

# Love, Truth, Peace and Death as Extolled by Selected Literary Philosophers: Inputs in Understanding Spirituality as a Transformative Agent of Society

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**Abstract** -*This qualitative study analyzed the selected works of the Christian mystics St. Augustine, St. Anselm, and William Blake as well as those of the Oriental mystics Confucius, and Rabindranath Tagore pointing out events and situations on how mysticism is reflected in their works. Likewise, this study tried to present how these identified literary philosophers extolled the meaning of love, truth, peace and death which serve as inputs in understanding spirituality as a transformative agent of the society. The selected writings consider the direct union of the human soul with the Divine through contemplation, meditation, prayer and love as the end of these mystics' philosophy. For in these selected prose and poetry manifest their mystical attitude and the spiritual truth that the meaning of human existence is the mindful and enlightened manifestation of love as the core of human life and the divine supreme law that guides humanity. The spiritual manifestations of human existence find their noblest expressions and exemplifications on their lives and works. There surfaces a unifying thread interwoven in all their works which centers on the constant and balanced yearning of men to be united with the Divine. These inputs serve as a new paradigm in understanding spirituality as a transformative agent of society.*

**Keywords:** *Confucius, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, Rabindranath Tagore, Spirituality, William Blake*

## INTRODUCTION

Much has been written on spirituality by theologians and on society by social anthropologists and sociologists, but slight effort has been made to ponder on the interrelationship of these two dimensions and to give thought on the significance of spiritual ideas and practices, while, in turn, such thoughts and praxis may serve as a compelling catalyst of societal transformation.

The dawning of the twenty-first century seems to herald a dramatically declining spirituality among people. This waning of the vital virtuousness in men may be due to doctrinal errors, spiritual pride, self-admiration and an inordinate desire and attachment to worldly things. Thus, it is very timely to contemplate on the life-changing possibilities of spirituality within the present social condition.

Spirituality is a vague term which denotes what was well thought-out by earlier Christians as devotional piety. However, it is a trans-religious term which is used in diverse ways like Christian spirituality, Buddhist spirituality and prophetic

spirituality, to mention a few. Galloway considered it as the inner life's journey and highlighted that this journey is shaped by the conditions of the cultural, gender, political, racial, religious and social contexts in which people live. Rolheiser acknowledged that every person has spirituality, since everyone is stimulated by desire. He averred that spirituality is about what people do and how they channel their deep desire. The habits and disciplines they decide on to live by and the values they adhere to, will either direct them to a greater harmony or discord within their minds, bodies and souls, and in their relationship with others, with the universe and with God. His connotation signifies that spirituality is not a product or service which people can opt for to consume or dispose of. Rather, it centers on an affinity with the life beyond people's individualism which shapes who they will be [1].

Mysticism is a particularly focused part of spirituality and the mystics aim at and believe in the attainment of the art of union between spirituality and reality [2]. It is the art or science of the spiritual life,

as cited by Underhill [3]. For her, it is the manifestation of humankind's deep-seated disposition towards complete harmony with the mystical order; regardless of the religious principle under which that order is perceived. On the other hand, mysticism, for Gellman [4] would best be thought of as a repertoire of distinctive texts, discourses, experiences, practices, institutions and traditions geared towards human transformation, diversely defined in various traditions.

Teilhard's fundamental perception of spirituality as a transformative life force in action offers a new model for its run-through in the modern age. For Teilhard and King, spirituality has moved out of the convents and out of religious institutions, into the world in general. The quest for new forms of spirituality which incorporate extrospection and introspection, contemplation and action as well as social and personal worlds is a search which one also finds manifestations in other places and situations. There is a pressing need to work for a profound spiritual awareness and responsiveness among people. To be committed to the spirit's appeal in contemporary culture, King calls for a creative and vibrant response. She said that only a transformed action-oriented spirituality can respond to the hopes and struggles of the suffering world [5].

