

## Talk by Alice Bailey to Arcane School students March 31, 1944

AAB: We have a rather brief finish to this particular instruction that we have been studying for the last two weeks, but I would like to launch a discussion or an approach to understanding among all of you as to the matter with which the Tibetan deals here. He is considering the matter of esoteric schools. I frequently wonder what the majority of us understand by an esoteric school. I do not believe that anybody whose esoteric sense is not developed will have any understanding of what an esoteric school is. And I thought it would be useful if we discussed what an esoteric school is intended to be, because in discussing it we build something. The Tibetan has said that as yet there are no true esoteric schools in the world. I suppose there are certain aspects of the work of the Arcane School that are embryonic beginnings of an esoteric school. They are potential; they are to esoteric schools what the Soul is in a completely undeveloped person, and the only way in which the Hierarchy can prepare humanity for the emergence of the real esoteric schools is when a group like this gets together and discusses it. We have a measure of esoteric sense; we know something of what esotericism is intended to be. I imagine if we heard a real declaration as to the nature of an esoteric school we would feel that we knew nothing; we would be amazed at our lack of perception.

In my mind I make a big distinction between an *occult* school and an *esoteric* school. To me an occult school is one like the Arcane School that is occupied with amassing occult facts, studying that which is not known, with concentration upon the world of meaning, and I think that is the outer court to esoteric schools. I would like to have you state what you think an esoteric school is. The Tibetan has written an article on esoteric schools that was written for the general public – that is, it is not written for us. We should be occupied with the next layer of consciousness. Perhaps to us and other groups like us in the world is given the privilege of thinking these schools into being. And it is an exceedingly difficult task, as all pioneering work always is. We have seen this in science and its various branches, and particularly in those branches connected with electrical phenomena, with the means of communication, with modes of illumination, with electro-therapy, with all the various branches that are the exoteric aspects of the mystery of electricity of which HPB speaks. We have gone as far, I believe, as exoteric knowledge can take us. I believe that the next step of science is into the occult, and the next step of the occult is into the esoteric. It is a step out of the world of knowledge into the world of wisdom, out of the world of physical phenomena into the world of meaning, and from that into the world of reality.

LM: That means it is not occupied with revelation and has nothing to do with consciousness.

AAB: But you have to be conscious of revelation. It is awfully difficult to draw lines of demarcation. I think we have to confine our discussion to below the third initiation, because up to the third initiation we are concerned with the development of consciousness; our consciousness reacts to truth, to that which is within ourselves. After the third initiation we become occupied with that for which consciousness is not the right expression. I do not believe, if we go past that point, we will be profitably occupied. I think we have to keep in the world of conscious understanding and see how far that conscious understanding will carry us. It isn't a question of better or worse, because those consciousnesses that don't reach that far will provide a firm basis for the gyrations of the more expanded consciousnesses, for which they are not ready. I would like you to have in mind that you have knowledge, wisdom, and revelation. You have the world of phenomena, the world of science. Then you have the world of meaning into which the occult takes us, and then behind that world of meaning you have the world of reality, which is the world of causes. I personally think that the occult penetrates into the world of meaning and that esotericism should take us into the world of causes.

JL: Isn't the real distinction between occult and esoteric that occult is conscious *knowledge* and esoteric is conscious *response*? When you want to be esoteric you have to cultivate the ability to respond to the inner reality of phenomena. The occult may be hidden, but not the inner.

RK: In line with that is the Tibetan's definition of esoteric sciences in a lesson paper on the Antahkarana: "esoteric science is the conscious unfoldment of divine recognitions."

AAB: That is considerably beyond the world of meaning.

JL: All those definitions are going to keep you below the third initiation.

AAB: The Tibetan has been talking about the sense of synthesis. [Reading from *The Rays and the Initiations*, pp. 121-123]:

This sense of synthesis is one of the things that the new esoteric schools will develop in their students and neophytes, for it will be the people trained interiorly in these schools who will be the builders of the new world and the trainers of future public opinion. The labels and the names whereby these schools may call themselves mean but little. Many will proclaim themselves as esoteric schools and will communicate nothing of a truly esoteric nature. They will but attract to themselves the gullible and the foolish. There are many such functioning in this manner today. Others may refrain from all outer indication of esoteric and occult training, and yet convey the needed teaching. They will seek to relate the One, the Monad, to the personality, and to evoke in their students a true sense of synthesis.

