

The Karma and Dharma Of Individuals, Nations, and Humanity

by *The Agnischool*

Karma is a Sanskrit noun that comes from the root "kri" with the meaning "to do." It is best rendered in English through the word "effect." It contains the following meaning: When a being acts, it acts from the inside. It acts by spending a bigger or smaller amount of its own innate energy. This spending of energy is an impact on the environment, the nature surrounding us. Perhaps it creates in the latter a momentous or perhaps a retarded reaction.

This can well be demonstrated with the example of a pebble: If one throws a pebble into a pond, it creates therein little circular waves; these waves spread and finally reach the shore around the pond. And, as modern science says, the waves are converted into vibrations, which go out into the endless space. But at every step of this natural process, occurs at the same time a corresponding reaction from all sides of each single and all the myriads of atomic particles that have been influenced by the expanding energy.

Karma is essentially a chain of causation, which goes back into the infinite past and which therefore necessarily has to reach into the endless future. Karma is inescapable, for it is the universal nature, which is infinite and therefore everywhere and timeless (G. von Purucker, *Esoteric Philosophy*).

Karma is the law of the universe, and what is a law other than the outcome of the purposes of God? Everything that comes into appearance anywhere and at any time, in the macrocosm as well as in the microcosm, has a cause in the

thinking of some being.

As our Logos set up the solar system, He drew into the circle of manifestation the matter sufficient for His project and the building materials necessary for His purposes. He built our system out of the atomic structure of the preceding one. Thus, also the seeds of karma inherent in matter were transferred onto our system, and at the end of time the seeds sown by us will pass over to the next one.

We are not isolated units, but a part of a greater whole, and we are all subjected to the cosmic law and work as a whole at certain clearly outlined aims. The One Life, in which we live and are, Sanat Kumara himself, stands in close relation to the One Law, which governs the world of being--the Law of Karma. Through this law, our system has the possibility to develop true love.

In our system, Saturn is the Lord of Karma. He is one of the most powerful of the four Lords of Karma and forces man to examine the past and prepare in the present for the future. This is the purpose and the intention of karmic opportunities (A.A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p.164).

The writers of karma are the "Lipika Lords." The name comes from the Sanskrit word "lipi," to write. They are the registrators who imprint onto the tablets of the astral light, invisible for us, the "great picture gallery of eternity," a precise report of every action, and even of each thought of man, of all that was, is, or ever will be in the phenomenal universe.

Karma manifests itself in those streams of energy and primordial matter that flow into and through the created world, the energy of the seven rays. Through their influence, everything comes into manifestation which is necessary for the ever progressing and ever more perfect manifestation of God in all kingdoms of nature. For man there are always five ray energies active. These are the rays of the physical-etheric, astral, and mental bodies, as well as of the personality and the soul. They condition being and activity on all planes of existence.

Definition and Effect of Karma

Karma is the universal will of God, of that primordial force which draws up all spirits out of the essence into the kingdom of being. Progressive perfection, ever more complete revelation of the love of God, development and release of the Divine core in all souls--that is the goal of karma. Unification of the self-will with the universal will, detachment from all lower forms, liberation from the cycle of rebirth, universal harmony--that is the way of karmic perfection.

Karma is the greatest law. It includes all other laws. This eternal and unchanging law is unconditional harmony in the world of matter and in the world of spirit. Karma therefore is the law of restoration, which always tries to restore a distorted equilibrium in the physical and a disturbed harmony in the moral world. Good is harmony, evil is disharmony. Every pain and all suffering are results of a lack of harmony, and the terrible, only reason for the obstruction of harmony is selfishness in one form or another.

It is not karma that rewards or punishes, but we reward or punish ourselves according to how we act with or against nature, according to how we obey the natural laws or break them. Every being that starts a movement or action, be it of spiritual, mental, psychical or physical nature, is responsible for that which creates an effect in the form of results and consequences which ensue there from and

which fall back earlier or later on the actor or original creator of the movement.

Karma is therefore essentially the teaching of the responsibility of the free will. But it also shows that man can shape his own destiny and indeed has to shape it. He can shape it for good or for bad, he can form it well or deform it, just as he wants. Everything is interlocked, linked together, and geared together; no being can live on its own; other beings are necessarily influenced in a greater or lesser degree by the causes or the movements that are created by some individual being. From the biggest to the smallest cause, from a cosmic perturbation to the movement of our hand, nothing stays without its due effect, and the same creates the same.

