

The Aquarian Theosophist

Volume XVIII, Number 08, June 2018

The monthly journal of the **Independent Lodge of Theosophists** and its associated websites
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A Practical Approach to Altruism:

The Five Dimensions of Love



In modern societies, a large part of the population is addicted to short-term and shallow views of life. As a result, millions of people talk about love and listen to popular songs about emotions - without really trying to know what they are talking about.

Understanding the mystery of human affection is, of course, no easy task. Perhaps it is for this reason that many do not even try. The several meanings of the word “love” are often difficult to grasp. Love creates conflicts and harmony, happiness and desperation. It moves the Universe. And seeing the dynamic unity and harmony among different elements of life is the same as perceiving Life itself.

Whether we understand love or not, love implies a degree of altruism. Brazilian poet Mário Quintana wrote that friendship occurs when “one’s soul moves to another house”, or when one “feels at home” while looking at the life of some friendly soul. Human affinity is also multidimensional: it flows on the seven levels of consciousness.

According to Pitirim A. Sorokin, a pioneer of balanced research in altruism, the energy of love has at least five dimensions:

- (1) Intensity;
- (2) Extensity;
- (3) Duration;
- (4) Purity; and
- (5) The adequacy of its manifestation in objective actions, in relation to its inner purpose. [1]

1. The Intensity

“In intensity”, says Sorokin, “love ranges between zero and the highest possible point, arbitrarily denoted as infinity.”

“The zero point is neither love nor hate. Below the zero point is hate (which has a similar intensity dimension). We all know this range of love intensity. When we observe a person who preaches love but does not practice it, we know that the intensity of his love is near the zero point; when the highfalutin preaching of love is used to mask selfish and hateful actions of hypocrites, their actions fall below the zero point and become hateful actions of various intensities.”

According to theosophy, the intensity of altruistic love depends on the level of consciousness from which it emerges. How intense is the contact between one’s personality and his own immortal soul?

Sorokin proceeds:

“Such actions as giving a few cents to the hungry (from large possessions of the giver), or offering a seat to another person on a streetcar, are actions of love, though of low intensity. Actions by which a person freely gives to others his greatest values - health, life, ‘soul’ (...) - are love actions of the highest possible intensity. Between zero and the highest points of love intensity there are many intermediary degrees.”

By having self-respect, a citizen feels love and respect for others. How best to measure the weight and strength of actual kindness?

“As a whole, the range of love intensity is not scalar”, says Sorokin.

“In most cases we cannot say exactly how many times greater a given intensity is than another, or whether it is equal, or higher, or lower. Yet we can often see clearly *which intensity is really high and which low, and sometimes even measure it in quantitative units*. Thus, other conditions being equal, the act of merely offering the seat in a streetcar will be appraised by practically all normal beings as an action of much lower love intensity than the action of saving a life at the risk or sacrifice of one’s own.”

He adds:

“...When the same person gives to others at one time 2 per cent of his wealth and at another 90 per cent of it, his second love action will be many times more intense than the first. When at one time he gives others one hour of his time and at another a week or a month, his second action will be many times higher in its love intensity than his first. To sum up: by and large *love intensity is not scalar*. This, however, does not hinder us from seeing the greatly different intensities of various love actions; nor even - here and there - from roughly measuring in numerical units these intensities. The same may be said of the scalar and nonscalar character of the four other dimensions of love.” [2]

2. The Extensy

Theosophy teaches an unlimited, impersonal love, and an unfathomable understanding of life as a whole. There is no separation between thought and emotion in esoteric philosophy, and its students must *know* what they love, and *love* what they know.

Pitirim Sorokin tries to approach love as a process in itself, with the help of methods borrowed from conventional science. He wrote about the narrowness or width of one's affinities:

“The extensy of love ranges from the zero point of love of oneself only, up to the love of all mankind, all living creatures, and the whole universe. Between these minimal and maximal degrees lies a vast scale of extensities: love of one's own family, or a few friends, or love of all the groups one belongs to - one's clan, tribe, nationality, nation, religious, occupational, political, and other groups and associations.”

