeshift stairway after pouring sanctified water over the spires to bless the newly completed Sri Siva Subrahmanya Temple in Nadi, Fiji, in 1995. See story, next page.

Gurudeva emboldened communities all over the world to establish holy sanctuaries for God and the Gods

R. S. VENKATACHALAM



WE WANTED TO BUILD A TEMPLE in our area," said Arumugan Saravanapavan, one of the founders of the multi-million-dollar Murugan Temple of North America in Maryland, a few miles from America's Capitol. "Since we didn't have land, or a clear idea of how to proceed, someone suggested we see Subramuniyaswami in Hawaii. The next week my wife and I went to visit him, in 1982. I explained the problem, and the next day he presented us with a three-foot-tall Ganesha. He said, 'You take Pillaiyar with you, and He will show you the way to build the temple.'" As instructed, they began the worship of Lord Ganesha, first in homes. The community's devotion came to the fore. Gurudeva visited several times, helped with the planning and personally blessed the land they purchased. When Gurudeva spoke at that blessing, recalls Mrs. Guruswamy, wife of the temple's first president, "The children were carried away. He was able to explain our religion in a way they could understand." A recent newsletter from the temple said, "With his monks, Gurudeva helped every step of the way in building the Murugan Temple, from the community to the structure. As busy as he was, he made time to take phone calls from the temple devotees. He inspired the young and grew himself in many of our hearts." In May, 1999, Gurudeva was the honored guest at the temple's mahakumbhabhishekam, or grand opening.

In a similar way, Gurudeva has guided 36

other temples in the United States, Canada, Guadeloupe, Denmark, England, Fiji, Germany, Mauritius, New Zealand, Reunion, Russia, Sweden, and Sri Lanka—giving each community or temple an icon of God, usually Lord Ganesha, and guidance when needed. He has also helped dozens more with direct advice or by publicizing their project in HINDUISM TODAY.

Some temples, such as the Maha Ganapati Temple in Edmonton, Canada, he guided very closely. "The conception of the Edmonton temple came right from Gurudeva," recalls Aran Veylan, a lawyer from Canada. "It gives the temple a special power to be connected to Gurudeva in that way. He brought the whole community together and defined the community as 'Tamil Hindus' because in the early 70s, the 'Tamils' were a Tamil cultural group—Christians and Hindus together. Now the community has matured into a Tamil Saivite community, and that is all because of Gurudeva's influence." The community has gone so far as to make the constitution of the temple state that one has to be a Saivite Hindu in order to be a member. Because of this, according to D. Selvarajah, one of the founding members, the temple now has a very clear and strong power. People from all over Canada come to this temple and have told Selvarajah it is the best temple in Canada and an example for them to follow.

Selvarajah recalls, "Gurudeva told us in the beginning, 'You have all built temples in Sri Lanka. Now, because of the children,

From idea to inauguration: (inset) In 1982, Gurudeva gifts a granite Ganesha to a Hindu community in Maryland. (above) Consecration of the completed structure in 1999, celebrated with Gurudeva as guest of honor.

you have to teach them what you know. The temple is what will bring the families together and the children together."

In Denmark, Gurudeva helped establish the Abirami Amman temple. The priestess, Sri Abirami Upasagi, is deeply psychic. While in trance, she channels the Goddess to heal and bless people. In the beginning she was criticized. She appealed to Gurudeva, as she felt these channelings were good and caused no harm. Gurudeva assured her that what she was doing was correct, and that he would put her under his psychic protection. Gurudeva gave her a small Ganesha in 1995. The icon arrived on the Ganesha Chaturti festival day in August. They commenced the worship that same day, and milk began dripping from Ganesha's eyes. A month later the famous "Milk Miracle" happened around the world, and this tiny statue began drinking gallons and gallons of milk offered before it with a small spoon. For many days after, hundreds of Hindus and local Danes came to feed Ganesha, including national television reporters. No one could explain the phenomenon witnessed by so many.

A few months later, Gurudeva sent a three-foot-tall Goddess Amman Deity to that temple. With Gurudeva's support, the

priestess has become a respected spiritual leader. In August 2001, Gurudeva's travel-study program "Innersearch Europe" visited their land, and Gurudeva laid the first stones of the new temple with his own hands.

In 1982, he visited Chicago and met with a group interested in starting a temple. Previously, one of the trustees, Dr. N. Janakiraman, had visited Kauai. They were having a great number of problems, Janakiraman explained, and couldn't agree on what to do next. They did, however, agree to do whatever Gurudeva told them to do. Gurudeva told them to start the worship of Lord Ganesha. "After receiving Gurudeva's blessings," said Janakiraman, "We returned home and, to our utmost surprise and ecstatic joy, Lord Ganesha had already arrived at the O'Hare airport." Gurudeva expedited the delivery as a surprise gift. A handful of devotees greeted the 2,000-pound statue and decided to start the worship in Mr. Rajagopalan's home. The house soon proved too small to accommodate the crowds, so they moved Ganesha to an industrial complex in 1983. Gurudeva assigned one of his close local devotees, Dr. Devananda Tandavan, to work with the community and keep him in touch with the progress.

Gurudeva was a great fund-raiser for temples. He attended a few fund-raising meetings as the guest of honor in Chicago and gave an inspiring discourse each time, telling those gathered to get out their check books and write down a number—then "add a few more zeros."

When he visited one temple being renovated in Singapore, the trustees explained their fund-raising strategy to sponsor each square foot of the new temple for \$100. Immediately he reached in his bag, took out a \$100 bill and bought one sponsorship. It was likely from the trustees' astonished look that he was the first visiting swami to ever contribute to their temple fund. Then he appealed for funds to the temple congregation during his speech. "I gave \$100," he said, "because I need the good karma of that gift to come back to me one day, maybe in the form of \$500." The same promotion was repeated to bolster temple fund-raising around the world. People were impressed to see him raise money like this for others, without saying a word about his own fund-raising needs.

Gurudeva wanted the temples to be accepted in the local communities, especially among the indigenous people. In Anchorage, Alaska, reported Shyamadeva Dandapani, "Gurudeva insisted we obtain the blessings of the Alaskan native spiritual leaders and elders." The Pipe Carriers, as the chiefs are called, joined the rites, honoring the Anchorage Hindu community with songs and chants. They shared the sacred peace pipe with Gurudeva and gave him a sacred drum. Gurudeva similarly invited native Hawaiian priests to bless the Iraivan Temple site and foundation at Kauai Aadheenam.

Sometimes a new temple represents a local revival of Hinduism. In Fiji, for example, the community had to move the 100-year-old Murugan temple in Nadi after losing the

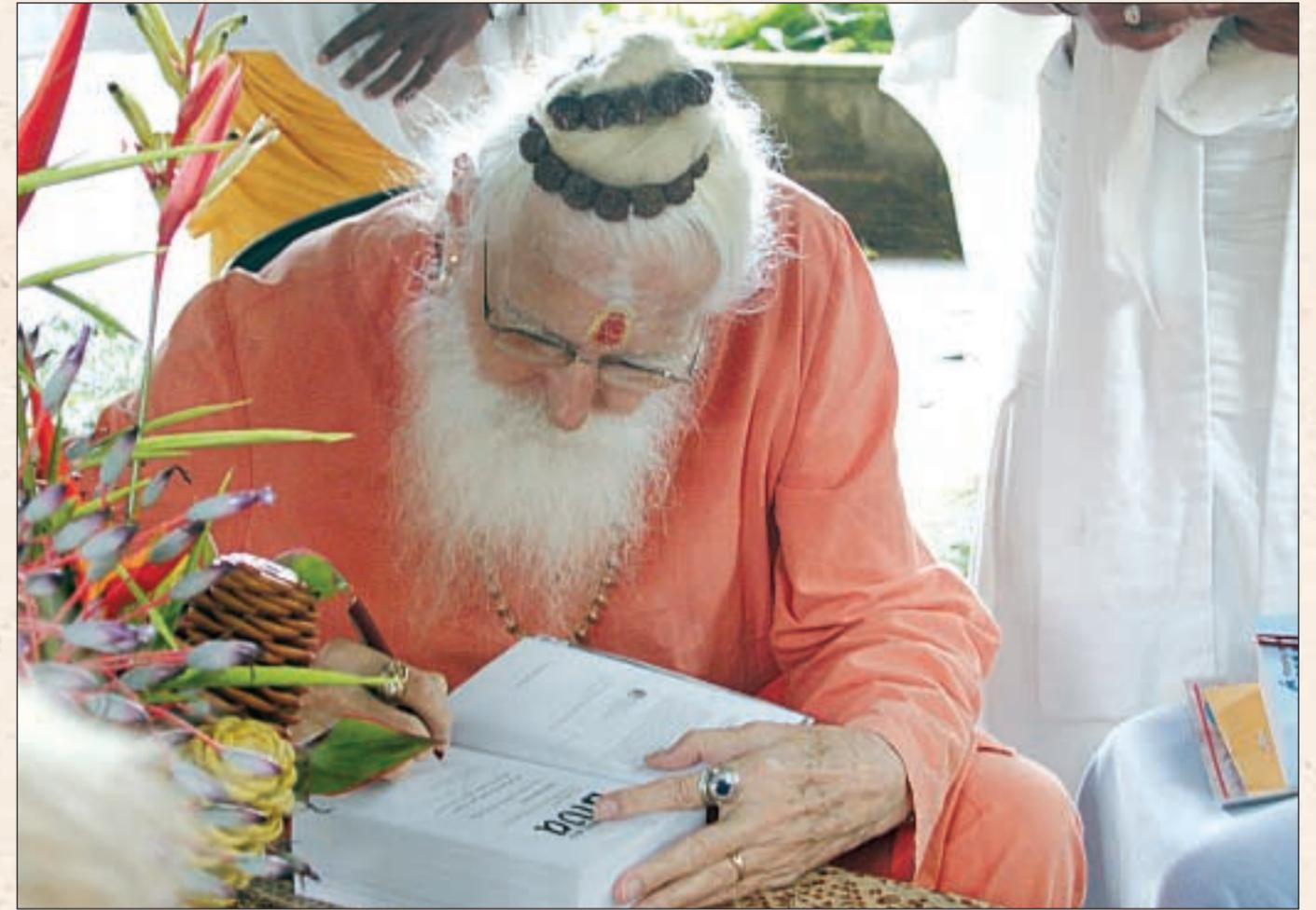
For the next generation: Gurudeva meets with Fiji children and gives them copies of the Saivite Hindu Religion children's course

land lease. They had already chosen a prime piece of land but couldn't get the project going. Gurudeva told them to begin the worship and sent a granite icon of Lord Ganesha. It was immediately installed on the new property. As in Chicago, the temple trustees had decided to do whatever Gurudeva directed. One trustee later commented that upon the temple's completion, "everything Gurudeva told us to do worked." The huge edifice symbolized a positive new identity for Hindus in a country in which ethnic relations had become strained. Even Christian representatives told one of Gurudeva's monks they realized the temple stood for a resurgence of Hinduism in Fiji. Gurudeva also responded to the local request for a Hindu children's course.

