

If one wants to follow one's heart and make real progress along the path of self-knowledge, it is necessary to perform actions every day that seem to be silly; for foolishness uses the most shining garments of wisdom, and right action can be easily described as wrong.

NOTE:

[1] "The Mahatma Letters", TUP edition, Pasadena, Letter LXII, pp. 351-352.

Reexamining The White Lotus Day Treason Can Sometimes Hide Behind a Homage



H.P. Blavatsky in her office in London, 1887

Disloyal politicians often pay ceremonial homage to the very ideals they betray.

Soon after the death of Helena P. Blavatsky on 8 May 1891, Henry S. Olcott was getting ready to start his struggle for power against those who were loyal to her, when he created the "White Lotus Day", which should be celebrated every 8 of May as a homage to the founder of the modern esoteric movement.[1]

Olcott was deluded. He had poor discernment. He should know the "homage" which Helena Blavatsky expected was no personal adulation.

She wanted people to have ethics and loyalty towards the Teachings of the Mahatmas, instead. And that was something Olcott and his political partner Annie Besant did not have: their main goal was largely to obtain political power.

There is one aspect, however, in which the name “White Lotus Day” makes sense for the date when the Adyar Society “pays tribute” to HPB. The phrase chosen by H. S. Olcott coincides with the title of a classic book by Mabel Collins, “The Idyll of the White Lotus”, actually a novel narrating the sad story of high treason in an esoteric organization.[2]

The lust for power can sometimes hide behind a homage. In spite of short term appearances, however, every form of disloyalty is self-defeating. In due time, ethics and love for truth win the day, and that takes place in strict accordance to the One Law.

The right way to express admiration for Helena Blavatsky’s mission remains the same. It has never changed. It consists of showing respect for her Masters and Their teachings, and of leading an ethical life.

In order to do that, one must be truthful to one’s own conscience in the first place.

(CCA)

NOTES:

[1] On what happened in political terms immediately after HPB died in May 1891, see the well-documented article “The Wills of Helena P. Blavatsky”, by Ernest Pelletier. The text is available in our websites.

[2] “The Idyll of the White Lotus”, by Mabel Collins. Subtitle: “A Mystical Novel”. Published by Quest Books, TPH in the USA, 1974, 142 pp. Although the book contains some points of theosophical teaching, it dwells too much on treason and negative thinking; in a way it anticipates the trajectory of Mabel Collins, who betrayed ethical precepts and abandoned the theosophical movement soon after it was published. Mr. T. Subba Row, who made a vehement defense of “The Idyll”, also had not a loyal or happy ending in his short career as a theosophist.

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See the text “**The Full Moon of May**”, which is available at our websites.

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A Few Decisive Steps

Present humanity will have to take a few decisive steps towards ethics and universal brotherhood, before everyone can see the true dimension of the mission fulfilled by Helena Blavatsky in the 19th century.

Pairs of Opposites in Theosophy

Humbleness and audacity are both necessary. Firmness includes flexibility, and when necessary flexibility must become the firmness of a rock. Silence contains sound, and sound, or mantra, is a loyal disciple to silence.

How Kindness Defeats Aggression

Theosophy and Humanist Psychology Unmask the Disease of Negative Thoughts



The long-time experience of the Adyar Theosophical Society and other “esoteric” groups shows that adhering to fancy creeds and performing “mystical” ceremonies of supposed medieval origins does not help.

The pioneers of a brotherly civilization must study and understand themselves in the first place. They have to examine their own wisdom and their ignorance and solve the mystery of human relationships. Psychology, if defined as the knowledge of the soul, is central and decisive to the theosophical effort in the present century. It is correct to paraphrase Terence and say:

“I am a human being, and nothing human is alien to me.”

In the 1960s, Transactional Analysis brought common sense to the psychological approach to human relations. Last century best-sellers like “I’m OK - You’re OK”, by Thomas A. Harris, popularized an accurate knowledge of different levels of consciousness in human soul and taught practical ways to find balance and harmony, while promoting sincerity in daily life. Also in the 20th century, Erich Fromm, Viktor Frankl, Karen Horney, Rollo May and others denounced and fought the materialization and “mercantilization” of human life.

In recent years, a new wave of psychological awareness discusses the process of dehumanization and uses the concept of “bullying”, which is defined as “the use of force, threat, or coercion to abuse, intimidate, or aggressively dominate others”. Patricia Evans is among the best-selling authors of books about verbal abuse.

Indeed, if we look beneath surface, disrespect is not difficult to find in human relations. We are facing a collective crisis of disrespect for life and denial of ethics.