Universal or boundless love is also an actual fact in human life:

“The maximal point of extensy is the love of the whole universe (...). Like St. Francis, one can love ‘a dear brother - earth’, the moon, the wind, a river, a tree, and generally all animate and inanimate phenomena, and thus ‘reverently and lovingly walk the earth’. And one can ‘hate the whole world’ and view it as his enemy.” [3]

One can love all beings, or love none. In theory, one can love himself exclusively. In fact, this is impossible since there is no actual separation in the universe. Selfishness is but a form of blindness and the “personal self” a delusion. And yet, working on a rather superficial level, one might say that according to Sorokin's system the “zero point” of love extensy is a love of oneself only.

Hate, on its turn, is a *negative quantity* of love. The aggressive rejection of another being is an “affinity below zero” and worse than useless except in cases of legitimate defense.

According to theosophy, the opposite of love constitutes a (karmic) debt to oneself and to others, and a debt to Life. The feeling of blind rejection needs to be understood before it can be eliminated, and replaced by a clear understanding of life's unity and a sense of impersonal justice. Theosophical wisdom gives humans both good will and detachment. These two feelings liberate people from the neurotic alternation between “attachment” and “rejection”.

3. The Duration

“The duration of love may range from the shortest possible moment to years or throughout the whole life of an individual or of a group”, says Sorokin.

And theosophy adds:

“It also uses to endure a number of lifetimes, perhaps a few eternities.”

Solidary actions have many different timings. Sorokin writes:

“Not only love actions of low intensity, but many of the highest intensity may last but a short time, like the actions of a soldier on a battlefield who risks or sacrifices his life to save his comrade; having saved him, and having himself survived, a soldier may stop such activities and become a selfish, ordinary creature. On the other hand, love actions of low as well as high intensity may endure for a long period, perhaps throughout the life of an individual or group. A mother caring for her sick child through his and her life, a good neighbour for years giving financial or other help to this or that person, great apostles of love discharging their love mission for decades, even throughout life, are examples of enduring love.” [4]

Deep altruistic action during one incarnation creates karmic trends which will emerge again as blissful facts in future lifetimes.

4. The Purity

Integrity is another dimension. Sorokin writes:

“The purity of love ranges from the love motivated by love alone - without the taint of a ‘soiling motive’ of utility, pleasure, advantage, or profit, down to the ‘soiled love’ where love is but a means to a utilitarian or hedonistic or other end, where love is only the thinnest trickle in a muddy current of selfish aspirations and purposes.” [5]

In fact, the concept of purity of love must be balanced with a knowledge of the fact that all levels of consciousness constantly interact. Purity does not mean an absence of communication between higher and lower levels of affection. It means that lower levels of love and affinity cannot unduly interfere with the impersonal, pure, elevated process of affinity. A notion of psychoanalytical factors will help preserving the right kind of devotion in one’s spiritual life seen as an impersonal matter. And that leads us to the next point.

5. The Adequacy of Love

Every honest person has an inclination to be a friend, to have compassion, to be helpful to others and live with good will regarding all life. The ability to do so in effective ways, however, is granted to no one. It all depends on the amount of discernment one has in looking at the way the Law of Karma works and the Consequences of his own actions.

Combined with naïve decisions, good intentions may cause havoc. Every day disastrous situations are provoked by the wrong use of love energy. The issue is easy to illustrate. Sorokin writes:

“We all know mothers who love their children intensely and want to make them ‘lovable’ - that is, honest, industrious, and good. With this purpose they frequently pamper them, satisfy all their fancies, and fail to discipline them when they need it. Through such love actions they often spoil their children, and make them capricious, irresponsible, weak, lazy, dishonest. These objective consequences of love differ radically from the mother’s goal of love. (...) The

necessary wisdom lacking, blind love miscarries in its objective manifestations and destroys itself; instead of benefitting the beloved person, it often harms him. Here we have an inadequate love (...) as a dark passion moving to self-destruction.” [6]

The same challenge occurs in all aspects of life.

Irresponsible love for the nation can lead to unfair war. Narrow-minded love for churches and sects produces fanaticism, oppression and intolerance. A selfish devotion to individual families may provoke an absence of ethics. Undue attachment to ideological groups can generate fierce class struggle and social disharmony in large scale.

