



Teachers of Wisdom

by

Igor Kononenko and Irena Roglič Kononenko

RoseDog Books, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, 2010

[\(Read the review by CLARION FOREWORD REVIEWS here\)](#)

[\(Read the review by KIRKUS REVIEWS here\)](#)

[\(For book in Slovene click here\)](#)

414 Pages, Size 9X6 Inches, 81 pictures

You can order the book [here from Rosedog](#) and [here from Amazon](#).

Here you can download [poster containing pictures of all Teachers of Wisdom \(MSWord file\)](#)

Below you can find:

- About book (opinions by some relevant people)
- Text from the back cover
- Contents of the book
- Preface
- About the authors

About book: Teachers of Wisdom

The book appeared in the Slovenian language in 2007, and the readers of four Slovenian journals awarded it the title:

“THE SUNNY BOOK OF THE YEAR 2007”

*“If in a book there is one sentence which calls out to me, just one single sentence which I note down, think over and quote, then that book was well worth reading. In **Teachers of Wisdom** there are hundreds of such sentences. This is why one must constantly sift through the book. Taking only one teacher at a time, so that*

the heart opens out and upon it will settle wisdom that is older than the oldest book, higher than the highest mountain, and deeper than the deepest well. For it conveys the message of One, the Greatest, the Absolute. The message of heartfelt peace from the Source. Balsam for the soul and material for spiritual growth. For deep gratitude. And for the unconditional faith that people in modern times need like air, without which the lungs die and the heart ceases to beat. The heart of the world and the lungs of every individual. Thanks to God for the precious gift. Thanks to Igor and Irena for their care, for having placed this gift of Light into our embrace.”

--- Prof. Dr. Manca Košir

“This book is a unique approach to spreading wisdom. Its main contribution are citations of the most important sages from known human history. It has the potential to become one of the most influential spiritual books of the 21st century.”

--- Prof. Viktor Gerkman

*“The book **Teachers of Wisdom** accompanied Dr. Janez Drnovšek (1950-2008), the former president of the Republic of Slovenia, during the last days of his life (he died of cancer). The book inspired him and helped him in his hard times. When he was not able to read anymore by himself, the people who took care of him read it to him.”*

--- Prof. Dr. Stane Pejovnik

“This is a book to be read slowly, not ‘swallowed down’ too fast. It is like a fine meal enjoyed in the company of close friends.”

--- Alan McConnell-Duff, M.Sc, writer and translator

*“**Teachers of Wisdom** is a unique spiritual book. Ensembling voices of more than 70 enlightened sages, spiritual teachers, and masters, speaking across the gap of millennia, different countries and traditions into a single chorus to give the reader the feeling of their universal and everlasting validity. Yet the unique character of each message is not lost in the polyphony as there is no interpretation, and the reader is free to read the original words and adapt them to his/her own spiritual level.”*

--- Prof. Dr. Marko Robnik Šikonja

“The authors are a heartily dedicated pair, mastering large fields of science and spiritual arts. Their comprehensive collection of short biographies and most noteworthy citations of the most wise teachers really is a unique, hard-to-do treasure of essential knowledge. A very helpful and inspiring overview!”

--- Dr. Mitja Peruš, physicist

“What is wisdom? Is it a rare quality that only a few ‘chosen ones’ possess and is unattainable to others? Or is it a cognitive quality that is accessible to everyone? Thoughts and experiences of various individuals across the globe, carefully collected and presented in this book, demonstrate that wisdom is

universal and that it stems from the path towards awakesness, towards higher and higher realization of the inner Self.”

--- Dr. Rober Leskovar, computer scientist

“A beautiful inspiration to find the best in yourself and in the world. A book written with love.”

--- Andrej Trampuž, MSc, psychologist

TEXT FROM THE BACK COVER:

Teachers (the Sages, Self-realized, Freed, Awakened, Perfected, Enlightened) were appearing and are still appearing in all the ages on all the continents, most often when we need them the most. The collection in this book describes 79 personalities for whom there exist historical documents about their lives, works and teachings. All sages claim that the Truth is indescribable; therefore we should read, study and meditate about their teachings not only with our mind but also at the same time intuitively feel them with our hearts. As the sages are consistent regardless of the time, location, culture or tradition, it is obvious that they all declare the same Truth, although each of them uses his or her own terminology and style for describing the indescribable Truth. ‘Written wisdom’ is, of course, a relative term, as the true Wisdom is in principle indescribable. Its numerous descriptions, collected in this book, show the innumerable ways in which Wisdom can be expressed, and the innumerable paths through which we can attain It.