The Chinese teacher, editor, politician and philosopher Confucius was the founder of the school of thought known as Confucianism. He is one of those mystics who devoted his whole life teaching others how to bring order into their lives, their families and their realm through spirituality. His insight has been delineated as a social order in close association and attachment with a universal order. He is confident that humankind could bring order into their lives by tapping into heaven's divine order and exuding its love and wisdom through culture and music [6].

St. Augustine of Hippo was one of the greatest theologians of Western Christianity. His characteristics of mysticism, which is generally defined as being under the possession of a most penetrating intellectual vision into things divine, and a love of God that was a consuming passion merits consideration. In his spiritual tradition, all good things come back to love, which is the very center of the Christian way of life. The heart, which artists have often represented Augustine holding, is a key to this spiritual tradition. For him, it is an exemplification for all that is profound, heartfelt and personal in every person [7].

St. Anselm of Canterbury was a Benedictine monk with a deep spiritual life, an exceptional mentor of the youth, a theologian with a remarkable ability for reflection, a leader with a keen mental discernment and good judgment and an uncompromising defender of Church's freedom. He stands out as one of the prominent figures of the Middle Ages who were able to harmonize all these potentials due to his profound mystical experience that constantly guided his thoughts and his actions [8].

William Blake is by far the greatest and most profound mystic of the world who has spoken in English. He lived in a world of splendor, of spirit and of vision, which, according to him, was the only tangible world. He saw God looking in at the window when he was four years old. From that time until death comes close to him, he welcomed it by singing songs of joy and lived in an atmosphere of divine enlightenment [9].

Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali poet, painter and novelist renowned for being the first non-European to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 [10]. He is one of the most influential mystic poets and teachers of the last century. Deeply spiritual and profoundly sensitive, his philosophical and mystical thoughts transcend all borders of culture, language, and nationality. In his writings, he takes people on a spiritual journey and gives them a glimpse of the immeasurable in the core of the finite, unity at the midst of all diversity, and the Divine in all things and beings of the universe [11].

One of the strong appeals of Confucius, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, William Blake, and Rabindranath Tagore is that they underscore spirituality. They registered in strength of conviction that life does have a meaning and they shed light on the value and sense of life through spiritual awakening in a remarkable way. They had a particularly profound way of looking at their relationship with God and the world. With the sure hand of a master teacher, they entangled life's misperceptions and led men into the path of faith and reason. It is not always, they readily admitted, an easy journey to tread; but they are certain that it is the right one.

The wisdom embodied in the selected works of these literary philosopher-mystics is one of the motivating factors that could help the Filipino people redefine their lives and values when they become cognizant of these mystics' genuine spiritual dimension. Their writings could identify spiritual

habits that define the Filipino attitude towards specific actions in particular and towards life in general. They may rightly be considered as qualifiers of human acts, which influence their deep motivations. They are intertwined in the basic elements of the social development of a Filipino as a person existing in a community of persons and lend support to the efforts of societal transformation.

With this wisdom in mind, the researcher was deeply motivated to analyze how mysticism and the virtues of love, truth, peace and death in the selected works were extolled by these mystics and how these inputs may be used in understanding spirituality as a transformative agent of society.