Examples are many. Love without wisdom is blind and irresponsible; its result is self-destruction. Cicero is right in posing three preconditions to anyone who wishes to help another. First, the action must be just and cause no undue pain to third parties. Second, the action must be within our possibilities. And third, the recipient of the action must be worthy of it; he, or she, *has to deserve it.* [7]

Once the right amount of wisdom is there, altruistic love and friendship are real and prevail, side by side with justice and a sense of respect for all beings.

The first object of the modern theosophical movement is to slowly form an enduring nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, without distinction of race, nationality, creed, sex, ideology, caste or color. Such a sense of brotherliness includes all beings in eternal time and boundless space. A humble combination of noble intention and severe discernment can gradually lead each citizen who loves truth to effectively learn the ancient *art of good will.*

NOTES:

[1] “The Ways and Power of Love”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, Templeton Foundation Press, Pennsylvania, USA, 2002, 552 pp., p. 15. On Sorokin’s five-dimension view of altruistic love, see the book “Unlimited Love”, Stephen G. Post, Templeton Foundation Press, Philadelphia and London, 2003, 232 pp., chapter 9, pp. 133-155. A fragment of Stephen Post’s book was published on pp. 1-2 of “The Aquarian Theosophist”, July 2015 edition.

[2] “The Ways and Power of Love”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, Templeton Foundation Press, Pennsylvania, USA, 2002, 552 pp., pp. 15-16.

[3] “The Ways and Power of Love”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, p. 16.

[4] “The Ways and Power of Love”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, same p. 16.

[5] “The Ways and Power of Love”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, p. 17.

[6] “The Ways and Power of Love”, Pitirim A. Sorokin, pp. 17-18.

[7] “De Officiis”, Cicero, with an English translation by Walter Miller, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2005, 424 pp., see p. 47.

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See the articles “[Love Without Violence](#)”, by Erich Fromm, “[Is Family Life a Duty?](#)”, by CCA, and “[Magnetic Circles of Universal Love](#)”, by CCA.

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Churchill and the Public Opinion

The Film *Darkest Hour* Is a Luminous, Enlightening Work of Art



The 2017 film “Darkest Hour” examines testing moments in the life of Winston Churchill and a decisive page in the History of mankind. [1]

Contrasting with its title, this is one of the most brilliant movies made about the Second World War.

A true work of art, the film shows the deadly duel between truth and falsity in human heart and in public opinion. The challenge is not unknown to theosophists, for a Master of the Wisdom says in “The Mahatma Letters”:

“...In the ideas of the West, everything is brought down to *appearances* even in religion.”

And the teacher proceeds:

“A confessor does not inquire of his penitent whether he *felt* anger, but whether he has *shown* anger to anyone. ‘Thou shalt in lying, stealing, killing, etc. *avoid being detected*’ - seems to be the chief commandment of the Lord gods of civilization - Society and Public opinion.” [2]

Although every noble effort is easy to attack in the “public opinion”, we read at the Mahatma Letters that the Initiates in wisdom are “utterly devoid of that sense of the ridiculous which prompts the Western mind to caricature the best, the noblest aspirations of mankind.” A Yogi, says the Master, can’t feel “offended or flattered by the world’s opinion”. [3]

Another master of divine wisdom recommended to a lay disciple:

“Fear not, *immortal* man, scorn the evil whispers of the double-visaged Janus called public opinion.” [4]

According to the Initiates, “the tribunal of Public opinion” is the “most flippantly cruel, prejudiced and unjust of all tribunals.” [5]

Winston Churchill challenged such a tribunal, as he insisted in the strange idea that people of good will should actually defend the UK and Western civilization against Adolf Hitler.

Appeasers were the majority in the public opinion. Nazism seemed invincible. Making peace with the aggressor was - from the point of view of mental laziness and moral defeat - the only thing to do. Winston Churchill was therefore seen as a madman and his ideas as absurd.

“Darkest Hour” is a must for theosophists and friends of mankind who seek for truth and dare challenge false consensus.

It is a story of moral courage against political correctness. It sets an example to follow in our century, in every department of life.

NOTES:

[1] Available in DVD. 125 minutes. Starring Gary Oldman as Winston Churchill. Director: Joe Wright.

[2] “[The Mahatma Letters](#)”, p. 233.

[3] “[The Mahatma Letters](#)”, p. 224.

[4] “[Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - Second Series](#)”, 1948 edition published online, see Letter 10, p. 28. In the 1973 edition, TPH, it is the same page.

