Reflecting on Gurudeva
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IN MY OPINION

Reflecting on Gurudeva

How he supported our ancient temple science

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Such was the brilliance 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 artistÃ a versatile dancerÃ 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.