Now that hundreds of temples have been built all over the world, many trustees have asked, "What's next?" Gurudeva gave the answer, "I want to see the stewardship of each temple take their leadership responsibilities seriously. The temples are built, the temples are dedicated, the Deities are there, the priests are there, the congregation is there. It is up to the core elected leadership, the trustees of the temple, to actually become full-time spiritual leaders and make a difference in the lives of the parents and children and change the community into a model community."



PHOTO BY STUDIO 103/JOE KITAHARA



PUBLISHING

Power of the Press

Gurudeva began by printing his own books, then finessed the skills learned into a high-tech, multinational publishing tool to promote Hinduism

THE YEAR WAS 1957. GURUDEVA HAD JUST turned thirty and begun his mission in the West. Knowing the innate power of the press, he bought a mimeograph machine. "Mimeograph?" you ask. For those under fifty, that's the office printing technology that preceded Xerox copiers, a stencil and spirit duplication device used between 1884 and 1960 for making copies. Gurudeva would later tell his monks of cranking out tracts and pamphlets, hands stained with the bluish-purple dyes of a messy-smelly technology. With such simple tools, he published his first book, *Raja Yoga*.

From the outset of his mission 52 years ago, publications were seen as a strategic tool, not merely to inform, but to transform individuals, a way to vivify a personal and cultural revival within Hinduism. As the years passed, he embraced new technologies as soon as they emerged, moving up to small AB Dick presses when they came to market, then massive Heidelberg presses which he brought in 1970 to his Mountain Desert Monastery, high in Nevada. The monks studied printing and typesetting arts at professional schools. Experts in press, bindery and photography/prepress skills all

pilgrimaged to the two-story building to offer their knowledge to the eager young apprentices in robes. Gurudeva founded Sierra Graphics, Ponderosa Press and Comstock House—a triad of institutions to design, print and distribute the books.

Books flowed like a stream in spate. Comstock House produced small, award-winning ones by the tens of thousands, notably the *On the Path* and *Pathfinder's Library* series, with titles like *The Meditator*, *On the Brink of the Absolute* and *The Power of Affirmation*. Teams of monks and family members traveled the US, placing the books in as

many as 3,500 stores. As the popularity of the titles increased, the sleep of the monks was inversely affected. They began printing far into the snow-bound nights to keep abreast of demand, napping on the press-room floor when overcome by fatigue. It was a heady time, and those books touched the soul of a generation looking for spiritual insights, the flower children of the '70s.

So competent did the monastics become that they received orders, big ones, from Nevada casinos. Restaurant placemats (one order for a million!), menus, brochures, Keno tickets and Harrah's Club letterheads began to fill the cavernous brick-walled rooms in Virginia City. Most of the time, Gurudeva had the monks printing his mission-critical literature: Innersearch Travel-Study brochures, Inspired Talks, posters, newsletters, correspondence course materials—all needed for a dynamic, growing institution.

In 1985 Gurudeva, who had never sat at one, bought a state-of-the-art Macintosh computer for himself. Seeing its potential, he ordered one for each of his monks, urging them to adapt their various services to this new tool. And did they. In 1986 Gurudeva's team cobbled together the world's first pub-

lishing network. This won them the 1987 MacConnection User of the Year Award and so impressed Apple Computer (monks and Macs?) they flew a three-man film team to Hawaii for two days to record the happening.

The '80s saw a series of publications focusing on Saiva Siddhanta, including translations of the classic *Tirumantiram* and *Tirukural* texts, which Gurudeva insisted be available in modern English. That decade he published hundreds of thousands of posters and pamphlets to promote Hinduism and popularize its worship and wisdom.

It was also a time of major growth for HINDUISM TODAY, founded in 1979. He focused his Publisher's Desk editorials on tough issues previously shrouded in silence, using his journal to guide the Hindu mind in how to dharmically approach matters like spouse abuse, suicide, adultery, pornography, mixed marriages, organ transplants and human cloning. The latter led to an invitation from President Clinton's Blue Ribbon Committee on human cloning for Gurudeva to define the Hindu view for legislators confronting the issue. Years later, the Texas Medical Association asked the magazine to write a chapter in their book on medical

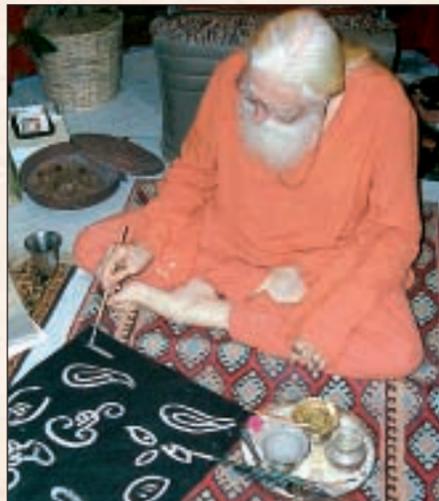
Words to match his deeds: (opposite) *Banta's press in Michigan churns out HINDUISM TODAY*; (inset) *for decades Gurudeva met daily, 3:00 to 7:00pm, to work on his writings. Here he leads his team on a wireless network near the beach*; (above) *autographing his book for a Kauai pilgrim.*

ethics to guide US doctors with Hindu patients. In such ways the magazine reached beyond its readership, guiding ashrams, yoga schools and hundreds of institutions. And not just in English. During the '80s, Gurudeva engineered a system of franchises, allowing teams around the world to republish in their regional languages in Malaysia, the Netherlands, India, South Africa and elsewhere.

The '90s were filled with state-of-the-art books and a move to digital publishing, including multimedia and CD design and production, audio, video and graphic. He introduced his daily Hindu news service, HPI, using the Internet to connect and inform Hindus. Gurudeva developed an editing style that was highly collaborative, based on networked Macs. Each afternoon, 365 days a year unless he was traveling, he met

with a team of monks between 3:00 and 7:00 pm. The team's portable PowerMacs were connected so that the same file, say a chapter of *Loving Ganesha*, was displayed simultaneously on all four monitors, to be accessed and altered by any member of the team. From this digital synergy poured forth thousands of pages, most notably *The Master Course* trilogy, Gurudeva's lifetime legacy on Hindu philosophy, culture and yoga.

Gurudeva was not writing in those sessions. In fact, he never wrote a book in the usual way. Rather, his thousands of recorded discourses provided the raw material of his works. Several times each week, or when traveling abroad, he would address pilgrims and seekers, speaking on dharmic subjects or answering their personal queries. He would invite his CyberCadets, visitors to his website, to send in questions by e-mail. A collection of over 600 talks can be found at www.gurudeva.dynip.com/~htoday/talks/.



Sacred art: Gurudeva paints traditional Hindu symbols using wet vibhuti, holy ash



Painter's patron: With Saroja Nagaratnam in her Chennai home studio, circa 1983

Days later, his editing team would import the transcripts, fine-tune them and add supplemental materials as he directed. Gurudeva personally edited every word in every book, without exception. That hands-on style brought an integrity and euphony to the lifetime written record of his creative, illuminating and vivifying mind.

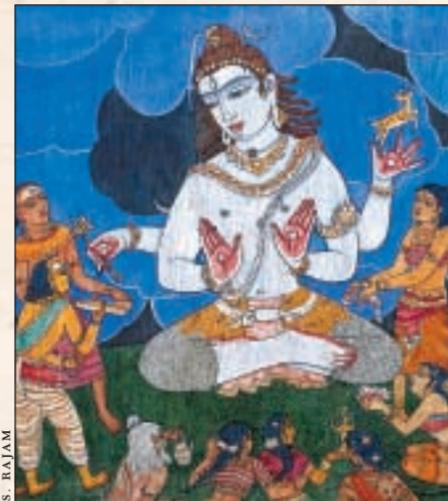
His books were vast, diverse and always focused on deepening everyone's understanding of Hinduism, and always in an approachable and practical idiom. In the last ten years the book effort took on a new momentum as others realized their preciousness. Spanish-speaking readers wanting to share the teachings received permission to translate the works. A team in Russia published editions, as did others in Sri Lanka (Tamil), Mumbai (Marathi), Kuala Lumpur (Bahasya Malay) and elsewhere. Motilal Banarsidass, Munshiram Manoharlal and Abhinav, three of Delhi's foremost publishers,

vied to reprint his books in India.

In his vivacious final year, Gurudeva completed the trilogy, and set a new standard even for his monks asking them to publish the three, art-rich, thousand-page books in full color and hardbound. It was unprecedented, as a few minutes in any bookstore reveals. A Malaysian printer was found for the task, and on October 27 *Living with Siva* was lovingly placed in Gurudeva's hands on his deathbed. He saw, in that moment, the last of his remarkable publishing efforts come to fruition. The monks recalled: "We placed the four-pound gem into his hands, and spontaneously the whole room erupted in applause, loudly saluting Gurudeva for this masterstroke. We asked how we could go on in his absence, without his grace and wisdom. He tenderly assured his aggrieved monastics, 'It's all there in the Master Course to guide your life and answer your questions.'"

A Heart for Art

GURUDEVA UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE of art in communicating ideas and uplifting the human spirit, and he regarded Hindu art as itself sacred. During his travels, he noticed that art, like so many other Hindu things, was waning, with unappreciated artists urging their sons to be engineers. In response, he sought out the finest artists and commissioned them to do major works in traditional styles, paying them well for their gifts. Artists in India, Bali and North America took on creative projects, some involving years of painstaking work on a single canvas, others requiring hundreds of large paintings illustrating Hindu motifs. Much of it has been ported to the Web, and a digital tour can begin at www.hinduart.org/mws/index.html. Art is more than painting, and Gurudeva retained bronze and stone craftsmen to produce Siva saints, Siva's 108 dance poses, a 32,000-pound Nandi and a 12-foot Dakshinamurthi. Artists were awed by this saint's interest in their skills. Two years ago Gurudeva brought A. Manivelu to Malaysia and the US for two months so he could see, and therefore depict, contemporary Hindu families and practices around the globe. S. Rajam, who at 83 still paints for Himalayan Academy, was captivated when in 1995 Gurudeva purchased his lifetime collection, fifty years of ingenious effort, and brought it to America to save it from neglect. Rajam wrote, "To take my 400 paintings to his ashram in Hawaii is something that opened my heart, to know there is a future for my paintings. Above all, his very majestic personality reminds artistes like me of old-time rishis and religion-makers."



Grace: Devotees approach Siva. Gurudeva breathed new life into art and artists.



Sculptor: Craftsman completes 108 bronzes of Siva's Cosmic Dance for Gurudeva

COMMENTARY

Meeting Gurudeva

How this Arya Samaj swami found a warm welcome and support at the Kauai ashram

BY SWAMI AGNIVESH

ICAME TO KNOW ABOUT HINDUISM TODAY AND THE mission of Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami six or seven years ago through a friend who lives in Switzerland. He gave me some literature about the magazine. Ever since I have been off and on looking at HINDUISM TODAY and trying to find out more about Gurudeva's great work. I finally met him at the Millennium Peace Summit of World Religious and Spiritual Leaders in New York in August, 2001, along with his monks, friends and colleagues. I was very much impressed by their serenity and the way they conducted themselves at the summit. Later on, when I was visiting Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii, I was able to meet Gurudeva at his Kauai ashram, the abode of peace.