[5] “[Letters From the Masters of the Wisdom - First Series](#)”, 1948 edition published online, see Letter 7, p. 31. In the 1973 edition, TPH, it is Letter 7, p. 28.

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A Book of Quotations
Some Insights for Each Day of the Year
by Robert Crosbie

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José Xifré Meets Blavatsky

There Was a Reason for Him Not to Leave London by Train That Day

Sylvia Cranston



José Xifré, the first pioneer of modern Theosophy in Spanish-speaking world

One of H.P. Blavatsky's visitors during the London years was a wealthy aristocrat from Spain, José Xifré, who was a close friend of Queen Isabella II and King Alphonse XII. It is reported that the king on his deathbed acknowledged Xifré as the only disinterested friend he had ever had. [1]

As to his first meeting with HPB, Xifré said a glance from her eyes "penetrated and destroyed the personality that I had been up to that moment" and that "its ideas, tendencies and prejudices, more or less engraved, disappeared... I shall not try to explain this seemingly startling fact, [but this] like all others, is based on the great law of karma... To her I owe all that I know... Both gentle tranquility and moral equilibrium were attained on making her acquaintance." [2]

On another occasion he asserted that HPB had twice saved his life. One of these incidents occurred when he was leaving London for the continent. She said:

“You are not going to leave today.”

Xifré replied he had to leave. When Blavatsky insisted that he must not, he responded, “But, I *must* go, it is absolutely necessary for me to go, I cannot put off my departure.” “You shall not go, you must stay overnight in London”, she ordered. Reluctantly he obeyed. The following day the newspapers reported that the evening mail train Xifré would have taken was in a dreadful smash-up. [3]

Despite the opposition of the Catholic Church, Xifré, with several associates, actively promulgated Theosophy in Spain. By the end of 1889, a Spanish translation had been completed of “Isis Unveiled”, “Esoteric Buddhism”, “Light on the Path”, and “The Key to Theosophy”. [4] A pamphlet entitled “What Is Theosophy?” was distributed to universities, libraries, and clubs throughout Spain. In May 1893, the Theosophist journal *Sophia* was started in Madrid, which continued through seventeen volumes.

De Zirkoff observes that “perhaps the greatest and most lasting result of José Xifré’s indefatigable work, in close collaboration with a few trusted friends and co-workers, was the publication of a superb Spanish translation of ‘The Secret Doctrine’, the first volume of which appeared in 1895”. [5] Xifré’s Theosophical work was eventually silenced when he lost his fortune, an event he believed was engineered by the Church. [6]

In England the Anglican Church was instrumental in having “Lucifer” [7] banned wherever magazines were sold. Particularly offensive to the Church, no doubt, was the editorial in the December 1887 issue, “*Lucifer* to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Greetings!” in which evidence was given that “in almost every point the doctrines of the Church are *in direct opposition to the teachings of Jesus*”.

NOTES:

[1] “The Theosophist”, September 1911, 897. (S. Cranston)

[2] José Xifré, “H.P.B.”, “Lucifer” magazine, August 15, 1891, 455-456. (S. Cranston)

[3] Don José Xifré, “Theosophical Worthies”, “The Theosophist”, September 1911, 897-899. (S. Cranston)

[4] “Theosophy in Spain”, “Lucifer”, December 15, 1889, 343-344. (S. Cranston)

[5] Blavatsky, “H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings”, 9:458-461. (S. Cranston)

[6] Boris de Zirkoff, “Don José Xifré”, “Theosophia”, volume 19, number 2 (Fall 1962), 14-16. (S. Cranston)

[7] The word “Lucifer” is an ancient name for the planet Venus, the “light-bearer”. Its meaning has been distorted for centuries by ill-informed theologians. (CCA)

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The above text is reproduced from the book **“HPB -The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement”**, by Sylvia Cranston, published by G.P. Putnam’s Sons, New York, 1994, 648 pp., see pp. 338-339. We have added footnote 7 and divided some of the larger paragraphs into smaller ones, to make the reading easier. José Xifré’s photo is reproduced from “The Theosophist”, September 1911, p. 898.