Churches and “esoteric” ceremonialism offer no solution. They are part of the problem, in fact, for religious fakeness and pious lies are among the worst forms of abuse. Attachment to mystical frauds is an obstacle to the learning of one’s soul.

People must learn to respect themselves, before they can really respect others, and this depends on expanding their antahkarana, the connection to their own spiritual souls, which has nothing to do with adhering to any creed or blind belief system.

Self-disrespect leads to disrespect for others.

War is a form of contempt for human beings. Terrorism is another. When “powerful” bankers and politicians develop occult partnerships with drug-dealers and merchants of weapons, this is a form of abuse against humanity.

In human karma and experience, inter-personal verbal abuse is connected with wider forms of abuse that take place on economic and social levels. Personal disrespect is inseparable from various political, financial, cultural and religious forms of contempt for life.

Down the long line of abuses, the “esotericist” may secretly envy his fellow truth-seeker. The husband may verbally abuse his wife and vice-versa, or the parents abuse their children, and a child may abuse other children.

Such abuses may be ostensible or disguised. They may explode, or they may be subtle and implicit. They all result from ignorance. They come from innerly powerless people who want to make others just like they think they are: blind to truth and unable to love.

It is the duty of the theosophist to fight such a chain of causation and vicious circle. In order to effectively help mankind, the esoteric movement must see the essential identity among theosophy, ethics, and psychology defined as self-knowledge. True self-knowledge implies the knowledge of all human beings.

The wording of esoteric philosophy must be used to attain and share knowledge; not to make propaganda of a corporation and win blind followers.

The implosion which the Theosophical Society of Adyar has been undergoing for quite a few years can serve as a lesson in sincerity, not only for its members, but for the followers and affiliates of every other form of “organized esotericism” as well. No one is above criticism. It is time to wake up from the “corporate dream”, which usually becomes a bureaucratic nightmare.

Self-responsibility leads to self-knowledge, and self-knowledge brings about brotherhood. Self-knowledge is the knowledge of the Law of Equilibrium. The esoteric movement must get rid of politics and politicking, and become a federation of researchers who look for truth and do not pay undue attention to mere appearance.

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On Psychology and Theosophy, see also the article “**The Theosophy of Namaste**”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline. The text is available in our websites.

Respect for One's Fellow-Pilgrims



There are numerous reasons for us to be especially cautious while thinking about the mistakes of our colleagues in the search for truth. In an initial approach, one should mention at least two of them.

1) In the first place, our brothers along the path are mirrors which reflect different parts of our being. The aspects of their nature which irritate us surely touch some points in ourselves which need improvement. Otherwise we would feel deep solidarity, instead of anger.

2) The second reason is that if our colleagues in study and search are intensely working for a noble cause, we must remember that, in the alchemical process of the soul's transmutation, all the inner failures (either real or potential) become visible. They are even exaggerated, like in a fever, at the same time as their roots may be invisibly eliminated in the soul of the learner.

Let us be cautious, then. Let us think the best about the others.

Let us take their higher selves and spiritual souls into consideration. Let us support those who have visible limitations and are trying to improve themselves and to help an altruistic cause.

Let us try to correct our own mistakes. Perhaps our inner shortcomings are not so few, and not so small, as we would like them to be. We can always improve.

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Cycle of Right Action Includes Time for Rest



Albert Einstein, while practising a physical exercise that involves dynamic equilibrium

An effective action has to combine the different levels of consciousness.

There must be a balance and a harmony among the various kinds of effort on the emotional, physical and intellectual dimensions of life.

One must pay attention to the whole cycle, from effort and rest back into a renewed effort. During the time of work, a creative use of positive energies prepares us to have a better rest at the end of the day.

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Evaluate Your Average Thoughts

Examine the direction of your average feelings, thoughts and aspirations along the day.

That direction is the direction of your karma. Have you chosen such a road? Is it bright and noble enough? Do the necessary improvements so as to make sure your karma makes progress in the direction you consciously want.

One must check and verify the degree of unity among the different links in the chain of individual life. What one wants, what one aspires to, what one thinks, feels, understands, what one does, and what one perseveres in, all these factors form a chain, and in such an association of different elements the strength of one link is the strength of all.

No Separation Between The Divine and the Worldly



In the first stages of the Way one often sees a painful difference, if not an abyss, between the divine and material aspects of life.

One's ambition is then to get rid of outward tasks and duties, so as to dedicate one's whole life to the altruistic ideal of human progression and perfection.

As one simplifies little by little his personal agenda, time for the search of selfless wisdom expands.

Into the extent that the change of one's life unfolds, the difference and the contrast between divine tasks and worldly duties get reduced and the time approaches when they will completely disappear.

