

## [Kailasa Parampara](#)

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# Kailasa Parampara

This month's poster section is dedicated to the Sri Lankan mystic, Sage Yogaswami (1872-1964), one of the most extraordinary Hindu sages of this century. The island nation he so loved is now in the midst of ethnic strife, and over 100 thousand Sri Lankans have relocated in Eastern Canada in the past ten years. In honor of the

historic conference on Saivite Hinduism they will hold July 1-3, 1994, in Toronto, Canada, and July 9-10 in Montreal, we dedicate these four pages. Here readers will find the magical stories of the masters of this lineage and the soul-penetrating sayings of Sage Yogaswami. It is hoped that his rare example and wisdom will be passed on to the youth, wherever in the world they may now call home.

Wise men who wrote the Katha Upanishad thousands of years ago advised seekers to "Arise, awake, approach the great beings and know the Truth!" It is a universal human imperative-the need to know the Truth within existence, the Reality beneath the appearance, the Immortal which gives meaning to our mortality. The way to this Truth, recurring in every age and culture, still exists today. It is a dynamic tradition, carrying the same force and power for contemporary pathfinders as it did for the seekers and disciples of the dim past. It is called the Sanatana Dharma, the "Eternal Path," for it never dies. It is coexistent with man's inquiry after the Real. The most powerful traditions all have a living master, a knower of What Is, an awakened soul. He provides a potency, an ability to make the journey one of personal experience far greater than any philosophy, any dogma, any religious history or institution. One such venerable spiritual tradition is the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara ("lineage of teachers"), whose present-day embodiment is Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswami. These are not your conventional saints or typical yogis. Technically, they are called Saivite siddhas, which means followers of Siva who have attained the highest knowledge and perfection. It is said that such men hold Truth in the palm of their hand, that they can do anything at will-turn iron into gold, heal the sick, raise the dead, see into the

future, change lives and talk with the Gods. Many are the stories told by the still-living disciples of this satguru lineage by those who saw the miracles first-hand through tears of wonderment and awe. Such powers sometimes became an obstacle when devotees came to these siddhas for the lesser magic rather than for God Consciousness. So, the masters "hid themselves" beneath unassuming white robes and stern ways. It helped. But these were luminous beings, engulfed in the Clear White Light day and night. Who can hide such radiance for long? People still came. The most ardent drew near, and the teachings were passed from one to the next over the centuries. Not in classes or seminars. In the old way, by word of mouth, by the preceptor's testing the disciple, preparing the disciple, guiding the disciple in daily context and in dreams. Such men can shake the seeker's mind loose from its shackles, arouse awareness from the slumber of so many births and turn questions like "Who am I?" into proclamations of "I am That." This the gurus of the Yogaswami lineage did. Here is a glimpse of these great souls and the God-centered nondualism they taught. One afternoon sometime in the mid-1800s a white-haired man happened into a tea shop near Bangalore in West-Central India. He was a stranger, probably from the Himalayan crown of India. He sat at a wooden table and took his tea. When the time came for the shop to close, the owner found the man had entered a state of contemplation so complete that he could not be aroused. Besides, it is considered improper to disturb a meditator. So he was left alone. Opening the shop early the next day, the shopkeeper discovered the yogi seated in perfect stillness, filling the room with a palpable sanctity. He did not move from that spot for seven years, nor did he speak. The shop closed. Villagers turned it into a shrine frequented by the crowds who wanted darshana, or "sight," of this remarkable being. Many came with problems, the kind people everywhere have—a new job, grandmother's health, daughter's marriage. To their amazement, answers always came. Sometimes in dreams. Sometimes a piece of paper would materialize in the air above the saint and float gently to the ground. On it would be written exactly what they needed. One day, as suddenly as he had come, the rishi emerged from his divine state, got up and left the shop, never to return. He was the first modern-day satguru in this lineage and is known as the "Rishi from the Himalayas." A few years later, farther south, a high court judge sat at the end of a trial, faced with the duty to pass a sentence of death on a convicted murderer. The man was guilty, but the judge refused to fatally condemn a fellow human being. Instead, he left the bench, quit the law and renounced the world. He became a wandering monk. In time he met the Rishi and was initiated into the inner teachings. Eventually he settled in Sri Lanka's port city of Jaffna. It was around 1860. He had no home, no ashrama or yoga school. He could be found walking in the marketplace, speaking of man's oneness with God Siva and taking his meals with common folks. The people called him Kadaitswami, the "Marketplace Swami." One day Kadaitswami was invited for lunch at the home of a devout but poor family. With little food in the house and not wanting to offend a great soul, the wife did the unthinkable—she sold her cherished gold wedding necklace to buy provisions. When the meal was finished, the swami asked her to bring a piece of iron. A rusty old rod was found. Kadaitswami took it aside, spat on it and handed it back. It had turned to gold! Today this is a wealthy coconut oil family, though it is said they never sold the