That was a very great experience for me. The whole ashram radiated with his philosophy and concept of Hindu renaissance. I was impressed not only by the natural beauty—I can say this is the rarest natural place in the whole world where easily you can have peace of mind—but I was also impressed by the devotion and dedication of Gurudeva himself and the fourteen *sannyasin* monks living there. I was impressed by each one of them. Each of them carried with him a great mission to bring out the best in Hinduism and to transmit it to the people the world over.

I was thrilled when Gurudeva personally greeted me, gave me a shawl and embraced me. He was very affectionate. I was moved and very much touched by his gesture. I was an ordinary visitor there, yet he could not only find time to meet me, but was personally attentive. He discussed with me as to how we could collaborate to bring forth the real Vedic light. People have been denied access to the *Vedas* over centuries—number one, by some medieval pundits. There are so many wrong interpretations, perverse interpretations, which have done a lot of disservice. Gurudeva was very thrilled that we would be able to collaborate and work together.

I was taken around the whole ashram. I had lunch there and long discussions with the other swamis. The whole atmosphere exuded a type of culture which I had not seen anywhere. The most thrilling aspect for me and the most reassuring aspect of the ashram and the *sannyasins* led by Gurudeva was that there are some great *sannyasins* who were not born Hindus. And yet they had taken upon themselves the rigors of a *sannyasin*, not only in terms of austere lifestyle but also scholarship and meditation. And

I could see that for the first time in history an organized attempt was made under the leadership of Gurudeva to break this concept that Hindus are there only by birth. For several centuries in our country, India, we have had this nauseating concept that you can only be born as a Hindu, and that there is no way that you can become a Hindu. The Satguru challenged this and displayed to the world that it can be done, and that it can be done in a very, very glorious way. They laid the foundation for renaissance, Satguru and his colleagues.

Normally in an ashram in India the guru is kept at a distance. But here Gurudeva

freely mixes with you. I was overwhelmed by the whole atmosphere. I very much cherish my few hours spent there. I would like to go back. One of his *sannyasins* who works on HINDUISM TODAY briefed Gurudeva about what generally is the public opinion about me and my work. Gurudeva said, "He is doing a good work and taking a lot of abuse in the process. Therefore, I will support him wholeheartedly." Now, this is a very bold statement.

Normally, the swamis and gurus keep aloof from the world. They do not want to be involved in the worldly things. Now, this great swami had learned about the use of fly ash to make concrete, by replacing part of the cement [used for the massive foundation of Iraivan temple]. When I told him that I work among brick-kiln workers, bonded laborers and stone quarry workers, he

wanted me to be in touch with that environmentally friendly technology [which could be used in brick making]. Fly ash is a waste product of power plants and causes much pollution in India. Gurudeva was very particular that I should learn about it.

Subsequently, a few months later, he sent me by e-mail more information. This aspect of Satguru impressed me very much. He was very much worldly. He was very environmentally friendly. He was for new technology which helps humankind to live better. His spirituality was not confined to *japa* and chanting but it was very much a part of the world as well. He wanted his spirituality to resonate outside also. That is what I

consider to be social spirituality. This spirituality not only takes care of the inside of a person but his outside as well. This was very great of him.

I am very sure that he has made a breakthrough in this age-old concept that a Hindu is only born and that there is no way you can become a Hindu. By himself becoming a Hindu and a *sannyasin*, he has challenged the obnoxious caste system. Because if you are only born a Hindu, then obviously you are born into a caste. There is no way that you can get away from the caste system. He gave me a copy of his very fascinating book, *How to Become a Hindu* [published in India by Motilal Banarsidass]. He has opened the door for millions and millions worldwide to become Hindus in a scientific manner. I think it is a great tribute we should pay to Gurudeva, and I am sure people around him, who have worked with him, will carry forward the torch, and we will all be able to contribute to the dream and vision of Gurudeva.



Blessing: Gurudeva honors Swami Agnivesh with a shawl during his visit to Kauai Aadheenam in 2001

Voices of India

Gurudeva touched the hearts of leaders across the Hindu holy land

Jayendra Puri Swami speaks of his guru **His Holiness Paramacharya Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Tiruchi Swamigal**, highly respected founder and head of Sri Kailas Ashrama Mahasamsthana, Bangalore: "My guru, a realized *jnani* himself, has repeatedly said more than a hundred times that Sri Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is an avatar of Lord Karttikeya, the Commander in Chief of the divine army, because he was the leader of all virtues.

"The relation between Tiruchi Swamiji and Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is inexplicable. It was more than friendship. They were a one soul with one goal. Tiruchi Swamiji is a person who rarely gives discourses. But whenever he has spoken about Sivaya Subramuniyaswami, he has discoursed for not less than one-and-a-half hours. He regards him as a very great soul, not an ordinary mortal.

"My guru has always said the disciples of Sivaya Subramuniyaswami and the discipline followed in the Kauai ashram are an example to all the other ashrams in the world. The way it is maintained and the strict adherence to rules is an ideal example. It was Sivaya Subramuniyaswami's goal to live by the Hindu scriptures. He was able to inculcate that way of living among his disciples.

"He sent copies of his works for review. Tiruchi Swami said of his books, 'No one in India has been able to do such tremendous work.' Sivaya Subramuniyaswami has been able to leave behind a well-groomed batch of disciples who will run the ashram according to the wishes and dreams of their Guru. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami was very frank in his expressions, and we have learned a great deal from him. He drew his strength to be forthright from his *tapas*.

"This birth of Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is a very rare birth. To

learn and practice a religion that did not belong to your land—being an outsider and contributing so much to Hindu religion is amazing. He has been able to teach Hindus how to be a Hindu."

H.D.H. Sri Pramukh Swami Maharaji is the leader of the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha in the lineage of Lord Swaminarayan and head of an order of more than 700 *sannyasins*, or renunciates: "We are all personally grieved to know this sad news. Many of us have shared deep spiritual relationships with Gurudeva. The first duty of all the disciples and sadhus of Gurudeva would be to follow every command of Gurudeva and keep on doing the great work he has been doing in letter and spirit. In Hinduism's tradition the body dies, but the spirit and consciousness of the person who has left the body will continue to guide. I will do special prayers personally for Gurudeva, who has done great work. The same respect as was given to Gurudeva should be given to his chosen successor, Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami. Gurudeva's spirit will continue to guide his successor. Whosoever comes to his seat would be respected for his qualities of virtue and spiritual worth and not talent and capabilities. Gurudeva's saintliness and spiritual values will continue to guide the whole *sampradaya*, or lineage. This has been the tradition of Hinduism."

Jagadguru Shankaracharya Sri Bharati Tirtha of the Sri Sharada Peetam, Sringeri: "Satguru Sivaya Subramuniya Swami was a unique religious leader of our times, very affectionately called 'Gurudeva' by his followers. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami started a lineage

of Saivite followers. Fifty years of his dedicated work sparked a Hindu renaissance in the Western world. As publisher of HINDUISM TODAY the role played by Satguru in promoting the cause of Hinduism and beliefs deeply rooted in our Sanatana Dharma is an important one. His saintliness and spiritual values will continue to guide his followers in all time to come. May God grant strength and willpower to all his devotees to uphold and work on the lines initiated by Gurudeva."

Dada Jashan P. Vaswani, spiritual head of Sadhu Vaswani Mission in Pune, India: "Beloved and Blessed One, such was God's Will! Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami was called away from temporal existence on November 12. The Voice that gave comfort to myriad devotees is stilled, but the Message remains. The Form through which God blessed thousands of devotees is gone, but the Light remains. May it be the privilege of Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami and you all and many others to spread this Light, far and wide. Humanity needs it. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami now dwells in the Starland of Silence. From there may he continue to pour his benedictions upon you all—and this humble servant here—in rich abundance. Say not that Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is gone. He hath but been united to the "Golden Purusha" of whom the *Upanishads* speak to us in rapturous strains—the Golden Spirit who, unseen by many, hath His seat in every heart. My humble, loving *pranams* to Satguru Bodhinatha and all inmates of the Ashram. I bow down to you all and seek your blessings. And may the Lord continue to bless you and your noble work ever-increasingly! In the One Service."

Sri-la-Sri Balagangadharanatha Swami, head of the Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Mutt in Bangalore: "He preached *ahimsa*, nonhurtfulness, and changed the attitude of thousands of people in a foreign land and made them see the essence in Hinduism. Even at the Parliament of World Religions, he was able to impress upon the members of all other nations that we all are children of the same God and peace should be our prayer. He was truly a messenger of peace. I was impressed by Sivaya Subramuniyaswami's forthrightness. He would speak directly about issues relating to dharma and religion. I was deeply touched by his concern for society, especially issues concerning family and children. In many ways

he has been of great influence both on me as a person and to our institution. When he visited our educational institutions, he told me that education should not restrict itself to academics like a government program. He said we should teach our scriptures, our traditions and values as well. On his advice we have incorporated this, setting aside time for spiritual items. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami was pained to hear that female infanticide and abortions were being carried out in our hospitals, and he advised me that we should stop this practice. He was instrumental in spreading the message of Sanatana Dharma in many countries across the world. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami was a guiding force towards peace and spirituality in an otherwise materialistic, violence-prone American society. He could convert people to a good life."

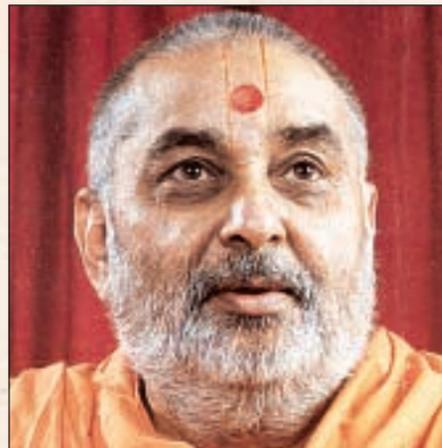
Swami Chidananda Saraswati (Muniji), president and spiritual head of Parmath Niketan Ashram in Rishikesh: "Gurudeva was the embodiment of kindness and compassion. A guru is like Ganga, bringing inspiration, liberation and purity to all whom he touches. Gurudeva was definitely this ideal. I could see that, like Mother Ganga, he gave and gave with no discrimination, no expectation, no hesitation and no vacation. His life was for all, bringing everyone in his midst to purity, upliftment and divinity. He not only taught people, but he also touched people! So many can teach, but only a few can truly touch the minds, hearts and souls of so many. His commitment to the traditional, pure aspects of Hinduism was truly unique and memorable."

Swami Paramananda Bharati, attached to Sringeri Peetam and famous for chanting "Aum" in the Kremlin at the Moscow Global Forum in 1988: "I was shocked to hear that Gurudeva is no more. It was an irretrievable loss to the great work of the international Hindu renaissance. Undoubtedly, no one could equal him in inspiring Hindus all over the world. He was a Siva *bhaktar* to the core, but without a trace of fanaticism. His vision of Hinduism was total, his approach rational and his love universal, pure, soothing and irresistible. I have never seen a person who is so integral. I join millions of people all over the world mourning his departure. I pray that his life shall inspire the Hindus all over the world to rededicate themselves for the great cause that he lived his life for and march ahead



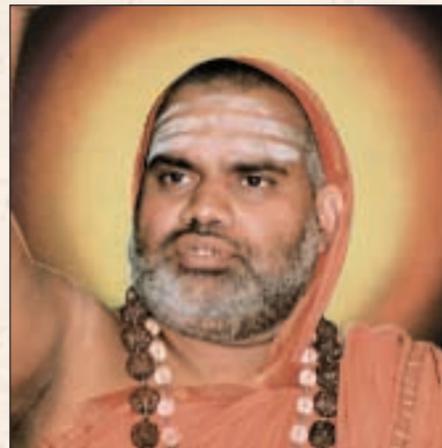
Sri Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is an avatar of Lord Karttikeya Himself, the Commander-in-Chief of the divine army.

