



A Glimpse of
Paramahansa
Omkaranda Saraswati
His Lineage and His Mission

OMKARANANDA — HIS LIFE, HIS TRADITION, HIS MISSION

Question:

The Journalist of the monthly newspaper HINDUISM TODAY asked the inmates of your Ashrams to describe you. We know the descriptions of you by them and by thousand others. We need to have a description of yourself by yourself. Who are you, Swami Omkarananda?

Answer:

Who Am I? — Before I was born, I was. After I die, I will be. A timeless Being came from, and into, timeless Eternity. Time was formed, and time is dissolved, and I remain what I have always been, a Being with depths to which there is no beginning, and heights to which there is no end.

Since the supreme Divinity as the Timeless Eternity and as the Time Eternity — Sadashiva Tripurasundari — is dwelling in my Heart, Life, Consciousness, and as there is no difference between That and Me and Me and That, I am dwelling in the Soul of all Gods and Goddesses, all Saints and Sages, all beings visible and invisible. And, yet I am what I am, the Transcendent Reality. If you know here on earth the greatest Sage, Saint, Guru, the greatest clairvoyant, prophet, or anyone to whom supernormal power of perception, or anyone to whom daily contact with God, is attributed — then, ask that person, who Swami Omkarananda is. He will confirm to you that the only true and correct description of Swami Omkarananda is the one he himself has given.

Question:

What is your Tradition and what is your Mission, Swami Omkarananda?

Answer:

Tradition

My tradition is the tradition of the Truth in your inner heart. It is the tradition of the Divine everywhere. I have no tradition as the learned intelligence understands. If I had a tradition, I would be localised. I would belong to some creed, some religion, some denomination, some Sampradaya, I would not be universal, not belong to all religions, all cultures, and yet transcend all religions, all cultures. I have no tradition except the tradition of traditionless self-expressions of the Experience of the one Truth.

Mission

I will not stop the activity of my being, not rest idle, until every creature in Creation and all of the Creation itself, is touched with the Light Eternal, until every individual entity gains in living experience the Love, the Peace, the Happiness and the fulfilment of the infinite One.

Paramahansa
Ombarananda Saraswati

*His Lineage and his Himalayan
and European Ashrams*

Questions raised by Mr. Malik,
Representative and Journalist in New Delhi, of
HINDUISM TODAY,
the Hindu Family Newspaper,
published monthly in eight editions:
North America, India, UK/Europe, Africa,
Mauritius, Singapore-Malaysia, a Dutch
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and our Answers

1996

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami's HINDUISM TODAY, a Newspaper circulated the world over, asked in the form of questions for a description of Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya Sadguru Sri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati and his Himalayan and European Ashrams.

The Answers have taken the form of this publication. Can one present a verbal picture of a Mystic Sage rooted in the experience of the transcendental Truth? Not possible. The life of this living liberated Man, Jivanmukta, Omkarananda Saraswati, a Brahmajnani (*brahmavit brahmaiva bhavati*) permanently settled in unconditioned and all-independent joy, peace, fearlessness, and a dignity that can only belong to the divine Reality, is inward and invisible, though the traits of his daily consciousness, delineated here in this line, are palpable to an appreciable extent to our eyes. It is a life that stays beyond mind and its words; it also remains supremely untouched by sky-high glorifications claiming however justifiably fidelity to reality or by the green-eyed monster jealousy's death-dealing, self-destroying defamations falsely asserting themselves to be a progeny of facts. Only a Sage can truly know and really describe a Sage, and even here it is still on the surface, though we have here universally valid knowledge obtained by inner identity with the subject of description: for instance, when Omkarananda writes on Sivananda. And, who shall describe Omkarananda? Yet, for the public any inadequate description is better than no description. Here is one.

And, when Omkarananda Saraswati was himself asked repeatedly to present to the enquirers his own biographical sketch, he always answered in three words: *Aham Brahma Asmi.*

July 1996

Dr. H. Eckert

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H.T. Question 1:

Overall we need to describe Swami Omkarananda, who his Guru was, his lineage and his activities today.

Answers:

- a) Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, a God-centred Saint and a Sage of Universal and Transcendental Knowledge**

Sri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati is a born Sage, Mystic and Genius. Already at the age of thirteen and fourteen his life was flooded with numerous spiritual experiences of the omnipresent and omniscient God. Under the dictates of these experiences, he left his home city in South India for the Himalayas, where the world-renowned Sage Sri Swami Sivananda recognised in him an embodiment of the high spirit of renunciation, profound divine wisdom, touching purity of heart, made him known as Bala Yogi, Bala Jnani, titled him as Adhyatma Kavita-Bhaskara and crowned him with Sanyasa-Diksha at the age of seventeen.

No one knew and no one could know of the inner life of this solitude seeking and in seclusion living ascetic, wherein he nurtured under the witnessing eyes of the Divine Mother, his intimate inner relations with the Infinite and the Eternal. His intense devotion gave to that Infinite and that Eternal a visible Form, bhavana-murti, the Divine Mother. Goddess Meenakshi of Madura bestowed on him the Sri Vidya Mantra Diksha, and he was initiated

into the science of Vedic Yagnas by a 105 year old Siddha Purusha, in the presence of a 700 year old Maha Yogi, who is invisible to all except to that Siddha Purusha and to Swamiji. It is a phenomenon that requires to be explained to seeking aspirants after Truth-experience. He obtained from a Yogi of Siddhis Swami Nityananda the secrets of higher Tantra Yoga in which there is in all the world and in all the creation only one woman, the immanent Divinity, the individual Self, seeking restlessly union with the transcendent Divinity, the Absolute Reality.

In the same year in which Jagadguru Swami Sivananda gave him Sannyasa-Diksha, his first book (The Story of an Eminent Yogi, 1947) was published and internationally appreciated and valued. He is the author of numerous publications, and several Professors of the Universities and other prominent personalities around the world, esteem him as an intuitive philosopher, a versatile genius, a profound scholar of universal knowledge, a brilliant writer and a charismatic and inspired orator. He was the right hand of Swami Sivananda for over a decade and wrote among other works on Sivananda two monumental publications dealing with Sivananda Literature. When the first of the two Volumes was published in 1960, the world received it with such statements as given in **Supplement One.**

Paramahansa Sri Swami Omkarananda's divine personality was described by some renowned spiritual leaders as shown in **Supplement Two.**

The renowned **Mahapandita SRI VISHNU VASANT SHASTRI PANSHIKAR, Leicester, England,** the Chief-

Acharya of Omkarananda Ashram, adores, as thousands around the world do, Swami Omkarananda as an Incarnation of God, and in adoration of his Divine Nature composed on him highly inspiring and immortal Bhajans, Hymns, Stotras, Aratikyams as well as the Srimad Omkara-Atharvashirsham.

Many are the Saints of India who pay their Homage to Swami Omkarananda. Among them, His Holiness **SRI SATYAMITRANANDA**, the builder of the **Grand Bharatmata Mandir in Hardwar** and a spiritual leader with a vast following both in United Kingdom (Great Britain) and in India, visited Omkarananda Ashram in Switzerland. He was enchanted by what he saw, and with reverence and awe exclaimed: **This is the Benares of Europe!**

b) Swami Omkarananda and his Guru Swami Sivananda

The opulent literature of Swami Omkarananda on Sivananda bears rich evidence that Omkarananda's own spiritual realisations enabled him to verify and describe by a direct personal inner knowledge the most luminous states of divine Consciousness that informed and inspired the phenomenon of the covert and overt life of the great Saint Swami Sivananda and the Light of the divine Knowledge in him. A magazine published from Madras, the „Call Divine“ portrayed with deep insight the relationship between these two spiritual giants: „What sweetness is to sugar and what fragrance is to a flower, Swami Omkarananda is to Swami Sivananda; because, the former is as wonderful as the latter.“

c) The Lineage of Omkarananda Sannyasis and Disciples

Our lineage, our Guruparampara, runs in this Order: Lord Narayana, Brahma, Dakshinamurti, Dattatreya, Four Kumaras, Vyasa, Vasishta, Gaudapada, Shankaracharya, Sivananda, Omkarananda. Our roots are in the Vedas and the Upanishads. Our Heart is Srividya; the Soul of our Being is Sri Yantra. Our Ishta Devata is Parabrahmaswaroopini Sri Mahatripurasundari. We are at the same time Siva Bhaktas and Vishnu Bhaktas because Siva and Vishnu are two of the many Faces of Parameshwari Tripurasundari. And because of our deep spirituality which is the quintessence of all religions, we belong to all religions of the world. We appreciate them, serve them, unite them and further the growth of the inner light in them.

From Sri Sadgurudeva Paramahansa Omkarananda, sincere seekers of the Divine, no matter to which creed, caste, colour, race they belong, can obtain, if they earnestly so desire, Shuddhi- and Nama-Karana, Upanayana Sacrament, Mantra- and Sannyasa-Diksha, practise Yoga of Synthesis, belong to our lineage, become universal personalities of intense Devotion, divine Wisdom and experience the ultimate Truth, the goal of all great religions of the world. Over 170 disciples have received Sannyasa-Diksha.

d) Swami Omkarananda's Activities today; his Ashram is a Myriad Faced Hinduism in Action!