Let us imagine modern traffic for a moment, and the above said immediately becomes clear to us. If I drive from one place to the other, I find on the way different indications, mandatory signs, and prohibition signs. If I obey them and drive in a careful and concentrated way with a car that is in good condition, I will, in all probability, arrive safely at my goal. If, however, I do not follow the general rules of society, which are necessary for an ordered course in road traffic, if I drive too quickly, ignore traffic lights, overestimate my driving abilities, or am not concentrated and thus cause an accident, this might have tragic consequences for the rest of my life. Perhaps I am badly injured so that I have to spend the rest of my life in a wheel chair, or perhaps I even kill myself. Who therefore is responsible for my destiny? Moreover, with my behavior I endanger not only myself, but also the life and limb of many other road users. The courts will call me to account for the material damage, which I will have to replace. For the moral damage, however, the karmic law will call me to account; maybe not in this life, but certainly in a later one. Karmic debts are not statute-barred by death.

For karma also is the law of rebirth. All souls manifest repeatedly on earth, and that according to this law. Therefore each incarnation is not just a repetition of life

experiences, but also a resumption of old obligations, the re-establishing of old relations, a good opportunity to clear off old debts, a chance for reparation and progress, an awakening of deeply slumbering qualities, the return and recognition of old friends and foes, the solution for outraging injustice, and the explanation for all that gives man his shape and makes him what he is.

It is therefore inevitable that the individual disposition in an incarnation is conditioned by all that was not carried out in the past, what remained, what was omitted and went wrong, and what was done right and well. All this is in the archives of nature, put down and stored by the Lipika Lords in the memory of the universal substance. Therefore karma returns to each man the actual consequences of his own action, the good consequences as well as the bad ones. All social differences in society, the unjust distribution of capital and work can be reduced to what we call karma.

Personal Karma

How does this law of cause and effect work in our personal lives?

Christ continued to say: "As thou sow, so shalt thou reap." The good and bad karma amassed in the past is the instrument of the soul to create a personality, and this universal law of requiting justice governs the duration and the specific characteristics of the particular incarnations. In every life, as it comes into physical manifestation, are latent those germs or seeds which must bear fruit, and these latent seeds are the efficient cause of the appearance of the form. Those seeds have been sown at some time and must come to fruition. If the karmic seeds are black, the man will be grossly selfish, material, and inclined to the left-hand path; if black-white, they will carry him into a form suitable for the working out of his obligations, debts, duties, interests, and the fulfilling of his desires; if they are white they tend to build that body which is the final one to be destroyed at the fourth

initiation, the final liberation from the physical world.

Thus the incarnating man consciously chooses his parents according to this law with respect to what they can contribute to his physical equipment in that incarnation. They will give him the body in which the necessary diseases can work out. He will have a weak and delicate or a strong, healthy body, according to what serves him best to learn his lesson. (For example, cancer, tuberculosis, and sexual diseases are karmic diseases that have been attached to humanity since Lemurian and Atlantean times. But also all hereditary diseases have karmic causes.) Or he will have the handicapped body necessary to bring certain karmic seeds to fruition that he sowed in earlier incarnations because of the misuse of his body or because he harmed the bodies of other persons.

He chooses for his birth the environment that allows him to meet his obligations and to learn the necessary lessons. Perhaps he once ruled over his fellow men; now he will also have to serve them. Perhaps he lived regardless of the costs to others, now he is played upon. Perhaps he promised marriage to a woman and never kept the promise, therefore he has to keep it now. Perhaps he has sworn revenge and wants to carry it out. Perhaps he owes money to someone and has now come to pay it back. Perhaps he comes with the objective to finally fulfill the desire for a nice big house. Perhaps he has now earned a life in beauty, harmony, and wealth because of difficult and well mastered tasks in earlier incarnations. Perhaps he has developed a great talent in some specialized area and now comes back with this great aptitude to improve it even more. Perhaps someone has started to take to the spiritual path, therefore he now again easily finds access to the wisdom teachings. Each desire, each longing, each promise that we give and do not keep, we take with us into the new life. Deeds, thoughts, desires, human entanglements, mistakes, debts, and so on, bind us to the wheel of rebirth and condition the circumstances of our

present life. The life chosen by ourselves offers us optimal, however often sorrowful, conditions to fulfill the tasks which our soul has resolved for this incarnation.

Verily, there is no misadventure in our lives, no misfortune, no bad luck, no joy, no success, and no luck that cannot be traced back to our own deeds in this or another life. Every man, therefore, has created for himself the world in which he has to live. And it is only he who is responsible for it. If we want to start to understand the Law of Karma, it is good to attend to the effects of karma by looking at all the events and circumstances of our life, including suffering and pain, as opportunities to set off certain effects. That means that we meet all obligations and opportunities into which our karma puts us, accept them, and try to understand their deeper meaning. In fulfilling the karmic obligations, we fulfill our dharma, the duty assigned by our own soul; by nonperformance, we create new karma.