Sri Sri Sri Tiruchi Swamigal



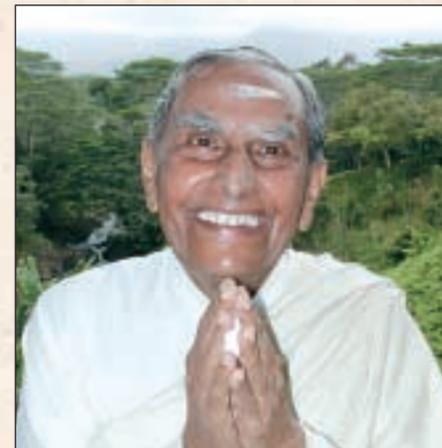
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Sri Pramukh Swami Maharaji



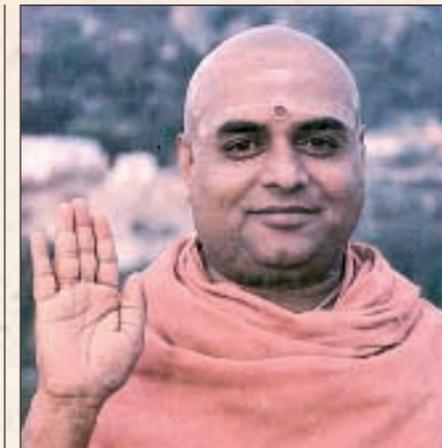
May God grant strength and will power to all his devotees to uphold and work on the line initiated by Gurudeva.

Shankaracharya Sri Bharati Tirtha



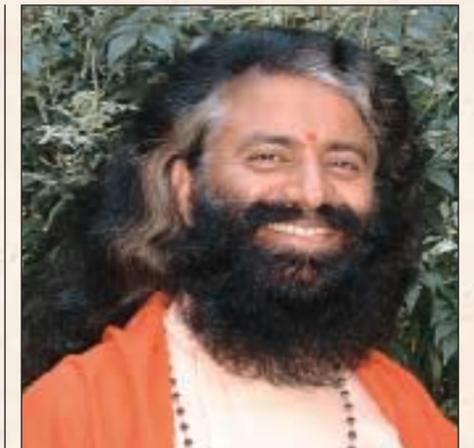
Say not that he is gone. He hath but been united to the Golden Purusha of whom the *Upanishads* speak, the Golden Spirit in every heart.

Dada J.P. Vaswani



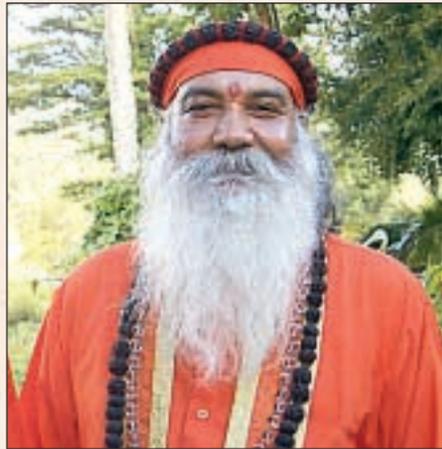
Gurudeva was a guiding force towards peace and spirituality in an otherwise materialistic, violence-prone American society.

Sri Balagangadharanatha Swami



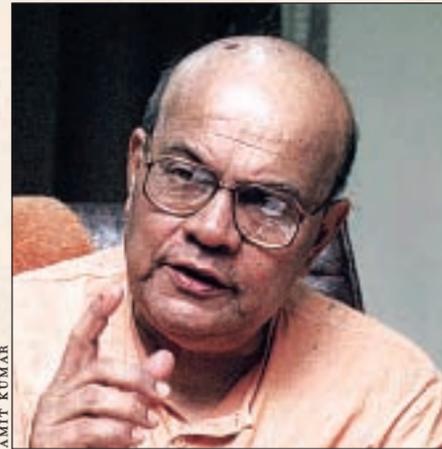
He not only taught people, but he also touched people! So many can teach, but only a few can truly touch the mind, heart and soul.

Swami Chidananda (Muniji)



He was an emperor amongst the present galaxy of saints. Gurudeva did not write his books, Siva was writing through him.

Swami Pragyand



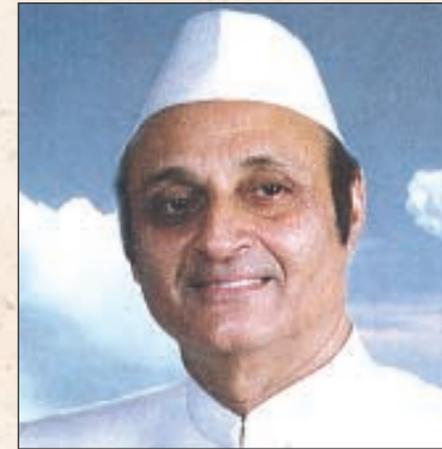
Gurudeva was a swami in a far-off place, doing such a spectacular work of propagating the message of Sanatana Hindu Dharma.

Swami Gokulananda Ji Maharaj



It was He who was dancing in His Holiness Subramuniaswami to achieve such great works that other men cannot even dream of.

T.S. Sambamurthy Sivachariar



Sri Sivaya Subramuniaswami was one of the most remarkable and influential Hindu writers and thinkers of modern times.

Dr. Karan Singh



Almost every saint I met at Kumbha Mela found it amazing that such good work for Hindu Dharma was being done by Gurudeva and his team.

Rajiv Malik



I was overjoyed when I read *Dancing with Siva*, because it gave me the confidence to tell my children about their own heritage.

Choodie Shivaram

in your resilient leadership.”

Swami Pragyand, head of the Pragya Mission International, New Delhi: “I can only say that no other saint has contributed as much to Saivism as has been done by Gurudeva. He was an authority on Saivism. I would like to say that he was an emperor amongst the present galaxy of saints. Try to look for one saint who has done so much original writing. I cannot find one. What Gurudeva has done while living in the West is something unique. Gurudeva did not write his books, Siva was writing through him. How else could he write such profound thoughts so well? Such great men come after ages. We can call him the Shankaracharya of the West. HINDUISM TODAY has become a household name in many houses who cannot live without it. The full credit for this goes to Gurudeva.”

Swami Gokulananda Ji Maharaj, head of the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi: “After seeing HINDUISM TODAY for the first time, a new world was opened to me. A swami in a far-off place was doing such a spectacular work of propagating the message of Sanatana Hindu Dharma. I always read with great interest his brilliant editorials. And I wish greatest circulation to this most valuable religious journal of the modern age.”

Sri T.S. Sambamurthy Sivachariar, a leading member of the South India Archaka Sangam, Chennai, foremost priest and defender of the Adisaiva lineage: “Mere words cannot explain my association with His Holiness Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswami. He had deep dedication to religion and total surrender to Lord Siva. His love to others was unbiased. His character was immaculate. His support to the Adisaiva priests was great. Gurudeva asked his staff to write a detailed article on the present situation of the Adisaiva priests and what could be done to keep alive this tradition. It was at the time when one of the oldest civilizations was diminishing due to social and political changes. Many organizations, *mathas* and even the government were discouraging us. Sri Gurudeva has left the mortal body, but he is still with us in subtle form to guide his *satsang*, or group, to complete the great work he had started for the peace and happiness of the world community. It was He who was dancing in His Holiness Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswami to

achieve such great works that other men cannot even dream of.”

Dr. Karan Singh, son of the last Maharaja of Kashmir and current member of India's upper house of Parliament: “Sri Sivaya Subramuniaswami was surely one of the most remarkable and influential Hindu writers and thinkers of modern times. At our first meeting Swamiji took the Aum Namasivaya bracelet off his wrist and snapped it onto mine, where it remained until it almost wore out. From then onwards I had several occasions to meet with Swamiji, notably in world religions conferences at Moscow, Chicago, Oxford, Rio de Janeiro and finally, in the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders at the United Nations in August 2000. Swamiji spent his life propagating Saiva Siddhanta in its universal articulation around the world. He also founded HINDUISM TODAY, which has emerged as the world's most widely circulated and influential international Hindu journal. His books on the Saivite texts are classics in their scope and profundity and represent a high watermark of Saiva scholarship in English. What was particularly impressive about him was the manner in which he organized his ashram so as to ensure that, even after he passed on, the great work that he had undertaken would continue with redoubled zeal. His lectures around the world to Hindu and interfaith audiences always made a deep impression. Although he has passed away, the contribution made by Sri Sivaya Subramuniaswami to the contemporary Hindu renaissance is so monumental that it will continue to inspire seekers around the world.”

Rajiv Malik, New Delhi correspondent for HINDUISM TODAY: “In 1994, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Delhi, I attended a gathering of top journalists, social workers, educationalists and lawyers organized in honor of a distinguished saint, philosopher, publisher and champion of Hinduism, Gurudeva. I was mesmerized by his persona. Tall, handsome, grand and majestic, Gurudeva in his gold-framed spectacles could be easily mistaken for a Hollywood star. I was simply awestruck. It was love at first sight with him. The next year, after my journalist guru, Sri B. M. Sinha, left his body, I took Sinha's place as HINDUISM TODAY's Delhi correspondent.

“For me it was amazing to discover the impact of Gurudeva among the spiritual people and saints at the Kumbha Melas. Almost

every saint I met found it amazing that such good work for Hindu dharma was being done by Gurudeva and his team. A large number were aware of HINDUISM TODAY and its impact on the global Hindu world. Issues raised by Gurudeva, including wife beating and child abuse, were widely discussed by the holy men, and they appreciated Gurudeva's initiative to abolish these practices from Hindu society. Many would accommodate my request for an interview when refusing others because they felt Gurudeva was doing a good work in the service of Hinduism.

The most memorable moments of my life were spent with Gurudeva in Rishikesh. Imagine Gurudeva, Paramacharya Palaniswami, Sannyasin Arumugaswami, myself and fellow HINDUISM TODAY correspondents M.P. Mohanty and Hari Bansh Jha sitting face-to-face with Gurudeva at a table in the Chotiwalla Restaurant, Rishikesh, having a cup of tea over a discussion on how to promote HINDUISM TODAY in India. When I look back, it sounds like a dream or fairy tale, a scene out of ancient times.

One night three years ago, I received a call from Gurudeva himself. I was totally taken aback as this was something I had never dreamed of. He asked me how was I doing in life and what stories I was working on. He told me that he appreciated my work. I was extremely delighted. Just a few days back, I had explained the meaning of the guru mantra—*Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Guru Devo Maheshwara*—to my twelve-year-old daughter Palak. I had told her that the guru was akin to God. So when I told her Gurudeva spoke to me over the phone, she said, with child-like innocence, “Papa, you must have felt great, God spoke to you tonight.”