Be it in the Himalayas or in the cities of Western Europe, Omkarananda Saraswati lives his life in seclusion, solitude and silence, far removed from publicity and propaganda. How detached he is even from persons staying closest to him can be seen from the fact that he never during the entire period of thirty-one years of his total absence from Himalayas wrote a single word, or phoned, or sought any kind of contact with the wonderful Swami who is taking care of his Kutir in Sivananda Ashram adjoining Omkarananda Ashram in the Himalayas. In consonance with this feature of his life, his Austrian Ashram on the top of a Hill with its own forests on three sides, and a valley down, commanding a view of the snowy Alps, affords him sceneries identical with the interior Himalayas. In spite of this fact, he is in the very midst of the multifarious activities of his Ashram. Notwithstanding his activities, he is always what he has always been, a Non-Doer allowing the Divine Will and Divine Grace to express themselves through the instrumentality of his charismatic personality and an institution that is self-born. Through correspondence, personal audiences, talks, speeches, phones, faxes, E-Mail, special prayers, this towering Sage serves seekers from all sections of mankind. He is the guiding Presence behind all the cultural, religious, spiritual activities of his Ashram and Ashram's Temples. There are two publications on the activities of the Ashram.

Mahamandaleshwar Swami Omkarananda Saraswati's Ashram is a myriad-faced Hinduism in action. All phases

of Hinduism can be seen and experienced in his European Ashrams and Temples. The daily Rudra Abhishekas find additional recitations of Rudri on Mondays. Every day Devi Puja of different types are conducted: Tripurasundari Puja with Trishati recitation; Lalita Sahasranamavali Archana; Durga Puja with Chandi recitation. Every morning Satyanarayana Katha Puja, Sri Lakshmi Puja with Sri Suktam and Sri Lakshmi Sahasranamavali. Everyday Sarva-Devata Yagna. Navagraha Shanti Homa. Gayatri Mantra Yagna forms one of the most important Yagnas conducted in our Ashram. On Fridays special Pujas are performed for Subramanya Swami. On Saturdays Hanuman is specially worshipped and Hanuman Chalisa is recited.

All the Twenty-four Hours of everyday, Agni Devata is present in our Ashrams. For the good and well-being of all mankind, all Nature, all beings, a 24-Hours a day Akhanda-Sarva-Devata Hawana is being maintained since 1974 (in 1996 now, it is a non-stop 22 year-Hawana). From the year 1974 to the year 1987, Akhanda Mahamrityunjaya Japa was maintained for the welfare of the whole world and for the health, long life, freedom from accidents and spiritual Enlightenment of the needy and seeking aspirants. Since 1987 it is continuing 12 Hours a day.

In all the three Satsang and Meditation Classes of everyday, we recite Purusha Sukta, Narayana Sukta, Durga Sukta, Bhagya Sukta, Medha Sukta. Etc. etc. Periodically Shiva-Parvati Kalyanams are performed. Omkarananda Bhajan Mandali conducts Bhajans to the accompaniment of instrumental music. We use all

Mantras, Vedic, Pauranic, of all Devas of the Hindu Pantheon, not only of Devi and Bija Mantras. Natya and Sangita Sections give their recitals before the Deities. And so on and so forth. All Hindu Festivals are celebrated. Every Thursday Guru Puja is performed, and on Guru Purnima the Festival assumes a highly festive mood with recitation of the Guru Gita and the conducting of colourful ceremonies. All the Parampara Gurus are worshipped.

The all-day, all-time lovers and servers of God, bearing purity of heart, deep devotion and spiritual knowledge, the Priests of the Omkarananda Ashram are invited as Pandits by prominent persons, families and institutions, for performing Yagnas and Pujas, purifying houses and conducting Grihapravesha ceremony, bestowing sacraments on the deserving and so on and so forth. There are numerous Temple publications of our Temples, circulated on limited scale.

Lovers of Truth from all over the world, and amidst them leading Indian Acharyas, Pandits, Swamis and most holy men and women, have visited the Omkarananda Ashram and its Vedic temples in quest of divine inspiration. Their statements (see **Supplement Three**) show how they were filled with admiration for the divine works in Omkarananda Ashram.

H.T. Question 2:

a) **What are their Teachings?**

Answer:

Everything that is in the Heart of Hindu Sanatana Dharma, Yogas, Vedanta, Writings of Sivananda, and the Outpourings of a Genius and a Man of Ultimate Truth-experience.

The teachings of the descending line of Gurus, in the lineage of Swami Omkarananda, from Lord Narayana, Dakshinamurti, Dattatreya, Vyasa, Vasishta, Gaudapada, Shankaracharya down to Sivananda and Omkarananda are already known to the world. Our Adi Guru Shankaracharya's central teachings are available to the seekers of the Truth and the public around the globe. The inspiring Teachings of our Paramaguru Sivananda are easily accessible to the people in all continents of our planet. They are also on the Internet. The entire universe of Sanatana Dharma is our field. We represent the Heart of the Vedas, Upanishads, Brahmasutras, Bhagavad Gita, Puranas, Dharma Shastras. We are Saiwaites, Vaishnawaites, Bhaktas, Yogis and, what is more, you can find the essence of the essentials of all world religions in our fundamental teachings. The Values we live by, and present to mankind, are timeless and therefore have a valuable message to people of all religions and races of all epochs. The whole mankind is our family, Sivakutumbam, and is to be served in all manner of ways. Embodying in himself the Mother of the Vedas, Aditi, Gayatri, Mahatripurasundari,

Swami Omkarananda Saraswati is unique, and his teachings breathe the breath of the Truth-realisation. When he speaks, he does not think, as his words laden with light, power, wisdom flow from a Source of all-including divine Intelligence, behind and beyond the mind.

Swami Omkarananda's teachings are pregnant with hundreds of wonderful, dynamic and most practical methods for God-experience in all conditions and circumstances of daily life. They are self-formulations of the realisation of the Infinite, offered to the individuals seeking a union with the ultimate Reality, Parabrahman. There are thousands of files full of writings of Swami Omkarananda waiting to be edited and printed and published. His speeches and talks are recorded on the magnetic tape, and the tape runs into thousands of kilometres. Since three decades his two hundred publications have touched and transformed the lives of numerous seekers and aspirants. Since 1965 the Publication Department of Omkarananda Ashram Switzerland has been issuing two Magazines in the German language. Some of his works have been published in 54 languages of the world.

- b) **He is very active in Europe and has major Ashrams at least in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, England. We visited a small place associated with him in Bombay, run by Madhu Shastri, who has visited Hawaii and is a fan of HINDUISM TODAY.**

Answer:

Every Hindu around the world should feel it his prerogative to be a fan of the HINDUISM TODAY.

H.T. Question 3:

What are the facilities of the Ashram? What do they do there? You can see from the literature that they run a number of schools. Is this their primary activity? What about spiritual teaching and Sadhana?

Answers:

- a) **A Glimpse of Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas**

Our Ashram has all the circumstances, conditions, facilities required for development of Bhakti, rendering intensive selfless service and realisation of God in daily life. All Ashramites' activities have only one Aim: God-experience. The running of schools is only one among the many forms of Selfless Service they render.

All our Ashrams are in the form of Temples formally and informally. Pujas go on day in and day out. We run temples. We print and distribute spiritual literature. We have our meditation classes, Bhajans, Yagnas, and individuals have their individual spiritual practices, apart from the general spiritual activities of the Ashram.

Every speck of dust, every rock, every tree of the actual dwellings of Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas and beyond are vibrant with the glow of Swami Omkarananda's spiritual realisations and bear silent witness to this incomparable Sage, his Wisdom and Purity and his uninterrupted experience and adoration of the Divine Presence in all beings and in all things.

Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas is located in the most sacred place near the bank of the holy river Ganga and in the proximity of both Rishikesh, the ancient place of pilgrimage, the neighbouring Sivanandanagar and the famous Lakshman Jhula. The Himalayan Ashram is — like other Omkarananda Ashrams in Europe — a place where God abides and announces His Presence in the wonders His Grace works, the works His Love inspires, the books His wisdom dictates and the deeds His Will perpetuates.

Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas carries its multiple activities through two registered Charitable Trusts — **Omkarananda Dharma Samsthan**, and **Omkarananda Charitable Trust**, as well as the **Omkarananda Educational Society** and the **Vani Educational Society**.

b) Spiritual Activities of Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas

Omkarananda Dharma Samsthan is maintaining **four Mandirs** in the Himalayan area of Muni-ki-Reti and Lakshman Jhula: **Sri Durga Mandir**, Muni-ki-Reti (1967, the original Temple and Ashram building was greatly extended in the 1980s); **Sri Dipeshwar Mandir**, Tapovan (1987); **Sri Ram Mandir**, Ghugdani (1989); **Sri Satya-Narayana Mandir**, Lakshman Jhula (1991).

In the Ashram's Temples daily Pujas and Agnihotra are performed and regular Hawanas and Abhishekas are conducted (see details also under Answer 1d). Sometimes visiting priests (like the famous priests of Tirupati and of Kanchi Kamakoti Pitha) are conducting special Homas, Abhishekas and prayers for special purposes (like world peace) or during festivals like Sivaratri, Dipavali, Krishna Janmashtami, Navaratri, etc.