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The Mystery of Self-Training

Examining the Need to Practice Self-Discipline in Daily Life



Once a pilgrim adopts some rules of self-discipline in his life, mystic tradition commands him to follow “without cavil or delay” the principles of behaviour that are part of the road to wisdom.

Vigilance is necessary, for the accidental delay and a relaxation in discipline easily become habits.

As an individual underestimates the importance of the constant practice of right action, he starts to consider the effort as “unnecessary”, and even as silly. Any demands from his conscience that he must keep the sacred discipline would then be easily explained away as something “too rigid” which really “makes no sense”.

It is precisely because many aspects of daily discipline seem boring and unimportant, if not ridiculous, that their thoughtful and careful practice generates a higher magnetism, and produces true self-discipline.

Pessimism and laziness are different faces of the same ignorance.

On the other hand, self-respect, self-knowledge and a call to victory give the pilgrim strength and the resolution necessary to be severe regarding himself, and to make true progress.

The truth-seeker ought to remember these words written by a Master of the Wisdom:

“You were told [.....] that the path to Occult Sciences has to be trodden laboriously and crossed at the danger of life; that every new step in it leading to the final goal, is surrounded by pit-falls and cruel thorns; that the pilgrim who ventures upon it is made first to confront and *conquer* the thousand and one furies [1] who keep watch over its adamantine [2] gates and entrance - furies called Doubt, Skepticism, Scorn, Ridicule, Envy and finally Temptation - especially the latter; and that he, who would see *beyond* had to first destroy this living wall; that he must be possessed of a heart and soul clad in steel, and of an iron, never failing determination and yet be meek and gentle, humble and have shut out from his heart every human passion, that leads to evil.” [3]

It is easy to criticize and ridicule the regular practice of small acts of self-control and self-discipline. Seemingly negligible as it is, such a humble effort constitutes a central, decisive factor in the search of sacred wisdom. The modest discipline may challenge and dismantle vast amounts of accumulated ignorance.

“The last will be first, and the first will be last”, says the New Testament in Matthew 20: 16. And chapter 41 of the *Tao Teh Ching* clarifies:

“Superior virtue appears like a hollow (valley);
Sheer white appears like tarnished;
Great character appears like insufficient;
Solid character appears like infirm;
Pure worth appears like contaminated.” [4]

Accepting the appearance of a fool is an effective defense for the well-informed learner. The wisest actions may seem to be sheer idiocies.

Foolish people try to look like wise by developing the ability to say and to do whatever others think is wise. Friends of truth, on their turn, leave aside artificial consensus and mere habit. Abandoning the short term average of superficial opinions, they search for the first-hand knowledge of truth.

NOTES:

[1] Furies - in classical Mythology, feminine deities who punished crimes, stimulated by the victims, and who made the revenge of the gods. (Note of the Brazilian edition of “The Mahatma Letters”)

[2] Adamantine - made with diamonds, unbreakable as diamonds. (Note of the Brazilian edition of “The Mahatma Letters”)

[3] “The Mahatma Letters”, edited by A. Trevor Barker, 1926 edition, published by T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., in London, UK, 493 pages, see pp. 351-352. The whole book “The Mahatma Letters” is available in PDF [at our websites](#). The pages are the same in the TUP edition.

[4] “Laotse, the Book of Tao”, translated by Lin Yutang and published in the volume “The Wisdom of China and India”, edited by Lin Yutang, The Modern Library, Random House, New York, USA, 1955, 1104 pp., see page 606.

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A theosophical Gallery of Thoughts and Images: [click here to see “An Illustrated Travel in the World of Wisdom - 01”](#).

The Writings of an Eastern Master - 15

A Compilation of the Letters of Blavatsky's Teacher

Editorial Note:

In number fifteen of the series of articles reproducing letters written by the master of Helena Blavatsky, we publish Letter XCVI (96) from “The Mahatma Letters”. The Chronological edition indicates January 1884 as the date of the Letter and reports:

“It was enclosed in a letter from H.P.B. The first part of [*the Letter*] is on a folded sheet of smooth note paper about 5” x 7” in size. From the text we learn that it was a sheet of Sam Ward’s monogrammed note paper. William Eglinton had continued his mediumistic activities after his return to London and this Letter [number 96] is concerned in part with a seance he was holding in the quarters of Sam Ward.”