“After having come in touch with Gurudeva, I am a totally transformed person. For the outer world, the biggest change came in my style of dressing. Five years ago, when I learned Gurudeva wished his correspondents to dress in a Hindu way, I changed from the standard urban middle class Western shirt and trousers, to elegant *kurta-pajama* or *kurta-churidar*. Overnight, just by dressing in the Hindu way, my personality changed. By sheer appearance I was taken by the society as someone who was a leader, intellectual, journalist, an important person. My inner being was also transformed. I became more composed and self-confident—and a better Hindu.”

Choodie Shivaram from Bangalore, HINDUISM TODAY correspon-

dent: “Within a few months of my association with HINDUISM TODAY, I received photographs of Gurudeva. The first thing that struck me was the benevolent loving charm on his serene face. He reminded me of a loving grandpa to whom a grandchild could run to for solace and comfort. It is Gurudeva who made me aware of many things about our religion, traditions and culture, which I was otherwise happily ignorant of. Gurudeva taught me the importance of upholding the values of our culture and religion, of keeping our children in touch with our heritage. It was not until I read *Dancing with Siva* that I realized what Smarta means. I belong to the Smarta sect, and for all these years no one had told me what it meant. I was overjoyed when I read it, because it gave me the confidence to tell my children about their own heritage. *Dancing with Siva* has become a bible for us. It has taught us so much; we keep going back to it again and again. I was awestruck by Gurudeva's ability to comprehend so much about Hinduism—something that many seers here in India have not been able to do. My association with HINDUISM TODAY and the influence of Gurudeva benefitted my whole family. My son, age 13, is the first one to read HINDUISM TODAY from cover to cover as soon as we get it.”

Lakshmanan Nellaippan, Chennai, an initiated devotee of Gurudeva: “The first meeting was like a lightning bolt struck me. The aura that emanated out of him was so powerful, and he was so kind and affectionate. Very tall, with ever-flowing silken white hair, his presence would mesmerize any soul on Earth, as if meeting Siva Himself. I have met in India and outside India many swamis and spiritual exponents and seekers. But in the case of Gurudeva and his swamis, what they preach is practiced by them without any deviation. Whenever I find any problem in my life, I begin deeply thinking of Gurudeva and communicating with him as if he is in front of me. The solutions automatically come and the problem is smoothly resolved. His proper explanations for spiritual and ritual activities enhanced my spiritual life. His presence and thinking made my life smoother and more peaceful. Hinduism is a complex religion, and there are many paths in it. To make them easy to understand, even for a born Hindu, is very difficult. But Gurudeva made it very easily understandable with his unique method of approach. For him everybody was equal, irrespective of his or her status and position.”



Germany: Sri Lankan Tamils parade the temple Deities through the streets of Hamm with men rolling behind as penance

SRI LANKANS

The Tamil Diaspora

When hundreds of thousands of Sri Lankans were driven from their homeland by civil war, Gurudeva guided their lives in new nations

IN 1983 MASSIVE RACIAL RIOTS BROKE out between the Tamil Hindus and the Buddhist Sinhalese in Sri Lanka ultimately causing an exodus of 700,000 Tamils. They fled their ancestral homes and took refuge in India, Canada, America, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, England and France. They did not go entirely unprepared, for by divine grace Gurudeva had traveled throughout the Hindu areas of Sri Lanka only months before. His message to “stand strong for Hinduism” would fortify them in the trying times ahead.

Tens of thousands left each year. The life was not easy. The reading of newspapers and listening to the news of your homeland at war—unsure if your friends and family would be alive tomorrow—took its toll. Gu-

rudeva worked hard to establish contact with as many refugees as possible, offering hope, solace and inspiration.

Strangers in strange lands, the Tamils appreciated Gurudeva’s commanding presence, traditional ways and clear guidance. He enjoined them to become contributing members of their new countries. He gave insights into integration, citizenship, public relations and more. He urged each group to start a temple, saying that the culture and religion comes from the worship and they need temples close by to preserve their heritage and pass it on to their children.

During Gurudeva’s visit to Denmark and Switzerland in 1995, he summarized the message he gave since 1983. “Your karmas brought you to this country, and you have more opportunities here than if you went to

the University of Colombo. Educate your children, learn the local language and settle down. When permanent peace comes to Sri Lanka, then you can go back.” He taught them ways to endure themselves to the local community. “I think we all appreciate what the governments have done. There are many ways we can pay back. One way is to smile at everybody you meet. You smile, and then they smile, and pretty soon the whole country is smiling just because you smiled. To be happy yourself, you have to make someone else happy.” Everywhere he encouraged them to pray for peace by chanting *Aum* and sending energy to loved ones still in Sri Lanka.

In Berlin, “He visited a boys’ refugee house in 1995, talked with the officials and saw to their material needs,” said Mrs. Pu-



Lanka: (Top left) Gurudeva with the trustees of the Sri Subramuniya Ashram, in Alaveddy, Sri Lanka in 1981; (Bottom left) 250 students receive graduation certificates from Gurudeva at the ashram school in 1983



vanesam Veeragathiyar. “He then met with a group of mothers and told us that what was lacking in these boys’ lives was a mother’s love. He encouraged us to invite the boys and other refugees to our home for meals and make them feel part of our family. Most of us are still doing this today.”

Gurudeva helped in other ways, too. M. Sri Sivanathan, 46, in Denmark said, “In 1993 I realized the serious problem of conversion to Christianity in Denmark among the Tamils. When Gurudeva visited here in 1995, he told us to be strong and proud of our religion and culture. Since then, conversion went way down. A lot of Tamils that had been going to church came back to Hinduism.” Gurudeva reintroduced to the communities and priests the ancient *vratyastoma* ceremony to officially welcome wayward Hindus back into the fold.

In Switzerland, a government official came to a Tamil gathering in honor of Gurudeva. He was worried about the influx of Sri Lankan refugees to his country. But after meeting Gurudeva, seeing that the community had a strong spiritual leader, he relaxed his concerns.

Gurudeva’s connection with Sri Lanka

dates back to 1948, when he journeyed there to find his guru. He was initiated in 1949, and with Yogaswami’s blessings founded the Sri Subramuniya Ashram in Alaveddy. As successor to Yogaswami, who passed away in 1964, Gurudeva became the hereditary guru of the Sri Lankan Tamils. In 1982, Gurudeva started another religious school, the Sri Subramuniya Kottam, in Kopy, Sri Lanka. These schools helped create a cultural and religious foundation for the young Tamils who later scattered across the globe. Over 800 students attended the schools each year. Some became leaders in their communities.

Suresh Dhanumalayan, 34, now living in Vancouver with his family, said, “Since I was 14, I have been involved in Gurudeva’s mission. When I entered university, I volunteered as a teacher at Gurudeva’s school. I am now passing on to my children the Hindu pride and teachings I learned from Gurudeva’s schools years ago.”

Many tell of the special magic held by Gurudeva’s business cards and photos. M. Elangovan, 26, of Italy said, “In 1990, when I was 14, I left Sri Lanka in a fishing boat to India. The only picture I had in my wallet was Gu-

rudeva’s. That picture helped me through difficult times. Even today I have the same picture in my wallet. Gurudeva has always been with me, helping and guiding me.” Others reported easily passing through military checkpoints after showing Gurudeva’s picture.

Regularly, Gurudeva spoke to the diaspora communities by phone, usually at their local temples, giving advice and inspiration. He also gave live interviews, translated into Tamil, on radio programs in Canada and Europe, answering many questions. Radio stations rebroadcasted his Internet talks, and newspapers published his messages translated into Tamil. Gurudeva inspired communities in Denmark, Germany and Norway to publish *Saivite Hindu Religion*, a course for children. He encouraged temples to create religious homes for the elderly within walking distance of the temples. HINDUISM TODAY had an immense impact, connecting Sri Lankan Tamils all over the globe, and through the “Publisher’s Desk” page, he conveyed the teachings and news of their homeland religion—Saivite Hinduism—as it applies to the modern world.

“Gurudeva was not only our spiritual guide,” said Thiru Satkunendran of Toronto, Canada, “but also a highly respected mentor, for both the young and old suffering from ‘culture shock.’ Every occasion that I met Gurudeva, he was keen to know of progress made towards peace in Sri Lanka. He was always prepared to offer his services as mediator. Such is the love of this great guru towards the island and people, where he found his *satguru*, Yogaswami. We are certain that he is working for peace even now, from the inner world. It is no coincidence that a ceasefire has been declared and peace talks are about to begin.”

In 1997, Gurudeva sent an 18-inch-tall, solid bronze, gold-plated Yogaswami statue on a world tour. At each city he is worshipped at local temples and homes. The icon carries Yogaswami’s presence, like the parade Deity of a temple. Since then, Yogaswami has traveled through numerous countries and is currently in Germany. Gurudeva said that, from the inner worlds, Yogaswami is helping each family and individual with their problems and concerns. His presence is exposing the children to Yogaswami and his philosophical songs, called *Natchintanai*. Many have had intense visions of Yogaswami during his visits. “When Yogaswami’s world tour culminates in Sri Lanka,” said Gurudeva, “there ought to be permanent peace in Sri Lanka.”

His Other Island Home

How Gurudeva uplifted families and revived the dharma in Mauritius

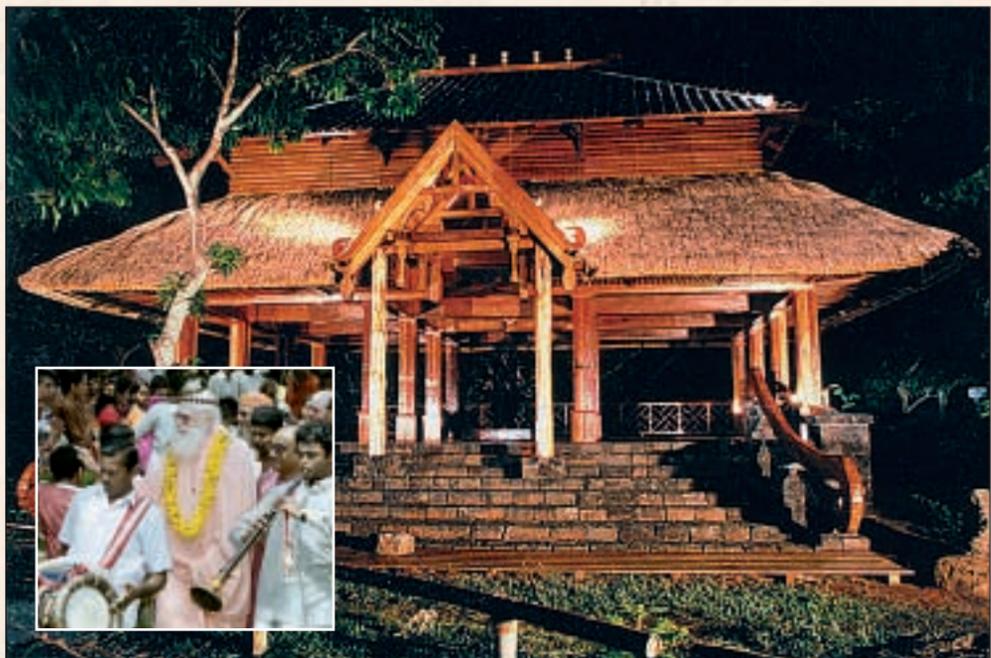
BY RAJEN MANICK, MAURITIUS

IT IS A KNOWN FACT THAT THE SUGAR island of Mauritius, basking peacefully in the Indian Ocean, is a land of pious temple worship for the general Hindu population. Almost every family here has been associated for generations with one of the many thousands of local temples. Hindu celebrations like Mahasivaratri and Thai Pusam are grand events that often stop traffic with magnificent processions of thousands of people. For the average Hindu, basic religious obligations are fulfilled by participating in such elaborate festivals.

