

MODERN SPIRITUAL MASTERS

Robert Ellsberg, Series Editor

Already published:

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer (edited by Robert Coles)
Simone Weil (edited by Eric O. Springsted)
Henri Nouwen (edited by Robert A. Jonas)
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (edited by Ursula King)
Anthony de Mello (edited by William Dych, S.J.)
Charles de Foucauld (edited by Robert Ellsberg)
Oscar Romero (by Marie Dennis, Rennie Golden,
and Scott Wright)
Eberhard Arnold (edited by Johann Christoph Arnold)
Thomas Merton (edited by Christine M. Bochen)
Thich Nhat Hanh (edited by Robert Ellsberg)
Rufus Jones (edited by Kerry Walters)
Mother Teresa (edited by Jean Maalouf)
Edith Stein (edited by John Sullivan, O.C.D.)
John Main (edited by Laurence Freeman)
Mohandas Gandhi (edited by John Dear)
Mother Maria Skobtsova (introduction by Jim Forest)
Evelyn Underhill (edited by Emilie Griffin)
St. Thérèse of Lisieux (edited by Mary Frohlich)
Flannery O'Connor (edited by Robert Ellsberg)
Clarence Jordan (edited by Joyce Hollyday)
G. K. Chesterton (edited by William Griffin)
Alfred Delp, S.J. (introduction by Thomas Merton)
Bede Griffiths (edited by Thomas Matus)
Karl Rahner (edited by Philip Endean)
Sadhu Sundar Singh (edited by Charles E. Moore)
Pedro Arrupe (edited by Kevin F. Burke, S.J.)
Romano Guardini (edited by Robert A. Krieg)
Albert Schweitzer (edited by James Brabazon)
Caryll Houselander (edited by Wendy M. Wright)
Brother Roger of Taizé (edited by Marcello Fidanzi)
Dorothee Soelle (edited by Dianne L. Oliver)
Leo Tolstoy (edited by Charles E. Moore)
Howard Thurman (edited by Luther E. Smith, Jr.) Swami
Abhishikatananda (edited by Shirley du Boulay)

MODERN SPIRITUAL MASTERS SERIES

SWAMI
ABHISHIKTANANDA

Essential Writings



Selected with an Introduction by

SHIRLEY DU BOULAY

ORBIS  BOOKS

Maryknoll, New York 10545

Founded in 1970, Orbis Books endeavors to publish works that enlighten the mind, nourish the spirit, and challenge the conscience. The publishing arm of the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Orbis seeks to explore the global dimensions of the Christian faith and mission, to invite dialogue with diverse cultures and religious traditions, and to serve the cause of reconciliation and peace. The books published reflect the views of their authors and do not represent the official position of the Maryknoll Society. To learn more about Maryknoll and Orbis Books, please visit our website at www.maryknoll.org.

Copyright © 2006 by Shirley du Boulay.

Selections from the writings of Swami Abhishiktananda are used with permission and by arrangement with the Abhishiktananda Society.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to ISPCK (New Delhi, India) for permission to reprint excerpts from *The Secret of Arunachala* and *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, and to Les éditions du Cerf, for excerpts from Henri Le Saux, *Lettres d'un Sannyasi Chrétien à Joseph Lemarié*.

An effort has been made to clear all permissions for this volume. The publisher regrets any omissions, which will be corrected in a future printing.

Published by Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0308.

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

Queries regarding rights and permissions should be addressed to:
Orbis Books, P.O. Box 308, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0308.

Manufactured in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Abhishiktananda, Swami, 1910-1973.

[Selections. English. 2007]

Swami Abhishiktananda : essential writings / selected with an introduction by Shirley du Boulay.

p. cm. – (Modern spiritual masters series)

ISBN-13: 978-1-57075-695-5 (pbk.)

1. Christianity and other religions—Hinduism. 2. Hinduism—Relations—Christianity. 3. Spirituality. 4. Spiritual life—Christianity. 5. Spiritual life—Hinduism. I. Du Boulay, Shirley. II. Title. III. Title: Essential writings.

