

ABHISHIKTANANDA SOCIETY

(Originally FRIENDS OF ABHISHIKTANANDA)

OCCASIONAL BULLETIN No.2 (April 1978)

THE FIRST Bulletin was sent out in Nov. 1975, and a second was planned for ~~MM~~ 1977. It was however thought best to wait until we could report on the formation of the Abhishiktananda Society.

The purpose of the Bulletin continues to be that of sharing information about work being done on Abhishiktanandaji--particularly the editing and publishing of his writings--so that his insights and 'message' (our word, not his!) may be more widely diffused. Letters which reach us from time to time, and contacts with those who discover him through his books and testify to the liberating effect of this discovery, leave us in no doubt about the value of this work.

We are grateful to those who have sent news concerning matters of interest that can be shared through this Bulletin, and hope this will be maintained and extended.

A word from Swamiji (in a letter to O.B.): "L'advaita c'est une attitude fñcière de l'âme--bien plus l'impossibilité de dire Deux que l'affirmation de Un. A quoi bcn dire Un dans sa pensée, si on dit Deux dans sa vie? Ne pas dire Deux dans sa vie, c'est l'amour..."

J.D.M. Stuart

Brotherhood House, 7 Court Lane, Delhi 110054

N E W S

1) The ABHISHIKTANANDA SOCIETY

Shortly before his heart-attack in July 1973, Swamiji made several copies of a document in which he left instructions about his books, papers and personal possessions, entitled "TRUE COPIES OF INSTRUCTIONS LEFT BY SWAMI ABHISHIKTANANDA DUELY SIGNED ON 9.7.73." It reads as follows (omitting the full addresses):

"In case of any accident, please inform: Rev. J. Stuart (Delhi), Fr Dominique (Bangalore), Marc Chaduc (Rishikesh), Lalit Kumar Sharma (Saharanpur), R.C. Srivastava (Delhi-Shahdara), Mother Theophane (Indore).

"Files and correspondence to be delivered to Marc Chaduc, if he is in India, otherwise to Fr Stuart who will decide in consultation with Fr Dominique (who knows all about). Books and other things to be taken by my Chelas: Marc, Lalit, Ramesh Srivastava, Ajit Muricker (Poona) and also Sr Terese, Carmel, Pondicherry - souvenirs also to John Cole.

"Books not useful to individuals to be put in the library of the Brotherhood, Delhi.

"The same for files, letters and books which are in Gyansu and which Lalit will bring to the plains.

Rajpur 9.7.73
Sd/- Abhishiktananda
Henri le Saux
6.8.73

"P.S. I give Lalit Kumar Sharma all authority to bring back books, files etc which are in my Kutiya in Gyansu (c/o Sri Jvala Prasad Joshi, Gyansu, Uttarkashi).

Rajpur 6.8.73
Abhishiktananda
Henri le Saux "

After Swamiji's samadhi in December 1973 these instructions were carried out. Everything was first brought to Delhi, where Marc Chaduc and James Stuart sorted out all the important files and correspondence and sent them to Fr Dominique. Fr Dominique saw to it that certain things were sent to Swamiji's family, and letters were returned to those who asked for them. Souvenirs were also distributed appropriately.

Meanwhile the Brotherhood in Delhi provided a place in the library for Swamiji's books, and a steel filing-cabinet in which his literary

remains might be safely and conveniently kept. These manuscripts and papers are still being assembled.

Those to whom Swamiji bequeathed his papers recognized their responsibility to make more widely known and available all that he had left of interest and value. This includes a number of hitherto unpublished essays and longer pieces, especially his Journal, as well as articles published in various periodicals which might be reprinted.

To do this effectively an organization was required with an adequate legal ~~status~~ status which would enable it to carry on the work of publication and to administer the royalties from the Indian editions of Swamiji's books, in agreement with the Le Saux family.

Accordingly a meeting was held in Delhi on 24 January 1978, at which the organization that had originally been called "Friends of Abhishiktananda" was constituted as the "Abhishiktananda Society". This is in process of being registered in Delhi as a 'charitable society' under the Societies' Registration Act (XXI of 1860 with later amendments).

The 'Memorandum of Association', signed by seven of Swamiji's friends and submitted to the Registrar of Societies, includes the following under 'Objects of the Society':

To make known the spiritual message of the late Swami Abhishiktananda and to co-ordinate the efforts of those interested in it and in its further implications;

To edit and hold the copyright of the writings of the late Swami Abhishiktananda without prejudice to other rightful claims;

To arrange and conduct seminars, conferences and lectures, and to provide opportunities for research related to Swami Abhishiktananda's work.

