

Swami Omkarananda - Dimensions of His Personality

Founder of the Omkarananda Ashram

The Biographies of distinguished personalities are brief. Swami Omkarananda's life could be summed up in three sentences: He was born with high spirituality. He lives the Truth and cannot be separated from it. He works intensively to spread the light of truth.

Swami Omkarananda was abundantly gifted for the realization of the Divine from his early childhood. In fact at the time of birth a strong nimbus of light seen by everyone present surrounded the head of the baby. From the time he was thirteen Swamiji was blessed with a growing number of divine visions of greatest mystics and sages. Decisive and intimate experiences of the divine omnipresence started revealing themselves ever more dominating his young life. He went on maintaining daily diaries. Several such diaries were filled with the constantly flowing, inspiring divined thoughts. Then one day in an experience of the inner spirit as the author of everything that was and will be written, he consigned all his diaries to Ganga. They were lost for ever.

In 1946, at the age of sixteen, Swamiji disappeared from his home in South India, and reached the banks of Ganga in Rishikesh at the foothills of the Himalayas. Looking at the boy, full of transcendental wisdom, advaita bhava, fiery spirit of renunciation, perpetual inner peace and joy, one of the greatest sages of our times, H.H. Shri Swami Shivananda Saraswati, lovingly called him a Bala-Yogi and Bala-Gyani and initiated him into Sannyasa.

The period from 1950 to 1962 was characterized by tireless work. Swamiji became the author and editor of numerous great literary masterpieces. Through his monumental works in the English language, embracing his intensive studies and research work in Eastern and western philosophies, arts, sciences, education, psychology and sociology, he won international public and academic recognition as a writer of unusual gifts. In 1954, the degree of M. Phil. was conferred upon Swami Omkarananda by the Yoga Vedanta Forest University. One year later he was elected a member of the International American Institute in Washington D.C.

From 1962 to 1965, Swami Omkarananda plunged himself into intensive inner spiritual silence. This was the time in which he withdrew himself completely from outer intellectual and literary activities only to open and explore by inner experience other dimensions of the supreme Divine Reality.

In 1965 Swami Omkarananda came to the West for the first time at the invitation of a group of Swiss scientists and seekers after Truth. On 11th October, 1966, the Omkarananda Ashram was established in Winterthur, Switzerland. Since that time a continuous stream of literature on various aspects of modern thinking has been issuing from the Ashram, born out of the awareness of the Divine. As an author the Swami

possesses that intellectual power, literary ingenuity, mental brilliance and cultural background which are necessary to meet the challenges of modern life.

Swami Omkarananda's exceptional knowledge of both Eastern and Western culture, religion, art, science and general tendencies particularly fitted him for the task of presenting a synthesis of Eastern wisdom and spirituality with Western culture and civilization. The timeless infinite Power operates in and through him; thus he is in a position to unify in himself all religious, and to present supra – religious synthesis which is established solely in the eternal Truth, the Truth that transcends the psychological realm and touches the ultimate Reality, yet is immediately present and can be directly experienced.

A personality of outstanding humility and modesty, of profound knowledge and wisdom, an aesthetic, open-minded towards art, beauty and culture, Swami Omkarananda considers himself in the first place a servant to the individual and to mankind, whose noblest concern is the never-ending help poured out each and everyone. He knows in a wonderful way how to place himself in the soul of others and to align himself to the needs and mentalities of those seeking his help and advice, so that he meets the scientist as a scientist, the artist as an artist, the seeker after Truth as the spiritual light on his path to God realization, Nobody ever leaves him without having obtained that type of mental nourishment which particularly suits his need.