The germaneness of this literary analysis is highlighted in terms of its significance to a number of individuals. For the academic managers, this will serve as a frame of reference in conceptualizing and implementing their developmental priorities, programs, projects and policies to ensure that spirituality can access the academe. This study will also be beneficial for the working professionals in the sense that the selected works may present how the literary philosophers help shape their understanding of mysticism as a philosophy of life. This paper may likewise motivate the media practitioners to introduce an intervention strategy which incorporates instructive messages on spirituality into literature, music or other forms of media to change the attitudes, behavior, and norms of the audience. Moreover, this will provide the College instructors of literature with opportunities to focus on the concepts of spirituality in their literature classes and open their students' minds and hearts to its varied teachings which may serve as inputs in understanding it as a transformative agent of society. This paper will also give the students of literature an extensive and profound vantage point in life through the lives and experiences of the authors and the characters in the selections. In addition, this paper will stimulate their appreciation of prose and poetry and inspire them to engage in literary analysis as an academic activity. Likewise, this study may benefit the researcher through the knowledge learned from the analysis and treatment of materials, and through the careful investigation of both theme and form in literary genres. Finally, this paper may be used as a frame of reference of future researchers to conduct more studies on integrating spirituality into the people's worldview.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This qualitative study aimed to analyze the selected works of the Christian mystics St. Augustine, St. Anselm, and William Blake as well as the Oriental mystics Confucius, and Rabindranath Tagore pointing out events and situations on how mysticism is reflected in their works. Likewise, this study tried to present how these identified literary philosophers extolled the meaning of love, truth, peace and death in the selected works which serve as inputs in understanding spirituality as a transformative agent of the Filipino society.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study employed the qualitative method of research in analyzing the selected literary philosophers' concept of mysticism in the representative literary works chosen. Philosophical and moral approaches were used as the bases for analysis. Content analysis, which is a systematic technique in analyzing message content and message handling [12], was also utilized.

The essential features in the treatment of materials were considered in the conduct of this study. To adopt a more systematic identification of the selected works, the seven criteria cited by Stott (2014) [13] were adhered to. These are the standards as regards what a piece of literature should abide to in order to be considered literary. The said standards include intellectual value, spiritual value, universal appeal, permanence, suggestiveness, artistry and style.

With reference to intellectual value, the worth connected to the stimulating influence of great literature was considered. The selections can help the readers understand their lives and realize truths about humanity and life in general. They likewise stimulate the readers mentally and enrich their thoughts particularly on spirituality. In relation to spiritual value, the quality of great literature which elevates the spirit was taken into consideration during the selection process. The chosen representative literary works are thought to have an underlying moral message that can potentially make the readers better people. These moral values are often written between the lines and can help the readers become better persons. As regards universal appeal, the thought that great literature appeals to all people regardless of race, creed, nationality or beliefs was taken into consideration. The said literary pieces appeal to a range of people across different age groups, nationalities, cultures and

beliefs. In connection with permanence, the quality that great literature endures was also considered. The selected prose's and poems' appeal is lasting and they can be read several times as each reading gives fresh delight and new insights and open new worlds of meaning and experience. With regard to suggestiveness, the value associated with the emotional power of great literature was noted. The selected literary pieces can carry many associations that lead beyond the surface meaning. The reader is left to establish what the author is suggesting and this captures the readers' imagination by making them think about what they are reading and engaging them into the story or poem. Relative to artistry, the quality which appeals to the readers' sense of beauty was likewise noted in the choice of representative works. The chosen works are well-written and they appeal to the readers' creative sides with beautifully crafted phrases and sentences. Finally, with reference to style, the peculiar way in which the author sees life, forms his ideas and how he expresses them were considered too. The selected literary pieces are marked with the writers' view of the world and can put thoughts to the readers in a way they have never considered.

Applying these standards, the following literary works were analyzed: Confucius' *Analects*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, St. Anselm's *Proslogion*, letters and prayers, William Blake's *Jerusalem*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, *Songs of Innocence*, *The Tyger*, and *The Four Zoas*, and Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali*. These works constituted the primary resource materials of the study.

The text analyses centers on pattern seeking and the extraction of meaning from these writers' works. This study was supported by the researcher's analysis and insights with reference to the content of the selected texts to bring about the philosophical and moral treatment of the identified works.

Much effort is focused on the task of recording texts or making notes through concepts and categories; altering or creating subtle categories; linking and combining abstract concepts; extracting the essence; organizing meaning; writing an understanding; and drawing conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**1. Mysticism Reflected in the Works of the Identified Literary Philosophers.** It is noteworthy to mention that mystics are found in all parts of the

world, in all ages, and practically in all systems, be it philosophy, religion and social interactions. Mysticism has expressed itself in comparable and even in identical forms whenever awareness and spiritual and human values are at risk and tried. Mysticism is a philosophical system that considers as the end of philosophy the direct union of the human soul and the Divine [14]. Contemplation and meditation, prayer and love provided the actual process and the vehicle for realizing its end.