In fact, every effort destined to sustain physical life - our own, or of those around us - is an opportunity to strengthen the temple within our heart and mind.

Just as the air can be found in water, and water is invisibly present in the soil, the spiritual aspect of Nature is also contained in every right action that is well performed on the physical plane.

There seems to be a "separation" between the earth and the sky, but where exactly is the

earth? The earth navigates on the sky all the time.

Human perception is part and parcel of divine consciousness.

Spiritual duty is that duty performed with the right intention and altruism. Through humble actions one defeats pride, eliminates self-importance and attains to selflessness.

Important actions are those which we perform with our soul. The science of theosophy teaches us to put our highest self and full attention at every moment and situation we live. Nothing is useless whose intention is noble. No action is meaningless if done with a pure heart and generous mind by an individual who's able to learn. All aspects of life are sacred when we look at them from the point of view of universal sacredness. When the presence of the soul is strengthened in daily life tasks, the very substance of daily life becomes sacred.

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The Esoteric Side of Beagle Boys



Organizing a fraud with regard to mundane matters is often considered a crime.

Promoting or protecting a religious, "spiritual" or "esoteric" fraud is even more harmful, for it means misguiding and stealing from the very souls of people, invisibly attacking their altruistic levels of consciousness.

This is something a few leaders of the esoteric movement must still come to realize: the Beagle Boys should have no disciples in associations dedicated to the search for wisdom.

Thoughts Along the Road Observing the Sacredness of Daily Life



- * **M**oral strength comes from concentrating the mind on one's duty.
- * Right action is inseparable from correct thought and honest emotion.
- * "Better late than never." Yes, and it is even better to act on time, with no postponements.
- * In the absence of a strengthened will, confusion arises. A calm yet firm self-discipline is the key to transform good intentions in right action.
- * Everyone knows that the true temple must be built in one's very soul, and that it requires a certain amount of willpower.
- * The cycles of life reflect Karma. Peacefully observing them allows us to harmonize the flowing of the energy from the Causes to the Effects.
- * The essence of the universe guides every human life, and it shines in an almost invisible way in the centre of our individual being.
- * To preach in the desert means emitting a mantra. The task requires discernment. If the work is well done, in the right time a little oasis will become visible.
- * You should not think that comfort is happiness. The way to suffering is paved by attachment to personal satisfaction. Happiness results from wisdom, instead, and it is inseparable from discernment.

* Harmony and contentment depend above all on the strength of our soul and the firmness of our long-term decision to attain the Inner blessing. External factors invisibly adapt themselves to the condition of our soul.

* The path to wisdom includes creating in one's daily life physical, emotional and mental habits that have the same substance as the philosophy one studies.

* Self-purification paves the way to self-knowledge, and it is inseparable from self-responsibility.

* Theosophy helps you widen your horizons. Through the study of ancient texts you can learn from the greatest sages of all time.

* Check your actions. Make sure you are proceeding in the right direction. Once you have done this with rigour enough, persist during any difficulties and an unconditional bliss will come to you.

* The ethics of generosity makes the difference between hell and heaven.

* All beings live in eternal unity. However, it is only on the territory of altruism that such union can acquire the substance of bliss.

* Each human being is himself a bridge or ladder between the Earth and the sky. As he learns about wisdom and undergoes the corresponding change, the celestial energies in his soul get more and more influential.

* There are times when falsehoods prevail. There are other times when illusions can't resist their own weight any longer, but implode and are defeated. Then sincerity is reborn in freedom, bringing with it a new springtime of ethics and justice.

* The fact that civilizations keep succeeding one another along history should be enough for us to understand that they are illusory. To search for the truth, in esoteric philosophy, means transcending the horizon of present "civilization"; a society which, by the way, is in many aspects scarcely civilized.

* All the aspects of time belong to eternity and to the present moment as well. Therefore the practice of learning lessons from the past and the efforts for building a better future are all parts of the one Time Eternal. The Seven Eternities are hidden in the Now, just as the Now dwells in and comes across the Seven Eternities.

* In order to act in an effective way and make the difference, one must identify the point in space and time where the difference can be made. Patience and perseverance, if practiced in the right direction, will build, first, and then reveal the decisive moment in the right place.

* Actual bravery is seldom announced by harsh words. Moderation in words is often associated with decisive action: hence the need for a balanced wording.

* One of the keys to life is having a severe discernment of right and wrong and abstaining from unnecessary negativity. The priority is setting in motion and managing those creative energies which build a healthy scenario for life. Mistakes must be shown as such, and one

needs to act to correct them. The central focus of one's effort ought to be the preservation and expansion of the most valuable, and the most valuable is both eternal and new.