In our Temples and Mandirs Sadhakas can meditate, study literature or can engage themselves in Karma-Yoga. Nature loving people can work in the fields, growing trees, fruit and vegetables at our Ram Mandir.

The Ashram has its own Go-Shala, which is a very essential part of an Ashram. The holy cow-dung is used in Yagnas and the cows are inspired by the tunes of Bhajans. The holy cow finds its right place in our Ashram.

In the Ashram's Dharma Shala on the river Ganges, daily Arati and Satsang are conducted by a renowned saint and sage, Prabhuji Acharya Surya Prakash.

A recognized Yoga Centre fulfils the wishes of many spiritual seekers. The traditional teachings of Patanjali are the main teaching. A nicely equipped Yoga hall with all facilities has become a main attraction in this area.

c) Educational and Social Activities of Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas:

Apart from conducting religious and other activities, the Ashramites are engaged in pure selfless service and in managing selflessly the Ashram's educational and social projects:

Fifteen basic and junior high schools in the Garhwal hills (registered and recognised); an **English Medium Inter-College** with a strength of over 1000 children in Muni-ki-Reti (affiliated to I.C.S.E., New Delhi); an **Omkarananda Degree College** in Deoprayag (affiliated to H.N. Bahuguna Garhwal University, Shrinagar); a **Natya Kala Academy** (affiliated to Prayag Sangit Samiti, Allahabad), where not only the practical but also the theoretical aspect of Indian classical temple dance is being taught; a **Sangit Samsthan** (in process of affiliation), where the traditional Indian instrumental music is taught.

Astrological science is also studied and taught in the Ashram.

Furthermore, a Public Library, a Homeopathic Centre and a beautiful Guest House on the banks of holy Mother Ganga are rendering great services to the Tehri-Garhwal region at the Himalayan foothills.

NOTE:

Certain activities and aspects which are not in Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas, are in the European Omkarananda Ashrams, and vice versa.

H.T. Question 4:

Do they teach Hinduism in the schools they run? If so, how and when?

Answer:

All Omkarananda Educational Institutions are situated in places which are since immemorial times impregnated with the vibrant spiritual presence of immortal Rishis and Sages. At every turn the children are faced with the dynamisms of living Hinduism; the very atmosphere of the place teaches them the basic principles of Hinduism.

Omkarananda Educational Society aims at imparting education to all students irrespective of their caste, creed, colour, religion or sex. In all Omkarananda educational institutions students enjoy total freedom of religious views, beliefs and practices. Religion is presented

joyously and with wisdom and love. Since students belong to various religions, the teachings of Hinduism and the essentials of all religions are being taught to the children in the Moral Science Classes.

Also guest lecturers and important personalities from all walks of life give frequently talks on various subjects like health, spirituality, better living, yoga and medicine. These lights of learning inspire and impart to the children the lessons and the wisdom they have gathered in their lives.

Here are two of the most recent examples of prominent spiritual personalities lecturing to our school-children, thereby beneficially influencing the children to live a life in accordance with the ethical, moral and spiritual ideals:

Last September His Holiness Sri Swami Shiva-premanandaji Maharaj, a direct disciple of Swami Sivananda, who runs an Ashram in Argentina, was received as Guest of Honour in our Omkarananda Saraswati Nilayam. The children were enthusiastic about his inspiring lecture on the spiritual life.

In February / March, Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas hosted the internationally renowned, most adorable great Saint Sri Vasant V. Paranjpe Maharaj with a number of his distinguished disciples. The Ashram was most happy to facilitate the starting of his latest project which aims at spreading his Fivefold Path — of which Agnihotra and Yagna are the heart and soul — also in the Himalayan area. Sri Vasantji has a special program of teaching basic principles of the Sanatana Dharma,

including Agnihotra, to the children. The visit of his team was a great success at our Omkarananda Saraswati Nilayam.

These special hours with guest lecturers are of great value to the school, and contribute to the shaping of the ethical, moral and spiritual ideals of the children.

On the last anniversary of Sri Swami Sivananda's birthday all the schools of Rishikesh were invited to participate in a prayer and speech competition at Sivananda Ashram. When the Omkarananda students finished their extraordinary performance of most rhythmic and enchanting prayers, the hall was booming with applause, and non ending congratulations accompanied the winners of five first prizes, and one second prize for senior, junior and primary group-prayer in English and Hindi, as well as two first prizes for the Hindi and English speeches. Such successful programs constantly improve the already excellent reputation of Omkarananda schools, and show the spiritual impact Omkarananda Ashram has on education.

„SARASWATI“, the Newsletter of Omkarananda Saraswati Nilayam, which is published regularly since the mid-eighties, contains words of wisdom of Sri Swami Omkarananda, messages of teachers, reports on guest lecturers with summaries of their speeches and — most important — many student contributions in the form of small articles, poems, witty comments, scientific knowledge, etc. The students try to excel each other in intelligence, in the depth of knowledge, spiritual insights and in giving Golden Rules of Life. The students demonstrate

by their active participation that their school journal is „great fun“. This Newsletter is thus another most attractive way of imparting and deepening moral, ethical and spiritual principles to the children and youth.

The Himalayan Ashram's Publication Department edits, publishes and distributes since 1990 „VIDYA PRABODHINI“, the biannual Magazine of Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas, with leading articles of Sri Swami Omkarananda, drawn from his speeches given during the daily three-times Satsang, as well as many other most inspiring spiritual contributions and Ashram information concerning its activities, publications etc. It reaches a still wider public, bearing as it does most inspiring spiritual wisdom.

Furthermore the Ashram distributes publications and cassettes carrying the teachings of Swami Omkarananda and other speakers. Cassettes and Publications on Suktas, Stotras, Aratis, Ashtakams, Mantras and Instrumental Music are also available.

H.T. Question 5:

Who lives at the Ashram — how many Indians, how many Europeans? What is their general background? Are they disciples of the Swami, or are they more like paying guests? Are there both boys and girls living together? That is an important issue, as you know.

Answers:

a) Who lives in the Ashram? Their background!

People of all nationalities live in the Ashram. Those that live in the Ashram live by the eternal spiritual Values. Many of them have come to the Ashram as children and while yet in their teens. From their previous lives, they have inherited classical Hindu Nature and Hindu Samskaras. By Swabhava they are real Brahmins. It is the repeated opinion of the Experts in the field that they recite Vedic Hymns and other sacred Hindu texts better than the best of the Brahmins of South, North, East, West of India (see the statement of Vedadarshanacharya Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Gangeshwarananda and others, **Supplement Three**) They have brought pure hearts and innocent natures, and are made Hindus by special purificatory Vedic and Tantric and Pauranic Rituals. They are given Upanayana sacrament and are made Brahmins. And they are given Sannyasa Diksha and are made Monks and Nuns of Adishankaracharya's Saraswati Order, belonging to Sri Sharada Pitha of Sringeri. We have our special predilection for our Kanchi Kamakoti Pitha. Our lives are condi-

tioned to highest purity as we are rooted in the worship of the supreme Divine Mother, Srividya. The life in this form of Worship, Vidya, requires from us uncompromising inner and outer purity.

b) Who lives at Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas

Only Indians and Indian citizens of Western European lands are living in the Ashram here: they are all Sannyasis and spiritual aspirants. All of them are highly educated and specialised in various educational and engineering fields. They are all direct disciples of Swami Omkarananda and have been with him since the late 1960s.

The Ashram has some rare jewels such as the most loved and respected Sage Prabhuji Acharya Surya Prakash, the ever-serving and dynamic Mother Usha Devi and the saintliness-incarnate boy of many talents Siddharta whose Bhajans sung by himself in a pure classical style keep the audience spell-bound.

The guests that come to participate in the Ashram's spiritual activities are lodged and given food free of costs.

c) Are there both boys and girls living together in the Ashram?

The Core of the individual spiritual disciplines in the Ashram consists in Sri Vidya Upasana, a form of divine Worship and Yoga-practice that requires unconditional inner and outer purity; it raises the

consciousness of the Sadhaka into the realm of the timeless and the spaceless; it settles in every part of his or her body the Divinity, the Infinite and the Eternal. The consciousness of the differences between sexes or boys and girls, which is so characteristic of even very noble human nature, falls away. All life is divine; moral norms, principles and character are fully fulfilled and transcended. In spite of such purity, the girls in their periods segregate themselves from the rest of the community and stay away from Temple Pujas. It can happen that here and there is a weak soul. The omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent Divinity knows many ways of withdrawing such a soul from such environs.

In Omkarananda Ashram boys and girls are full of Satwic Nature and dominated by Adhyatmika Buddhi. They are really Devaganas. They are fully occupied every day with the practice of Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga. They are experts in the performance of Pujas, Hawanas, Abhishekas. The boys look upon and inwardly adore girls as direct incarnations of the all-seeing, all-knowing, all-powerful Divine Mother. And girls look upon boys as embodiments of the Divine Mother's all-seeing Presence. Thoughts bound up with body-consciousness are foreign to them. The strict rules of a life in Srividya govern their daily life and conduct. We have boy-Sannyasis and girl-Sannyasis. The atmosphere in which they live is charged with deep spirituality. The Prana-pratishtha Devatas of our Ashram Temples constantly watch over them and protect them from all sides. See also the answer to the Question 7 b.

