

Auszüge aus

ON LOVE & HAPPINESS

Lecture given by Teilhard de Chardin in Beijing 28 Dec 1943

By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin 1967 now in Tue Great Library Cotlection ByR.P. Pryne

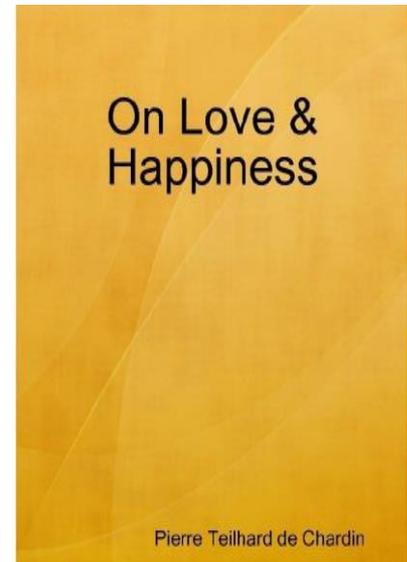
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1: Passages on Love

Excerpt from Chapter 1 in >>>>>

Love is the most universal, the most tremendous and the most mysterious of the **cosmic forces**.

After centuries of tentative effort, social institutions have externally diked and canalized it. Taking advantage of this situation, the moralists have tried to submit it to rules. But in constructing their theories they have never got beyond the level of an elementary empiricism influenced by out-of-date conceptions of matter and the relics of old taboos. Socially, in science, business and public affairs, men pretend not to know it, though under the surface it is everywhere. Huge, ubiquitous and always unsubdued-this wild force seems to have defeated all hopes of understanding and governing it. It is therefore allowed to run everywhere beneath our civilization. We are conscious of it, but all we ask of it is to amuse us, or not to harm us. Is it truly possible for humanity to continue to live and grow without asking itself how much truth and energy it is losing by neglecting its incredible power of love?



From the standpoint of spiritual evolution, which we here assume, it seems that we can give a name and value to this strange energy of love. Can we not say quite simply that in its essence it is the attraction exercised on each unit of consciousness by the center of the universe in course of taking shape? It calls us to the great union, the realization of which is the only process at present taking place in nature.

By this hypothesis, according to which (in agreement with the findings of psychological analysis) love is the primal and universal psychic energy, does not everything become clear around us, both for our minds and our actions? We may try to reconstruct the history of the world from outside by observing the play of atomic, molecular or cellular combinations in their various processes. We may attempt, still more efficaciously, this same task from within by following the progress made by conscious spontaneity and noting the successive stages achieved. The most telling and profound way of describing the evolution of the universe would undoubtedly be to trace the evolution of love.

In its most primitive forms, when life is scarcely individualized, love is hard to distinguish from molecular forces; one might think of it as a matter of chemisms or tactisms. Then little by little it becomes distinct, though still confused for a very long time with the simple function of reproduction. Not till hominization does it at last reveal the secret and manifold virtues of its violence. "Humanized" love is distinct from all other love, because the "spectrum" of its warm and penetrating light is marvelously enriched. No longer only a unique and periodic attraction directed to material fertility; but an unbounded and continuous possibility of contact through spirit much more than through body; the play of countless subtle antennae seeking one another in the light

and darkness of the soul; the pull towards mutual sensibility and completion, in which preoccupation with preserving the species gradually dissolves in the greater intoxication of two people consummating a world. It is in reality the universe that is pressing on, through woman, towards man. The whole question (the vital question for the earth) is that they shall recognize one another.

If man fails to recognize the true nature, the true object of his love, the confusion is vast and irremediable. Bent on assuaging a passion intended for the All on an object too small to satisfy it, he will strive to compensate a fundamental imbalance by materialism or an ever increasing multiplicity of experiments. His efforts will be fruitless-and in the eyes of one who can see the inestimable value of the "spiritual quantum" of man, a terrible waste.