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Two Fragments from Jean-Jacques Rousseau

* **H**ow delightful it would be for those who live among us if our external appearance were always a true mirror of our hearts, if good manners were also virtue, if the maxims we spout were truly the rules of our conduct, if true philosophy were inseparable from the title of a philosopher! But so many good qualities seldom go together, and virtue rarely walks amidst such pomp and state.

* **T**oday, as more subtle study and more refined taste have reduced the art of pleasing to a system, there prevails in our manners a loathsome and deceptive conformity: all minds seem to have been cast in the same mold. Incessantly politeness makes demands, decorum issues orders. Incessantly we obey rituals, never our own intuition. We no longer dare to appear as we really are, and under this perpetual restraint, people who form the herd known as society, finding themselves in these same circumstances, will all behave in exactly the same ways, unless more powerful motives prevent them from doing so. We never know therefore with whom we are dealing: in order to know one's friend, one must wait for some critical occasion, that is, wait until it is too late, for it is precisely on those occasions that knowledge of that friend would have been essential.

[Reproduced from "**Discourse on the Sciences and Arts**", by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), in "**The Social Contract and The First and Second Discourses**", by J-J Rousseau, edited by Susan Dunn, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2002, 315 pp., see pp. 49-50.]

The New Texts in Our Websites

This is the monthly report of www.TheosophyOnline.com and its associated websites, valid for May. The following items were published between 23 April and 22 May:

(The more recent titles above)

1. **The Need for Personal Responsibility** - *Steven H. Levy, M. D.*
2. **The Theosophy of Namaste** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
3. **Barborka, on The Secret Doctrine** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
4. **The Library of the Soul** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
5. **The Full Moon of May** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
6. **Universal Brotherhood Still a Puzzle** - *Carlos Cardoso Aveline*
7. **The Exercise of Patience** - *John Garrigues*
8. **The Aquarian Theosophist, April 2015**

On Praise and Blame

Or Examining the Process of Self-Delusion

John Garrigues

**“He also is my beloved servant (...)
to whom praise and blame are as one.”**

Bhagavad-Gita [1]



An image of Mengshan Mountain Buddha, in China

What are praise and blame but one of the ubiquitous pairs of opposites? They represent the reaction of other personalities to ours and its activities, spontaneous or directed from within.

To desire that our efforts shall receive commendation and that they shall not be adversely criticized is to look for results, which should not concern us when we are trying to live up to the best we know. He who fears censure may find himself, in time of crisis, a moral coward; he who courts praise may be ready to betray a confidence to justify his course, or vaunt his good deeds better left unsung.

It might be thought that only an extremely self-centered person, so enwrapped in his estimate of himself that he is indifferent to the opinion of any other, could regard praise and blame with entire equanimity. But often the person most satisfied with himself is most susceptible to flattery. Convinced as he is of his own worth, corroborative testimony cannot fail to ring true in his ears. He expands under praise and generously increases the radius of his esteem to take

in the flatterer. Even the man of deepest apparent humility often hungers for commendation. Not infrequently, excessive self-abasement is with the unguessed motive of eliciting contradiction, which, however deprecatingly received, is none the less eagerly welcomed.

Praise is a subtle intoxicant, and to hold it in the mind is to invite self-delusion. The wise deplore the competitive system under which we live, with its contests, formal or unproclaimed, featuring our advance from infancy to age. Their objection is not primarily because of the humiliation of those who “also ran”, but because of the inevitable strain upon the victors. It has been well said that for a thousand men who can stand adversity, there is only one who can stand prosperity. All too easily, the head is turned, and the winner accepts the momentary estimate of the fickle crowd as his evaluation of himself. “There never was, there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always blamed or a man who is always praised.” [2]

It is only a question of time until the plaudits of the crowd die away or change to ridicule or censure, but a man’s self-esteem, once inflated, is not easily punctured.

It is the lower self the people praise, nine cases out of ten; beauty of face or form or prowess physical; “temperament”, meaning moods uncontrolled, emotions passionate; or sharpened intellect to cope with problems that beset the man of earth. What has the man himself to do with these, except as tools whose usefulness to him is measured by their resignation to his purposes? Until their conquest is complete, praise strengthens their resistance to his will and makes his task more difficult and long.

But what of blame? Only the man of conscious rectitude, who sees himself as but one drop in the vast sea of life, no more important than the least of men, his brothers, can bear it without flinching. The Buddha said: “Is there in this world any man so restrained by humility that he does not mind reproof, as a well-trained horse the whip?” [3]

It is a species of hypocrisy to seek to hide from others the blemishes that still deface the picture of the man we seek to be. Not one of us but will admit, in calmer moments, that he falls sadly short of the perfection that he seeks, but we object to others noting it. We fain would impress with our good qualities those whom we contact, and deal unobserved, if deal we do at all, with the enemies within our own household.