The literary philosophers who include the Christian mystics St. Augustine, St. Anselm, and William Blake as well as the Oriental mystics Confucius, and Rabindranath Tagore emphasized love as the necessary prerequisite and ultimate channel in the mystic journey towards the final union with God.

It can be gleaned from the *Analects* Confucius' concept of mysticism, which is centered on love or *Jen*- the very active center of life. Confucius made *Jen* the central point of his mystic philosophy. As a moralist and social reformer, he did not think of God in the same manner as the other mystics and metaphysicians do. His idea of God, though not specifically named so, is evident in all his writings, particularly in his ideas of *Jen*, on the universal moral order or the Supreme Law of the universe. His perception of *Jen* is so alive and overflowing as the mainspring of all virtues; occupying the very center, the cause behind all order and harmony, and the end of all things. He believed that it is in loving and living the *Jen* that people stay attuned and united with the universal harmony of all things.

St. Augustine made the love of God his central principle of morality. The consequent drawing together of the parts of the *City of God* bear directly on his major theme - the origin, development, and destiny of two cities or two kinds of love which served to heighten the impact of his mysticism. The two cities described by St. Augustine are mystical and very supernatural in every essence. One is called the city of men where people live according to the spirit. It is referred to as the city of love, of truth, of good, of peace and of order. It is certainly a model of an authentic society. The other, since it is defined as the denial of the first, is identified as the city of men where people live best according to the flesh. The latter is known as the city of error, of disorder and confusion. These two groups form in their own ways, a dual society, since they are, as St. Augustine

portrayed as an association of rational beings united by unanimous agreement upon the things they love.

It is in St. Anselm's *Proslogion* that readers discover Anselm the monk, the Christian philosopher and the man of prayer at his best. The *Proslogion* is introspective, but that introspection is turned toward God who is the ultimate goal of spiritual life. For Anselm, the truest source of joy is faith in God. Faith begets joy, because it is the surest way to reach God who is love. He was very eager to tell men, reasons on why seeking to deepen one's faith and understanding can bring an added measure of joy.

William Blake's work entitled *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* revealed the profoundness of his understanding of both mysticism and psychology. He stressed that infinity is in love with the relative production of time. One of his foremost thoughts was on the duality of creation, the contraries, and how each was essential for creativity and spiritual progress. In this humorous satire on religion, he recognized that the triangulation of opposites lead to an understanding on a higher plane. This spiritual union of energy and reason creates a higher order born from tension of the contraries, leading man back *Home* from where he came. Blake's mysticism reversed the mystical pattern, for he considered man as the end of his search [15].

Tagore's Nobel Prize-winning *Gitanjali* synthesized clearly his mystical attitude. He believed that both humans and the divine were engaged in a creative process - a process that gives birth to love or goodness in the world. What made this poem so remarkable is that he did not believe that goodness was found, or that goodness was an attribute only of a Creator. Rather that goodness was possible only when humanity labored with divinity. In the *Gitanjali*, Tagore spoke to men as an ethical culturist. He emphasized that the surest job to be done to make goodness possible was to ensure that a diverse and equitable culture continued to exist in this world.

## **2. The Themes of Love, Truth, Peace and Death as Extolled by the Selected Literary Philosophers.**

The Theme of Love as Extolled by the Selected Literary Philosophers. Confucius' *Analects*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, the letters of St. Anselm, William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* all presented life as a dialectic movement towards Love who is God.

For Confucius, the idea of love, though not specifically mentioned by that label, is evident in the *Analects*, particularly in his ideas of the *Jen*, which is considered the universal moral order, the Supreme Law of the Universe, and the beginning and the end of all things. By practicing, living, or identifying with the *Jen* as advocated by Confucius as universal peace, harmony, and the brotherhood of all men can thus one achieve and attain full union with God. Hence, readers can see how and why the ethics of Confucius is inextricably bound up with mysticism.