It is the sense of synthesis, putting it very simply, that will be the goal of all the educational movements, once the New Age idealism is firmly established. Physical coordination, personal integrity (which involves primarily the control and later the negation of the astral body), and personality integration will be the essential first steps. To this will succeed processes whereby the fusion of the personality with the Soul, of the lower self with the higher Self, and of form with the divine Dweller in the form will follow next. Then the truly esoteric phase of the educational process will be attempted when the earlier steps or stages have been satisfactorily grasped and there is indication of some measure of real success. By that time the school of the Mysteries and the Halls of preparation for initiation will be generally recognized by the thinking people and believed in by the expectant masses.

In those schools, those who are beginning to function as Souls will be led on to take their next step. Their developed Soul nature will be expressing itself through intelligent love and a sense of group fellowship; these two divine qualities will form a basis or foundation from which the next unfoldment can emerge and on which a more spiritual superstructure can be built. The Science of Meditation and the conscious building of the Antahkarana will be the first two preliminary stages in the esoteric curriculum. Today, the true teaching of meditation and the construction of the bridge of light between the Triad and the personality are the most advanced teaching given anywhere.

Humanity is, however, ready for exceedingly rapid development and this readiness will demonstrate increasingly in the postwar period, and for it the disciples of the world must make ready. Two factors will bring this about: the first is the tremendous stimulation that the war, its demands and its consequences have given to the human consciousness and, secondly, the coming in of very advanced Souls ever since the year 1925. These Souls will be ready to give the needed training and instruction when the right time comes, having brought it over with them when they came into incarnation, and knowing normally and naturally what the modern esoteric student is struggling to grasp and understand.

A study of what I have here outlined as basic requirements will show that the esoteric schools about which I wrote in *Letters on Occult Meditation* lie far ahead in the distant future. The work of the preparatory schools must come first, and their work will proceed until such time that the work of the Ashrams of the Masters is recognized as forming part of an outer Hierarchical activity. This in due time will lead to the giving of the first initiation publicly, as a part of the great service ritual of the then prevalent universal religion. The race of men will then – in its most advanced brackets and groups in every country in the world – be normally clairvoyant, and will therefore see for themselves the light within the candidates; they will know then that the first initiation is justifiably undergone, and they will also see the same light in thousands who in previous incarnations have taken that initiation.

One thing only will I add to the above and to the elucidation of the significance of Rule 5. The clue to all this esoteric work demanded by Shamballa is to be found in the development of the Art of Visualization.

AAB: The Master M. is the head of all esoteric schools. Esoteric schools are not on the teaching ray. They are on the First Ray of Will or Power because the esotericist is not occupied with teaching but with the wielding of forces, with the handling of energies. Therefore energy, will, life and purpose will be characteristics of the First Ray governing esotericism.

RK: Occult schools are related to the Hierarchy, and esoteric schools are related to Shamballa.

AAB: It might be so; I just don't know. We have to get totally clear in our minds the fact of our esoteric work. I think it is a point we should bring out in the next set of esoteric instructions that esotericism deals with instruction and teaching connected with living as a spiritual Triad. Esotericism has to do with the handling of forces.

JL: What do you suppose the Tibetan means by the handling of force? If I have force and direct it somewhere, I am said to be handling it. If I am having force impinge upon me and digest it properly, I am handling force.

AAB: It is both.

RK: I think he also means a third way of handling it. It is being at the middle point and wielding both in line with the objective that you as an esoteric worker hold.

AAB: You mean directing force?

RK: Yes.

AAB: I think that is the first thing we should make very clear. HPB in *The Secret Doctrine*, in a long footnote in the first volume, gives us seven forces that the esotericist has to handle, what the esotericist has to work with. I think that is something that we should begin to handle, because I have an idea that the Antahkarana is built of those forces. It is something we will have to work out.

It is very difficult to get away from the teaching concept, which is what we have to do in dealing with esotericism. It is a way of life. It isn't a matter of learning; it isn't a process of teaching, and I think we have to think these things into reality for the sake of later students.

AP: I got to thinking about the mineral kingdom. Sound and fire are the two ways by which they take initiation, and the mineral kingdom is now taking initiation by these means. When a magnet is

brought near an inchoate mass of iron filings, they fall into patterns. If we were esoteric beings, our presence in a group should make it fall into its proper organized design.