Contents

Preface..... 5

Introduction: Teachers of wisdom from all traditions are telling us the same message..... 9

A Wish.....21

1 **Legendary and Antique Near and Far East**

- Sri Rama (? 45th century BC), legendary Indian enlightened master, king and sage.....23
- Sri Krishna (? 32nd century BC), legendary Indian enlightened master, prince and sage..... 27
- Hermes Trismegistos (? 3rd millennium BC), legendary master and spiritual teacher..... 32

- Zarathustra (Zoroaster) (? 2nd millennium BC), legendary Persian enlightened master and spiritual teacher, founder of the Zoroastrian religion..... 35
- Lord Mahavir (599?-527? BC), enlightened master and spiritual teacher, reformer of the Jain religion..... 40
- Lao Tsu (570?-490? BC), Chinese sage, philosopher, founder of Taoism..... 45
- Siddhartha Gautama Buddha (560?-480? BC), enlightened master and spiritual teacher.....48
- Zhuang Zi (369?-275? BC), Chinese sage, philosopher, writer on the wisdom of Taoism..... 53

2 Greek and Roman Antique

- Pythagoras (cca. 569-475 BC), Greek philosopher, mathematician, sage and spiritual teacher..... 57
- Heraclitus (cca. 535-475 BC), Greek philosopher and sage..... 62
- Socrates (470?-399? BC), Greek philosopher and sage..... 65
- Jesus Christ (6?BC - 29?AD), enlightened master and spiritual teacher69
- Seneca (3?BC - 65AD), Roman philosopher and dramatist.....74
- Apollonius of Tyana (2?-98?), Greek philosopher and sage, spiritual teacher..... 78
- Plotinus (cca. 205-270), Greek philosopher, sage and spiritual teacher, founder of Neoplatonism..... 81

3 European Middle Ages

- St. Francis of Assisi (1182?-1226), blessed, master of humility, founder of the Franciscan order..... 86
- Mechthild of Magdeburg (1209?-1282?), Christian mystic, Beguine.91
- Meister Eckhart (1260-1327?), Christian theologian, philosopher and mystic..... 94
- Marguerite Porete (Porret, Poiret; Marguerite of Hainaut) (1255?-1310), mystic, sage, spiritual teacher..... 98
- Nicholas of Cusa (1400?-1464), Christian philosopher, diplomat, mathematician and metaphysicist.....103
- Paracelsus (Theoprast Bombast von Hohenheim) (1493-1541), physician, alchemist, mystic, laic theologian and philosopher..... 109
- St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), Christian nun, saint, mystic, reformer of the Carmelite order.....112
- St. John of the Cross (1542-1591), mystical theologian, saint, founder of the Discalced Carmelites.....118

4 Sufism

- Omar Khayyam (cca. 1048-1131), Persian mathematician, astronomer, poet and teacher of Sufism.....123
- El-Ghazali (1058-1128?), Islamic philosopher, theologian and Sufi..... 126

- Attar of Nishapur (1142?-1220?), Persian Sufi-poet, teacher of Sufism.....129
- Rumi (Jalal ad-Din) (1207-1273), Persian poet and Sufi, founder of the Whirling dervishes.....132
- Hafiz (Hafez) (1325?-1389?), Persian poet and Sufi.....135
- Jami (Nur ad-Din Abd ar-Rahman) (1414-1492), Persian Sufi-poet, and mystic.....138