H.T. Question 6:

And then, Swamiji's view on Tehri Dam.

Answer:

This controversial subject of Tehri Dam is in the hands of the Central and State Government bodies, of the public and of the concerned scientists and engineers.

The Ashram begs the Divine to guide the judgement of the public and the Government in the right direction, a direction that is in accord with the Will of the Divine.

H.T. Question 7:

You can ask Swamiji his opinion on (a) abortion and on (b) unmarried men and women living together in the same Ashram. (c) And you can interview individual inmates of the Ashram. Ask them about their experience there.

Answers:

a) Abortion

Abortion in any form and for any reason, is bad and should be discouraged. However, Hindu Dharma permits abortion in very exceptional cases, but there is no case

that can be quickly defended as an exceptional case. One has to study scrupulously any special case before one can call it a very rare and exceptional case.

b) Disciplined and divinely protected men and women in the same Ashram

With reference to your question on unmarried men and women living together in the same Ashram, we do not answer concerning other organisations, institutions, Ashrams, but we refer only to our Ashram. Unmarried men and women in our Ashram follow absolutely the principle of Brahmacharya and abide by all codes of conduct dictated and determined by all-absorbing love for the supreme divine Mother, Parashakti, Parameshwari. All men in our Ashram look upon all women as direct Manifestations of the all-seeing, all-pervading Divine Mother. Moral lapses are not possible and unknown in the Ashram. Should anyone feel unable to adhere strictly to the principle of Brahmacharya and not be able to keep up his divine attitude to women as divine Mother's incarnations, he is asked to leave the Ashram.

Omkananda Ashram is a Sri Vidya Ashram, where every lady, young or old, is adored as Divine Mother, and not as a woman. With this well established attitude, there is no question of sensual thoughts. Should however any Ashramite feel attracted to the idea of marriage, he or she will leave the Ashram.

- c) **Ask inmates of the Ashram about their experience there.**

See the **Fourth Supplement**, printed as the last pages of this Questions and Answers Text.

H.T. Question 8:

In your Switzerland Ashram they have the practice of keeping the yagna, a sacred fire, burning continuously, and have maintained 24-hours vigil at the fire since 1974. This is very interesting to us, as the monks here also maintain a vigil at our Nataraja Temple 24 hours a day, in 3-hours shifts. Why do they do this? What is the meaning of it?

Answer:

Yagna is one of the most effective forms of worship of the Divine. It has been practised for thousands of years by great saints and sages of India. Through the intonation of the special Vedic Mantras, we invoke the living, responding, dynamic presence of Fire-God, Agni-Devata, into the sacred Fire of the Yagna-Kunda, and offer into His hands our prayers, offerings, and so on, to be delivered to the Divinity of our devotion and meditation, and to other Gods and Goddesses. We offer our Mantras, prayers, offerings directly to the Heart of the Infinite and the Eternal in the form of Gods and Goddesses whose favours and Grace we desire, not through

our hands, through the agency of our impure hearts or impure bodies, but through the agency of the purest thing that there is in all the world, Fire. Agni-Devata carries our prayers and offerings directly to the Divinities of our choosing.

When we recite Mantra, yes, the all-hearing God hears it. But if we offer the same Mantra-recitation through fire, it directly reaches the heart of God at once. That is a secret. This technique God Himself has revealed in sacred scriptures. We apply this technique of placing our prayers, our Mantra-recitation directly in the lap of the Divine, through the agency of Agni-Devata.

This Fire-Ceremony is a wonderful ceremony. It wields a tremendous influence on all mankind, on the whole of creation — on plants, on stars, on the whole earth, on visible and invisible entities — a beneficent effect, a blessing effect. Everything flourishes, everything blossoms. It is a wonderful ceremony. There are secrets within secrets in this ceremony.

H.T. Question 9:

a) Is Swami Omkarananda training a successor?

Answer:

Our Ashram is not planned and founded and organised by any enlightened human will. It is a spontaneous mani-

festation of the divine Will and divine Grace. No power of the world however great can affect or damage its existence. It survives every challenge and executes its functions so long as that divine Will and that divine Grace will it. Omkarananda Ashram first came into existence in March 1965, with the construction of the Yagna-Shala in the premises of the Vital Mandir and Ashram adjoining the now Omkarananda Ashram's main Building in the Himalayas. Most powerful Yagnas were conducted, in the Presence of Swami Omkarananda, two immortal Sages, the Divine Mother Herself and other Divinities, by Siddha Purusha Swami Durgananda.

Swami Omkarananda has no personal Will and no private Life. It is decreed by Mahatripurasundari, Parvati Parameshwari, that no matter where in the world Swami Omkarananda resides in a Building or a House, that Building or that House is granted by the Gods and Goddesses the status of a Temple. Notwithstanding its outer appearance, such a Building or House is indeed in its interior a real Temple. Of the future, the past and the present of Omkarananda Ashram, you have to address your question to that divine Will and that divine Grace if your position on the scale of your inner spiritual evolution affords an access to them.

Successors are not trained. Successors are born. Saints are not made. They are born. By the purity of their heart, by their untiring selfless services, by their following in the footsteps of Swamiji, and above all by the divine Grace successors constitute themselves. If you wish, you can interview any of the persons living in Omkarananda Ashram, and watch their purity, their selflessness, their devotion, their service.

Speaking from the standpoint of the organisation, we have two main Registered Trust Societies to guarantee the survival, growth and expansion of the Services of the Omkarananda Ashram, for decades and perhaps for centuries to come: one, Omkarananda Charitable Trust, two, Omkarananda Dharma Samsthan. The next elected President of the Trust Societies will be the successor of their present Founder-President.

b) Who is the successor? Try to interview him.

Answer:

The very person whom the representative and journalist of the HINDUISM TODAY, Mr. Malik contacted and to whom he dictated the questions on Omkarananda Ashram, is the Vice-President of Paramahansa Omkarananda Saraswati's Four Trust Societies, which are functioning for, and through, Omkarananda Ashram Himalayas, Sri Swami Vishveshwarananda Saraswati. His Name signifies the Happiness of Lord Siva Vishwanatha of Varanasi, of Sivananda Ashram's Vishwanatha Temple and of Omkarananda Ashram's Dipeshwara Temple. He is an Akhanda Brahmachari, one who has embodied in himself from childhood and youthhood unbroken principle of Brahmacharya. He has received Sannyasa Diksha from Paramahansa Omkarananda Saraswati. Pancha Tantra says, „He is not a Saint in truth, who is not a Saint in youth.“ Vishveshwarananda is a Karma Yogi by temper, character and choice and bears in his heart uncompromising and total Devotion to his Gurudev. From 1967 to 1982 he has rendered distinguishing services to Omkarananda's

European Ashrams. In 1982 he was sent to Himalayas, Muni-ki-Reti, Rishikesh. Within a short time he has created a large new field of activities — the Ashram Temples for the Sadhakas, schools for the students, and buildings for the resident Swamis, Teachers and Professors. In a hilly region, which is a world of Sadhus, Sannyasis and Mahatmas, he discovered education as the greatest need, and has been ably fulfilling this need much to the joy of over a thousand families. He is self-effacing and has no ambition to be the succeeding President from his present Vice-President Position. Yet from the standpoint of the institution, he is the successor. Such is his Devotion to the Gurudev that he always wants to be Hanuman and not Lord Rama. He is not only Hanuman but also Bharata. With absolute physical absence of his other-worldly Mystic and Sage Sadgurudeva Omkarananda from the Ashram, since the last 30 years, Swami Vishveshwarananda has been since he took up the Management of the Ashram, ruling the tiny kingdom of the Ashram just with Guru-Padukas on the Throne of the Ashram.

A team of Omkarananda Saraswati's monastic disciples, who are also Members of the Board of Omkarananda Trust Societies — Swami Satchidananda, Swami Gaurishankarananda, Swami Vishvarupananda and Somashekhari (Somashekhari has also got Sannyasa-Diksha and is a monastic disciple, but has been ordered by Sadgurudeva Omkarananda to be in civil dress so long as she is the Director of Natyakala Academy and Sangit Samsthan and has to teach these Arts to students and has to give public performances) — are greatly helping Swami Vishveshwarananda. In the spirit of the Veda

Mantra, they are serving Sarva-Devata and the public as one Heart, one Mind, one Will. The Grace of Guru, Gayatri, Ganga, Gita, Tripurasundari is visibly operative in their lives.

H.T. Question 10:

If Swamiji is in Europe, you may be able to ask him questions by fax. You can ask about his overall vision for the organisation, and what the plans are for the future. What is his central teaching, what does he think is the most pending problem for Hindus today? What can we do about it?

