

Symptomatology and Karma Research: Historical and Personal Implications.

By Richard Cooper

Symptomatology is developed through studying the phenomena we find in everyday and historical occurrences. As a process of enquiry with its end goal an applied resolution, its parallels with medical diagnosis are also warranted. Indeed, Christ was traditionally known as the good physician. Healing can occur when full knowledge of the spiritual context of an event or a dynamic process provides the necessary grounds for its understanding and transformation. Two areas of unprecedented growth came to existence in the twentieth century; the esoteric world, and the hidden political world. Hidden to our life within Maya (the appearance of the sense world) and our life within society, the spiritual world weaves its threads of karma. Until we awaken to the spirit karma holds sway both individually and collectively. How are we to find the resources to understand and perceive this karma? We live in a media environment flooded with image and seeming free choice, or as Guy Debord would say 'The Society of the Spectacle!' Whether one calls it propaganda or public relations or advertising and entertainment, its result is the same, a world of asserted ideological meaning. From the threefold perspective that Rudolf Steiner introduced to the world, we see the social order as comprised of a political, cultural and economic sphere relating to the thinking, feeling and willing of the individual human subject. In stepping over the threshold to the spiritual world, mankind faces the challenge of differentiating truth and falsehood as it lies unconsciously between these three areas.

How did a system arise where the dream of freedom would replace the engagement with spiritual activity? Hollywood is the dream factory of modern society per se and symptomatic of its enchantment. Perhaps the most pertinent image of its function within society is the film the Wizard of Oz from 1939. The simple folk farmers surround Dorothy in Kansas. Through the whirlwind she lands in a fantastic world, now in 'glorious Technicolor' (the first section of the film is set in Kansas in black and white), and through confronting the Wicked Witch of the West, Dorothy comes to finally expose the Wizard pulling the levers of the Emerald City. A more occult rendition can be seen in Fritz Lang's Metropolis 1927. The two films depict the individual within the state apparatus; through the media our engagement with political process is closely managed, as the Nazis well understood, the 'Weltanschauungskrieg' (world-view-war) is the basis for societal mind control. They took many of their impulses from the public relations industry of the roaring twenties in America. Eduard Bernays used the term 'public relations' for the relationship between corporations and their consumer market base. Eduard Bernays, nephew of Sigmund Freud, applied psychoanalytic societal insights to his work with corporations and was an inspiration behind Hitler's propaganda minister Goebbels. The corporate establishment had been quick to recognise the necessity of media control to facilitate business enterprise. The established system grew essentially out of the British and American financial system though closely working with German industrial might before and after the first and second world wars. It has since morphed into a global network significantly augmented by the Leninist / communist revolutionary ideology and based on the mind control that underpins the character of modern society. The essential role that the media plays in hiding and facilitating this process was poignantly expressed by David Rockefeller;

"We are grateful to the Washington Post, The New York Times, Time Magazine and other great publications whose directors have attended our meetings and respected their promises of discretion for almost forty years."

"It would have been impossible for us to develop our plan for the world if we had been subjected to the lights of publicity during those years. But, the world is now more sophisticated and prepared to march towards a world government. The supranational sovereignty of an intellectual elite and world bankers is surely preferable to the national auto-determination practiced in past centuries." **David Rockefeller June 1991 Baden, Germany**

Historically karma research was one of the most important and final legacies of Rudolf Steiner's work culminating in the eight volumes of Karmic Relationships 1924. The 8 volumes detail specifically the cosmic biographies of leading individualities and spiritual streams through historical epochs and planetary spheres. They also contain indications to methodological aspects of karma research which involves intimate perception of the social impact of our actions; on a small circle of acquaintances and colleagues but also on wider political, indeed cosmic realities. Such research requires that life continue to all intents and purposes as it did before while observations are made and conclusions drawn. The political method of the leading elites of the West has been Hegelian dialectic. This process of thought practised in the freemasonic lodges sees historical change brought about through polarisation, intensification and crisis. What we can learn from Hegelian dialectic is to expose the different contradictions inherent in the partial views of history, to come to the truth itself of the distorted view. This can have personal as well as wider sociological implications. The following quotes of Donald Rumsfeld the United States Secretary of Defence 2001-2006 are responses that he gave to questions at a U.S. Department of Defense news briefing in February 2002 about

the lack of evidence linking the government of Iraq with the supply of weapons of mass destruction to terrorist groups. Although far from the kind of research we are here addressing they nevertheless highlight the contemporary concern with such epistemological issues.

*There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know.*ⁱⁱ

Moreover the following lesser-known Donald Rumsfeld quote can be used as a spring board to approach our understanding of karma research.

*Oh my goodness gracious, what you can buy off the Internet in terms of overhead photography. A trained ape can know an awful lot of what is going on in this world, just by punching on his mouse, for a relatively modest cost.*ⁱⁱⁱ

In both quotes Rumsfeld is talking about epistemological issues. It draws our attention to the first problem of karma research; the images that come to us when we take this 'easy aerial view'. The visions that come to consciousness without inner activity arise out of our own wishes. Spiritual discipline requires that we develop the attitudes and traits of character that can orient ourselves to productive inner work. This requires a persistence and fortitude often lacking due to the pressures of daily life and a technique that avoids day-dreaming and distraction. It needs long term commitment and a reorientation of life. As the study of Anthroposophy progresses the more what we once believed and thought is illumined by knowledge of the spiritual world. We now know that there are psychological unknowns and mysteries to our lives. What should be our way forward? What methodology should we adopt? The Slovenian philosopher Slavov Zizek's analysis of the relation between personal and historical symptom is a helpful background meditation in this regard. ^{iv}He develops the symptomatologic perspective through dialectic thought to enable us to perceive the interplay of the real and the symbolic. Significantly, his philosophical commentary on Paul with a number of other philosophers also points the way to a personal and communal relationship to Christ as the basis for a renewal of society.