5 India and Far East

- Bodhidharma (470?-539?), enlightened master and spiritual teacher.....141
- Kanachi Sosan (510?-606?), enlightened master and spiritual teacher, 3rd Zen Patriarch in China.....144
- Sri Adi Shankara (788?- 820?), enlightened master and spiritual teacher, philosopher, poet, religious reformer..... 147
- Huang Po (1st half of 9th century), master of Zen and spiritual teacher..... 153
- Rinzai (?-866), enlightened master of Zen, spiritual teacher..... 158
- Naropa (1016-1100), enlightened master, spiritual teacher..... 163
- Jetsun Milarepa (1052-1135), Tibetan yogi, poet, magician, enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 167
- Dogen Zenji (1200-1253), Japanese master of Zen and spiritual teacher, poet, founder of Soto-Zen..... 172
- Kabir (1440?-1518?), mystical poet, Indian saint, enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 177
- Guru Nanak (1469-1539), enlightened master and spiritual teacher, founder of the Sikh religion..... 182
- Mira Bai (1498-1547), Indian saint, sage, mystical poet..... 188

6 19th century

- Lahiri Mahasaya (1828-1895), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 191
- Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), parapsychological medium and founder of the Theosophical society..... 194
- Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1833-1886), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 199
- Sri Sai Baba of Shirdi (1840?-1918), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 205
- Sri Yukteswar (1855-1936), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 210
- Ohiyesa, Charles Alexander Eastman (1858-1939), American Indian writer, physician, writer of Indian wisdom..... 216
- Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), Austrian philosopher and scientist, founder of the Anthroposophical movement..... 222
- Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), Indian philosopher, sage and spiritual teacher..... 228

7 First half of the 20th century

- Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Indian poet, philosopher..... 234
- Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), master of nonviolent fight for the truth and human rights..... 239
- Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 242
- Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), Swiss psychiatrist, psychologist and philosopher..... 248
- George Ivanovich Gurdjieff (1877?-1949), Greek-Armenian philosopher, spiritual teacher and mystic..... 251
- Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 258
- Edward Bach (1886-1936), English physician, founder of the (Bach) flower essences, sage..... 261
- Mikhail Naimy (1889-1988), Lebanese spiritual writer, poet, philosopher..... 267
- don Juan Matus (1891?-1973?), American Indian shaman, seer and sage, spiritual teacher..... 273
- Paramhansa Yogananda (1893-1952), master of Yoga and spiritual teacher..... 279
- Meher Baba (1894-1969), enlightened master and spiritual teacher.285

8 Second half of the 20th century

- Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895-1986), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 290
- Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj (1897-1981), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 293
- Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov (1900-1986), Bulgarian philosopher, mystic and spiritual teacher..... 299
- Martin Kojc (1901-1978), Slovenian parapsychologist, philosopher and columnist, teacher of wisdom..... 304
- Shogaku Shunryu Suzuki (1904-1971), Japanese Zen master, founder of the Soto-Zen community in USA.....311
- Peace Pilgrim (1908-1981), enlightened master, pilgrim and sage...316
- Mother Teresa (1910-1977), Albanian Christian nun, blessed, personified love, founder of Missionaries of charity..... 322
- Alan Watts (1915-1973), theologian, mystical philosopher and spiritual teacher..... 327
- Idries Shah (1924-1996), Sufi writer and teacher.....330
- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1926-2004), physician, psychiatrist, tanatologist, master of compassion..... 336
- Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968), master of nonviolent fighting for the human rights of Blacks..... 341
- Anthony de Mello (1931-1987), Indian Jesuit, mystic and spiritual writer..... 344
- Osho (Bhagavan Sri Rajneesh) (1931-1990), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... 349

9 21st century

| | |
|--|------------|
| - Bhagavan Sathya Sai Baba (born 1926), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... | 355 |
| - Sri Chinmoy (1931-2007), enlightened master and spiritual teacher, poet, writer, musician, painter, athlete..... | 358 |
| - 14th Dalai Lama (Tenin Gyatso) (born 1935), spiritual leader of Tibetan people, sage..... | 364 |
| - Eckhart Tolle (born 1948?), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... | 369 |
| - Sri Sri Ravi Shankar (born 1956), enlightened master and spiritual teacher, founder of the Art of Living foundation..... | 374 |
| - Malidoma Patrice Somé (born 1956), African shaman, writer and spiritual teacher..... | 380 |
| - Mother Meera (born 1960), enlightened master and spiritual teacher..... | 385 |
| Literature and recommended reading..... | 391 |
| Viktor Gerkman: On Awakening and On Enlightened People.... | 397 |
| Appendix: Objective science and subjective spirituality are complementary..... | 403 |
| - Albert Einstein (1879–1955), German physicist, the author of the relativity theory, a synonym for genius..... | 412 |
| About the authors..... | 414 |