But let us put aside any sentimental feelings or virtuous indignation. Let us look very coolly as biologists or engineers, at the lurid atmosphere of our great towns at evening. There, and everywhere else as well, the earth is continually dissipating its most marvellous power. This is pure loss. Earth is burning away, wasted on the empty air. How much energy do you think the spirit of the earth loses in a single night? If only man would turn and see the reality of the universe shining in the spirit and through the flesh. He would then discover the reason for what has hitherto deceived and perverted his powers of love. Woman stands before him as the lure and symbol of the world.

He cannot embrace her except by him self growing, in his turn, to a world scale. And because the world is always growing and always unfinished and always ahead of us, to achieve his love man is engaged in a limitless conquest of the universe and himself. In this sense, man can only attain woman by consummating a union with the universe. Love is a sacred reserve of energy; it is like the blood of spiritual evolution. This is the first revelation we receive from the sense of the earth.

From Human Energy

Exzerpt of Chapter 6

1. LOVE, THE TOTALIZING PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN ENERGY B. Totalization of the Individual on Himself by Love

That each of our separate pursuits can become total under the animating influence of Omega is already a marvelous utilization of human energy. But no sooner has this first transfiguration of our activities taken shape than it tends to enlarge into another more profound metamorphosis. By the very fact that they become total, each one in itself, our activities are logically led to totalize, merged together in a single act. Let us see how.

The immediate effect of universal love, rendered possible by Omega, is to attach to each of our actions a root identity of passionate involvement and gift of self. What will the influence of this common ground (one might call it this new climate) be on our inner life? Shall we dissolve under its pleasant warmth? Will it blur the clear outline of the objects around us with an atmosphere of mirage? Will it take our attention from the individual and tangible, to absorb us in a confused sense of the universal? If we fear this, it is because we have again forgotten that in the direction of spirit union differentiates. It is undoubtedly true that once I have discovered Omega, all things become for me in some ways the same thing; so that whatever I do I shall have the impression of doing one and the same thing. But this fundamental unity has nothing in common with a melting into homogeneity. In the first place, far from weakening, it accentuates the outline of the elements it assembles; for Omega, the sole object of desire, only forms for our eyes and offers itself to our touch in the completion of those elementary advances by which the fabric of evolution is

empirically taking shape. But there is more to it than this. Love not only impregnates the universe like an oil that will revive its colors. It does not simply bind the clouded dust of our experiences into a common lucidity. It is a true synthesis which operates on the grouped bundle of our faculties. And this is indeed the point that it is most important to understand. In the superficial course of our existences, there is a difference between seeing and thinking, between understanding and loving, between giving and receiving, between growing and shrinking, between living and dying. But what will happen to all those contradictions once their diversity has revealed itself in Omega as an infinite variety of forms of a single universal contact? Without any sort of radical disappearance they will tend to combine into a common sum, in which their still recognizable plurality will burst forth in ineffable riches. Not any sort of interference, but a resonance.

Why should we be surprised? Do we not know, at a lesser degree of intensity, a similar phenomenon in our own experience?

When a man loves a woman with a strong and noble passion that exalts his being above its common level, that man's life, his powers of feeling and creation, his whole universe, are definitely held and at the same time sublimated by his love of that woman. But however necessary the woman may be to that man, to reflect, reveal, transmit, and "personalize*" the world for him, she is still not the center of the world!

If therefore the love of one unit for another is powerful enough to melt (without fusing) the multitude of our perceptions and emotions into a single impression, how great must be the vibration drawn from our beings by their encounter with Omega?

Indeed we are called by the music of the universe to reply, **each** with his own pure and incommunicable harmonic. When, as love for the All advances in our hearts, we feel stretching out beyond the diversity of our efforts and desires the bounding simplicity of an urge in which the innumerable shades of passion and action mingle in exaltation without ever becoming confused, then, within the mass formed by human energy, we shall each approach the plenitude of our powers and personality.

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