An understanding of the significance of the Hindu guru was almost nonexistent in Mauritius until the 1980s when Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami first set his holy feet upon this island. Not only was Gurudeva an exceptional and singular example of a guru, he was also a great spiritual innovator. He revolutionized the whole concept of Hinduism for many on the island, redefining it from a different and more substantial perspective. This vitalized the inspiration of sincere seekers and began a new era in Mauritius—the era of guru bhakti.

It was at this time that I first met Gurudeva. Although I had been studying his teachings through a correspondence course and writing for HINDUISM TODAY, my first encounter with him in person was a memorable experience. I could see immediately that he was not an ordinary man.

He changed my life. The girl I was lucky enough to marry was also one of Gurudeva's



A pavilion for prayer: Gurudeva founded the "Spiritual Park" at his ashram residence on the northeastern coast of Mauritius to provide a pilgrimage destination for the island's Hindus. It features a hand-carved, nine-foot, five-faced Ganesha housed in an elaborate stone, wood and thatched Kerala-style pavilion. (Inset) Gurudeva participates in the grand opening of the park on September 14, 1999.

students. We were the very first of his devotees to be married in Mauritius. This happened in 1985. Our greatest joy has been to serve Gurudeva by imparting his teachings on the island of Mauritius, which we first did by organizing classes at local temples. After ten years of marriage we despaired of having children. Gurudeva taught us to face our karmas gracefully and to be humble in difficult situations. Shortly thereafter, most certainly with the blessings of Gurudeva, we had two children.

Gurudeva came to Mauritius in the 1980s at the request of Hindu elders who were worried about the high rate of conversion from the Hindu fold. In January, 1982, he spent an entire month here, traveling from village to village with two of his swamis. Following this, he sent a French-speaking monk to live and teach

in Mauritius. At one point the monk was holding 25 classes around the island.

In 1986, Gurudeva set up a monastery on a 12-acre parcel of land in Rivière du Rempart. In July of 1988, the establishment of Gurudeva's mission was made official by the Saiva Siddhanta Church Act which was passed in Parliament. Hundreds of people came to the weekly *homas* held at the monastery during this time. Today one third of Gurudeva's Church congregation live in Mauritius. A major part of this land is dedicated to the Spiritual Park, a present from Gurudeva to the people of Mauritius. Today the Spiritual Park at Rivière du Rempart welcomes hundreds of visitors each week. Pilgrims from all around the world say there is nothing else like it—especially not in Mauritius.

This park was created at a cost of several million rupees, all donated by local Hindus. In a beautiful ocean-front setting, it features a Ganesha Mandapam with a nine-foot tall Panchamukha (five-faced) Ganapati—as well as huge granite icons of Lord Murugan

in His form as the six-faced Arumugam and Lord Siva, in the form of Dakshinamurti, the silent teacher.

During this time, there was a regular flow of monastics traveling from Kauai Aadheenam, Gurudeva's home in Hawaii, to the monastery here. These monks created the Spiritual Park and held retreats and seminars for thousands of youth around the island.

Meanwhile, Gurudeva advised his family members on the island to use ayurvedic medicine and adopt a healthy diet, including raw sugar, brown rice and brown bread. He encouraged us to wear Hindu dress at home, in the temples and during festivals. Several Mauritians have completed a six-month training at Kauai Aadheenam, where we presently have a Mauritian monk who is one of the Aadheenam's foremost priests.

Koothan, 52, a primary school head teacher in the south, says, "One day Gurudeva asked me if I was a vegetarian. I answered that I was waiting for Gurudeva's blessings. Gurudeva immediately said, 'Here is my blessing, are you now a vegetarian?' I answered, 'Yes,' and today my whole family has discovered from personal experience how vegetarianism can help spiritual progress." Amba Valaytan, 47, a bar manager at the famous St. Géran Hotel remarks, "In temples now, many devotees sit down to absorb the shakti after the *puja*. This practice was not known before Gurudeva came."

Mougam Pareatumbee, 40, a retired hotel chef, now manager of his own catering center, remembers how life was hard during the early days of his marriage when his wife's health seemed unfavorable for childbirth. One day he declared, Gurudeva called from Hawaii and said, "I am with you. Don't worry!" Soon his wife, Amutha, gave birth to two beautiful daughters with no complications. S. K. Moorghen, who handles the accounting for several large businesses, remembers that although prior to Gurudeva's arrival in Mauritius the importance of the home shrine was not fully understood, "Now, even nonfollowers of Gurudeva make it a must to keep shrines in their homes, and they are proud of it."

Swami Pranavananda Saraswathi, head of the Chinmaya Mission for Mauritius and Reunion Island, confided, "Gurudeva is a great soul who teaches Sanatana Dharma in a systematic way. By using the English language as the main teaching medium, he has brought this knowledge into the technological age in an unprecedented manner."

Politicians like Anil Baichoo, Minister of Transport, say that Gu-

rudeva's teachings in Mauritius have helped to harmonize the various ethnic groups of the island. "Gurudeva's approach to Hinduism is not based on ethnicity or language," says Anil insightfully. "This has helped to build up more Hindu solidarity between Hindus of both North Indian and South Indian origin. Also, conversion is no longer a problem in Mauritius. This is due to the influence of Gurudeva and the Sai Baba groups."

"Gurudeva has indeed helped many Hindu leaders to understand that it is a waste of time and energy to discuss religious differences within the Hindu community," states Mrs. Shoba Balgobin, manager of the renowned Eden College with 3,000 students. "Our youth are very motivated today and they think in terms of oneness within Hinduism. We need to stand united against all types of negative Western influences which are already undermining our beliefs."

Raj Putten, Deputy Speaker of the Mauritius Parliament, who knew Gurudeva for many years, says, "Today, as a result of Gurudeva's influence, I command the respect of the House through justice, equality, consensus and protection. Gurudeva's books will remain eternal treasures that will change the world in many ways into the next century."

In the mid-1990s, Gurudeva was shocked to learn that many his devotees, were using corporal punishment on their children. He

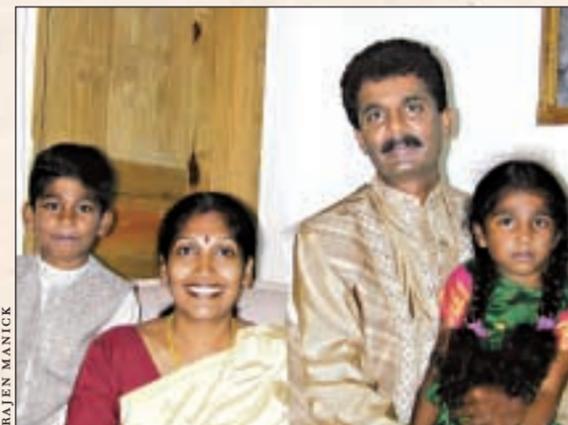
was surprised and not a little hurt by this revelation, and immediately demanded a change. Not only did he require members to repent and do penance for hitting their children, but to hold classes in the community on "Positive Discipline." This system by Dr. Jane Nelson teaches that children should be raised with encouragement, love and respect rather than blame, shame and pain. Manon Mardemootoo, a long-standing devotee of Gurudeva and a prominent attorney, was among the many on the island who wholeheartedly undertook this mission. He said, "To take these teachings of *ahimsa* into the public and make them a living reality is the present *sadhana* of Gurudeva's devotees here in Mauritius."

Gurudeva will also be remembered for his participation in two significant meetings promoting community harmony. First, he met with Hindu leaders to strengthen the ties within the Hindu community. Then, under the auspices of the Municipal Council of Port Louis, he met with religious leaders of all faiths to strengthen the bonds of friendship, respect and harmony among all the people of Mauritius. Today, in significant part because of Subramuniyaswami's contribution, Mauritius is cited everywhere, including on the floor of the United Nations, as an example of peaceful coexistence in a multi-racial, multi-religious nation.

With Manon Mardemootoo in Mauritius



Thank you, Gurudeva: The spiritual extended family of Manon Mardemootoo gathers on the front porch of Manon's home with friends and a traveling swami from Kauai Aadheenam in Hawaii



Blessings: Rajen Manick, wife Premila and children

The Marvelous Malaysians

From the early 1980s Gurudeva received a warm reception among this nation's Hindus

YOGASWAMI WAS KNOWN IN MALAYSIA in the 1940s and 50s. About that time, Sri Jeganathaswami, a Malaysian sadhu, told one of his devotees who was going to Sri Lanka to pay homage to Yogaswami. Later, in 1951, Jeganathaswami predicted that an American swami by the name of "Subramaniam" would come to Malaysia to spread Saivism and Hinduism. When Gurudeva first arrived in Malaysia in June, 1980, with two swamis, several people recounted the story of what, until that moment, was regarded as an highly improbable prophecy.

Gurudeva didn't suddenly "take Malaysia by storm." In fact, he never took any place by storm. He sought no self-promotion, but rather worked to support and strengthen local religious leaders and institutions. Malaysia was already beginning to experience an awakening among Hindus brought about in reaction to several negative incidents in the late '70s. Gurudeva gave form, style and impetus to this awakening as he traveled through the country and visited the major Hindu institutions, such as the Malaysia Hindu Sangam, the Maha Mariamman Temple, the Ceylonese Saivites Association, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Divine Life Society and others, to make friends. Especially drawn to him were those of the Tamil community. Many of Sri Lankan descent, particularly those who knew Yogaswami, made an easy connection.

As a result, the hundreds of Malaysians who turned out for the December 20, 2001, memorial service for Gurudeva held at the Sri Kanthaswamy Temple in Kuala Lumpur were a cross section of the Hindu society. Close devotees, friends, religious and political leaders all came to honor Gurudeva's contribution to Hinduism. "Malaysian Hindus owe Gurudeva a deep debt of gratitude," said Dr. S.M. Ponniah, former president of the Malaysia Hindu Sangam, "for helping all Hindus to know themselves and their cultural and religious heritage." As in each country he visited, the whole of soci-

ety similarly appreciated his inspiring and stabilizing influence.

The situation of Malaysian Hindus, just eight percent of the country, is different than that of Hindus in India. Official government policies favor Islam and the Bumiputra, native Malaysians, over the Indians and Chinese. One result of this inequity is the turning of Hindus to their religion as a means of self-identity, especially among the youth. Malaysia was the first place in the world, for example, that Gurudeva ever met a youth group attached to a temple. This fine group of young men all wore jackets with "Siddhi Vinayaga Temple" on the back and assisted with the temple's management and care. Likewise from 1981, when Gurudeva came through Malaysia on a travel-study program with 33 devotees, he received an enthusiastic reception from the younger generation and counted it a good sign.