Answers:

a) The Vision of Swamiji in relation to his organisation

Swamiji is an utterly other-worldly Mystic rooted in the Truth-experience. He never considers that he has any devotees, disciples, followers, and an organisation. If you see there is an organisation around him, then it is purely a manifestation of the divine Will and divine Grace. The vision of It and the future of It belong entirely to that divine Will, and is known only to It. He adores and serves all, disciples or no-disciples, as direct manifestations of the Divine.

b) Swamiji's plans for the future

Swami Omkarananda is essentially a flame of the spirit of renunciation, with no personal wishes, no desires, no plans, no programs, no aims — totally self-surrendered to the Truth and literally breathing and moving in It. Therefore, the whole of his life is nothing but the Self-expression of the luminous Nature of the transcendent Divinity. In his case, the future unfolds itself in accordance with the rhythms of the divine Will.

c) Central Teachings of Swami Omkarananda

Swamiji's Central Teaching is: Practise Yoga of Synthesis. Be in yourself a Karma Yogi, Bhakti Yogi, Raja Yogi, Mantra Yogi, Jnana Yogi. Love the all-pervading, all-knowing, all-mighty God with all your Heart and Soul. Experience Him here and now, and distribute the fruits of that Experience to all mankind.

Everywhere there is nothing other than God. He is within us, around us, above us, below us, everywhere. Everything is God. Know and experience this! Look upon every-one and everything with an overwhelming conviction: this is God in Manifestation!

Look upon the whole world with eyes full of Love, a mind full of Peace, a heart full of Blessings, with hands full of Strength and ready for Service, with a life that is full of God-consciousness. Bless as you walk, bless as you think, bless as you feel, bless as you work, bless in all ways, each minute of the day. If you do this, the whole

nature, the whole of creation will reveal to you the boundless Beauty, Harmony, Love, Happiness, Peace, which really is your own innermost nature, your true divine Self. You will be divine in every cell of your being. You will be a supra-cosmic individual of transcendental Experience.

d) Answer to the problems facing the Hindus today

The most pressing and pending problems of the Hindus today, are widely known. The first step in solving them is to publish and distribute all over the world newspapers like HINDUISM TODAY, and disseminate the works of God realised Men of India, and the Wisdom in all the Hindu scriptures. Nothing is more inspiring, more powerful, more light-giving, more joy-making, more paradise-building than the wisdom and immortal words of the eternal Hinduism, the Sanatana Dharma.

Every Hindu should try to live by the ideals of the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads, the Vedas and other such timeless Hindu scriptures; then, automatically all problems will solve themselves. The wisdom of these scriptures, and a life lived in the light of this Wisdom, afford every Hindu wonderful insights that enable him to face and overcome all the contemporary problems he is challenged with around the globe.

The greatest problem that dogs the footsteps of man, be he Hindu or non-Hindu, is the ignorance of the all-governing Reality of God in daily life, of the real Nature of oneself as Satchidananda, Existence-Knowledge-

Bliss. The greatest service that those who are concerned with the welfare of the Hindus, can render to the Hindus is to spread the literature like that of Sivananda all over the world. Let the Light of wisdom reach Billions. Illuminate their minds and enlighten their hearts. Make them lights unto themselves and they shall solve not only their own problems, but other people's problems, not only be happy, but make others happy.

H.T. Question 11:

You can ask Swamiji about the concept that it is OK to use bad money for a good purpose, if it purifies the money, something we heard from India a lot and which Guruji does not agree with. You can also ask him about bribery, why it seems to be a way of life in India.

Answer:

When bad money is used for a good purpose, the good purpose becomes a bad purpose. A good purpose does not purify the money; on the other hand, the good purpose is rendered bad by the bad money. What is more, there are karmic consequences for those that so use bad money. But, there are numberless Faces of bad money. Some Faces are not so bad as they seem to be, and if that money is selflessly, egolessly, offered at the altar of a Temple Deity, it can help wash away some of the sins of that person. This fact does not give a license

to anyone to obtain bad money and give it to the Temple Deity and imagine it washes away one's sins. Badrachala Ramadas robbed the State Treasury, to build a Temple for Lord Rama. Ramadas was imprisoned. Lord Rama paid back to the State Treasury the misappropriated money. Lord Rama made the Bhakti of Ramadas boundless and granted him God-realisation. However, no one can imitate such an example. There can be only one Ramadas of Badrachalam. Valmiki of Ramayana was a robber, he robbed the travellers and fed his family. When wisdom dawned on him, he gave up this style of life and became one of the greatest of the immortal Sages of India.

Good and bad are relative. Even in Rama Rajya, there is evil, the bad Kaykeyi and Ravana. You can never separate good from bad and bad from good, by no means, not by governmental, social, ethical, economic, religious means. These means can increase good, but not eliminate evil. Good and bad cannot be severed from one another; they can only be transcended in individual experience of the absolute Truth, God-realisation. Swamiji's central message is: Experience the Truth, or God, but first prepare the ground for such an experience through being good and doing good, by adhering to Brahmacharya, Satyam, Ahimsa. Be a Karma Yogi, Bhakti Yogi, Raja Yogi, Mantra Yogi, Jnana Yogi — all in one.

Since the birth of mankind here on our planet, bribery has existed in one or the other form. It has numberless Faces. Bribery in India is explainable by some of these factors: poverty, low income, high taxes, growing needs

of the people. Bribery is universal in India because of these and several other reasons, but bribery is not absent in Europe and in America. One can see in the newspapers bribery exists in West Germany, Switzerland, Italy and other countries. In Russia now it is as much rampant as in India. It is present in Japan, Korea, in all of the very rich countries. However, bribery should not be encouraged, one has to keep one's hands off from it, under all circumstances. The only real solution to all ills and evils of life lies in the birth and growth of deep spirituality in individual life. A real Ashram is the Home of such deep spirituality; it is the main function of the Ashram to spread it.

SUPPLEMENT ONE:

**Sivananda and Omkarananda:
Divine Flower and Divine Fragrance**

SIVANANDA'S whole merit stands revealed in this volume.... Today, the burning problem is constituted by the arguments advanced by materialism, mechanism, positivism, and a narrow-minded evolutionary theory. Recently, I spent a week at the Congress and the International Institute of Philosophy, and observed how these tendencies dominate not only the philosophy of Communism, but also the thoughts of many Western thinkers. To this, Sivananda's philosophy, its fundamentals and its application, as shown by Swami Omkarananda, are a powerful counter-balance, and we are in full agreement with it... In my capacity as the President of the Swiss Philosophical Society, a body of which representatives of the philosophical faculties of the Universities of Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchatel, Bern, Basel, Zurich and Fribourg, are members, and in my capacity as President of the International Parapsychological Society, and Member of other scientific unions, I feel competent to pronounce an opinion.... I have read a few of Swami Sivananda's works. But I confess that only after I had perused the first tome of the great synthesising work in three volumes by Swami Omkarananda, my eyes were fully opened to the true greatness and significance of the scholar, scientist, sage and teacher Sivananda. The comparisons Omkarananda draws between Sivananda and Plato, Kant, Leibniz, Schleiermacher and other philosophers,

are very important for a better understanding between East and West. — **Dr. Gebhard Frei, Professor of Comparative Religion, UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH, Switzerland.**

OMKARANANDA commands the intellectual energy, literary skill, spiritual brilliance and cultural background needed to answer most of the modern challenges. — **Dr. Edward de Betterncourt, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt., UNIVERSITY OF SANTIAGO, South America.**

THIS young sage of India, Swami Omkarananda, owns a nature characterised by transcendental tenderness, commands a wisdom beyond his years, is too highly educated for his age, and astonishes the American elite as much by his culture of the highest order as by his genius for classical literary expression in all its multiple form. Providence has, me thinks, endowed him with every excellence that entitle him to World's Presidentship. He has a valuable message for our civilization. — **Dr. Florence la Fontaine, Ph.D., D. Litt., INDIANA, U.S.A.**

SIVANANDA'S works are profound and deeply inspiring. It has often been disputed that inspiring material of the type composed by Sivananda and his disciples is not amenable to scholastic research. This I have found to be untrue; for, such works as those of His Holiness are, in themselves, what scholars in this country call „primary source material“. — **Swami Agehananda Bharati (Professor Dr. Leopold Fischer of Vienna), UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON and SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK, U.S.A.**

AN ENORMOUS and wonderful work that overwhelms us with excellent philosophical knowledge, and keeps us reflecting over the extraordinary zeal, the unusual power of memory, the able survey, the deep insight and intuition, and the analysing and synthesising capacities such a work demands. Omkarananda's versatile philosophic genius, we admire not as his personal attribute, but as a manifestation of God, as an all-penetrating light of the Truth, and as an expression of Cosmic Vision. The work will be continued to be studied for centuries. A magnificent service to humanity as a whole. — **Hanna Herrmann, Winterthur, Switzerland.**

Swami Omkarananda is a whole culture in himself, a culture which might be a real alternative to our own Western narrow world-view. — His statements <about himself and on meditation> are genuine utterings of a real Guru whose God-given Mission (also Sivananda says, Guru is one who is sent by God) is to bring to the people the light, the truth, the peace and the joy which he himself IS. This Source-Book <Sivananda Literature Volume One> is an intellectual and literary achievement, to which no one can withhold either his admiration or his recognition of its value. — **Professor Dr. Carl-A. Keller, UNIVERSITY OF LAUSANNE & UNIVERSITY OF NEUCHATEL, Switzerland.**

This wonderful treatise is an eternal monument — splendid and stupendous. What sweetness is to sugar and what fragrance is to a flower, Swami Omkarananda is to Swami Sivananda; because, the former is as wonderful as the latter. — **The "Call Divine", Madras, India.**