BR128.B8A2413 2007

261.2'45—dc22

2006030802

Contents

Sources	9
Abbreviations	11
Glossary	13
Introduction	19
1. BENEDICTINE MONK	43
<i>Brittany</i>	43
<i>Vocation</i>	44
<i>Letter to Louise</i>	45
<i>Father Jules Monchanin</i>	48
<i>Fulfillment Theology</i>	52
2. ADVAITA	56
<i>Ramana Maharshi: “The Unique Sage of the Eternal India”</i>	56
<i>Ramana Maharshi’s Way</i>	59
<i>Ramana Maharshi — The Quest of the Self</i>	61
<i>Advaita — A Definition</i>	61
<i>The Challenge Christianity and Advaita Present to Each Other</i>	63
<i>Christian and Vedantic Asceticism</i>	65
<i>Simply Becoming Aware</i>	66
<i>Man Is Truly Himself</i>	69
<i>There Is Only Being</i>	70
<i>Eternity</i>	71
<i>Eternity in the Present Moment</i>	72
<i>Goal of the Universe</i>	72
<i>Being</i>	73

3. EAST-WEST	75
<i>Advaita and the Religions</i>	75
<i>The Advaitic Dilemma</i>	77
<i>Why Name the Mystery?</i>	78
<i>The West's Interest in the East</i>	78
<i>The Challenge Presented to Christianity</i>	81
<i>A Call to the Church</i>	82
<i>The Tension between Christianity and Hindu Advaita</i>	83
<i>Responses to Saccidananda</i>	85
<i>Tensions</i>	86
4. IMMERSION IN HINDUISM	88
<i>Pray to Be Simply Transparent</i>	88
<i>The Grace of India</i>	92
<i>Morning Worship</i>	97
<i>Evening Worship</i>	98
<i>Night Prayers</i>	101
<i>Christ the Sad-Guru (True Master)</i>	101
<i>Meeting the Guru</i>	104
<i>Greeting the Guru</i>	108
<i>The Effect of Meeting Sri Gnanananda</i>	109
<i>Christ as Guru</i>	110
<i>The Mystery of the Guru</i>	111
<i>The Guru in the Depth of the Heart</i>	113
<i>The Secret of the Guru</i>	114
<i>Pilgrimage— A Definition</i>	115
<i>Setting Off</i>	116
<i>Ascent to Gangotri</i>	117
<i>Sadhus</i>	118
<i>The Cosmic Covenant</i>	119
<i>Review of Hindu-Christian Meeting Point</i>	121
<i>Hindu-Christian Dialogue Postponed</i>	125

5. THE LIFE OF THE HERMIT	129
<i>The Ideal of the Sannyasi</i>	129
Sannyasa	130
<i>Surrender</i>	131
“ <i>Naked as a Stone Is Naked</i> ”	133
<i>Silence</i>	136
<i>Solitude</i>	139
<i>The Role of Contemplatives</i>	141
<i>Solitude and Emptying</i>	142
<i>The Great Solitude within the Soul</i>	143
From “ <i>Esseulement</i> ”	144
<i>The Call of the Within</i>	148
6. CHRISTIANITY	150
<i>What Is a Christian?</i>	150
<i>Is It Possible to Live according to the Gospel?</i>	155
“ <i>My Father and I Are One</i> ”	157
<i>Jesus</i>	158
<i>Jesus, the True Guru</i>	159
<i>Jesus in Advaita</i>	159
<i>For Ascension Day</i>	160
<i>Christ and the Church</i>	161
Saccidananda — <i>A Definition</i>	161
<i>The Trinity</i>	164
<i>The Two Experiences of the Trinity and of</i> Saccidananda	164
<i>Mass</i>	166
7. GOD	169
<i>The Existence of God</i>	169
<i>The Essential Void</i>	170
<i>The Secret of the Within</i>	171

<i>The Meeting of Man with God</i>	172
<i>Contemplation of the Transcendent-Immanent God</i>	172
<i>Everywhere He Is, and Only He</i>	174
<i>Seek God</i>	178
8. PRAYER	180
<i>God's Presence</i>	180
<i>Prayer — an Act of Faith</i>	182
<i>Prayer — God Is beyond Form</i>	183
<i>God in Creation</i>	184
<i>The Prayer of the Name</i>	184
<i>The Primacy of Contemplation</i>	187
<i>Advaitic Prayer</i>	188
OM	189
<i>The Prayer of Silence</i>	190
9. AWAKENING	193
Satori	193
<i>Dazzled</i>	194
<i>Only for the Strong</i>	194
<i>The Present Moment</i>	195
<i>Beyond All Signs</i>	196
<i>Extracts from Abhishiktananda's Spiritual Diary</i>	199
<i>The Only Real Self</i>	203
<i>I Am</i>	204
<i>Beyond Words</i>	205