

Dr Steiner's Agriculture Course

An Astrological View

Glen Atkinson

As a long time student of this course, I have been amazed at the levels of confusion it has caused, over the last 90 years. Yes it is a very dense course, and as my re edit showed, it is quite 'mixed up'. The two basic stories—the Energetic Activities and the Physical Formative Forces (PFF) — are often intertwined throughout the text, so that it is very difficult to know which story is being told, when. Indeed the PFF story is so obscure it has been completely lost to many people. I hope I have shown that if we use the Medical lectures and their agreed 'framework', we are able to find the structure RS uses for his agricultural indications. Interestingly, it is NOT the structure you will find most BD folk using. Instead of, the 4 energetic activities taking place within a 3 fold physical organism— outlined in Lecture 2 - we have most folk only making it to a 3 fold image. An expansive pole , a contractive pole and a middle. In this 'cut down' form lots of things do not make sense, and these are therefore 'left behind'. In this confusion about the course, and a lack of a consensus authoritative understanding, people are free to make up whatever stories they want. Given the isolation of farmers from each other, over time we have several 'islands of delusion' floating about the planet, pushing their 'local gurus' ideas. The internet is allowing us to see all these different views of BD, however the continued lack of an authoritative understanding of RS message, at its centre, means no serious critiques of these 'islands' can be undertaken. I have begun this critique process, from my isolated position on the periphery of the planet, however it is like speaking into a vacuum. No one need listen and Yes, things do take time to comprehend and seep into the collective.....

How have we gotten here, when other RS initiatives have managed to find their 'authoritative understanding' around which to coalesce?

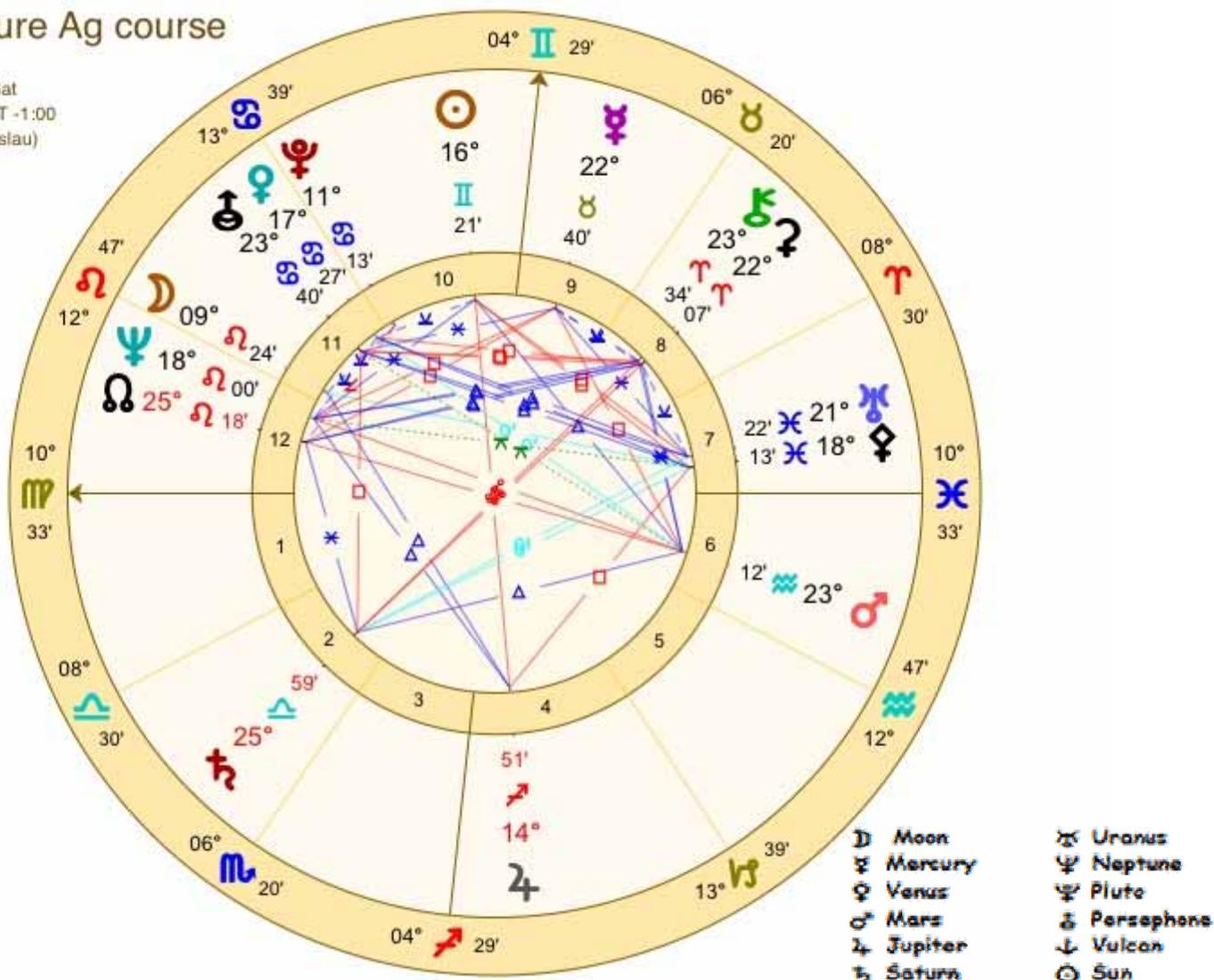
My interest in Astrology has been very useful in finding RS underlying order, and moving it along some, however I have not gotten around to asking the question of **what is contained in the astrological moment at the beginning of the Agriculture Course.** In Astrology we place importance upon the 'moment of beginning', be it the birth of a person or the initiation of a project. In this moment we have the seeds of what will unfold in that person's or project's 'personality and life'. So the moment of the start of the first lecture of the Agriculture Course, should contain information about the 'Life of the Course'. This will be what is provided, how it is received and how it will unfold through time.