The working of the Society is in the hands of the Executive Committee, composed of the seven founding members together with six others, resident in India, who have been invited to serve on it. The Chairman is Professor R.Panikkar, the Vice-Chairman Sister N.Shanta, the Treasurer Shri Sita Ram Goel and the Secretary the Rev.J.Stuart. The other three founding members are Bishop P.D'Souza, Fr J.Dupuis SJ and Shri Ram Swarup. Those invited to accept co-option to the Committee are Shri Swami Chidananda, the Revd John R.Cole, Shri P.Y.Deshpande, Fr Dominique OSB, Fr Bede Griffiths OSB and Shri Nirmal Tripathi.

At the meeting on 24 January 1978 the international aspect of the Society was given expression by the recognition as 'Associate Members' or 'Corresponding Members' of those who had previously agreed to represent the Society in various countries outside India. These friends can contribute much by carrying on appropriate action locally and by keeping us in touch with what is going on.

For the present we are regarding as members all those to whom the Bulletin is being sent, many of whom have expressed their desire to receive it. New applications to receive the Bulletin may be sent either to Mme O. Baumer or to the Secretary in Delhi.

2) PUBLICATIONS

English

The Indian S.P.C.K. (Post Box 1585, Kashmere Gate, Delhi 110 006) published in 1975 The Further Shore (containing "Sannyasa" and "The Upanishads--an Introduction");

and in 1976 Hindu-Christian Meeting Point (new edition).

These can normally be obtained in England from the S.P.C.K. Mail Order Service, 14 North Parade, Bradford, West Yorkshire DD1 3HY, who also stock Saccidananda (I.S.P.C.K., 1974). They also supply the S.P.C.K. publications, Guru and Disciple (1974) and Prayer. An American edition of Prayer is published by the Westminster Press.

Four short pieces by Swamiji are included in Abhishiktananda on Aikiya Alayam, privately published by Fr I. Hirudayam from 67D, Santhome South Beach Road, Madras 600 028.

German

"Yoga und christliches Gebet" (tr. by Dr B. Baumer) was published in Meditation (4-1975), Sackingen, West Germany.

Italian

Dom Arrigo Chierigatti in 1976 printed privately for the Fraternalite Charles de Foucauld Lettere e scritti; esperienza indu e esperienza cristiana, containing the first five (out of 6) chapters of "Souvenirs d'Arounachala" (an unpublished MS) together with some of Swamiji's letters and poems. He also published in the Italian Jesus-Caritas for Jan. 1977 translations of two articles "L'appel au dedans" and "Au sein du fond".

3) PUBLISHING PLANS

German

Matthias-Grünewald Vg will shortly be publishing the translation of Eveil à soi--éveil à Dieu (Prayer) and O.W.Barth Vg intends to publish Gnanananda, introduced by Dr B.Baumer. Eugen Diederichs Vg is seeking to publish a translation of The Further Shore.

French

Souvenirs d'Arounachala: récit d'un ermite chrétien en terre hindoue edited by Mme O.Baumer and Mme M-M.Davy, is shortly to be published by E.P.I. S.A. (Paris). They are also preparing another book which will contain the essay on "Sannyasa" from The Further Shore together with some other essays of Swamiji on related subjects.

The Mémoire of Swamiji which is being prepared by Fr J.Lemarié, will be published, it is hoped, by Centurion this year.

Mme Baumer has done much work on the Journal kept by Swamiji from 1948-1973. She has made a preliminary type-out, extending to about 700 pages, deciphering as much as possible of his difficult handwriting, with its many quotations in Sanskrit and other languages. She is now making a tentative selection of passages with a view to publication and also is checking the doubtful readings.

English

The Memoir which Sr Sara Grant is preparing has been unavoidably held up, but she hopes to complete the work this year. An English version of Arunachala may also be taken up after the French version has appeared.

Work continues in Frauenfeld (O.Baumer) and Delhi (J.Stuart) on collecting, typing out and translating Swamiji's other published and unpublished writings. Collections of these shorter pieces may later be brought out in French and English.

4) OTHER NEWS

Centro Le Saux (Milano), organized by C.Conio, issues an interesting Notiziario twice yearly. A pilgrimage to Swamiji's birthplace in

Brittany was planned for June-July 1977, but finally could not take place.