Preface

If we are able to accept the fact that we are spiritual beings and that we walk on the path of spiritual evolution, then it is obvious that we will once, after numerous mistakes, experiences and trials, completely express our spiritual nature. Such people are Self-realized, Awakened, Perfect, Fulfilled, Absolute, Enlightened, Saints, Wise, Sages, Chosen, Blissful, Saved, Free, Consecrated, people of Knowledge – Masters of love and wisdom because they completely express these two and other qualities of spiritual nature. They are beyond all attachments and illusions, freed of all wishes and desires, they have discarded all prejudices, all fears and recognized all the games of egocentric self, with the light of their understanding they have completely eliminated the fog of illusion. Masters recognized their connection with Creation, unity with the Divine in such a way that they no longer feel any separation. They have individuality, however, they live as a Whole, composed of an infinite variety of expressions. Sages (Teachers, Sufis, Gurus, Masters) were appearing and are still appearing in all the ages on all the continents, most often when we need them the most. They are all telling us one and the same, only the styles of preaching, languages and deepness of messages differ and are adapted to the culture and the spiritual maturity of the environment.

The collection in this book describes personalities for whom there exist historical documents about their lives, works and teachings. The only exception are four legendary masters from the first section for whom we do not have reliable historical documents, however, the oral tradition and legends about their lives and teachings has had and still has a significant impact on the sincere spiritual direction of millions of seekers. As spirituality is frequently abused by official religious circles, also many historical ‘facts’ are questionable and adopted to serve political purposes of diplomats and religious highest institutions. Also the teachings of great masters are modified and counterfeit and therefore mislead not only the believers but also the public opinion in general. Unfortunately, sages often had to avoid the attacks of the orthodox religious circles and their wisdom is not preserved through history. Also, unfortunately, we lack documents about wisdom of many African, American (Indian) and Australian (Aboriginal) sages. All sages claim that the Truth is indescribable; therefore we should read, study and meditate about their teachings not only with our mind but also at the same time intuitively feel them with our hearts. In their teachings there is no place for final rules and dogmas.

Besides notable enlightened masters we list also some unselfish advocates of the Truth – they felt It so deeply that they were not able to betray It, even at the price of their lives. They felt the inner necessity to speak of It although they all, without an exception, claim that It is indescribable, unexplainable and that everybody has to find It by him or herself alone, inside. The descriptions of teachers are unified, so that after a short biography and a description of teachings and works, there is a collection of citations, selected by our own judgment. The length of description and the number of citations are by no means intended to indicate the ‘measure of wisdom’ or significance of the teacher. It just reflects our limitations during writing. Sometimes, when we did not feel competent enough to judge, we took recourse to citing other authors (e.g. Kahlil Gibran in the description and citations of Jesus Christ).

In the introduction there are collected and briefly described the most important common points of all teachers of wisdom. As they are consistent regardless of the time, location, culture or tradition, it is obvious that they all declare the same Truth, although each of them uses his or hers own terminology and style for describing the indescribable Truth. At the end you can find the list of sources and the additional list of books about wisdom which we sincerely recommend. The appendix describes the relation between objective science, on which the “modern” materialistic civilization is based, and subjective spirituality, which is an urgent counterweight for the survival of humankind on this planet.

The selection of sages is necessarily subjective, as also is subjective the experience of their wisdom. The collection of sages is not and cannot ever be complete. We tried to select the most important sages, however, we have surely omitted many sages that may be most honored by the reader. At the end we were surprised that we had practically confirmed the statement by Prof. Viktor Gerkman, who said that at least half of the sages were donated to humanity by India (out of 79 teachers, described in this book, 29 teachers are from India). At Igor's web page you can download a 'poster' (MSWord file) containing the pictures of all the teachers of wisdom from this book.

Many friends have helped us in selecting the teachers of wisdom and we thank them wholeheartedly. However, for the final selection we followed our hearts, as, if you do not feel something, you cannot freely write about it. We are deeply grateful that we were able to meet four of the described sages. Our special thanks to *Viktor Gerkman*, *Robert Leskovar* and *Marko Robnik Šikonja* who helped us the most in selecting the teachers. At the beginning we received useful hints also from *Nikola Petrovič*, *Primož Škoberne* and *Vesna Periček Krapež*. *Stjepan Palajsa*, with his lectures, inspired us to search for and to describe the teachers.