Wise is the man who sifts impartially the blame he receives for the grain of truth it may contain, and, having found it, sets himself more diligently to mend his ways, dismissing from his thoughts, meanwhile, the censure and all the feeling of resentment. Blame, dwelt on morbidly, may stifle initiative or give rise to a sense of inferiority, the “miserable sinner” complex of Christian theology.

To regard praise and blame alike impersonally does not mean, then, to ignore them. Like every other experience, they offer lessons from which the wise man may profit. From the critical evaluation and dispassionate analysis which both call for, much may be learned of human nature, the critic’s and our own. Praise from an unworthy source may be a danger-signal, which the wise will heed. Conversely, blame may be accorded to nobility of conduct which the deluded or low-minded cannot appreciate at its true value.

One point to note is that, when we think too much of either blame or praise, we are centering our thoughts upon our personality, encouraging the ingrowing tendency it is our task to

overcome. He who forgets himself in Their work for Humanity has no time to dwell upon the criticisms, favorable or adverse, of those surrounding him. “As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people falter not amidst blame and praise.” [4]

EDITORIAL NOTES:

[1] See Chapter XII of the “Bhagavad Gita”, William Q. Judge edition, Theosophy Co., pp. 91-92. The full sentence says: “He also is my beloved servant who is equal-minded to friend or foe, the same in honor and dishonor, in cold and heat, in pain and pleasure, and is unsolicitous about the event of things; to whom praise and blame are as one; who is of little speech, content with whatever cometh to pass, who hath no fixed habitation, and whose heart, full of devotion, is firmly fixed.” (CCA)

[2] Chapter XVII of “The Dhammapada”, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. 10, by Max Müller and Max Fausböll, 1881. Available online. In the Theosophy Co. edition of the Dhammapada, see a similar version of the same sentence on p. 54, aphorism 228. (CCA)

[3] “The Dhammapada”, Chapter X, aphorism 143 (Sacred Books of the East). See note [2] above for bibliographical background. (CCA)

[4] “The Dhammapada”, Chapter VI, aphorism 81 (Sacred Books of the East). See note [2] above for bibliographical background. (CCA)

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The article “**On Praise and Blame**” was first published in the March 1932 edition of “**Theosophy**” magazine, in Los Angeles (pp. 206-207). It had no indication as to the name of the author. Original title: “Praise and Blame”. On the criteria used to identify articles written by J. G., see the text “**Life and Writings of John Garrigues**”, by Carlos Cardoso Aveline. It is published at www.TheosophyOnline.com and its associated websites.

Robert Crosbie, on the Power of Thought

Our very thought and effort will produce results. Thus we continue the thought and effort and let the results come as they will. Whatever comes must be right for us, for our work, for everything. Doubt, anxiety, fear, only hinder and delay the outcome. So doing what may be done from day to day, with right motive and trustfully, we meet all requirements, fulfill every duty.

I feel the hardship of your trials and struggles, and yet I know you would not change anything except as it should be changed by law, all the time using your best judgment, making your best endeavors under existing circumstances.

We must be able to fight against what seems to be overwhelming odds, and as long as we fight we are not overcome. We need not fear for ourselves, nor be unduly anxious for others - just simply, surely, steadily keep doing our duty as it comes before us.

[From the book “**The Friendly Philosopher**”, by Robert Crosbie, Theosophy Co., Los Angeles, 1945, 415 pp., see p. 204.]

Truthfulness and Patience in Judaism

A Few Ethical Principles As Taught by Moses Cordovero



Centuries ago, members of the Jewish community of Safed followed a course of instruction in the Kabbalah tradition, laid out by Moses Cordovero (1522–1570). The main ideas in the teaching show the same ethics and wisdom present in the best parts of other religions and philosophies.[1]

The lessons consisted of 13 points:

- 1) Forbearance in the face of insult.
- 2) Patience in enduring evil.
- 3) Pardon, to the point of erasing the evil suffered.
- 4) Total identification with one's neighbor.
- 5) Complete absence of anger, combined with appropriate action.
- 6) Mercy, to the point of recalling only the good qualities of one's tormentor.
- 7) Eliminating all traces of vengeance.
- 8) Forgetting suffering inflicted on oneself by others and remembering the good.
- 9) Compassion for the suffering without judging them.
- 10) Truthfulness.
- 11) Mercy beyond the letter of the Law with the good.