St. Augustine's *City of Love* made the love of God the central principle of morality. In this book, his societies were divided according to the particles and elements of love. When he speaks of a "City" it is relayed in a figurative sense, as he himself states, a mystical level that he practices. He concluded that the human race can be divided between those who love God, on the one hand, against those who love themselves and the world.

Besides zeroing in on arts, St. Anselm in his letters showed bias in his personal as well as his analytic, meditative approach to life. His sensitive temperament, as well as his deep empathy for the well-being of those to whom he writes was St. Anselm's advocacy. He, in one of his letters referred to the Holy Spirit as the source of all the mystery of human love. Love, to him takes on the character of a divine gift, which can never be tangible, but can only be accepted with joy.

William Blake's spiritual manifestation of human existence with reference to love is synonymous with human virtue and this virtue certainly is God. Therefore, everyone who says a prayer in any human form and adores a divine image adores God. In the *Songs of Innocence* God and Jesus, to Blake, by all terms is humanity per se.

Rabindranath Tagore's mystical attitude towards love is an impersonal type of relationship with the Divine. In the *Gitanjali*, he illustrated by example how the individuality of the one who love is absorbed or lost by uniting with the universe.

To sum up, all these literary philosophers agree that love who is God and the Great Creator is the goal and ultimate end of human existence.

The Theme of Truth as Extolled by the Selected Literary Philosophers. Confucius' *Analects*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, the letters and prayers of St. Anselm, William Blake's *Jerusalem* and Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* catalogued and

collated all the mystics' ardent desire to unravel the secrets of life. They also proved man's incessant quest for the truth that brings a genuine bond of intersubjectivity.

Relative to this truth, Confucius stressed that both the *Jen* or the love or human-heartedness and *Li* or propriety should operate in a scheme of five relationships namely: between father and son, between ruler and subject, between elder brother and younger brother, between elder friend and younger friend, and between husband and wife[16]. In the *Analects*, he examined his emphasis on the moral ascendancy of man despite their differences, conflicting claims and interests. The production of the perfect man in a perfect social order envisioned by Confucius comes about only with the establishment of a genuine bond of intersubjectivity.

The anti-racism of St. Augustine in his *City of God* embraces all men of whatsoever and varied state. There was no doubt in St. Augustine's mind that God himself had created the human race in this way so that men might understand how qualified unity could there be even despite diversity of faith in God. For him, men are naturally brothers and in Adam even before being supernaturally brothers in Christ.

A background about the meaning of friendship prepared readers as they sought to understand the meaning of a genuine bond of intersubjectivity as true as that of St. Anselm's. Though he wrote no treatise on friendship, readers can glean from his writings - most especially from his letters and prayers - the idea of what friendship meant to him. He related its significance to Christian life. For him, the ultimate goal of friendship grows and flourishes to a degree that each friend practices their purity of heart. One attaches himself to God first and then to others. Only then does one realize how he or she is in God.

Blake's spiritual manifestation of human existence extols on truth that brings a genuine bond of intersubjectivity which is synonymous to Jesus. Here is humanity so united by love. Jesus is always acknowledged as humanity's shepherd. The Divine Similitude appears in their roles and tears as always. Blake's word for brothers, sisters, and friends in *Jerusalem* are often referred to in reality as Jesus and family at its final stage.

Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* expressed his concept of intersubjectivity through man as a relational being. Man is a relational being by nature of his existence. He believes that true love of self

does not exclude love for others. It always shares its goodness to another.

The basic concept to truth with reference to the said spiritual manifestation is enunciated in the works of the aforementioned mystics. After learning to love God, learning to love others is the second purpose of man's being. They do acknowledge the principle of brotherhood and love as the solution for establishing a genuine bond of intersubjectivity.

The Theme of Peace as Extolled by the Selected Literary Philosophers. Confucius' *Analects*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, St. Anselm's *Proslogion*, William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* all presented in a mystical context at a supernatural level their concepts on true and lasting peace.

