

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERGROUP WORK FOR THE EXTERNALIZATION OF THE HIERARCHY

by Gordon Davidson

The Spectrum of Esoteric Groups

For the past 100 years, esoteric groups based on the Ageless Wisdom from various spiritual traditions all over the world have been formed based on the original inspiration of the founders, or on a revealed or transmitted text, or simply on the initiative of some individual who decided to leave an existing group and found a new one based on his/her ideas and new interpretations of the teaching and how the work should be done. Thus, the world esoteric work has seen a proliferation of a host of diverse groups with a wide variety of lineages, focused on many different levels of consciousness, with varying degrees of clarity, glamour and/or illusion, and, therefore, with varying degrees of usefulness to the work of the Spiritual Hierarchy and the redemption of humanity. Some of these groups may have become corrupted by power and wealth, and appear to have lost sight of their original vision or reason for being. Others may have exploited and misled sincere seekers, and consequently caused damage to the public perception of esoteric and occult work.

Many groups have made a concerted and valiant effort to avoid these pitfalls of the spiritual path and are selflessly serving the work of planetary redemption, freeing the “prisoners of the planet” (suffering humanity) and helping humanity understand and fulfill its role in the Divine Plan. They are found in every country, culture and tradition of the world, and can be recognized by their universal, non-dogmatic approach, their love of humanity and their willingness to serve the enlightenment and redemption of humanity at any personal cost, and often in very innovative ways. They may simply be a small group of three or more, quietly meditating and working in their community, or very large national or international groups that encourage exploring and developing the inner life, an appreciation for the deeper principles that govern our world and lives, with a commitment to inspiring others to make a contribution to the upliftment of humanity, based on an experienced Oneness of Spirit within their group, and with those they serve.

Seeing Other Groups Clearly

However, even with the most enlightened and selfless groups, there is an inevitable tendency, due to the crystallizing effects of form life on consciousness, to become insular, and to stay within the ring-pass-not of their own work. This can happen gradually, due to the separative tendencies of the lower mind, so prevalent in this fifth subrace of the fifth root race, as groups begin to regard the work of other groups through a lens of separation, and see the work of other groups as somehow not quite right, glamoured, or otherwise flawed. Of course, given the history of the distortions and even perversions of the teaching that have occurred down through the ages, a degree of caution is justified in relating to other groups. Yet groups who are deeply aligned with Shamballa and guided by the plan of the Spiritual Hierarchy will recognize those of a similar resonance, even at different octaves of focus and service. What are the signs of an esoteric group that is working with the Hierarchy in ways that are consistent with the teachings of the Masters?

- Universal recognition of the Divine principle in humanity and all of life
- Understanding of the process of evolution through reincarnation and karma
- Dedication to purpose and principles, not personalities
- Members of the group are encouraged to follow their own inner soul direction
- Free will is viewed as a sacred principle and coercion and manipulation are absent
- Meditation, study and service in some form are keynotes
- Decentralization, inclusiveness, group focus and dedication to selfless and sacrificial service are emphasized
- A demonstrated love of humanity and the Plan is present

Using these guidelines and our intuitive recognition of the inner vibration of a group, it is possible and practical to determine which esoteric groups are working in some useful way in support of the Plan and the Hierarchy.

Why Intergroup Work?

We might then ask, why is it important to relate to other groups? Why not just let each group go on doing its self-chosen work, knowing that each one is part of the One Work, and all subjectively linked? The Tibetan teacher who worked with Alice Bailey stated that groups serving other groups and working together would be a major characteristic of the Aquarian age. Intergroup work is important because: 1) the externalization of the Hierarchy is changing the requirements for discipleship groups; 2) the influence of the 7th Ray and the Avatar of Synthesis is conditioning all spiritual work and stimulating changes; 3) there is a need for esoteric groups to reflect the patterns of the inner Ashrams in the world; and 4) the current degree of crisis/opportunity in humanity and its world today demands new approaches.