Centre Monchanin (Director Fr R.Vachon, 4917 St Urbain, Montreal 151, P.Q., Canada) publishes a stimulating Journal devoted to cross-cultural understanding.

Reviews of Swamiji's books have appeared in various periodicals, including The Mountain Path (Tiruvannamalai). Vidyajyoti (Delhi) in 1976 December carried a review article of The Further Shore by Fr G. Gispert-Sauch.

Several recent books have included discussions of Swamiji's point of view, but in each case the writers have taken into account only a small part of his writings: Marcus Braybrooke in The Undiscovered Christ (C.L.S., Madras); R.H.S.Boyd in An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology (revised edition, C.L.S., Madras, 1975); Eric Sharpe in Faith Meets Faith (S.C.M.Press, London, 1977).

Three lectures on "Swami Abhishiktananda: pioneer on a spiritual frontier" were given under the Teape Foundation in Cambridge (England) by James Stuart in October 1976 (not published so far).

In December 1976 on Swamiji's third Anniversary, Fr Bede Griffiths organized a conference at Shantivanam Ashram, at which papers on Abhishiktanandaji's life and work were read and discussed. Fr J.Dupuis' paper--"Christ-consciousness and Advaita experience"--has been published in his book Jesus Christ and His Spirit (T.P.I., Bangalore).

In March 1978 Dr Bettina Bäumer gave a lecture on Swamiji at the Meditation Centre, Tholey, Saar (West Germany).

The mysterious disappearances of two of Swamiji's chelas--Sister Thérèse Lemoine from her hermitage near Rishikesh in Dept.1976 and Swami Ajatananda (Marc Chaduc) from his hermitage at Kaudiyala in April 1977 (only discovered in September) are a great grief to their friends. Both cases are under police investigation. In manus tuas, Domine...

The following are the Associate Members at present (others may be added later):

Canada: Fr R.Vachon (Montreal)

France: Mme M-M.Davy (Paris) and Fr J.Lemarié (Chartres)

Israel: Fr C.Murray Rogers (Jerusalem)

Italy: Miss C.Conio (Milan)

Japan: Mr Minoru Kasai (Tokyo)

Spain: Prof. L.Maldonado and Prof. J.M.Velasco (Madrid)

Switzerland: Dr P.Bachmann (Greifensee)

U.S.A.: Mrs A-M.Stokes (New York)

West Germany: Dom E.Jungclaussen (Niederalteich)

In addition Dom M.Blazy, Abbot of Ste Anne de Kergonan, which was Swamiji's monastery, and Mme A-L.Guguen-le Saux (Rennes), Swamiji's sister, are also Associate Members.

The Corresponding Members in Europe are:

Austria: Dr Bettina Baumer, Herbeckstrasse 128, Wien 1180

Switzerland: Mme Odette Baumer, 25 Bannhaldenstrasse, 8500

Frauenfeld, who is the Secretary for Europe and the West.

Ordinary Membership is open to anybody who wishes to belong to the Society and applies through one of the members of the Committee. All members will receive the Occasional Bulletin. There is no regular subscription, but small voluntary contributions will be gratefully received to help with the expenses. It is suggested that members living outside India should send such contributions to Mme O.Baumer.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

A list of Swamiji's unpublished manuscripts is being prepared, and complete sets are being assembled at Delhi and Frauenfeld.

In Bulletin No.1 a list of his published books and articles was given, to which the following corrections and additions should be made:

Corrections

11. appeared in the Examiner on Jan.13 and 20, 1968 (not August, 1967), and was signed "S.V.Swami".
28. was published in Revue Monchanin in Jan.-Feb. 1974 (not Dec.1971).

Additions

36. Le Pere Monchanin (La vie spirituelle 98, 1958, pp.71-95).
37. Christian Sannyasis (Clergy Monthly Supplement 4, 1958-9, pp.106-13).
38. Features in Catholic News Service of India (1969-70)
Theological Commission needed for Indianisation of the Church
Professional Men or Spiritual? (28/7/70) (30/8/69)
There are no part-time Priests (?/8/70)
The Call of the Lord (date?)
39. Christian Monks and Asian Religions (Cistercian Studies ix, 1974, Nos 2 & 3, p.148).
40. Les moines chrétiens face aux religions d'Asie (Secretariat A i M, Vanves, France).
(Nos 39 and 40 contain the paper prepared by Swamiji for the Monastic Congress held at Bangalore in October 1973.)