

Biodynamics for the Rational World

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This article was published in the NZBDA Harvest magazine of November 2014, and aims to address the reason the Agriculture Course is considered incomprehensible by so many people, and thus why BD is not taken seriously by the general public.

Topic 1 – Making sense of ‘the Course’

Surely every BD action should be informed from what the Agriculture course actually suggests. Anything else is speculation. This lack of understanding of the course, has concerned me since my initial experience of Biodynamics in 1976. I trust my presentation at the last conference provided proof of my answer. The Agriculture course can be understood and practical understandings and innovative developments, do arise from it. This presentation is available on DVD, for those who missed my presentations.

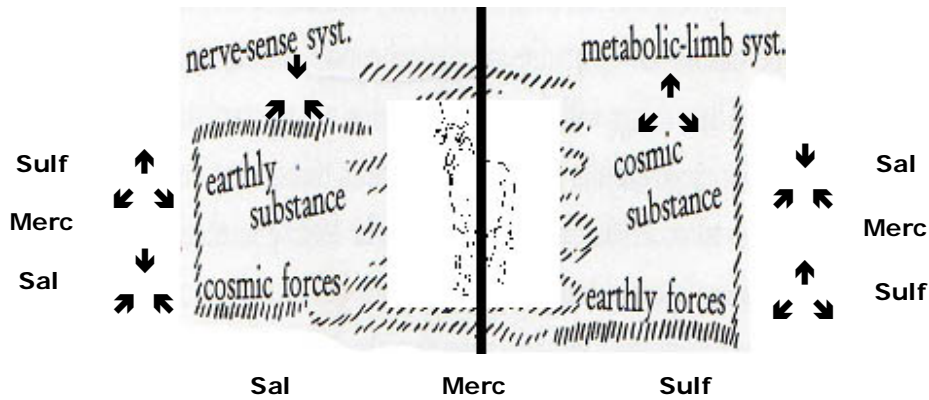
There is one cornerstone understanding that appears to be missing in the ‘common NZBD approach.

We have been encouraged by this magazine to focus upon a threefold view of BD information. The threefold law arises when a thesis and anti thesis meet to create a central activity. Many traditions use this ‘law’. Astrology speaks of it as a Contractive Fixed activity, an expansive Cardinal activity, which work together to produce a Mutable variable activity. In Alchemy these processes are described as contractive Salt, expansive Sulphur and the variable Mercury centre. Dr Steiner describes these activities particularly with regards to the physical body activities. The contractive nerve sense system is centered in the head, while the expansive metabolic pole is centered in our belly region, with the mutable rhythmic system encompassing our heart lung processes. In lecture two he extends this reference to the Earth, with the contractive processes being below the soil, the rhythmic processes showing in the leaf realm and the expansive processes appearing in the flowering and fruit zones.

In Dr Steiner’s story the threefold activities only describe the physical ‘sandpit’ within which other processes become active. The confusion Biodynamics is suffering, comes from trying to describe ‘everything’, within this limited context, without fully acknowledging the other processes which actually drive and control these threefold activities. In short there is more to the story.

While the Agriculture Course contains hints of this patterning, there are large sections of the course that do not fit it. If we look to the picture that is given in the 8th lecture, we can see Dr Steiner shows there is a threefold division of the ‘spatial’ physical body, but ‘underneath’ this

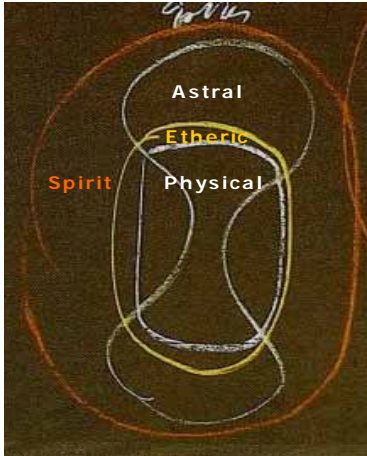
is a fourfold structure. The real BD world view is this. Fourfold processes working within a 3 fold body. The question needs to be asked 'what are these four activities'?