And it is important to recognize which actions, thoughts, and desires create karma. As a matter of fact, this can be defined in a simple and easy way: all that violates a divine law creates karma. Therefore we are admonished to train in harmlessness: "Do not hurt or harm anybody, neither in thoughts, words nor deeds." Christ defined the divine law that includes all others as follows: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God above all and thy neighbor as thyself."

When we look for a picture of a behavior that creates karma, we find an example in the zodiacal sign of Leo. Leo individuals often see themselves as the sun, as the dramatic center of the universe. They are centered in themselves and often look to themselves as the measure of all things. By means of their personality, they want to rule and govern and be loved by those over whom they rule. The egocentric Leo individual serves but himself. He fulfills his desires and engages entirely to succeed with his interests, until he later leads his egocentric Leo consciousness to the decentralized Aquarius awareness and becomes a server to humanity. Then he will

say: "Lord, not my will, but thine, be done." And he will accomplish his life task, or his dharma, which says: "I am That I am. I am no more egocentrically fixed on myself, for in my soul I am one with all."

We see that Leo serves only as a symbol for every personality distinctly centered in itself, and everyone passes through this stage of evolution in one or in many lives. It is clear that in an egocentric life revolving only around its own center, pursuing only its proper interest, inevitably a lot of karma is created. We not only create karma through serious offenses like robbery or murder. No. Karma begins with small things, and there are many everyday situations in which we create karma that are not so obvious at all. Even by omitting a right and necessary deed, by doing nothing, or by keeping silent where words are necessary, we create karma. Let us briefly consider together by means of several questions when and where do we act from soul consciousness and when and where do we react in a personal way and create karma?

- a. It is said: Whosoever acts against his soul, kills it.
Question: Am I loyal towards my own inner self and do I live according to divine truth, or do I act according to the opinion of others?
- b. It is said: Kill the ambition. Ambition is the first curse, the great tempter of man. It is easy to seek rewards.
Question: Am I ambitious, selfish or egotistical?
- c. It is said: Haughtiness is the slayer of spirit.
Question: Do I entertain thoughts and feelings of rage, temper, aggression, anger, jealousy or arrogance towards my fellow men?
- d. It is said: Energy follows thought.
Question: Are my thoughts mainly constructive and positive or destructive, hindering and negative?
- e. It is said: Complete freedom from the force of matter brings bliss and joy.

Question: What do I wish and desire? Do I make a distinction between a genuine need and a desire?

f. It is said: Judge not that ye be not judged.

Question: Do I judge situations and people with a clear power of discrimination, led by love, or do I criticize?

In addition, overestimation as well as underestimation, absentmindedness, forgetfulness, hypocrisy, and curiosity create karma. The above and other questions everyone can ask himself who would like to understand his own karma. It is also important to find out on which plane of our existence we create karma, whether through maya, glamour, or illusion. Karma is an inexorable law, which can neither be changed by prayer nor by alms. But karma is not a rigid law. It can be changed to the degree we change our thinking. For energy follows thought, and the cause of each action originates from the mind. Therefore, diligent control of the mind can avoid sowing new seeds of future karma. Therefore only desire what is dearest to your heart and, by doing so, ask yourself if it is passing or lasting. Christ said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." And we always have to remember that love ends all earthly karma. Love creates that radiation which not only invokes and evokes the heart of God, but also the heart of humanity.

The Karma and Dharma of Groups, Nations, and Mankind

The working of karma and dharma is not limited to the individual, but also reigns over the destiny of groups and nations; there exists even a karma of the earth, of the solar system and of still greater macrocosmic units--all that manifests is under the Law of Karma. However, let's only consider our planet and the

karma of the human kingdom. In the present time, we can observe how people more and more join together in group units. There exists a variety of groups--political, religious, ethnic, scientific, economic, and so on. Nations join together in bigger and bigger groups, such as the EC or the ASEAN states. At the suggestion of the Spiritual Hierarchy, the United Nations was founded fifty years ago to promote unity among nations and to obtain universal recognition for human rights. There are also groups on the inner side of life that are starting to externalize today--the New Group of World Servers, and the ashrams of the Spiritual Hierarchy.