The Impact of the Externalization

As the Tibetan often reiterates, although the fundamental principles and touchstones of the Path remain constant, the methods, techniques and requirements of discipleship group work are constantly changing, based on the inflow of new energies, changes within the Hierarchy, the expanding consciousness of humanity and the deepening capacities of disciples. This is especially true today, when a major shift in the focus and location of the Hierarchy is underway. The “externalization” or coming forth into public life of advanced initiates, senior disciples and ultimately the Masters, has been planned for centuries and has been accelerating for decades. Their influence becomes more apparent in all fields of human activity with every passing day. Men and women of high spiritual quality, deep compassion and keen intellect, who are dedicated to serving humanity and are impacting world affairs are emerging everywhere. The Dalai Lama, Oscar Arias, Gro Brundtland, Vaclav Havel, Mary Robinson, Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa, Mikhail Gorbachev, Jimmy Carter, to name a few, are evidence that the Hierarchy’s plans for world redemption are unfolding.

There are many others, working behind the scenes, who are influencing and uplifting human affairs, conditioning human thought and raising the kingdoms of nature. They work through organizations that support the United Nations and through movements for the rights of the abused and oppressed everywhere, for the protection and love of the kingdoms of nature, and for the directing of humanity towards building the new, principled civilization. They prepare the

way for the recognized emergence of the Hierarchy into the full light of day by raising the level of human thought and expanding human consciousness.

As a result of this accelerating externalization, esoteric groups also are being asked to take a new stance in relation to the world and to each other. Intergroup cooperation, meeting the spiritual needs of humanity, and fulfilling a bridging function between the emerging Hierarchy and the New Group of World Servers (those who love and selflessly serve humanity) are some of the new requirements of esoteric groups today.

The Influence of the Seventh Ray and the Avatar of Synthesis

The second reason intergroup work is significant is that the incoming seventh ray, conditioned by the influence of the Avatar of Synthesis, is requiring that disciples and groups synthesize the world esoteric work, both in the world of subjective, meditative work, and in the world of practical action. The externalization of the Hierarchy requires a fully constructed planetary antahkarana, (the bridge in consciousness between Spirit, Soul and personality) reaching from Shamballa through the Christ and the ashrams of the Chohans and Masters, through the initiates and disciples to the New Group of World Servers, to men and women of goodwill who distribute the contacted energies to humanity. Today, the portion of this planetary bridge in consciousness that needs the most development is the linkage between the Hierarchy and the New Group of World Servers, which must be built by the esoterically trained meditators of the world, many of whom are disciples associated with esoteric groups. The strengthening of this segment of the planetary antahkarana can be done most effectively in a coordinated, worldwide fashion. Hence the need for intergroup relationships based on an unshakable Oneness of Spirit, expressed through cooperation and coordinated subjective work, that includes many different groups all over the world. When this segment is fully built, the seventh ray keynote, “the highest and the lowest meet” will truly be fulfilled, as the energy of Shamballa and the Will of God can be anchored in the world.

The Avatar of Synthesis is also beginning to influence and condition the mental plane, and for those who have eyes to see, the signs are everywhere. The trend in human thinking and planning towards synthesis and amalgamation, which is in line with the Divine Plan, is accelerating,

although it is sometimes expressed in a distorted manner. The development of the European Monetary Union, with a single European currency is one example among the many new free trade regions and gradual unifications that are emerging in Asia, North and South America, and recently proposed for East Africa. Though these trends are often manipulated for material control and dominance, synthesis can still result if there is a change in the underlying purpose.

Multi-national corporations too are merging and globalizing -- the new term for the consolidation of companies into global institutions, with vast reach and often unlimited and unaccountable material power. The emergence of United Religions, an effort to end conflict and wars caused by religious differences by creating an organization similar to the United Nations is another example of the trend towards synthesis. And as often happens, the forces of darkness are also appropriating this energy, seen in the growing and unprecedented collaboration of crime syndicates from different cultures including Italian, Asian, Russian, Colombian and other mafias now working together to expand their empires.

This descent of the Avatar of Synthesis, increasingly conditioning the mental plane, and aligned closely with the Christ, has vast implications for esoteric groups and the world esoteric work. It is the impetus for a change in how esoteric groups all over the world are seeing their work, how they interact with each other, and how they carry out the world work.