Indeed the answer is given within the first indication Dr Steiner gives, which can be summarized as 'As Above , So Below'. (1) He suggests we look at the astronomical reality we live in, and then see how its reality informs our world view. The four great regions, the Galaxy, Solar System , Atmosphere and Earth, provide the four very real energetic activities, Spirit, Astral, Etheric and Physical, that can be followed through all living activities, right into the DNA molecule. Following these pathways clarifies many of the inconsistencies the course appears to have.

Galaxy	Solar System	Atmosphere	Earth	Spheres
Spirit	Astral	Etheric	Physical	Bodies
Will	Psychology	Immunity	Body	Human
Nerve Sense	Respiratory	Circulation	Metabolic	Body Systems
Warmth	Light	Chemical	Life	Ethers
Fire	Air	Water	Earth	Elements
Hydrogen	Nitrogen	Oxygen	Carbon	Biochemistry
Cos. Forces	Cos Substance	Ter Forces	Ter. Substance	Lecture 8
Cos. Silica	Ter. Silica	Cos. Calcium	Ter. Calcium	Ca & Si
Clay	Sand	Humus	Lime	Soil
Fruit &Seed	Flower	Leaf	Root	Plant
Roundness	Pointed	Wavey	Square	Forms
Stalk	Skin	Mass	Tissues	Plant Growth
Seed	Ripeness	Size	Quality	Fruit
Germ	Seed Coat	Cotyledons	Viability	Seed
Nucleus	Mitochondria	Cytoplasm	Cell Tissues	Cell
G	A	T	C	DNA

Dr Steiner's stories throughout the Agriculture and Medical lectures (2, 3,4) tell of how these four 'great' activities stand behind lifes' physical manifestations . In 1924 (5) he drew them in this manner, to represent how they stand in regard to one another in the human.

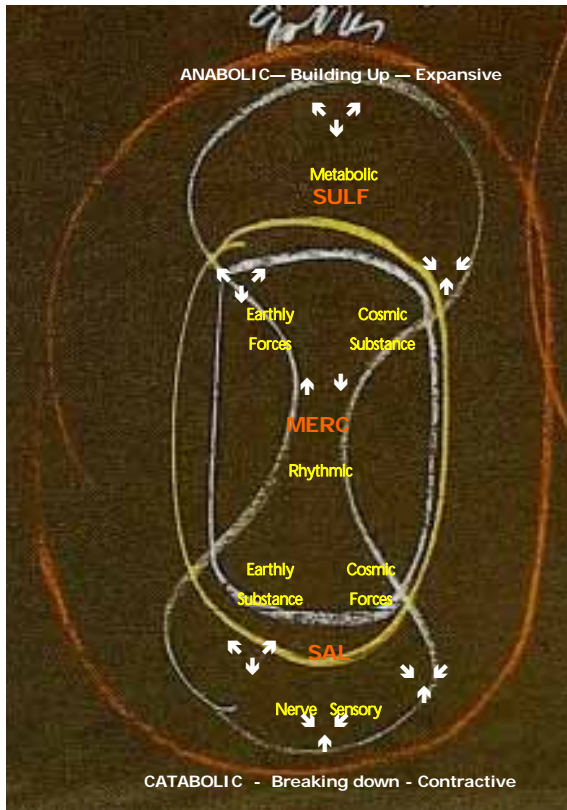


It may be useful to reflect on a paragraph from the sixth lecture. *"In man and animals, the astral body is connected with the physical body through the etheric body and a certain connection is the normal state. Sometimes, however, the connection between the astral body and the physical body (or one of the physical organs) is closer than would normally be the case; so if the etheric body does not form a proper "cushion" between them, the astral intrudes itself too strongly into the physical body. It is from this that most diseases arise.*

In lecture 6 of 'The Healing Process, given on 16.11.23 he says, *"Although the three major systems intermingle, they are distinctly different from one another. The physical, etheric, astral and I-organisations work totally differently in our sensory nervous system, for example than they do in our rhythmic or metabolic-limb systems. All four members of the human constitution—physical, etheric, astral and I—are present in each of the three spatially somewhat separate systems, but affect each one in very different ways."* So the four terms used in the Agriculture course, are RS's way of indicating how the 4 energetic activities manifest at this physical level, that 'spatially' manifests as a threefold structured body.