golden rod. The next satguru in this tradition was called Chellappaswami (1840-1915). Chellappan means "wealthy father." Except in a spiritual sense, he was anything but rich. In fact, most thought him a vagrant, and mad in the bargain. He wore disheveled clothing and preferred to be alone. At age nineteen, Chellappan was initiated by Kadaitswami. Thereafter he camped on the steps of Jaffna's now famous Nallur Temple-that is when he was not walking the country roads, which he did frequently and energetically. Chellappaswami spoke of God only in the first person, oblivious of duality, never admitting that there was "another." He would puzzle passersby by asking questions like "Did you know that I am the King of kings?" "Did anyone tell you that all the money in all the banks in the world is mine?" Chellappaswami was strict with himself, especially about food. He cooked his own meals-simple affairs of boiled rice and dal. His favorite curry was eggplant, for which he would sometimes walk ten miles to the market to get fresh and ten miles back. Never would he allow base desire to well up. If it did, if his mouth would so much as water at the smell of a hard-earned curry, he would chide himself, "So, you want this tasty food that much, do you?" Laughing aloud he would pick up the clay cooking pots and break them on the ground. Then he would meditate on greater things as the crows loudly shared the scattered food. One morning a pilgrim was walking by the temple where Chellappaswami lived. Suddenly, the sage laughed, calling out, "Just who do you think you are?" It was a seemingly innocuous query, but somehow it went deep into the heart, then deeper and deeper. Later the 35-year-old man left all worldly life and joined Chellappan as his disciple. This was Sage Yogaswami (1872-1964), who wrote many verses recounting that meeting: "I saw my guru at Nallur Temple. 'Hey! Who are you?' he challenged me. I saw darkness all-surrounding and could not comprehend his meaning. As I stood perplexed, he looked at me with kindness, and the maya that was tormenting me left and disappeared. He pointed above my head, and I lost all consciousness of body and stood there in amazement. He then spoke of the essence of Vedanta, that my fear might vanish. 'It is as it is. Who knows? Grasp well the meaning of these words,' said he. Everything disappeared and by the grace of my guru, who has no one to compare with him, I remained still, with no one to compare with me."

In 1947 a 20-year-old American sailed from San Francisco to Bombay in search of his guru. His cabin on the ship was directly over the engine room. It was his habit to meditate long hours each day alone in his room. One morning his contemplation was particularly deep, and as he returned to normal consciousness the mechanical roar of the engines became annoying, then grating, then unbearable. In his mind he spontaneously commanded the noise to "Stop!" The engines immediately halted, and the ship drifted quietly for two days before the voyage was resumed. Arriving in India, the youth traveled south by train. Crossing the straits to Sri Lanka, he found himself among Buddhist and Hindu mystics. His urge to realize God fully grew irresistibly intense. Entering the dense jungles southeast of Colombo, he settled in the famed Caves of Jalani, vowing to fast and meditate until he attained the ultimate illumination. Finally, the young yogi broke through the various wheels of

consciousness, or chakras, into full enlightenment, beyond time, beyond form, beyond space. Months later, the youth was taken to Sage Yogaswami's humble hut in the North. The 77-year-old Yogaswami named him Subramuniya, "silent teacher of light" and initiated him into the famed mantra, Namah Sivaya. Later, on the full-moon day in May, 1949, his satguru initiated Subramuniya into the holy orders of sannyasa and with a forceful slap on the back commanded him to carry the ancient Natha teachings back to the West. The event was acclaimed a coronation by all who witnessed. Yogaswami attained oneness in 1964. Sivaya Subramuniyaswami is now the living successor of the venerable sage and the satguru of the Tamil Saivite Hindu people of Sri Lanka, who now reside in many countries of the world. He lives on a remote Hawaiian island where he has built a Saivite temple and monastery. Here his eleven swamis and numerous other monks work full-time to strengthen all four sects of Hinduism. Gurudeva, as he is affectionately known, teaches the traditional inner path which he was taught as a youth in northern Sri Lanka. From Hawaii he guides seekers-as his guru and his guru's guru once did-to know thy Self and see God everywhere. Deeply immersed in the global Hindu renaissance for over half a century, Gurudeva publishes this international news journal, Hinduism Today, printed each month in four languages and ten editions. The paper has 250,000 readers in over 120 nations, reaching out to all Hindus from its printing facilities in North America, India, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Mauritius, Africa, Malaysia and Singapore. His discourses have inspired many books and courses, most importantly Dancing with Siva, Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism-a 1,008-page illustrated sourcebook safeguarding India's timeless ways and wisdom.

For more information about Yogaswami or free home-study tantras write to:

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