The letter unmasks the fabrication of false messages ascribed to the Master himself and to H.P. Blavatsky.

(CCA)

Letter No. 96

Received 1883 or '84? [1]

My humble pranams Sahib. Your memory is not good. Have you forgotten the agreement made at Prayag and the pass-words that have to proceed every genuine communication coming from us through a..... [2] *Choot-dak* or medium? How likely the *seance* of December the 15th - coroneted card, my letter and all! Very similar - as a Peling pundit would say. Yes, first a loving greeting from old woman to *Lonie* misspelled on card Louis, then to C. C. Massey whose name she now never pronounces, and that greeting coming after supper - when C.C.M. had already left. Then my message in a feigned [3] hand when I am at dead loggerheads with my own; again I am made to date my supposed message from Ladhak December 16th, whereas I swear I was at Ch-in-ki (Lhassa). Smoking your pipe. Best of all my asking you to “prepare for our coming as soon as we have won over Mr. Eglinton Sahib!!!” One Saturday and Lord Dunraven having failed why not *try* again. A solemn evening, that Saturday, at Picadilly over old Sotheran the mouldy bookseller. Knew premises well, felt amused and watched with your leave. Why feel so disgusted? Spooks worked remarkably well nothing abashed by my presence of which neither W.E. nor his bodyguard knew nothing. My attention was attracted by their forging H.P.B.’s handwriting. Then I put aside my pipe and watched. Too much light for the creatures coming from a Picadilly Street though Sotheran emanations helped good deal. I would call your friend Mr. Myers’ attention

to psychic fact of rotten emanations. Raise a good Choot crop. Yes; the room with windows overlooking Picadilly is a good place for psychic development. Poor entranced wretch.

"We wish to state to prevent any future misunderstanding that whatever phenomena may present themselves to you this evening we are in no way responsible for them and have no hand in their production." This is pure self-abnegation - modesty is no name for it. He paced the room and I followed from a distance. He went to Mr. Ward's writing desk and took a sheet of his monogram paper - and I helped myself to one - just to show you I watched. [4] As for all of you you did not watch very keenly while he was guided to place paper and envelope between the leaves of a book and when he laid it upon the table, or you would have seen something very interesting for science. The clock's silvery tongue strikes ten - fifteen and K.H.'s form descending a hill on horseback - (he is in the far off woods of Cambodia now) is supposed to cross the horizon of "Uncle Sam's" vision - and disturbs the activity of the Pisachas. The astral disturbance impedes their dull progress. Their bells are fine - very.

Now Sahib, you must not be too hard upon the wretched young fellow. He was utterly *irresponsible* on that night. Of course his belonging to your L.L.T.S. is pure nonsense for a paid and suspected medium is no peer for English gentlemen. Yet he is honest in his way and however much K.H. made fun of him in his card addressed to the Gordons - that all of you took seriously at the time - he is really honest in his way and to be pitied. He is a poor epileptic *subject to fits especially on the days when he is expected to have dinner with you*. I mean to ask K.H. to beg a favour from Mr. Ward: to save the poor wretch from the two elementaries - which have fastened on him like two barnacles. It is easy for good "Uncle Sam" to get for him an appointment somewhere and thus save him from a life of infamy which kills him, he will thereby do a meritorious and a Theosophical act of charity. Mr. Ward is wrong. W. E. is not guilty of any *conscious*, deliberate jugglery that night. He got a passionate desire to join the L.L. and as the wish is father to the deed - his astral ticks fabricated that letter *of mine* through means of their own. Had he done it himself he would have remembered it was not my handwriting as he is familiar with it through Gordons. Woe to the spiritualists! Their *Karma* is heavy with the ruin of men and women they entice into mediumship, and then throw off to starve like a toothless dog. At any rate ask him for the card of *Upasika* with her alleged writing on it. It is a good thing to keep and show occasionally to the Masseys of the L.L. who believe pure lies and will suspect fraud where none is meant. You are at liberty to regard me as a "nigger" and savage Sahib. But though I am the first to advise Mrs. K.'s re-election - nevertheless, I would sooner trust W.E.'s clairvoyance than Mrs. K.'s or rather her *rendering* of her visions. But this will soon stop. Subba Row is vindicating you. - Writing an answer to the Australian convert.

M.