AAB: Yes. I think we are most frightfully ambitious because we are only occult students and not occultists yet. [Reading further from *The Rays and the Initiations*, p. 123]:

One thing only will I add to the above and to the elucidation of the significance of Rule 5. The clue to all this esoteric work demanded by Shamballa is to be found in the development of the Art of Visualization. Through visualization, three expressions of the human consciousness will become possible:

1. The Antahkarana can be built and the shining of the Triad be definitely seen. Such will be the new vision – an outcome of the development of the sense of vision.
2. Groups, large wholes and major syntheses will also be visualized, and this will lead to a definite expansion of consciousness. Thus the sense of synthesis will be unfolded.
3. All creative art will be fostered by this training, and the new art of the future in all departments of creativity will be rapidly developed as the training proceeds. The unfoldment of the sense of vision and of the sense of synthesis, through visualization, will lead to a sense of livingness in form.

AAB: A sense of vision, a sense of synthesis and a sense of life. And that is the result of the art of visualization.

N: This last week I have been interested in creative imagination as a way to God, and it seems to me that it is very much akin to what the Tibetan has to say. It seems that visualization is a real way to direct force in any specific matter. Without visualization nothing is possible. The Tibetan says that we begin with intent, then visualization and finally projection.

AAB: That is what is happening in Shamballa consciousness, in the consciousness of the Monad. The Monad created all there is. It uses energy to construct its creations because the atom, from which everything is made, is a unit of energy.

We started the Fourth Degree, had a preparatory year of work, starting with the keynote of producing experts in the art of meditation. At the end of that period we were dealing with approximately 100 people. We picked out those people who had a little bit of the esoteric sense and put them into the esoteric section. We took the others, who were more sensitive but not so intelligent, and put them into the creative group; we felt that they had in them a potentiality that could be more easily developed than in the more intellectual types to become creative because the mind would not come in between. We had therefore a duality. The objective is, of course, a sense of synthesis, but out of that duality later on we shall eventually have to organize a group that will be composed of esotericists who can become creative and the creative ones who can become esotericists. But we started right, and I think it is interesting that a group such as our group could proceed with the feeling it was right but not really seeing it. The art of visualization was not clear enough in us.

B: Isn't it the basic nature of the people in the group? They are pulling out of the group the things that had to be.

AAB: I thought so. One of the problems, which is of course tied up with the art of visualization, has been to get across to the student what creativity is. So often people think that to be a creative artist

you have to produce a picture or write a great book, but the production of a solar system is a creative act, and so is the production of a planet, an organization, or something that is an expression of an idea that you have or that a group has. That is a creative act.

N: The artist is always at work. God with His creative imagination created a universe. If reflective imagining and rational thinking both exist within the individual, we will have creative activity, which we find in divine expression.

AAB: I am sure you are right. It seems to me that the visualization the Tibetan is dealing with, the art of visualization, doesn't deal with any phenomenal aspect at all, but must deal with ultimate results and finished things. I think this world is going to be straightened out by two major groups. I am considering the idea of starting one of them next winter – a group that will dispel glamor. The Tibetan has given us the meditations and the work that must be done. It will be hard work; it has to be steady consecrated work, steady unchanging work, carried forward over a long period of time. The second group is going to work with the art of visualization and will be made up of those who vision the world as it ought to be – not the vision of a perfect world, because that would be utterly useless, but a group of people who can see the world as it is and who can work dispassionately, impersonally, visioning the next step that humanity has to take in order to bring about the new world order.

You have to have people who are free from prejudice, who can think along the lines of a sound common sense, who have some intuition as to the next step that the Hierarchy wants humanity to take. The Hierarchy is not trying to produce a perfect world within the next hundred years, because the Hierarchy is full of common sense and knows it can't be done, but there are certain great abuses that can be gotten rid of within the next hundred years, certain types of minds, certain attitudes that can be developed in the next hundred years. That creative activity has to be done by people with love in their hearts, who are nonpartisan, who have no prejudices, who will use anybody that can do the work. They do not care whether they like the person's methods or not. They visualize that work carried forward. They are rare types of people to find.

I do think we could do something. We esoteric students talk a lot about unity and synthesis, but what we really mean is a binding together of people who think as we do. But you can work in unity with a sense of complete synthesis with a religious person of a particular persuasion who is anathema to you, with some political leader who is anathema to you, because he is accomplishing something worthwhile and because the Masters have put him there. You can work with teachers and people whose terminologies you don't like, because they are reaching people. We talk a great deal about the work of the Masters. Have you ever tried to put yourself in the Master's consciousness about having to work with you and me? The Masters have to use us, and they do use us.

RK: I think we must always remember that we are part of the chain of Hierarchy and there is no outcast, nothing outside of God.

AAB: But the links in the chain are of all different calibers.

RK: But that particular person I don't like is a link in the chain.