Rudolf Steiner gave an exercise precisely in lectures dealing with psychoanalysis to address the problem of technical investigative method. ^vHe speaks of the need to clearly differentiate between my life as it is according to the results of my efforts and my destiny as it has woven my reality within these efforts. Two pictures can clearly be worked up in the imagination. One will be an exact account of the triumphs and failures that I can clearly provide a reason for, a starting point and a justification for. The other will be facts in my biography for which I have no explanation; an imagination arises of a person, behind the scenes as it were who organises my life with magical prescience and intervention. A being that has altered my destiny in ways I cannot account for. We can develop a great interest in this being. It is the being of our last incarnation in thinking, feeling and will. Rudolf Steiner urges us to differentiate between our own desires which we meet in the spiritual world and true clairvoyant images inspirations, and intuitions. The exercise develops a power in us, like an act of will, to see through the illusions of the false. Our past incarnation is interwoven with our symptomatology, its reality continually returns to our experience in our life of fantasy. Whether it is the repeated failure to hold down a job, a particular relationship or a debilitating illness; we must seek to interpret our symptoms. What are the unique signatures, the unique traces that we can interpret? What should we take note of in our lives? With experience one can perceive how a word or a fact lights up, as if to say 'that is important'. We come to dwell in a mood, a style of dress, or a gesture. Or we come to breathe in the historical gesture of a country or of a landscape. Progress depends on our interest and our identification with the symptoms in relation to history. For this reason, the study of human and cosmic history in Anthroposophy cannot be underestimated; for it is increasingly this study that can free us from the infatuations of our self-seeking personalities lost in Maya. As long as our personalities are seeking justification for our identifications and affiliations in the spiritual the longer we are lamed, as an Amfortas, in the wound of our own astral obsessions. ^{vi} On the other hand, when we come to understand world history as our own biographical story we may discover ourselves anew.

Learning to develop imagination is vitally important. The work of the Holy Spirit through a life of prayer and thought in Christ means learning to read the Bible with increasing understanding for its esoteric significance and relevance to our lives. The movement from imagination to inspiration is detailed extensively in Steiner's descriptions of the Rose Cross Meditation among others.^{vii} As a further step behind and a result of observing the activity of soul in Inspiration we can come to Intuition. Meditation and engagement with a spiritual schooling path attracts those electromagnetic forces that root us to the spot and force us to confront all the multifarious aspects of ourselves. The Guardian of the Threshold approaches us at the door to the spiritual; but it is Christ that 'knocks' at that door and comes to guide us further in the spiritual world. Symptomatology along the spiritual path

thereby provides coordinates for our further study of geopolitics and our own karma, which we can use to shape our character and will in the world. The following have been chosen as they represent important aspects of the economic, political and cultural life of the global system. We can further develop our appreciation of the individual in relation to these contexts;

- The fantasies of the eugenicists of the twentieth century and their link to the present-day transhumanist movement; scientific research of the genome and the 'man-machine' projects. ^{viii}
- The progression from the communist bloc to the post 1989 techno-media society and the role of mass media in its historical contextualisation. ^{ix}
- The link between the environmental movement, the banking interest and the UN. The role of Germany's Green power and its folk spirit within the EU.
- The development of China and conflict with Russia in relation to twenty first century financial and geopolitical objectives of global governance.
- The problem of Satanic Ritual Abuse and paedophilia in high places.

What implications do these contexts have for the individual? Firstly, they contain the need for man to awaken to his experience of the etheric, to the elemental realms of nature. Secondly, they highlight the importance of inner work to counteract the dictatorship of the media matrix. Thirdly they highlight the importance of engagement with history and the future development of society; and finally, they reveal the need to confront and comprehend radical evil. As one crosses the threshold one comes to see a three-fold man whose links we must strive to consciously manage. A need to surrender, to repent and finally to command in the name of Jesus Christ enables us to develop spiritually; standing firm in Christ to free those more vulnerable from abuse and oppression. Are we again entering a time when we shall see the Book of Acts a necessary hand book for those working in the social services and the Book of Revelation essential to understand geopolitics? True change can come from committed groups of people who have consciously surrendered everything to Christ in order to work with power in society against growing perversion, crime and decadence. Humanity stumbles and struggles through illusion and pain to see what obsesses it: As in an individual, there are spiritual impulses of will that find little solace in empty slogans and ideological phraseology. Humanity awaits the social initiative of souls wanting to awaken to their humanity and form the future: 'winning souls', 'healing' and 'delivering from the demonic' in the name of Christ, in prayer and in ministry. To experience ones' biography in imagination and the ability to work this through into an all-encompassing imagination of the spiritual world can be the development of a gift for the world through reengagement with the Bible and the Word of God. The contemporary world is now full of occult teaching: It is the Word of God, Jesus Christ and our understanding of community that is central to our fruitful application of all we learn.