Confucius' concept of peace was shown by his philosophical principle of *Wen* or the art of peace in the *Analects*. *Wen* stands for the totality of what is dubbed as culture or the finer things in life like history, music, philosophy, poetry and the humanities and the arts in general. That to him nurtures the aesthetic sense, which enlivens leisure and ennobles the human spirit.

One of the finest attributes of St. Augustine's *City of God* is peace. He defined peace as the perfectly ordered and harmonious communion of those who find their joy in God and with one another in God [17].

In St. Anselm's *Proslogion*, peace is synonymous with inner disposition of people which brings them to prayer and hope. For Anselm, anyone who is serious about growing spiritually can easily be identified with his call to prayer with their hearts quiet, relaxed and reflective. Inner silence or peace is most essential to men and they must strive to empty their minds of negativities and to still their hearts in solemn silence and nearness to God.

The center of Blake's concept of peace and universal brotherhood is Jesus. In *Songs of Innocence*, Blake says that the people's prayer for peace is actually a prayer to God.

For Rabindranath Tagore, the key to peace is trust. In the *Gitanjali*, people find peace in God because they have absolute trust in Him, in His love and His justice. Likewise, true peace is a gift of God that will come to men when they prove themselves worthy of it, according to Tagore.

When these mystics extolled on profound changes in all aspects of life to bring about true and lasting

peace, they certainly meant changes not only in the outward structure of society but also more importantly in the deeper transformation of the inner nature of man. It is in the latter that true and lasting peace is based and established.

The Theme of Death as Extolled by the Selected Mystics. Confucius's *Analects*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, St. Anselm's letters, William Blake's *The Four Zoas* and Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* all manifested their concept of death in the mystical sense.

Confucius in the *Analects* defended the fact that the physical appearance of man upon his earth is not everlasting. He conceived death as the culminative stage or perfection in human existence. He preferred to call death as the Decree of Heaven or the Will of Heaven so man should accept it with calmness and resignation.

Death for St. Augustine in his *City of God*, comes to the soul when God abandons it, just as death comes to the body when the soul is born and departs from the body [18]. He also cited that death is good for no one, but many become meritorious if suffered to retain or to gain some good.

St. Anselm in his letters disclosed that death is fleeting and transient in character on mortal existence and he called on men to grow in virtue. He warned that time relentlessly moves on towards the end that will bring them eternal rest and a glorious crown in the company of the heavenly saints.

William Blake's *The Four Zoas* conceived death as the very last predicament of man. He further looked at it as the deliverance of the spirit from the body - matter. Death gives freedom to the spirit as it seeks God.

On the other hand, Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* registered his belief that death is life's final boundary, thus, inevitable. It is the end of the historicity of man. He concluded that God created man with the end view of eternal life with Him.

Mysticism, is indeed, as universal as humanity. It is found in all times, in all places, in all religions of the world as represented by the selected mystics.

It is worth mentioning that if there is anything where in all these mystics agree, despite their differences, it is that they long for their own well-being and happiness which they know cannot be fully satisfied in this life which is fleeting. The good on earth are but temporary, limited and imperfect.

The gist of the foregoing spiritual manifestations of human existence with reference to love, truth, peace and death extolled by the selected mystics all geared towards their yearning for the infinite; imperfect men seeking perfection. All are in search for perfect being; so that in their human thinking the thoughts are divine in their contemplation of the eternal truths. Their hearts crave for truth and perfect peace, enduring happiness despite their transitory lives all pointing to and destined to life beyond.

### **3. Understanding Spirituality as a Transformative Agent of Society.**

From the analysis of the selected writings of Confucius, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, William Blake, and Rabindranath Tagore, inputs on spirituality specifically on mysticism, love, truth, peace and death were identified that may guide the Filipinos in understanding spirituality as a transformative agent of society.

