



# EFFLORESCENCE IN THE WISDOM TRADITIONS DEVELOPING CONCEPTUAL PARADIGMS FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY AND INTERFAITH PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

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The concept of the Interdisciplinary as well as Interfaith Discussion Group is one of the timeliest developments in spiritual collaborative efforts for communities nationwide and worldwide. The interfaith brings together spiritual people from various walks of life to come together, discuss similar ideas, celebrate commonalities and join together in the spirit of Wisdom and Loving Service. This manuscript therefore explores the fundamental conceptual paradigms that various interfaith communities can utilize for curriculum development concerns as well as program development concerns.

The freedom to conceptualize and organize spiritual, interfaith, and religious communities is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines:

No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights. (Article III Bill of Rights, Section 5, 1987 Philippine Constitution).

Thus, in accordance with this law, interfaith and interdisciplinary religious dialogue is a right of the sovereign Filipino people. This inspires us and gives us the impetus to outline and highlight conceptual paradigms that various interfaith and interdisciplinary religious and spiritual communities in the Philippines can utilize for organizational purposes.

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## DISCUSSION

### Symbiotic Unity in the Spirit of Service

Spiritual seekers from all inclinations and from all walks of life are now beginning to come together and share knowledge, insight and wisdom. Coming together from various spiritual frameworks and backgrounds, these spiritual people have realized the need to unite in the spirit of service. Unity is a crucial factor in all historical epochs and more so in an age where Ascension is possible. Symbiotic Unity is a conceptual paradigm that could have a very powerful impact in the way interfaith and other spiritual communities come together, coalesce, and manage themselves and their relationships with fellow organizations and the community as a whole. In understanding Symbiotic Unity, we have only to access the legacies of various mystical orders, shamanic associations, and spiritual communities since the dawn of time. Their spiritual lessons have always included the facet of unity as a very crucial factor in achieving their dreams and goals. For example, we can see Symbiotic Unity as a crucial factor in the management of Celtic Druids. The great Druids of Europe would come together every now and then, share knowledge and help each other in the service of their Celtic tribes. They were the fathers of their respective peoples and commanded respect far and wide. The conceptual paradigm of symbiotic unity can be seen in the inner workings of the Shaolin Temple of China. It was a massive demonstration of unity at a time when monks were not given proper attention by the ruling elite. Eventually, the symbiotic unity of the Shaolin Temple monks helped raise awareness about the many productive endeavors that they were regularly contributing to the community.

In the present age, spiritual people from all walks of life can utilize the lessons of Symbiotic Unity to improve the cohesiveness of their mystical or spiritual organization in ways that can transcend their particular backgrounds and religious frameworks. It is understood that spirituality can be a guiding force that binds together seekers of various inclinations into one cohesive, dynamic and cheerful whole.

### Collaborative Harmony in the Spirit of Cheerfulness

From the fields of psychology and management, humanity has acquired the lesson that inner passion must be one of the guiding forces in the choice of vocation and occupation. Spirituality and mysticism can join this insight with their spiritual wisdom and produce groups, teams and organizations which are functioning at a very high level because they incorporate

the aspect of "FLOW." Flow is a term in motivational psychology referring to the zone state where a human is performing at the most optimum level. It has been recognized that mastery of a skill or talent requiring the utmost performance level can be achieved when one is fully passionate about a particular activity. (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 2008).

Spiritual organizations and interfaith communities can take a cue from these findings of psychology and management. It is very important for spiritual leaders of all kinds to have the utmost enjoyment in their craft. The spirit of cheerfulness, therefore, can be another guiding force that can enlighten and solidify the performance of spiritual tasks. It is already a given that spiritual leaders love their particular vocation. However, they should also incorporate the spirit of fun, adventure, humor and cheerfulness in their calling. The best spiritual communities are those who are imbued with an element of fun. If it is not fun, why quest spiritually?

### Infinite Diversity in the Spirit of Love

The Cosmos is a massive ensemble of worlds, like sands in the seashore. The infinite permutations of the Divine Essence of the Supreme God are so numerous as to dazzle the mind and imagination. Thus, all the fields of thought themselves are expressing this principle of Infinite Diversity. All the souls of all the universes are playing a symphony in eternity that is so dazzling and so deep and so multi-dimensional that it can only elicit the spirit of wonder from any observer.

It is this principle that the interfaith communities nationwide should exercise as another guiding principle in the conduct and management of their organizational strategies and tactics. Infinite diversity as a conceptual paradigm can be celebrated in many ways. Be open to the ideas of new as well as old seekers. Celebrate their uniqueness. Everyone has a story to tell. Ennoble the storyteller by listening attentively and actively as well as testing that narrative in the crucible of experience. Spiritual insight produces its validity when examined by the crucible of experience, modified by the uniqueness of the context where it arises. Another way to express Infinite Diversity is to celebrate creativity in all its forms. The artist is brother to the medium. The artist is brother to the mystic. The artist is brother to the shaman. When interfaith communities incorporate this conceptual paradigm into their operational goals, Love will naturally bloom with its finest essence.

In the saga of Philippine History, we can see the paradigm of Infinite Diversity to be expressed in a very unique form in the panorama of the 1898 Philippine Revolution. Our heroes and heroines were unique personalities with outstanding individual talent. The wisdom

and prudence of their leaders was palpable in the harnessing and integration of those singular talents into working wholes. For example, Marcelo H. Del Pilar was the archetype of leadership wisdom, Andres Bonifacio was the archetype of martial courage, Apolinario Mabini was the archetype of sacrificial service while Dr. Jose Rizal was the archetype of versatile intelligence. (Teodoro Agoncillo, 1990).

### **Organizational Autonomy in the Spirit of Empowerment**

Spiritual communities like the interfaith initiative here in our country are organizations that can stand on their own if imbued with the proper set of strategies and tactics. Strategic planning must blend with operational implementation in such a way as to manifest and create a successful program of development. Spiritual empowerment, therefore, is another crucial conceptual paradigm that interfaith offices nationwide can study, incorporate and implement as part of their organizational goals. (Erwin Rimban, TAR Paradigm, 2016).

Here in the Philippine islands, various spiritual Seekers understand the crucial role of spiritual empowerment as a conceptual paradigm that should be explored and implemented in order to insure organizational success. We are currently exploring various strategies and tactics to enhance organizational effectiveness and better serve our spiritual communities. We recognize the need to absorb and utilize insights from various fields of thought, like the sciences, philosophy, psychology and education in the management of our spiritual community. We realize the pivotal roles played by organizational autonomy, self-reliance and spiritual empowerment to insure that we achieve our organizational goals in the most effective and efficient ways possible. The fluidity of our team management can only be a testament to the beauty of our spiritual paths and the primacy of our spiritual vocation as a blessing from God.

### **LITERATURE CITED**

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