An incident at this time deeply impacted those that learned of it. Gurudeva was quite fond of the Ulu Behrang Ganesha Temple in Tanjong Malim, Perak. During one visit, according to Gurudeva, Lord Ganesha Himself appeared and blessed him at this temple. Gurudeva's respect for temples and this vision in particular was a very encouraging and faith-building sign for many.

Over the next few years, Hindus attracted to Subramuniyaswami's teachings started classes in Hinduism, held after hours at public schools. These popular classes and the widespread distribution of HINDUISM TODAY magazine had a huge impact on Hindus in Malaysia. Gurudeva's dedicated members disseminated clear Hindu teachings to the youth and instilled a pride in Hindu religion. He sent one of his monastics to teach classes all over the nation for nearly a year. In 1986 successful Hindu youth camps in Malaysia were conducted by his devotees, which inspired the other Hindu organizations to put more emphasis on youth camps. When Gurudeva returned to Malaysia in the 1990s his lectures were packed, and at his last book

signing tour two years ago, more than 2,000 people showed up, beyond the hall's capacity. Many of Gurudeva's initiated members are Malaysian, as are three of his 14 swamis.

"Once upon a time," writes Appasamy Kuppasamy, an initiated disciple, "Gurudeva was ignored by many Hindus of Malaysia because he was white. But after getting to know him, the same people praised him for his services to Hinduism worldwide." "More recently," Appasamy went on, "he's advocated abolishing corporal punishment in the homes and schools, directing his devotees to teach classes for other Hindu parents in nonviolent means of parenting and to change school policies regarding corporal punishment of students. At a national level, the cumulative impact of his work has been a dramatic increase in the pride of Hindus."

Whenever Gurudeva visited Malaysia, he would always stop in Singapore, and nurture a small group of devotees there. As in Malaysia, he encouraged and promoted the local temples and organizations. In the last few years, Gurudeva's devotees have waged a campaign against corporal punishment in



COURTESY ULU BEHRANG GANESHA TEMPLE

Singapore's homes and schools. They made substantial progress in the local schools, which were already tackling the issue, by seeing to it that teachers still using corporal punishment were reprimanded and re-trained in better methods.

Gurudeva's publications have always been popular in Malaysia. In the 1980s, local devotees requested Gurudeva to write a book on Lord Ganesha, to explain this elephant-headed God to the Hindus. They wanted it right away to distribute at an upcoming festival, so Gurudeva and his monks created the entire book in eight days. That was a 12-hour-a-day effort of a dozen monks, and the resulting book, *Lord Ganesha, Benevolent Deity for a Modern Hindu World*, was a spectacular success. The title alone was an inspiration to people. Later it was expanded into the even more popular *Loving Ganesha*. When HINDUISM TODAY was in newspaper format, a local edition was published in Kuala Lumpur, and later, when it switched to magazine format, more than a thousand copies an issue—each read by dozens of people—continued to be sold.

Local devotees have been called upon to stage photo shoots for the difficult social issues of corporal punishment and domestic abuse. The photos depicting all aspects of these societal ills were very powerful, and appeared not only in HINDUISM TODAY, but were requested by other organizations in the US fighting domestic violence. Devotees have independently arranged publication of Gurudeva's writings, such as the small book, *Satguru Speaks on Hindu Renaissance*, drawn from "Publisher's Desk."

Gurudeva's children's course, *Saivite Hindu Religion*, has been a hit in the country. One lawyer established an endowment to see that it is printed and distributed to poor students. Many classes are taught using this course, which is in Tamil, English and Malay and based on the *Sawaneri* course on Hinduism produced by the Sri Lankan government.

Certainly the most important development in publishing occurred just prior to Gurudeva's *mahasamadhi*, when he decided to have Uma Publications in Kuala Lumpur print his three-volume, 3,000 page trilogy, *Dancing, Living and Merging with Siva*, in

Welcome, Malaysian style: Gurudeva with two of his swamis are taken in parade to the Sri Sithi Vinayagar Temple in Ulu Behrang for the temple's kumbhabhishekam, rededication ceremonies, in 1991

full color and hardbound. *Living with Siva* is the first book to be completed in this new format, and it arrived in Hawaii just days before Gurudeva passed on. These elegant books printed in Malaysia are exported for sale worldwide.

Just as Gurudeva has benefitted Malaysia, so has Malaysia benefitted his worldwide mission. His Malaysian and Singaporean devotees are among his staunchest and most active. Not only have they hosted each of his travel-study programs as it passed through the country, they've substantially supported every one of Gurudeva's projects, including major fund-raising efforts for Iraivan Temple. Some help electronically with World Wide Web assignments or news gathering for Hindu Press International. Others have worked on translations to Tamil or Bahasa Malay. Devotee Jiva Rajasankara took early retirement to move his entire family to India and supervise the Iraivan Temple carving worksite. At Gurudeva's encouragement and under his supervision several successful cross-national marriages have been arranged between devotees born in Singapore, Mauritius, Malaysia and America.

Tiru Kuppasamy shared with HINDUISM TODAY this summary of Gurudeva's impact on his life. "At the beginning, I was not very serious about doing the *sadhanas*, the religious practices, but later I did do them seriously. I learned the Atmartha Puja for home worship and taught it to others. I and my wife, along with our ten-year-old son and 22-year-old daughter, all became vegetarians without any reluctance. Gurudeva made me realize my mistakes, my bad karma done earlier in this life, and had me correct it through penance, *prayaschitta*. After that difficult penance, I am relieved and happy that this karma is gone. I thank Gurudeva because he changed our lifestyle. He taught us Hinduism. He taught us discipline. He made us see God everywhere. He taught us to do *thondu*, religious service, all of which I am doing my level best to follow."

At the December 20 memorial meeting, Saiva Periya Sangaratna Tan Sri Somasundram, president of the Malaysia Arul Neri Thirukootam, said, "Gurudeva avoided arguing the philosophies of the various sects of Hinduism. He showed the importance of religion but not the arguments. He was not only the guru for a particular group of Saivites, but he was accepted by all of us as a guru. If we are to respect him, we must live according to his teachings, to have peace in the world, peace at home, peace between husband and wife, peace everywhere." 🙏

Milestones of Ministry

Enumerating a spiritual master's remarkable accomplishments

FIMBLAZENED BY HIS ILLUMINATION, his ordination as a *satguru* and the blessings of Gods and *devas*, Gurudeva contributed to the revival of Hinduism in immeasurable abundance. He was simultaneously a staunch defender of traditions as the tried and proven ways of the past and a fearless innovator and defender of the downtrodden, rivaling the rishis of Vedic times in instilling fresh understanding and setting new patterns for contemporary humanity. Here is a partial list of his trail-blazing efforts and accomplishments:

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

- Bringing seekers new meaning to life through the Master Course as a path of self-transformation through *sadhana*, a self-initiated journey to bravely, cheerfully face the karma one has created in the past.
- Pioneering the language Shum in 1968 to enhance seekers' yogic efforts and vigorously developing it from 1995-2001, as his inner gift to his monastics.
- Bringing the Gods "out of exile" by explaining and writing about the mysteries of temple worship and the three worlds of existence from his own experience.
- Unfolding theological summations for a religion in renaissance, such as "Four Facts of Hinduism," "Nine Beliefs," "Hinduism's Code of Conduct," the 365 *Nandinatha Sutras*, and a Hindu catechism and creed.
- Bringing forth *Lemurian Scrolls* and other esoteric writings from inner-plane libraries to guide his monastic order and revive the centrality of celibacy and sexual transmutation.
- Translating and publishing Tiruvalluvar's ethical masterpiece, the *Tirukural*, in modern, lucid English.

LEADING THE HINDU RENAISSANCE

- Building Hindu pride; convincing Hindus everywhere to stand up and proclaim themselves Hindus and stop repeating equivocal slogans like, "I'm not really a Hindu. I am a universalist—a Christian, a Jew, a Muslim and a Buddhist."
- Proclaiming that Hinduism is a great, living religion, not a relic of the past as depicted by Western scholars, one that should be presented by Hindu writers, as he did in his peerless publications.
- Teaching Hinduism to Hindus, awaken-



SHEELA VENKATKRISHNAN

Europe 2001: Gurudeva at his elegant best during his last Innersearch program

ing them to see themselves as a world community and as inheritors of a grand civilization and culture, indeed, the religion best suited to the new age.

- Rescuing the word *Hinduism* from its fallen status as a dirty word and restoring it to its age-old glory.
- Heralding sectarianism when the prevailing trend was bland uniformity, insisting that only if each denomination is strong and faithful to its unique traditions will Hinduism itself be strong.
- Championing the centrality of temples, legitimizing their establishment, and authenticating their purpose.

THINGS HE CAMPAIGNED TO CORRECT

- Dispelling myths and misinformation about Hinduism through HINDUISM TODAY for two decades.
- Promoting the *Vedas* and *Agamas* as the holy bible of Hinduism rather than the mythological *Puranas* and the historical *Bhagavad Gita*.
- Establishing rational-mystical explanations for Hindu practice to displace the Puranic "comic book" mentality.
- Reinstating *ahimsa*, noninjury, as the cardinal ethic of Hinduism when militants were promoting righteous retaliation, often by citing the *Bhagavad Gita*,

- Rejecting traditional stories that glorify violence, such as many found in the *Periyanapuranam*.
- Repopularizing Siva as a God of love to be worshiped by all devotees, not a fearsome being approached only by ascetics. Assuring Hindus it is alright, in fact necessary, to have Lord Siva in the home.
- Speaking for the purity of Hindu monasticism and against the idea of "married swamis" and mixed-gender ashrams.
- Campaigning against the use of illegal drugs by exposing the harmful effects and karmic consequences.
- Combatting unethical Christian conversion by enhancing Hindu education, exposing the devious tactics of evangelists and the immaturity of faiths that consider theirs the only true path and aggressively seek to compel others to adopt it.
- Debunking the notion that "All religions are one" and publishing a comparative summary of the major religions of the world, side by side with prominent secular philosophies.
- Enjoining temple boards of trustees to get along with each other, to beware of detractors and to establish teaching programs for the youth.