LM: I should think people would be traveling in a Neptunian fog most of the time and have no feeling of any kind.

AAB: You could feel very strongly and not let it affect your attitude as a co-worker.

LM: I think that is a stage that is almost as advanced as revelation.

AAB: I think that is being done all the time by worldly people and they are doing it better than we, except spiritually. We spiritual people are so hypercritical. We have to learn that while we may dislike people, we can work with them impersonally, without any friction.

BG: I think that statement, that worldly people do it all the time, is very revealing – for example, people in large organizations.

AAB: It is good business.

GP: In that case they are all united in one aim, but they never bring in politics or religion.

RK: In the case of political groups, they have to get along with all kinds of people.

BG: I think that is the whole point. We have to be united in one aim. We have to get some intimation of purpose and turn our attention toward that instead of toward the people we are working with.

AAB: The purpose of the work is the only thing that matters. You get a group of occultists and mystics together and you have the handling of force, and that is where trouble comes in. They carry more force than the ordinary person in an organization, and there is constant difficulty.

AP: We care so much about that that we are not either dispassionate or impersonal. I have seen a roundtable of advertising men plan a campaign that didn't amount to much and yet they give a most perfect example of cooperation. All of them are interlocked with perfect coordination. What could they contribute from their angle to the whole?

JL: Isn't part of our trouble getting too much Third Ray instead of Second Ray?

AP: I don't think you get anywhere by putting emphasis on one point of the triangle. You say the Third Ray gets you into trouble. You have to have all three, the perfect balance. The minute you discredit or overbalance any one of the points of the triangle you get something lopsided.

AAB: It is adherence to purpose that really matters.

C: Everything you are reading there is a revelation of the Plan; it is what we have to do.

AAB: That is esotericism; that is synthesis.

N: Within an organization everyone must work together whether they like it or not. If they have a universal sense they can talk religion and politics and still work together.

AAB: It always comes back to the conviction of the individual that his point of view is right and that of other people is wrong. You come back to that basic thing that the Tibetan is always emphasizing – humility.

AP: If we have spiritual concord as to purpose and tolerance, as to method, we can work together.

AAB: There you have the handling of energy; there you have the failure of the esotericist.

RK: When energy is in action, it is the Self, the One; when we handle force, it is always the garment of the One.

AAB: The differentiated thing.

RK: Energy is expressing the Self.

AAB: That can be bad too. You have the forces of the physical body, the astral body and the mental body, which become integrated into the personality. That can be positive and therefore dangerous, or negative to the higher and therefore receptive. What is force on one plane becomes energy on another.

FB: Perhaps the word detachment is a useful key to that specific problem. We have a concept of what might be done for the world, and we become attached to that concept; it has tremendous power over us. We get an idea that seems to be good and we lose our detachment and become over anxious in our fear that something might go wrong. Thus dissensions that shouldn't exist are the result. I am convinced that this group is already subjectively useful in the Arcane School, in the Goodwill work and in what is emerging in the present world crisis. If you can be detached, there won't be any conflict.

CH: That is really maintaining a midway point then.

AAB: Do you think that the Noble Middle Path of the Buddha leads to the midway point?

M: The middle path is balanced. When I think of consciousness unfolding I think of a fan opening up.

CH: If you interpret Buddha's Middle Path in terms of handling energy, what would it be?

GP: I think the Middle Path is misunderstood. The middle point is neither positive nor negative; it is equilibrium. You can't go directly from positive to negative; you have to go into equilibrium.

RK: It is a point of tension. In *The Voice of the Silence* by HPB [p. 28] it is written, "Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself." And the footnote to this passage states, "When this path is beheld . . ., whether one sets out to the bloom of the East, or to the chambers of the West, *without moving*, O holder of the bow, *is the traveling in this road*. In this path, to whatever place one could go, that place one's own self becomes." That is Buddha's Middle Way. It is a matter of expansion or, what you said last week, penetration and expansion.

AAB: "Without moving" – that is to space what the eternal now is to time.

RK: I wonder if we know how much light and true teaching are in our instructions on the Antahkarana. I wish we would read it and become it.

M: I have the marked the high points and what he says about perception. He means perception apart from sight or any registered vision. What kind of perception that must be!

C: The revealing power of words as he uses them is always staggering.

M: He evidently picks the best words, and I try to visualize those words in their full meaning.

AAB: That is the art of visualization.

AP: A businessman said, “When leading a procession you must be ahead of it, but not so far ahead that they cannot see you.” That is a provocative thought.

CH: Invocation, evocation and provocation.