So the other day I did ask this question.....and there in front of me is the story I have told you above.

I believe I have the right starting time, from Peter Selg's book on the course (ISBN978 1 906999 08 7) as **11 am on the 7th June 1924 at Wroclaw, Poland.** The chart of that time is on the next page. There is a lot going on in there, and so it helps to simplify this by looking at the 'conversations' going on between the planets. I like to look at charts as if they were an executive team in a business. Each planet is a head of a department, and this picture is them sitting around the conference table, talking to

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each other. The **lines are the Types** of conversations they are having with each other. The **Planets are What** they are talking about. Through the process of pulling this image apart, into its structural groups, we can listen to all the different conversations going on here. One way to start is through the different types of conversations. Like in music, with its different tones, so we have harmonious and discordant / non harmonic conversations. In the charts, the **Blue lines are the harmonious 3rd harmonic**, while the **Red are the discordant, 4th harmonic** conversations. The light blue are **especially good 5th harmonic** conversations. These are 'the gifts' of the chart.

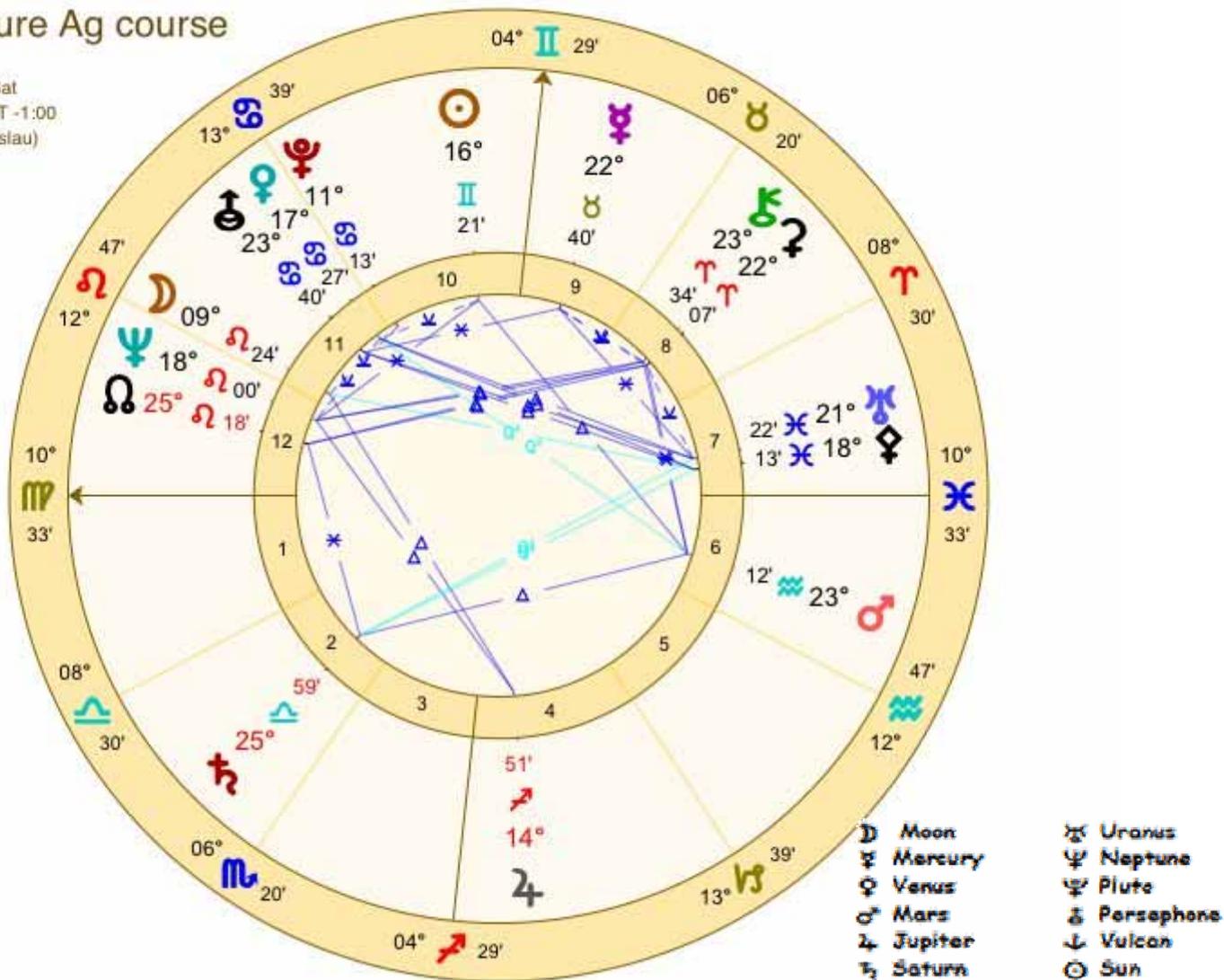
Given the human penchant for 'nice things' first, I will start with the positive indications of the course. The chart on the next page has only the 3rd harmonic (positive) relationships between the planets. I have also added three other celestial bodies. The asteroids Ceres (agriculture) and Pallas Athene (leadership) and the hypothetical planet Persephone (Transpluto) which I have found very accurately predicts how something works for the whole of humanity, and hence its international influence.