Four times, I got a Professorship at the **Tamagawa University in Tokyo, Japan**, and taught also in USA and in India. I have known the writings of Swami Omkarananda since a long time. They reach the people of all continents in many languages. I had the opportunity to meet him and his Ashram inmates personally. My impression was confirmed: Here is a man who serves and works from a high 'and powerful' spiritual vision and with all-embracing goodness for the well-being of all peoples and all nations, without any personal interest, a truly uplifting example of selflessness.— **Professor Dr. h.c. Werner Zimmermann, Zurich, Switzerland.**

It is known that Swami Omkarananda possesses the power of an extraordinary radiation and his activities are recognized by Swiss and foreign University Professors. His institution is a school of a high spiritual order. — **Dr. Nello Celio, late President of the Federal Council, Federal Government of Switzerland.**

Swami Omkarananda's mission is to show us new ways in the contemporary world, and to explain to us the ancient wisdom in modern language. For, on the one hand he knows the traditions of his native country India, and on the other hand, he reveals to us the beauty and the wisdom of Jesus Christ's teachings again and again, which were misunderstood and neglected too often in the Occident. Moreover, his knowledge of modern sciences is surprising. Already these capacities qualify Swami Omkarananda to be counted among the most important of the celebrated Swiss personalities as J.H. Pestalozzi, H. Dunant, C.G. Jung. — **Dr. Ing. H. de Witt, Physicist, Switzerland.**

SUPPLEMENT TWO:

Adishankara, Saint Jnaneshwar and Omkarananda

Sri SWAMI VENKATESANANDA, a direct disciple of His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda, who became himself a renowned spiritual leader and founder of an Ashram in Mauritius, published in an introductory note the following statement about his younger Guru-Bhai Swami Omkaranandaji:

„This intuitive genius possesses the wisdom of a sage at a very young age. He has been literally burning with such a fire of thirst for knowledge that at an astoundingly early age of 25 he shines as a master of several fields of knowledge; and in his insatiable eagerness to expand the frontiers of his knowledge, he often exalts himself to heights of wisdom, from where he is able to direct the gaze of the very authorities on a subject to the truth in it that they missed. This intuitive capacity has been made possible in him, not only by his penetrating insight into men and things, but by an inborn ability to realise within himself all that he perceives and desires to understand.

This ability to realise everything within himself it was that lit within him the Lamp of Discrimination

and Dispassion while he was yet in his teens. 'I realised that even the life of a monarch or a millionaire is not worth my aspiring for,' he said once. This realisation was born of his actually living the life of a monarch or millionaire within himself.

Endowed with this supreme dispassion, Omkaranandaji shines today as a bala-Jnani, a great lover of seclusion and solitude, with a fiery spirit of renunciation that knowingly, willingly, gladly and constantly spurns all the enjoyments of the universe as straw. Like Sri Sankara and Sri Jnaneshwar, Swami Omkarananda has, even while he is so young, been guiding spiritual aspirants all over the world with sublime and deep wisdom born of his enlightened intellect. He hides himself and you can hardly meet him; but his fame and his life-transforming thoughts have girdled the earth today. Hard working and devoted to the Master Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, Swami Omkarananda blends in himself the best among Karma Yogis, the devout Bhakta, the fiery Yogi and the resplendent Jnani. He is the best interpreter of Sri Swami Sivananda's Philosophy."

Sri Swami Venkatesanandaji closes his introductory note with a salute to the spiritual Light of his Guru-Bhai:

„May we all be enabled by Gurudev's Supreme grace to walk in the footsteps of Swami Omkaranandaji and thereby make our own lives blessed.“

The present President of Sivananda Ashram, His Holiness Sri Swami CHIDANANDA Maharaj, introduced in his recorded message his Guru-Bhai Swami Omkarananda with the following words:

„... a holy spiritual brother of mine, young Swami Omkarananda, whom Swamiji, our beloved master Swami Sivananda, used to call Bala Yogi, or the ‘Boy Yogi’. Swami Omkarananda, a young boy Yogi, whom the master loved, and held in high esteem for his great philosophical abilities, is coming to you as a true representative of the spirit of Sannyasa, of the holy men of India. He brings to you the fresh breath of the Ganges and the Himalayas, and he is an embodiment of the silent Sannyasin who teaches by the power of his ideal life — preaches through personal example more than through so many words.“

Swamini SHIVAPREMANANDA, a disciple of Sri Swami Sivanandaji, a well-known German Yoga Teacher and President of the Dorschhausen branch of The Divine Life Society, stated in a letter to her students (translation from German):

“Sri Swami Omkarananda reached in very young years Self-Realisation, as was stated by his famous teacher <Sri Swami Sivananda> himself. ... A long cherished dream and deep longing to meet a selfless Yogi of Self-Realisation coming from the solitude of the Himalayas to us here in Europe out

of love for the struggling humanity has come true. ... Swami Omkarananda is the highest and finest we can meet today on this earthly plane, in the fields of Spiritual Arts and Science, Yoga, Vedanta, Philosophy, and so on.”

We Need the Ideal of Swami Omkarananda as presented by **Dr. phil. Erwin R. Jacobi, UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH, Switzerland:**

”When Swami Omkarananda came to us, he was of the very same age as Albert Schweitzer was, when he first departed for Lambarene. We as the ‘Underdeveloped’ and the ‘Illiterate’ of another type here in Central Europe than the inhabitants of Equatorial Africa — yet not less needy in our poverty than they — require and demand Swami Omkarananda’s help and services in a great and steadily increasing number, and this in spite of the achievements of some of our big and powerful organisations which seem so secure and unailing. It is left to the reader to continue this comparison in accordance with his own experiences and lived events.

Not only do we need the Ideal of an Albert Schweitzer in order to adjust our living and thinking in the sense of his ‘Reverence for Life’, but we need also the example of Swami Omkarananda, who by his very life and work is called to teach anew Goethe’s ‘Being Pious’ in order this Piety may unfold and bear fruit in our hearts and lead us to real peace.”

DR. A. B. MAALAKARADDY, M.D., Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore, India, expressed his deep reverence after his visit at Omkarananda Ashram and its Temples, which was crowned with Swamiji's Darshan:

„The day of our visit to Sadguru Omkarananda Swamiji's holy Ashram shall always be remembered and cherished in our memory. The profound knowledge of the disciples at the Ashram, Sanskrit prayers and the ways of the practice of spirituality at the Ashram has astonished us. By visiting Paramapoojya Omkaranandaji's Ashram myself and my wife were enriched beyond measure to say the least. Discussions with Sadguru Swami Omkaranandaji has given me and my wife a new dimension for attainment of peace. I have come to the conclusion that he is one of the greatest living seers who leads a perfect Vedic life of a Rishi. When I saw him, my memories went back to the ancient Indian Vedic times which have given eternal and imperishable truth to the world. Sadguruji was extremely kind enough to Bless us and he was kindness personified.“

SUPPLEMENT THREE:

**Flowers of Homage to
Omkaranda Ashram**

HIS DIVINITY VEDADARSHANACHARYA MAHAMANDESHWAR SRI SWAMI GANGESHWARANANDA, the most celebrated exponent of Vedas and Vedic rituals and the recognized All-India Leader and founder of the **G. Gangesh Chaturved Samsthan and G. G. International Ved Mission**, in Bombay, who at the age of over 95 years visited the Omkaranda Ashram in Winterthur for Ved Pratishtha, was particularly delighted with the unbelievable activities of this unique Ashram, with the most holy atmosphere of its Temples and with the high quality of performance and purity of the young Sannyasis. Here are some extracts of his Tribute to Swamiji and his spiritual community:

„... Ved Mata Gayatri drew us here to breathe the intoxicating Vedic atmosphere and to feel the divine touch of various mantras. I have visited a number of Ashrams and Mandirs in India and abroad, but never have experienced such a deep spiritual happiness combined with purity and simplicity.

Bhagavan Veda has chosen the most beautiful seat, where, in the constant flow of Vedic mantras,

Omkar Anand is reflected. Our young teenager sister reciting Shree Suktas, Purush Suktas and Rudradhyaya mantras fluently in perfect original Sanskrit accents is indeed remarkable and highly creditable.“

In his recorded speech at our Temple (which was simultaneously translated to our Ashramites by S. Krishnamurti), he exclaimed with great joy:

„I never had such an experience as I had here in Omkarananda Ashram, where I heard the children reciting the Vedas. In India even the top class Brahmins cannot pronounce it so well, and here the children did it. I had one worry that I must spread this Veda Bhagavan, the book everywhere. Now Swami Omkaranandaji has removed that worry, I am free of worry.“

SRI KRISHNASHANKER SHASTRI, the Founder and Trustee of both Sri Bhagawat Vidyapeeth and Sri Vallabha Nidhi, and the Editor of Janakalyan from Ahmedabad, India, visited Omkarananda International Ashram. Here below we give excerpts of his „Divine Flowers“ laid at the Lotus-feet of Swamiji and his devotees:

„I had longed to see the Ashram, having read about it in books, and having heard from the renowned scholar of superhuman intelligence, the eminent and profound Philosopher, Shri Badrinath Shastri of Baroda, about its Founder-President, Sri

Swami Omkaranandaji — Tapasvi, ascetic, highly intelligent, attached to the Lotus Feet of Mother Maha Tripurasundari — a pure-hearted Yogi whose fame has spread far and wide....