This 'threefold law' relates to the physical bodies organisation, and so is an important reference for the overall ordering of the 'physical sandpit', we are playing in. However once RS moves to the actual processes active in the creative processes within the 'sandpit', they are all described as within the fourfold patterning, and directly related back to the primary external activities, as shown in the 8th lecture. (6) The 3 fold body is the 'clay' that is moulded by the four activities. If we wish to influence nature, we must work with the activities, that move the 'clay'. These are ultimately the four 'cosmic' energetic activities. The course provides ample indications of how to practically do this.

'The Healing Process' lectures have many examples of this approach. Based upon them his image from lecture 8 can be combined with the earlier image to become -



The text of the course does us no favors and is very confusing. We need to give Dr Steiner some leeway, as he was very ill at the time. We are lucky he could give these lectures at all. To help clarify the text, and the two central discussions in the course, I have pulled the course apart, and reorganized the paragraphs so that the two discussions are separated. This work is available free of charge as "Energetic Activities" at www.garudabd.org.

This way of seeing the course solves all of the contradictions that appear to exist within it. This clarification opens up a wide vista of possibilities for applying the course in effective ways. Sadly, many of the beliefs that are now 'abroad' will need to be reconsidered. But I can assure you, we will be able to speak with confidence, about our central document.

Topic 2 – Faith in the 'Other'

Goethean Science is based upon facts. What we do with those facts might not conform with the 'official' doctrine of Baconian science, but nevertheless, we do have to work from the facts in front of us. The astronomical fact is that we live within a Galaxy, Solar System, Atmosphere and on a physical Earth. All of which are primarily electro magnetic spherical beings.

This is the factual energetic organisation of our existence, and the basis Dr Steiner describes throughout his agricultural and medical lectures. This simple reality is what informs everything

that follows. There are however certain Anthroposophical beliefs, around these facts that inform 'our' story.

I suggest 'we, the association' need to be much more selective about what an 'accepted story' contains. Faith and belief are the 'red lights' and 'blaring alarms' to what turns off the rational public. Our representatives need to steer well clear of them.

These three last paragraphs offer three very specific topics of discussion.

- (1) Where do we – the association- sit with regard to the Anthroposophical belief in there being a separate dimension beyond electro magnetism?

One expression of this belief, is that 'the ethers' stand behind and are separate to electro magnetism. Electro-magnetism falls out of the ethers, and to some very extreme standpoints, this 'falling' is then seen as being 'evil', at very least a very bad thing. Hence there is a 'quiet' rebellion against Electro Magnetism, that verges on the irrational, that needs addressing.

This 'realm of the other', has yet to be proven, and opens up a whole pandora's box of further belief and conjecture. To those who might be having 'a reaction' to this question, I pose to you the question. "Please show me one action we take in biodynamics that is not firstly manipulating the electro magnetic matrix?"

- (2) A second question arises from the first. "What is the place and understanding of 'The Etheric Formative Forces'?"

This is a very confused concept within Biodynamics, yet made very central by some stories, which in turn leads to several further confusions. Rather than going into this here. I can but flag it as a topic that needs serious discussion. I have made an attempt at clarifying this issue, (7) and will make it the subject of a fuller article in the future.

The aim of this article is to elicit response, as it is only through creating movement, that we will be able to stir our 'messy swamp' of confusion, into a 'living effluent pond' from which something useful can arise.

Doing the same old things will not lead to any other outcome than we have had these last 20 years, so please respond, either through articles to Harvests or via the email list. Lets turn on the light.....

- (1) pg 16-17 'Agriculture' - Steiner / Gardner

- (2) Spiritual Science and Medicine 1920 Dr Steiner
- (3) Anhtroposophical Spiritual Science and Medical Therapy 1921 Dr Steiner
- (4) Pastoral Medicine 1924 Dr Steiner
- (5) second lecture , Pastoral Medicine 1924 Dr Steiner
- (6) pg 155 'Agriculture' - Steiner / Gardner
- (7) www.garudabd.org - blogs