RELIGIOUS STATESMANSHIP

- Speaking out fearlessly at interfaith conferences and spiritual and political forums, objecting to Christian hegemony at such gatherings, calling for equal representation by other religions, including the indigenous peoples, and decrying the hypocrisy of scientists who would speak as potential saviors for Earth's problems when science itself had caused many of the predicaments.
- Defending advaitic Saiva Siddhanta at international conferences and with pundits of South Indian *aadheenams* to successfully affirm the legitimacy and antiquity of the nondual theology which so perfectly reflected his own realizations.
- Creating a method of ethical self-conversion for seekers to formally enter the Hindu religion, insisting that Hinduism has always accepted newcomers, countering the notion that "You must be born a Hindu to be a Hindu."
- Encouraging people to practice their religion, whatever it may be, rather than non-religious paths such as materialism, com-

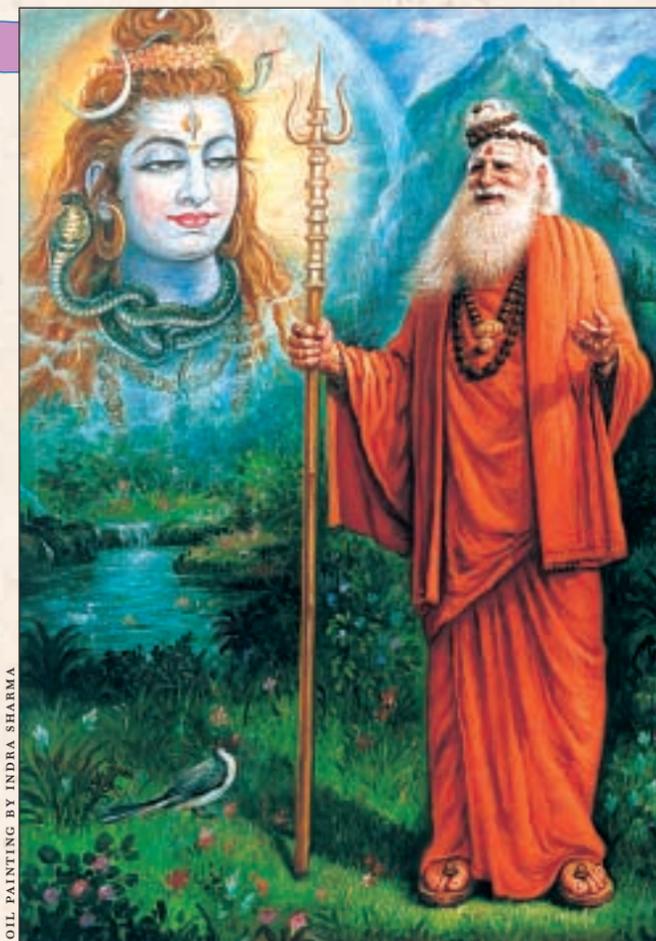
munism, existentialism and secular humanism.

PIONEERING NEW PATTERNS

- Harnessing information technology to drive Hindu Dharma into the new millennium, including setting up the first Macintosh publishing network (1986) and founding the first major Hindu website (1994).
- Calling for the establishment of schools, *pathasalas*, to train temple priests outside of India.
- Promoting the idea of resident facilities for the elderly at temples in the West.
- Gifting Deity icons to initiate the worship and remove obstacles at 39 temples globally.
- Establishing perpetual funds to finance his own and others' religious endeavors through Hindu Heritage Endowment.
- Finding ways for Hindus to meet cultural dilemmas in the modern age, such as devising a new festival, Pancha Ganapati, now celebrated for five days around the time of Christmas.
- Supporting cross-national marriages within his congregation and the wider Hindu world.
- Drawing from the American church system to make his organization, socially viable, legally strong and structurally effective.
- Encouraging selfless, religious giving of one's time, resources and finances, and establishing tithing as a monthly practice within his global congregation.
- Establishing Innersearch Travel Study as a means of self-discovery and spiritual renewal for devotees and students, with his last three journeys consecrating new temples in Alaska, Denmark and Trinidad.
- Distinguishing outstanding leadership with his Hindu of the Year award.
- Introducing to Kauai: Toggenberg goats, Jersey cows, the honey bee industry and various species of exotic flora.

REVIVING NOBLE TRADITIONS

- Bringing sacraments, *samskaras*, back into vogue through his writings and by implementing them among his congregation with reverence and formal documentation.
- Campaigning for priests' rights and fair treatment, demanding they receive the same respect enjoyed by the clergy of other religions.
- Supporting and reviving the traditional arts, including South Indian painting, with which he illustrated his trilogy; Indian dance, which he and his followers learned



OIL PAINTING BY INDRA SHARMA

Source of inspiration: Gurudeva delights at a vision of Siva, shown gazing from the inner ethers on the Garden Island. He holds a trisula, its prongs symbolizing love, wisdom and action.

and taught; temple architecture, which he embodied in Iraivan temple; Vedic astrology, which he used daily for its insights into character of people and timing of events; and ayurveda, which he promoted in his publications and encouraged as a natural healing system for all his followers.

- Rescuing the home shrine from extinction—"out of the closet into the most beautiful room of the home."

STRENGTHENING MONASTICISM

- Garnering respect for Hindu monastics of every order when "swami bashing" was common, proclaiming that swamis and sadhus are the ministers of this noble faith and that genuine gurus should be venerated, obeyed and sought out for their wisdom.
- Creating a global enclave of several hundred Hindu leaders and regularly calling on them for their wisdom on critical issues, from abortion, to cloning, to medical ethics and Hindu family life, publishing their collective views in HINDUISM TODAY.
- Breathing new life into the *aadheenams* of South India (temple-monastery complexes), bringing new prominence to the Sankaracharya centers and to the seats of power of all monastic lineages.
- Codifying in his *Holy Orders of Sannyasa*

sa the ideals, vows and aspirations of Hindu monasticism in unprecedented clarity.

IMPROVING FAMILY LIFE

- Upholding the integrity of the family, extolling the extended family, finding ways to keep families close and harmonious, declaring that divorce is never a happy solution to marital conflict.
- Denouncing and taking action against wife abuse as a despicable act that no man has the right to perpetrate.
- Insisting on "zero tolerance for disharmonious conditions" within his monasteries and the homes of followers.
- Protecting children from abuse, standing up for their right to not be beaten by parents or teachers and debunking the notion that corporal punishment is a part of Hindu culture.
- Helping parents raise children with love and respect through Positive Discipline classes taught by his family devotees.
- Establishing a "women's liberation movement" of his own, reminding Hindus that family well-being lies in the hands of women, who have the power to raise their children well and make their husbands successful by not working

in the world, but following the traditional role of wife and mother.

SETTING STANDARDS IN LEADERSHIP

- Creating Kauai Aadheenam, a temple-monastery in Hawaii so traditional and spiritual—replete with two Siva temples, a large monastic order and a *satguru pitha* (seat of authority), all amid religious art, sculpture, traditional temple architecture and liturgy—that it stands as the most authoritative *aadheenam* in the West.
- Manifesting Iraivan, the first all-stone Agamic temple in the West.
- Initiating and nurturing a traditional order of two dozen celibate Saiva monastics, molding them into an effective, harmonious, traditional multi-national team.
- Building two platforms: Hindu solidarity, which he promoted through HINDUISM TODAY, and monistic Saiva Siddhanta, which he elucidated in his peerless publications.
- Being always available: personally greeting thousands of Hindu visitors to his *aadheenam*, speaking with them about their lives, concerns and aspirations.
- Fulfilling the motto "Think globally, act locally," joining monthly with Kauai leaders in an island visioning group to help manifest an enhanced social and economic future.

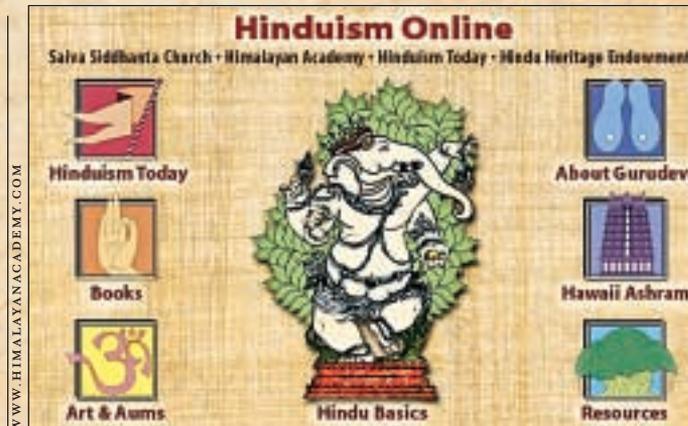
INTERNET

Hinduism on the Web

The most extensive and approachable resource there is

BY NILIMA SRIKANTHA,
NEVADA, USA

ONE OF GURUDEVA'S SPECTACULAR contributions to the perpetuation of Hindu Dharma is his marvelous, multi-faceted site on the World Wide Web. This has created a heightened awareness of Hinduism—especially among the “cyber-generation.” It has transformed Hinduism's image from some old historic religion to a dynamic, rich religion of today and the future. The pages of Hinduism Online draw over 200,000 visitors per month—well over 5,000 per day. Text and graphics amount to 350 megabytes, plus 2 gigabytes of sound files. Visitors download over 12 gigabytes of information every month. One of Gurudeva's more recent popular innovations is Today at Kauai Aadheenam, TAKA, as it has come to be known. Located at www.gurudeva.org and updated daily, the site is a window into Kauai's Hindu Monastery—a refreshing glimpse into the joyous, pristine life of the monastics and their service to humanity. For many, TAKA is a way to watch the progress of Iraivan Temple as it grows each day, erected stone by stone by seven Indian craftsmen. TAKA is also the home of Gurudeva's audio “Cybertalks”—and now of Satguru Bodhinatha Veylan-swami's—words of wisdom to



From the portal site visitors can enter seven sections

set the tone for the day. We receive frequent comments on the far-reaching effects of TAKA. A Hindu in Malaysia wrote, “I enjoy the daily TAKA web pages. Each evening, I sit and listen to one of Gurudeva's archived talks prior to my meditation and prayer. It has become the center of my day.”

Always on the crest of technology, Gurudeva was one of the first to see the potential of Hinduism on the Internet. He started by posting HINDUISM TODAY in 1994. By 1995, several of Gurudeva's books and pamphlets had been added. Like a prolific banyan tree, the site has expanded immensely and continues to flourish.

Another premier presence, important to people exploring current events, is HINDUISM

TODAY (www.hinduismtoday.com), posting over 85 past issues back to 1993. The most re-

cent addition to the family, Hindu Press International (HPI) presents a daily collection of Hindu news from the world media. It is also available through e-mail subscription.

For researchers like me, there is no better source on the Web for realistic, well-explained Hindu teachings than Hinduism Online (www.himalayanacademy.com). The resources here have reached a depth that is almost mind-boggling. Of course, all of Gurudeva's beautiful books are there to buy, but the selection of online books with complete text (www.himalayanacademy.com/books/online_books.html) is truly amazing!

Art also has its place at www.hinduart.org including the famous “Aum” page and a superb collection of Hindu art by some of the best contemporary Indian artists which can be purchased for the home or workplace. A lifetime of Hindu surfing and learning awaits every visitor.

More Gurudeva In-Sites

- Hinduism links page: www.hindu.org
- Gurudeva's *Master Course* online—updated daily: www.gurudeva.org/lesson.shtml
- TAKA archives: www.gurudeva.org/archives/
- Short biography of Gurudeva: www.gurudeva.org/gurudeva/
- Cybertalks: www.gurudeva.dynip.com/~htoday/talks/
- Kauai's Hindu Monastery: www.saivasiddhanta.com/hawaii/
- Iraivan Temple: www.saivasiddhanta.com/hawaii/iraivan/
- Academy study: www.himalayanacademy.com/academy/
- Gurudeva's books: store.himalayanacademy.com
- Hindu basics: www.himalayanacademy.com/basics/
- Hindu Heritage Endowment: www.hheonline.org
- Thank You, Gurudeva Fund: www.hheonline.org/funds/thankyou_gurudeva.html
- Accolades: www.himalayanacademy.com/site_comments/