Moved by the divine Power, I happened to travel to Switzerland to this holy and unique place, the Ashram, during the special Puja celebration of Shri Mother Tripurasundari and Nava Durga. A heavenly grove! I have no word to speak or write — but I cannot help saying that this Tapovana is nothing but the everflowing Waters of the holy river Ganges, or a hermitage made supremely divine by constant chanting of the holy Mantras and by penance — a blissful state of Liberation (Nirvruti-Ananda)!

Instead of making the futile attempt of describing it in words, it would be more proper to have a bath in this holy water. When I beheld the Swamiji, I felt that I saw the Incarnation of Muni Bharadwaja, who continuously offered Ahutis at four altars and practised Mantras, Tantras, the mystic rites and philosophies. Administering the institution, discoursing, and guiding for twenty-four hours a day, with an ever-smiling face for all residents and visitors, remaining in the state of detachment, blissful, happy, and like the ever-glittering sun, one who has transcended the ego, Swamiji also advises like a close relative and benefactor, like a Divine Father and Divine Mother to all those who come in contact with him. He is proficient in whatever work is being undertaken, and is always wish-

ing the good and welfare of all humanity. I realised the presence of Mahayogi — King Pruthu in humility, Vachaspati in morals, Bhagirath in industry, Jaimini in preaching, innocent like a child, an orator like Vasishta, like Kubera in charity, Dhruva in devotion and Prahlada in the constant chanting of the holy Names of Divine Mother.

The Ashram is as great as the greatness of Swami Omkarananda. The Ashram is like a huge hermitage, full of devotees, who are spreading culture, spiritual ideals, faith, and all the highest values of character; and induces in visitors tranquillity, divinity, bliss and joy. What is more, the place bestows honour upon everyone; and all the aspirants seem to be the living angels of the earth, and the living souls of our most revered Swamiji.“

His Holiness **SRI SWAMI SHIVAPREMANANDAJI**, a direct disciple of the Sage Sri Swami Sivananda, who has his own Ashram in Argentina, commented in a letter to Swami Omkarananda about his impressions during his recent visit in his Guru-Bhai's Himalayan Ashram:

„This whole day I have experienced the immense joy of being in the company of the five blessed Devaganas, devoted disciples of Yours, who have made this Omkarananda Ashram such an inspiring abode of selfless service and abiding peace... They have turned their devotion for their Guru into marvellous institutions of social and spiritual

service, of which this ancient land is in so much need and which you can really be proud of... To be with ... <them> is like being enveloped in the highest form of love and devotion that one should have for their Guru. Your spiritual presence is, of course, constantly here, in every building and in all the work done..."

SUPPLEMENT FOUR:

**Our Experiences of the Phenomenon
that Omkarananda Saraswati is
in our daily Life with Him**

By Two Ashram Inmates: Dr. Strauss and Dr. Eckert

We need a God-man who holds in his heart inexhaustible resources in Wisdom, in Love and in the Power of Light. Be that Europe or Asia, America or Australia, Russia or Africa, be that any continent, any nation, or even any religion, or any culture, or any social group, or any economic organisation or educational institution, or political party, or an old peoples' society, or a youth association, or all of them in one, the whole world — it needs above all, *above all*, and first of all, *first of all*, a God-man. Here is one: Omkarananda Saraswati.

Philosophical schools founded on theorizing about the Truth we have since before the times of Aristotle. We need someone who lives in the Truth, experiences the Truth, is established in the Truth, and therefore, speaks to us in simple words, flames of living fire that arise from the fact that he lives in Truth, and Truth has made its habitation in him. Here is one: Omkarananda Saraswati.

Scientists we have by the several thousands, and among them Nobel-Prize bearers, and yet we have not seen the Face of the Truth. For all their labours, we are also no

nearer to peace and happiness, wisdom and goodness, abundant life and blessedness. We need a scientist who is rooted in the Reality of realities, the Truth of truths, the Substance of all that is existent, and speaks to us of the Truth that does not change, that can be experienced, known and expressed, a Truth that is universally the same, eternally the same, and can be proved anywhere, and everywhere, in all circumstances. Here is one: Omkarananda Saraswati.

Priests we have many, brilliant and good, but we need a prophetic soul with the credentials in daily Character and Work from the all-seeing, all-knowing, all-blessing, all-loving, all-pervading Divinity. We need urgently one whose heart is one with the Heart of the all-transforming divine Presence, one whose soul is absorbed in the Soul of the Goal of all religions, all cultures, all human aspirations. Here is one: Omkarananda Saraswati.

So-called, or self-styled, or self-appointed world-redeemers and world-redeeming organisations we have, and yet mankind groans in chains, and the redemption helps no one, except the redeemers. We need a redeemer whose presence is transforming, whose words are the words of Life eternal, touching and elevating us into our essential element of infinite Peace, Joy, Existence. We need one who redeems men by his mere presence, merely by his breathing. Here is one: Omkarananda Saraswati.

Here he is — a theocentric, Reality-centred man of universal Love and life-transforming and all-uplifting Wisdom, an all-problem-solving example. He is here, not to receive our services, but to serve us; not to be attended to by us, but to attend to us; not to be loved by us, but to

love us; not to depend on anything we can do for him, but to go on doing everything in his power for us.

In the preamble to the UNESCO constitution, it is written: "... since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

The competence to grant guidance, special services and leadership for so rare and difficult a work can be trusted only to a man of God-experience, a monk whose life has been from the earliest boyhood a blazing fire of renunciation, selflessness and devotion to the ultimate Reality. Happily, such a personality we discover in Omkarananda Saraswati, who is, at the same time, a philosopher, a writer of international reputation, a man of vast erudition, a poet, and a person of intellectual and prophetic energies.

Even in words scribbled by him, on an almost forgotten scrap of paper, we discover, and therefore also can describe, his eminent qualifications for so immense and urgent a task as that of constructing peace in the minds of men:

"The God or Soul of Love is my heart. The Soul of knowledge is my mind. The Soul of Power is my will. My whole life is full of the Soul of Peace. I live in such thoughts. I feel so. I experience so. And therefore, silently, I am full of strength. Not fearing in myself, I help others to conquer fears. Not needing peace, being full of Peace, I help others attain peace."

Omkarananda Saraswati Is a Fascinating Life Emanating from a Consciousness Permanently Established in the Rich Beauty of the Divine Truth

Omkarananda Saraswati is an embodiment of highest spirituality, in the all-comprehensive sense of the word. He is a Sage, who has reached the experience of the ultimate and all-embracing Truth and is living out of It. Out of It he draws the Wisdom, the Purity and the Radiance of his life; in It he finds the Peace of his being, and the Strength for his untiring service. He is essentially a flame of the spirit of renunciation, with no personal wishes, no desires, no plans, no programmes, no aims — totally depending on the Truth, and literally breathing and moving in It. He is first and last a Lover of the Lord, who lives only for the Divine, who works hard in order the Light of the Lord may spread.

He is a man of multiple and permanent God-experience. His constant experience of God as the absolute Reason-Knowledge-Consciousness is the foundation of his philosophy. His idea and experience of God as absolute Beauty is the basis for his aesthetic theories and his art. His ethics are rooted in his knowledge of God as absolute Goodness, absolute Truth, absolute Love. His philanthropy rises from his experience of God as Love, and God as resident in all beings. His services flow from the fact of his life that all humanity is his family. All his works are flowings of divine Grace for the welfare of mankind.

His words constitute great literature. His Love rules the hearts of man. His Wisdom guides the footsteps of mankind towards Peace and Joy, Light and Illumination.

The Greatness of His Thought Rises from His Awareness of the Divine

Omkarananda Saraswati combines in himself a strong intellectual response to spiritual things, and an uncompromising love of the ultimate Truth. Since his eighteenth year he has been a philosopher, scholar and writer of international appreciation.

The many-sidedness and the adaptability of his thinking are extraordinary. His thoughts are permanently rooted in the Absolute — though they have an astonishing nearness to life. Still more, they are life-transforming. People who read his literature find a new meaning and strength and peace and happiness in life. They are inspired by the powerful ideas, uplifted by the broad, universal, all-embracing views, charmed by the sweetness, kindness, humility and self-effacement of this humblest of the servants of mankind — Omkarananda Saraswati.

Doctors, professors, statesmen and other persons of eminence have paid high tributes to the Purity of Omkarananda Saraswati's Truth-centred life, the brilliance of his mind, and the excellence of his writings and cultural attainments. His philosophical thought is compared with, and considered complementary to, and is a fulfilment of, the philosophy of Kant and of Hegel. Not often was he acclaimed Platonic in the extent and depth of metaphysical thought. His psychology has been favourably set in the context of that of the famous Swiss psychologist, C.G. Jung; and his psychological perceptions in relation to life have been esteemed as greater than anything in the whole of Western psychology since

the time of Aristotle. His life is compared to the lives of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. As a charismatic personality, a pioneering spirit, he reveals dimensions of personality that are characteristic of the greatest benefactors of mankind.

As an educator Omkarananda Saraswati is a supreme example of moral and spiritual integrity. He is a man working entirely selflessly and making numberless sacrifices in order to spread amongst problem-laden humanity the Light and the Knowledge of the fundamental values of life. His educational thought is so comprehensively rich and unique that since as early as his twentieth year it has won for him in American academic circles much honour and esteem.