As soon as a group manifests itself, an individuality comes into being. Just as an individual has both a personality and a soul, the same can be said for groups and nations. Sri Aurobindo said: "The nation or society, like the individual, has a body, an organic life, a moral and aesthetic temperament, a developing mind and a Soul ... It is a group Soul that, once having attained a separate distinctness, must then become more and more self-conscious..." (*The Human Cycle*)

Whether a group or nation expresses mostly soul energy, or the forces of the personality, shows itself in their purposes and ways of acting. Let us look at the group of business people. They are responsible for the right and just distribution of food and raw materials. Do all people have enough to eat? Are the resources of the earth used for the well being of all? Or is the distribution determined by the profit of a few at the expense of others? It is evident in this case that special interests are in the foreground and not the well being of the whole.

As long as the motives of a group or nation are not pure and they do not act selflessly, the group personality is well to the fore. Through self-centered actions, the group creates karma for itself, but also for the people who are in relationship with the group. When the soul of a group emerges, the group acts in accordance with the divine plan and puts the well being of the greater community before the individual

welfare of the small group personality.

Just as integrated, individual personalities tend to be separatist, self-centered, arrogant, and materialistic, the same can be observed with the developed personalities of groups or nations. Nations that primarily identify with their personalities tend to conceit and consider their nation superior to others. The flaring up of nationalism in many of the new republics in the east and the fights in ex-Yugoslavia show how nations are in search of their own identity and, as national individualities, go through the process of the integration of the personality. Other states, especially the nations of the west with stable governments and a strong economy, have already passed through this process and are integrated personalities, but they now have to learn to subordinate themselves to the impulses of their souls. They must no longer use their power for individual interests, but have to rise to soul-consciousness, which knows that one's own welfare comes from the growth of the whole.

This process is often very painful and demands from the citizens sacrifices and the willingness to give up their national pride, complacency, and self-isolation. Does Switzerland find it difficult to integrate itself into Europe because of the resistance of the personality against the command of the soul? Yet Switzerland would have such an important function and task for the redistribution of money, which could relieve need and poverty, and save the planet earth. In spite of its growing national debts, Switzerland is still the richest country in the world, with its economy and banks prospering. Money is energy, and energy has to flow. If we do not learn to share, we create for ourselves a gilded cage, in which the soul of the country is locked up, and that is karma.

It is enlightened national self-interest to help other nations and to give, not because of pie-in-the-sky idealism, but out of a recognition that all that individuals or nations give returns again to them. For example, the United States experienced karmic consequences when religious fundamentalists,

who had been trained by the United States in the 1980s in Afghanistan to defeat the communists, were involved in the World Trade Center bombing of 1993.

If we do not learn to give in liberty, we will have to learn the lesson of giving under force. In the East, there is a saying that the wheel of karma grinds slowly, but exceedingly fine. An example of positive karma which contributes to the dissolution of bonds is the recently settled remission of debts between Switzerland and Bulgaria, involving certain areas of Bulgaria being transformed into national reserves where the protection of the environment is intensified. A study done by Donald Keys in the middle of the 1980s examined the voting records of different nations at the United Nations. The votes show whether a nation expresses usually its soul or its personality. The study examined how often the nations engaged themselves in supporting world-order values such as minimizing violence, maximizing social and economic well being, realizing fundamental human rights, and maintaining environmental quality.

From the study, we see that Mexico, Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, Ecuador, and Singapore have the highest scores in supporting world-order values; they reached a percentage of 87 to 88 percent.

The Scandinavian nations have quite high scores as well (between 73 and 84 percent), probably because they have relatively small and homogeneous populations, long periods of stable government, and relative success in meeting the basic needs of the populace.

Third World nations tend to vote for the good of the whole because they know it is the most likely way to have their own needs met, since they are at the bottom of the international pecking order. In contrast, the larger developed nations show more self-interest; often they believe that their views should be given more weight than those of other nations. They suffer from an attitude of superiority, fearing that they will lose their greatness and uniqueness if they become a subordinate part of a greater whole. According

to Key's study, the United States has one of the lowest scores at the UN (35 percent), followed by the fairly low scores of other Security Council members, the United Kingdom (49 percent), France (54 percent), USSR (60 percent), and China (61 percent)--voting patterns that reflect strong self-interest.

The citizens will have to demand that their countries start realizing that the survival of our planet depends on nations considering their own interest within the context of larger planetary needs. When each nation in the whole is strengthened and balanced, the stronger nations are also enhanced by greater peace, stability, increased trade, and cultural exchange. (*Spiritual Politics*, p. 284f)

Influence of Rays and Zodiacal Signs on the Karma and Dharma of France

Like the individual, each nation is shaped by the influence of rays and of zodiacal signs as well. Especially important are the soul and personality rays, the rising sign, and the sun sign. These forces confer on a nation its specific character and thus also influence the karma and dharma of the country. Let us take a look at these influences on our neighbor country France. The sun sign of France is Leo. As we have already seen, Leo is the sign of the egocentric personality, and Leo individuals regard themselves as the center of the world. The sun king Louis XIV is said to have uttered: "L'etat, c'est moi"--"I am the state." Even today many Frenchmen are proud of "La Grande Nation."