The incoming seventh ray not only brings with it energies that facilitate the linking of Spirit and matter, but it also stimulates the creation of new, synthetic group forms that carry spiritual energies right down on to the physical plane through effective, practical, world transforming activities. The seventh ray essentially reveals God immanent within humanity and within all of God's creation. This can be seen everywhere in the awakening occurring within people to their Divine nature, in the new physics of light and energy, in the spirituality in business movement, and in "energy medicine", as the divine life and light within every atom is beginning to be revealed. And as this light intensifies, it is causing great upheaval, because old forms either resist, wither and die, or adjust to the absorption and radiation of this new energy, giving them new life.

This keynote, creating a new synthesis of forms which reveals the light within, is reflected in the concept of intergroup work. It seems we are being asked to create a new form for the world esoteric work, which honors the purpose, integrity and light of existing groups, but also builds active, cooperative relationships between groups, based on an experience of the One Soul and the universality of the work. This results in a synergized form of esoteric group work that embodies and releases more light. This form allows each group to carry out its unique and essential purpose, while also choosing to unite and work in coordination with other groups when such collaboration enhances their chosen purposes. And while many groups' purpose is to assist in the externalization and prepare humanity for the reappearance of the Christ, the particular focus and sphere of work for each group is different. But there can be a great deal of unity and coordination on the universal essentials that everyone agrees upon.

Reflecting the Ashram in the World

One way to see intergroup work is to view it as a way of organizing ourselves as a microcosmic reflection of how the Great Ashram of the Spiritual Hierarchy is organized. Remembering that “all ashrams are found on the antahkarana,” the connection to each group is first an inner one, resulting from the building of the inner bridge in consciousness. It is through building this bridge that we contact the One Soul and ultimately, Monadic Oneness of Spirit. What do we know about how the Great Ashram of Sanat Kumara is organized that can be used as a template for intergroup work?

We know that within the Great Ashram there is an overriding awareness of fundamental, unshakable unity of purpose and method. Many esoteric groups today have an outline of these fundamentals of the path through the codification of the spiritual path presented by the Tibetan, and through other teachings such as Agni Yoga, Raja Yoga, esoteric Christianity, Buddhism and others. We also know that in the Ashram there is a ceaseless orientation towards Shamballa and the purpose flowing from the Will of God. Thus groups become truly “esoteric” when they focus on the use of the will in group formation. And in the Ashram there is a group consciousness that embodies a flexibility of approaches and methods while adhering to fundamental principles. Thus groups that can adapt to, and utilize new tools and techniques that can reach a humanity in need, while maintaining a sense of higher principle and purpose, become more useful to the work

of the Hierarchy.

We also know that there is complete telepathic communication among Masters and senior members of the Ashram --so open and full communication is an essential. And while some members of esoteric groups today do experience telepathy, many are developing this skill, and we can also utilize modern means such as telephones, the internet, email and faxes to increase purposeful communication between our groups.

We know that the Ashram shares and exchanges personnel based on the needs and demands of the times. Members of one ashram can be "loaned" to another for a specific project, or even to develop a new ashram. The Tibetan tells us about a new ashram of synthesis that was being created when he and Alice Bailey wrote the books, and how members were drawn from different existing ashrams. Likewise, participants in intergroup work can emerge from many different groups, each offering their skills and expertise based on their ray qualities and ashramic affiliations, each helping to build the intergroup work.

We know that energies flow and circulate unimpeded throughout the Great Ashram, and the seven ray ashramic differentiations are only differences in function and specialization, and not fundamental divisions. They can be seen more as overlapping energy fields, rather than airtight compartments. We can visualize this as being similar to how the rainbow colors of a crystal prism overlap, gradually blending and yet each adding its distinct color and tone. Thus, if we see the serving esoteric groups in the world as overlapping energy fields, each group with a particular ray quality, an ashramic affiliation and a divine idea it is radiating into the world, yet also part of a unified radiation, we can begin to create a truer reflection of the Hierarchical reality here on earth.