Not only for the highly inspiring and life transforming Wisdom ever flowing from his all-comprehending Truth-experience, but also for the untiring services springing from his universal and compelling love, and for his vast abilities to help everyone become happy, peaceful, luminous, progressive, Omkarananda Saraswati is profoundly revered around the world. On European soil, at present, one hardly encounters a second example of such a life, led in such an ideal spirit and unifying such an intellectual height with such an unconditional readiness for helping and doing good.

His Life's Philosophy of Selfless Action Emerges from His Experience of the Divine Reality as Unconditioned and Infinite Love

Omkarananda Saraswati has been encouraging the conducting of research into the causes of human unhappiness and suffering. The highest form of philanthropy and humanitarianism we see in him. In his smallest autobiography in the world, written within minutes, he says:

"There is no greater poverty or human disability than the human ignorance; and therefore, the best way to do the best of philanthropic and humanitarian services is to illuminate the minds and enlighten the hearts of the people. Make them lights unto themselves, and they shall not only be happy, but make others happy, not only be rich, but enrich others, not only give, but give more and more abundantly."

Knowledge of the Divine expresses itself in the hundreds of ways of presenting the ultimate Truth to every kind of man, to everyone, in every stage of evolution, in every culture, nation, race and religion. Omkarananda Saraswati is a universal individual, a genius; and his spirituality is modern and integral, and therefore transcends all religions; with the result, he is the Christian of the Christians, the Hindu of the Hindus, and is capable of leading everyone to tremendous inner spiritual development, through whatever faith a person belongs to, no matter what his temperament is. He is capable of leading everyone to happiness, knowledge, inner wealth, selflessness, inner spiritual development, illumination and enlightenment, because his experience of the one God, the one Truth, has made him one with all mankind:

"When I look at myself, I am not there. There is everything. Everything is One; and One is everything. There is an experience of the multiplicity in the One; and the experience of the One in the multiplicity. I am myself the Germans, the Italians, the Russians, the Negroes, the Indians, the Tibetans, the Chinese, the Americans. I am the women. I am the children. I am the trees. I am the stones. When I meditate, everything meditates with me. When I meditate, the Heart of the whole of Nature is meditating with me. When I meditate, all the Angels of God, all the immortal Mystics are meditating with me. When I meditate, the whole inner Being and Soul of mankind is meditating with me.

The welfare of all humanity is my welfare. The happiness of the trees is my happiness. The peace of the birds is my peace. The prosperity of the world is my prosperity. Everything belongs to me. I live and labour for everything. I meditate for everyone. I meditate through all. All are dear to me. Every minute, thousands of packets of Love, thousands of gifts flow from my Consciousness to all beings.

Mankind is mine. All Nature is mine. And mine is all the world. I have won them in indestructible and all-triumphant Love, in pervasive and self-maintaining Peace, in services and sacrifices, and above all, in a total dissolution of the little self, in the total triumph of That in me which is the Image of God. I have inherited them in my oneness with That in them which is the same as That which is in me."

Thus, not merely by the prevailing power of his unusual sympathy and boundless love, the sweetness of his speech, his deep humility, but more fully by a power that can come, by a spiritual quality that can grow active, only by an intimate minute-by-minute consciousness of God, does Omkarananda Saraswati bring relief to the suffering, comfort to the most distressed of the distressed among us, a new hope and strength and life to the depressed and the unhappy, and joy to spiritual aspirants. He is a man whose very name inspires in thousands a rare joy, whose influence is his love, whose only weapon is silent Truth, whose only goods are wisdom, understanding, patient hearing, and words that are to any man, in any situation, most appropriate.

Only a holy man can be convincing in his words. Only he can really comfort all kinds of people, in all kinds of troubling and trying circumstances. It is his authority that we need, and that we unfailingly obtain:

"I live in them, not in myself.

I look how much I can give, not what these people can give me in return for my pains.

I bleed to help make them happy and peaceful and strong and self-dependent — not dependent on me or on anything external to them.

I constitute them into a tower of strength unto themselves, and give them much power of will for the good and for the practice of disciplines of higher evolution.

I never advise them, but beg them.

I never instruct them, but merely illuminate some phenomena; and they see the instructions themselves.

I do not think I am superior to them. Though I am a monk, a spiritual leader, I have no feeling that I am in any way superior to the meanest mortals who come to me.

Everyone is my Lord and my Leader. I make them feel their essential worth and dignity and greatness.

I may have the wisdom of a Plato and the literary gifts of a Goethe, yet I feel inferior to the unlettered, uneducated, uncultured peasant. He is all to me; I am nothing to myself.

I may have the organizing abilities of a director and the loving kindness of a St. Francis of Assisi, yet I think, I know, I feel, I experience in myself that I am nothing.

They are troubled and come to me. I give them just what they need, comfort.

They are wise, and come to me with a problem that needs the Light of a greater Wisdom. I give them just that Light, as if that Light were already in them, and they were in possession of it.”

When we fail, God seems to fail in us. We consult Omkarananda Saraswati, and know another way to encounter God as Success. When the future before us is black, we find from him an assurance of our future happiness, and a way to work for it. When the astrologers frighten us by predicting calamities, it is he, the super-astrologer, who grants us the right knowledge. When the spiritualistic mediums and little prophets of the world terrify us, it is his assurance that comforts us.

Omkarananda Saraswati is an universal genius, loved everywhere, esteemed everywhere. He is loved, because he is unconditionally loving. He is served, because he needs no one's services and serves others unconditionally and untiringly.

"God is My Life, and I Have No Existence Apart from Him", says Omkarananda Saraswati who is at once a Karma-Yogi, a Jnani-Yogi, a Raja-Yogi and a supreme Bhakti-Yogi. This synthesis in himself of the various Yogas, crowned by the supreme Grace of the Supreme Mother of the Universe, constitutes him into the greatest in our decades, of the men of God-knowledge, God-experience, a Sadguru of rare abilities — abilities which are not built up by human training, knowledge, experience, exercise, but are a result of the supreme Grace of the Supreme Divinity. There are Gurus who become so as a result of hard disciplines and spiritual realisations, and there are Gurus who are sent as Gurus by the Divine. Omkarananda Saraswati is of the latter kind:

"I am here, not because I wanted to be here, or that I have chosen you, but because you have been chosen by Him, and I am sent.

Whatever I would talk, it is not I; but He is talking, expressing Himself. I love Him; therefore, I do not ask Him: Why have you sent me here, O Lord?

My success with all of you is not mine, but His, and my love for you all is as much as for Him. My powers are not limited, because they are not my own, but are of the One who is in all that you see everywhere and more than you see. My Perfection is not bounded, because it is not my own, but of Him whose Will He alone is executing through me.

Whatever be the nature of my unconscious, I am in the depths formed of the Image of God. I have more

memories of the encounters, experience and life with the Godhead, both within the field of my inner Consciousness, and in the outer world without, than memories of the world and life in it. It is these memories of the Godhead that is the secret of the vitality of my life and words.

God is my boundless Love: Love is All. When I look into the eyes of that Love, it is Love looking into its own eyes. It is as though two pairs of eyes meet, mingle and melt away into one vision. Were the two pairs of eyes a dream, a hallucination, a fleeting nothing? I think not, for it is one among the million possibilities of the Consciousness, which is One and Many, One and not many, Many and not One, and yet always One."

Such is his nature in his attunement with the boundless divine Reality of infinite Peace, Love, Light, here, there, everywhere that he describes his condition in this way:

"Having done so much good, I have done absolutely nothing. Having seen so many people, I have seen none. And every good anywhere in the world is my good."

A thousand ships and motor-boats may furrow the surface of the sea, and yet the sea always remains instantly the same, a surface without any furrow, any mark. Such a sea he is.

Omkaranda Saraswati and the Future of Mankind

Great men play many roles in human history. Some rule nations, some found organisations, some lead armies, some produce great literature, some contribute to the arts, some fight and achieve freedom for a country, some labour for human rights and bring about great social changes. Omkaranda Saraswati's realm lies in the Soul of mankind. His greatness emerges from the timeless Reality.

In the transformation of mankind that our age has been long awaiting, the vast and profound knowledge of the divine Reality and of the many techniques for the realisation of that Reality that Omkaranda Saraswati holds in his hands will certainly contribute its own distinctive share. In him we find mirrored the future of humanity, the fulfilment of its aspirations and of God's promises to mankind. Omkaranda Saraswati is not a theorist building systems of thought, but a prophet setting new patterns of life that are in accord with the concealed genius that all life bears.

*Dr. Y. Strauss
Omkaranda Ashram, Switzerland*

"This genius of a mystic, Swami Omkarananda, should be seen as what he is: a unique flame flaring for God, and a living expression of a profound mystical life in God." So wrote an important paper, *Der Bund*, from the Capital City of Switzerland, Bern, and indeed, this is how everyone, — from the Heads of the Governments, Ambassadors, Directors of multi-national companies, Scientists, Professors, Scholars, Saints, Priests of all denominations, Shankaracharyas of Kanchi and Sringeri, Mahapandits, people of all nations, housewives and taxi-drivers, — sees and experiences Omkarananda Saraswati.

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