At present, people experience a societal transformation which is not shaped by a distinct ideology, but by cultural, economic, ethical, social, and technological aspects. Fortunately, they possess a promising opportunity to create a new awareness and attitude towards the society and the world in general. While present-day society is confused about ethics and morals and in educational and social disorder, it is vital for the people to respond to this unique opportunity for a societal transformation and find the required wisdom to respond to it. Such upsurge of wisdom, which may prompt the will to action, can only be realized through the inner growth of each person. The appeal to innate wisdom relative to the global spiritual legacy and to the growth within each individual in relationship with others can be understood as a significant call of the time to delve into the influences of spirituality in contemporary society [19]. But before people do so, it is noteworthy to give some preliminary thoughts on these through the concepts on mysticism cited by the selected mystics. This is an opportune time for the Filipinos to reflect on spirituality and set it within the context of the present place and time.

Nowadays, the inflow and acceptance of electronic media applications has allowed educators and media practitioners the chance to incorporate the values of spirituality specifically love, truth, peace and inspirational death in the curriculum and in their online information-sharing formats including social

networking sites (SNSs) like Facebook, Google+, Instagram, Tumbler, and LinkedIn; motivational messages' sites like Spiritual Awakenings' ॐ Page, Words of Wisdom by Daisaku Ikeda, Lessons Learned In Life's Page, Robin Sharma's Page, and Simple Truths; creativity works-sharing sites such as YouTube, Deviant ART, Animoto, and Flickr; collaborative websites like Wikipedia; and microblogging sites like Twitter. This incorporation of values could be a starting point to position the people particularly the youth as society's forerunners in understanding spirituality, which is geared towards societal change.

The role of spirituality as gleaned from the selections has deep implications to the Filipino society. Thus, a properly understood and practiced spirituality can provide direction and signification towards a transformed society. The Filipinos must realize this with exceptional lucidity the intricacy of both mindfulness and the society, which are caught up in hastened dynamic forces of change. Considering the writers' thoughts, they may start searching for a transformational spirituality wherein their personal, societal and world-wide progress are not viewed as apart, but as closely interconnected. Close consideration must be made to this approach to meet the needs of the contemporary Filipinos. While others tend to focus on the subjective, individualistic attitude to inner growth and self-transformation, they must not forget to underscore a skillful grasp of the vibrant interrelations between the spiritual enhancement of a person, of groups and of the global community. Spirituality must permeate the Filipino people's personal and societal dimensions and must animate their thoughts and actions in order for them to transform their society.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION**

The selected writings of Confucius, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, William Blake and Rabindranath Tagore consider the direct union of the human soul with the Divine through contemplation, meditation, prayer and love as the end of their philosophy. For in these prose and poetry manifest their mystical attitude and the spiritual truth that the meaning of human existence is the mindful and enlightened manifestation love as the core of human life and the divine supreme law that guides humanity. The spiritual manifestations of human existence with reference to love, truth, peace, and death extolled by the literary philosopher-mystics

find their noblest expressions and exemplifications on their lives and writings. There surfaces a unifying thread interwoven in all their works which centers on the constant and balanced yearning of men to be united with the Divine. The inputs on spirituality gleaned from the selected writings provide a new paradigm for a transformed Filipino society. From the foregoing findings and conclusions, the study offers the following recommendations: That literature teachers may work in partnership with teachers of philosophy and humanities in presenting spirituality and the meaning of human existence using their own instructional approaches and materials for wider dissemination and readership; that the Filipino youth and media practitioners may use motivational strategies that incorporate educational messages on love, truth, peace and inspirational death in their online information-sharing formats to change the readers' and the audiences' attitudes, behaviors and norms and to enhance an emerging interest in sharing their encouraging achievements and value-laden experiences; that researchers writing literary studies on selections in English written by Asian authors prepare sample matrices of constructs that may serve as guideposts for worthy discussion, analyses, interpretations and appreciation by their students; and finally, that other studies on works written by other writers in the veins of the recent research be conducted by future researchers for academic enhancement to have a cross dissection of views of life.

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