The Great Ashram is composed of 49 ashrams, some of which are in process of formation, and each one is a point of synthesis, combining a variety of disciples, senior initiates and a Master or Chohan, as well as energies from a wide variety of dimensions. Likewise, esoteric groups should be functioning as points of synthesis in the world, bringing a range of individuals and groups into contact with each other, promoting unity, cooperation and ultimately, fusion. When these groups come together for intergroup work, they are building a united focus of consciousness that

provides an integrated field upon which higher impressions from Hierarchy can play. As the group is impressed by Hierarchy, the larger intergroup begins to move as a unified world body, with a cooperative, coordinated strategy guided by Hierarchy. It then becomes a receiver and distributor of new energies that can inspire and move forward the work of all the participating groups. And it provides Hierarchy with what is needed for the externalization -- an integrated, world group vehicle oriented around a higher principle -- the universality of the One Work. Once the group has achieved this level of integration, it can then organize itself around projects and programs that all agree to participate in and can benefit from in expanded service.

Crisis/Opportunity

Many disciples today realize that humanity's need and the current crisis/opportunity is so great that world esoteric work must increase its power and effectiveness in order to truly meet the needs of the times, especially as humanity attempts to deal with the results of the descent of the Shamballa energy. It is becoming clear that the crisis that humanity currently faces is unprecedented, and that a battle is underway for the soul and future of humanity. The forces of materialism are waging an all-out effort to convince unawakened humanity that self-interest, greed and separateness are logical, acceptable and viable means of organizing our world.

Disciples who understand the inner, spiritual issues, and the deep crisis of decision humanity is facing, sometimes feel their efforts are not enough to meet these overwhelming forces of retrogression. An increase in the voltage of power and effectiveness of esoteric groups around the world is required. In addition to all of us strengthening our connection to the Hierarchy and aligning more deeply with Shamballa, we can enhance the power of the world esoteric work by increasing the power of our subjective efforts through linking our groups' meditative work, both thematically and in focus and timing, thereby synergizing and multiplying the effects of our work.

The World Service Intergroup

Pioneering work along these lines has been done by the Los Angeles Intergroup with several groups working together to co-sponsor the Three Spiritual Festivals. Other groups have

organized several international conferences on seed group work. This type of approach is being experimented with today by an intergroup network, which has been steadily growing, called the World Service Intergroup. This group of more than 200 active disciples, representing 45 different esoteric groups from 20 countries, has met in conclave during the past eight years for 4-5 days at the time of one of the Spring full moon festivals. These Conclaves were held on Wesak 1996 in Washington, DC; Gemini, 1997 in Los Angeles; and Aries 1998 in London; Wesak, 1999 in Geneva, Aries 2000 in New York, Wesak 2001 in Darjeeling, Aries 2002 in Tokyo, Gemini 2002 in Scotland and Wesak, 2004 in Rio de Janeiro. The group is coordinated by a Steering Committee representing esoteric groups from around the world, with an Advisory Board representing many additional groups.

The group has the explicit purpose “to generate a focused, conscious and deliberate intergroup effort to specifically assist the Externalization of the Hierarchy and the Reappearance of the Christ. The Intergroup also aims to develop a practically applied synthetic sense among esoteric groups, so that all recognize together the synthesis that IS. Through soul level face-to-face sharing of ideas and energies, the Intergroup is developing an experiment in right relations among disciples, building a united field of love, which knows and respects the work of each, while emphasizing the common purpose and fusion found in the Will of Shamballa worked out through the applied love radiated by Hierarchy.

This purpose is implemented by members using a shared Conclave meditation with their groups at least twice a week; linking up and meditating as an intergroup body at the exact time of each Full Moon, distributing energy through the five planetary centers; and holding an annual Conclave meeting at one of the Three Spring Festivals. In addition to active cooperation and co-sponsorship of projects, there is a World Service Intergroup website, (which can be accessed at www.synthesis.tc) and a priority alert meditation program to mobilize meditation by the world group when there are specific conditions and situations that need additional inner work. There are sub-groups working together on esoteric public education, and a set of guidelines for the general public on doing world healing meditations or sending light to troubled areas.

For the Externalization and the Reappearance of the Christ to occur, the Hierarchy must have a world vehicle of trained disciples, that is fused in love, universal in outlook, international in

scope, aligned with and actively cooperating with the Hierarchy's unfolding plans. True intergroup work has the purpose of strengthening active intergroup cooperation, building lighted linkages between different esoteric groups, and at the same time strengthening a recognized inner synthesis. Thus the world esoteric work is carried forward with increased spiritual power and love, building a lighted pathway down which the Christ can walk, so that He may walk again with humanity. This is the true significance of international intergroup work.