The main acknowledgments are attributed to the Sages themselves for their gift to humanity. Many many thanks also to their – most often anonymous – disciples and other writers and translators who were unselfishly describing the life and teachings of sages with great self-sacrificing, sometimes even at the price of their own lives. It is their merit that the written Wisdom was preserved till nowadays. 'Written wisdom' is, of course, a relative term, as the true Wisdom is in principle indescribable. Its numerous descriptions, collected in this book, show the innumerable ways in which Wisdom can be expressed, and the innumerable paths through which we can attain It. Very often we were so enthusiastic about what we read that we literally transcribed or translated parts of the writings.

From our heart we want to thank to all our friends and directors of our spiritual path. We learned a lot on their workshops, lectures, seminars, meditations, therapies and friendly and spiritual discussions. Thank you *Barbara Novak*, *Viktor Gerkman*, *Minnie Hein*, *Slobodan Stanojević*, *Marko Robnik Šikonja*, *Andrej Trampuž*, *Meta Fonda*, *Igor Ziernfeld*, *Mechthild Scheffer*, *Phyllis Krystal*, *Marianne von Schwichow*, *Maria-Gabriele Wosien*, *John Kelly*, *Richard Manson*, *Matjaž Bevk*, *Milan Mladenović*, *Jan Kozamernik*, *Vili Poznik*, *Drago Vrhovnik*, *Željko Stepanović*, and many others who were enthusiastic about the first descriptions of teachers and who stimulated our writing. We thank the web journal *Pozitivke* and all the readers of *Pozitivke*, *Sončna pošta*, and *OM* mailing list, who also, with their commentaries and additional explanations, encouraged and stimulated our writing. Special thanks to *Prof. Dr. Manca Košir* for encouragement and to *Prof. Viktor Gerkman* for his essay '*On Awakening and On Enlightened People*' which concisely summarizes the essence of Teachers and of their teachings. Special thanks also to *Nina Kononenko* for the cover design. We are grateful to *Alan McConnell-Duff* for his careful proofreading and additional suggestions and for his translation of citations by *Martin Kojc* and of the essay by *Viktor Gerkman*. Thanks also to our children, *Nina* and *Veno*, who contributed with their love and patience to the 'family project'.

Igor and Irena

Ljubljana, Slovenia, May 2009

P.S.: The readers' comments are welcome.

e-mail: igorDOTkononenkoATfriDOTuni-ljDOTsi

About the authors

Igor Kononenko received his Ph.D. in 1990 in computer science from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is professor at the Faculty of Computer and Information Science in Ljubljana and the head of Laboratory for Cognitive Modeling. His research interests include artificial intelligence, machine learning, neural networks and cognitive modeling. He is the (co)author of 12 textbooks (two in English), 180 scientific papers and 70 popular papers. He was twice a chair of the program committee of International Cognitive Conference in Ljubljana, and in 2007 a chair of the international scientific conference 'Measuring Energy Fields', where scientists from various fields addressed also borderline phenomena, such as near-death experiences, complementary medicine and the memory of water. Besides artificial intelligence he is interested also in natural intelligence: self-healing, complementary medicine, meditation, spirituality, the relation between science and spirituality, and spiritual wisdom.

Irena Roglič Kononenko graduated in Slovene and German languages in 1982 and in psychology in 1993 from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She is a translator, teacher of Slovene and German languages, a psychologist, a therapist with Bach flower essences and a teacher of sacred circle dances. She has translated eleven books (from German to Slovene), and published by herself eight of them. She considers the psychological help, which is not separated from spirituality, an important part of physical and emotional health. Her main activity is in helping her clients to overcome marital, educational and psychosomatic problems. She accompanies the psychological advice with natal horoscopes and Bach flower essences. She received further education in a three year postgraduate study of psychological astrology, headed by Prof. Viktor Gerkman in Slovenia. She received her training in Bach flower therapy in Vienna, Austria, and for teaching the sacred circle dances at several seminars in Germany and Austria.