NOTES:

[1] Note written by Alfred P. Sinnett, to whom the letter is addressed. (CCA)

[2] A word in Oriental characters appears here in the original. (Note from the editors of the first edition of the Mahatma Letters)

[3] In the first editions of the Mahatma Letters, "fained". We follow more recent editions with the corrected word. (CCA)

[4] That is, the Master took a piece of paper with him to show it to Sinnett as an evidence that he was there. (CCA)

[The above material transcribes Letter XCVI (96) in "The Mahatma Letters", edited by A. Trevor Barker, 1926 edition, published by T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., in London, UK, 493 pages, see pp. 431-432. This is letter 118 in the Chronological edition, TPH, the Philippines. The whole book "The Mahatma Letters" is available in PDF [at our websites](#). The pages are the same in the TUP edition.]

Five Chapters From The Book of Tao



We reproduce chapters nineteen through twenty-three of the “Tao Teh Ching”, translated by Lin Yutang, published under the title of “**Laotse, the Book of Tao**” and included in the volume “**The Wisdom of China and India**”, edited by Lin Yutang, The Modern Library, Random House, New York, USA, 1955. 1104 pages, see pp. 592-596. We have added a few footnotes. (CCA)

Chapter Nineteen: **REALIZE THE SIMPLE SELF**

Banish wisdom, discard knowledge, [1]
And the people shall profit a hundredfold;
Banish “love”, discard “justice”,
And the people shall recover love of their kin;
Banish cunning, discard “utility”,
And the thieves and brigands will disappear. [2]
As these three touch the externals and are inadequate;
The people have need of what they can depend upon:
Reveal thy Simple Self, [3]

Embrace thy Original Nature,
Check thy selfishness,
Curtail thy desires. [4]

NOTES:

[1] Banish excessive talk about wisdom and knowledge. (CCA)

[2] The ideas of Chapters 18 and 19 are fully developed by Chuangtse (Ch. X, “Opening Trunks”). (Lin Yutang)

[3] *Su*, the unadorned, uncultured, the innate quality, simple self; originally “plain silk background” as opposed to superimposed colored drawings; hence the expression to “reveal”, “realize”, *su*. (Lin Yutang)

[4] The eight characters in these four lines sum up practical Taoist teachings. (Lin Yutang)

Chapter Twenty: **THE WORLD AND I**

Banish learning, and vexations end. [1]

Between “Ah!” and “Ough!” [2]

How much difference is there?

Between “good” and “evil”

How much difference is there?

That which men fear

Is indeed to be feared;

But, alas, distant yet is the dawn (of awakening)!

The people of the world are merry-making,
As if eating of the sacrificial offerings,
As if mounting the terrace in spring;
I alone am mild, like one unemployed,
Like a new-born babe that cannot yet smile,
Unattached, like one without a home.

The people of the world have enough and to spare,
But I am like one left out,
My heart must be that of a fool,
Being muddled, nebulous!

The vulgar are knowing, luminous;
I alone am dull, confused.
The vulgar are clever, self-assured;
I alone, depressed.
Patient as the sea,
Adrift, seemingly aimless.

The people of the world all have a purpose;
I alone appear stubborn and uncouth.

I alone differ from the other people,
And value drawing sustenance from the Mother. [3]

NOTES:

[1] Banish artificial learning, developed with selfish aims, and vexations end. The present chapter unmasks the fact that spiritually ignorant people have great pleasure in pretending they are sages, while true sages - because they do not pay too much attention to appearance - are often seen as fools.(CCA)

[2] *Wei* and *o.* “O” an utterance of disapproval. (Lin Yutang)

[3] Imagery of the sucking child, symbolizing drawing power from Mother Nature. (Lin Yutang)

Chapter Twenty-One: **MANIFESTATIONS OF TAO**

The marks of great Virtue [1]

Follow alone from the Tao.

The thing that is called Tao
Is elusive, evasive.
Evasive, elusive,
Yet latent in it are forms.
Elusive, evasive,
Yet latent in it are objects.
Dark and dim,
Yet latent in it is the life-force.
The life-force being very true,
Latent in it are evidences.