The third ray of active intelligence works through the personality of the country. It shows itself in the brilliant philosophic minds of the Frenchmen. The stubbornness with which the French president pushed through his atom bomb program in overseas dominions shows that France still is greatly dominated by the ambitions of its Leo personality to be a world power. Perhaps the atom bombs are also a distorted attempt to live the esoteric national motto: "I release the Light." Another groping

attempt to release the light took place precisely one hundred years ago, when the cinema or motion picture was invented in France by the Lumiere brothers, whose name translates as "light." This light, however, was not yet the light of the soul, but brought a world of glitter and glamour. But in the French impressionism many artists also tried at the same time to picture the sensual impressions as light qualities or to express abstract thinking in a pictorial form through expressionism.

When the urge toward the soul gets stronger, a nation readily begins to clear off the karma that it has amassed as a personality. At the moment, France meets with the effects of its national karma in the form of inner disturbances and bomb attempts by Algerian fundamentalists. For centuries, the French colonial power had exploited the resources and populations of many nations, and up to the 1960s it had treated Algeria even as a part of the French mother country. Today France has to pay off karmic debts by integrating, educating, and supporting numerous people from the ancient colonies, which brings along social tensions. At the same time there are etheric bonds with many parts of the world; a fusion process takes place that will lead to the recognition of the soul, of the inner divinity of all people, and to identification with the entire human family.

The light of the soul of France expresses itself through the fifth ray of knowledge and science. France owes its brilliant intellect and its scientific bias to this ray. Think of the magnificent examples of modern architecture in Paris, of the technical achievements in the construction of the metro or the TGV, of the discoveries of scientists like Pasteur or the two Curies, or of Teilhard de Chardin, who built a bridge between natural science and the Christian creed and called man's attention to the noosphere, the world of consciousness.

Master D.K. indicates, "from France will come a great psychological or soul revelation which will bring illumination to world thought." France may prove to the world the fact of the soul. But for this to happen, it has to

use the light of the fifth ray for the well being and progress of mankind and not to endanger other peoples as it does in the Pacific at the moment. The brilliant and clear vision of the fifth and the third ray enabled France in the past to bring to the whole of humanity the ideals of freedom, equality, brotherhood, and human rights.

To close this chapter, let us look at karma in the context of astrology. On the eleventh of November, 1995, Pluto entered into the sign of Sagittarius, after having traveled through Scorpio for eleven years and having brought there from darkness to light many dark machinations in politics and society; think for example of the karmic working which expressed itself in the last years by revealing the involvements of politicians in corruption or in the Mafia. Sagittarius is a fire sign, and as Pluto entered into the fire sign Leo from 1939 onward, the great karmic cleansing of World War II began shortly afterwards, where strong national personalities clashed against each other and became transformed. Pluto is the Lord of Death; Sagittarius is the sign of the great journey back to the soul that expresses itself in the masses as religiousness and spirituality. Will Pluto bring the death of conventional religions and of rigid forms or will it again be necessary, like 55 years ago, to provoke death by the fanatical clashing of ideologies?

Pluto transmits to us the first ray of will and power, and during this time of the Pluto transit through Sagittarius will also come the influx of Shamballa energy intended for the year 2000. The whole of humanity is challenged to direct these powerful energies in a positive way and resolve the battle for the destruction of old forms on the mental level, and not manifest it on the physical level. Therefore we must learn to use the energy of Sagittarius in the right way. We have to direct our view towards spiritual aims and envisage the next evolutionary goal before us, expressing unity in all aspects of life and society.

The Unity of the World

The creation of Unity in multiplicity is the eternal plan; unity in consciousness, multiplicity in the form. To attain this goal of unity and synthesis in all areas of human activity is the assignment and dharma of all nations. Prejudices, hostilities, hatred, separatism, egoism, and fixed ideas create cleavages and wars between man and man, between nation and nation, and thus karma originates. The soul does not know boundaries, only unity and solidarity. Therefore the states have to expand their identity beyond the national borders to encompass the rest of the world. Soul values like cooperation, good will, common welfare, and good mutual relations create the basis for lasting peace and international unity. The world is one, and one are its joys and sorrows. One is the goal and as one big family we all have to step together into the future. Let us accept the responsibilities of karma and by right living let us try every day not to create new karma.

"Let us learn unity in big things, freedom in small things, and love towards all things, in the work for the Glory of the One."

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