From the days of old till now
Its Named (manifested forms) have never ceased,
By which we may view the Father of All Things.
How do I know the shape of Father of All Things?
Through These! [2]

NOTES:

[1] *Teh* as manifestation of Tao, the active aspect of Tao, the moral principle, tr. by Waley as “power”. (Lin Yutang)

[2] Manifested forms. (Lin Yutang)

Chapter Twenty-Two: **FUTILITY OF CONTENTION**

To yield is to be preserved whole.
To be bent is to become straight.
To be hollow is to be filled.
To be tattered is to be renewed.

To be in want is to possess.
To have plenty is to be confused.

Therefore the Sage embraces the One, [1]
And becomes the model of the world.
He does not reveal himself,
And is therefore luminous. [2]
He does not justify himself,
And is therefore far-famed.
He does not boast of himself,
And therefore people give him credit.
He does not pride himself,
And is therefore the ruler among men.

It is because he does not contend
That no one in the world can contend against him.

Is it not indeed true, as the ancients say,
“To yield is to be preserved whole?” [3]
Thus he is preserved and the world does him homage.

NOTES:

[1] The Absolute, to which transient attributes revert. (Lin Yutang)

[2] *Ming* with two meanings, “clear” (bright, sterling) and “clear-sighted” (wise, discerning). (Lin Yutang)

[3] Another Chinese proverb: “Yield your land boundaries all your life and you never lose half; yield your way to fellow passengers all your life and you never lose a step.” (Lin Yutang)

Chapter Twenty-Three: **IDENTIFICATION WITH TAO**

Nature says few words:
Hence it is that a squall lasts not a whole morning.
A rainstorm continues not a whole day.
Where do they come from?
From Nature.
Even Nature does not last long (in its utterances),
How much less should human beings?

Therefore it is that:
He who follows the Tao is identified with the Tao.
He who follows Virtue (*Teh*) is identified with Virtue.
He who abandons (Tao) is identified with abandonment (of Tao).
He who is identified with Tao -
Tao is also glad to welcome him.
He who is identified with Virtue -
Virtue is also glad to welcome him.

He who is identified with abandonment -
Abandonment is also glad to welcome him.
He who has not enough faith
Will not be able to command faith from others.

The New Texts in Our Websites

On 22 June, we had 2222 texts in our websites. Of these 4 items were in French, 74 in Spanish, 1062 in English and 1082 in Portuguese.

The following items were published in English and Spanish between 23 May and 22 June:

(The more recent titles above)

- 01. Observando el Astral de un País - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 02. Five Years of Theosophy - Various Authors [book]**
 - 03. La Clave de la Teosofía - Helena P. Blavatsky [book]**
 - 04. The Key to Theosophy - Helena P. Blavatsky [book]**
 - 05. Una Palanca para Mover el Mundo - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 06. Ideas a lo Largo del Camino - 04 - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 07. The Voice of the Silence - Helena P. Blavatsky (Ed.) [book]**
 - 08. La Teosofía y los Conflictos Sociales - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 09. Ideas a lo Largo del Camino - 03 - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 10. Ideas a lo Largo del Camino - 02 - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 11. The Philosophy of Sherlock Holmes - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 12. Thoughts Along the Road - 19 - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 13. The Arab Wisdom in Israel - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 14. The Habitude of Happiness - John Garrigues**
 - 15. Ideas a lo Largo del Camino - 01 - Carlos Cardoso Aveline**
 - 16. The Aquarian Theosophist, May 2018**

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“Ideas rule actions.”

(Robert Crosbie, in **A Book of Quotations**, p. 43)

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The Aquarian Theosophist Volume XVIII, Number 08, June 2018.

The Aquarian Theosophist is the monthly electronic journal of the **Independent Lodge of Theosophists** and its associated websites, which include www.TheosophyOnline.com, www.HelenaBlavatsky.org and www.CarlosCardosoAveline.com. It was founded by Jerome Wheeler in November 2000. Editor: Carlos Cardoso Aveline. Assistant-editor: Joana Maria Pinho. In order to make a free subscription or get in touch with *The Aquarian*, write to indelodge@gmail.com. Facebook: **The Aquarian Theosophist**. Blog: www.TheAquarianTheosophist.com. The entire collection of the journal is at our associated websites. “**The Aquarian Theosophist**” is a trademark registered in the National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI), Lisbon, Portugal, under the number 515491 (19 September 2013).