The next step is to see who is talking to who, and wherever there is a pattern of interactions, there is a complex conversation going on. However we can consider this just one 'flowing' conversation. There are various emphasis points within the conversation, but it is still one conversation.

Looking at this chart, we can see that all of the blue lines, more or less connect up with each other. I can see two main conversations in this picture, who are connected to each

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other. So they can all hear each other.

Blue 1—The big rectangle

Saturn, Mars, Ceres, Chiron, North Node, Neptune, Sun, Venus, Persephone

Blue 2 - Small triangle on the right

Uranus, Pallas Athene, Chiron, Ceres, Mercury, Venus, Persephone

Both of these have interconnecting links, however it is better to see the two parts.

Blue 1

These pieces of the conversation show their positive sides. Given this is a agriculture conference we can start with **Chiron and Ceres in Aries**. Chiron is the healer, while Ceres is the goddess of agriculture and in Aries, the first sign, so we hear them talking of **highly innovative ways to heal global agriculture**. Following the big rectangle clockwise, **Mars and Saturn** both are male 'lets make this practical' sort of guys, and want these ideas to be acted upon. The air sign placements of these planets, do indicate the ideas are 'lofty' , and will take a little effort to make practical. The fourth leg of this rectangle is **Neptune and Node**. Neptune is the idealist in this conversation, and while he likes the practical nature of Mars and Saturn, he is bringing in the spiritual and humanitarian points of view to the table. The Node in this mix is saying **'the time has arrived'** for this practical vision to be presented. When we focus on Neptune, we see it has a positive side conversation going with the Sun. The Sun is

the conscious individual, which suggests that the message of this conference can be consciously grasped and put into practice. While here we can mention the Sun has a 'small' conversation going with Venus Persephone and Neptune. This talks of good will amongst the international participants within the movement, as can be seen every year at the Dornach conferences.

Blue 2

The **second pattern** sitting alongside this first one, is based on **Mercury**—the communicator, **Uranus**— the innovative thinker, **Pallas**—leader, and **Venus Persephone** International people and **Ceres Chiron** - Healing agriculture; All these indicate the innovative , multi layered and revolutionary nature of the ideas that are presented. It also brings the 'open to all people' nature of the knowledge, and the cosmopolitan community we are.

Jupiter is standing on a leg of its own and in Sagittarius, so it is offering many stimulants to the 'lofty' idealistic side of the conversation. It adds to the humanitarian socially conscious ideas, but as we will see shortly, it is a little over enthusiastic.

Light Blue 1

The **third pattern** we can see here is the light blue lines between **Saturn, Uranus Pallas and the Moon**. So far the Moon has not featured. This structure, indicates a very special practical inspiration which is carried somewhat intuitively. This is the wonders of Goethean perception, but it can also suggest **the women of our movement will play a significant role in its innovative development and leadership**. We do not have to look far to see this. This is one of our strengths.....

Sun, Moon, Ascendant and Midheaven

It is 'traditional' to begin an analysis with a look at these four points. These provide an image of the conscious intention, the unconscious intention, the persona or how these are seen, and the impact upon the world.

The **Sun** in Gemini in the 10th house indicates a youthful, bright, even playful intention to achieve a certain goal. The sabian symbol of the 17th degree of Gemini is "**The head of a robust youth turns into that of a mature thinker**"

The **Moon** in Leo in the 11th house indicates an inner confidence with ones vision for the future of ones community. The sabian symbol for 10 Leo is "**Early morning dew sparkles as sunlight floods the field**". The interpretation of this is stated as " The exalted feeling that rises within the soul of the individual who has successfully passed through the long night which has tested his strength and his faith"

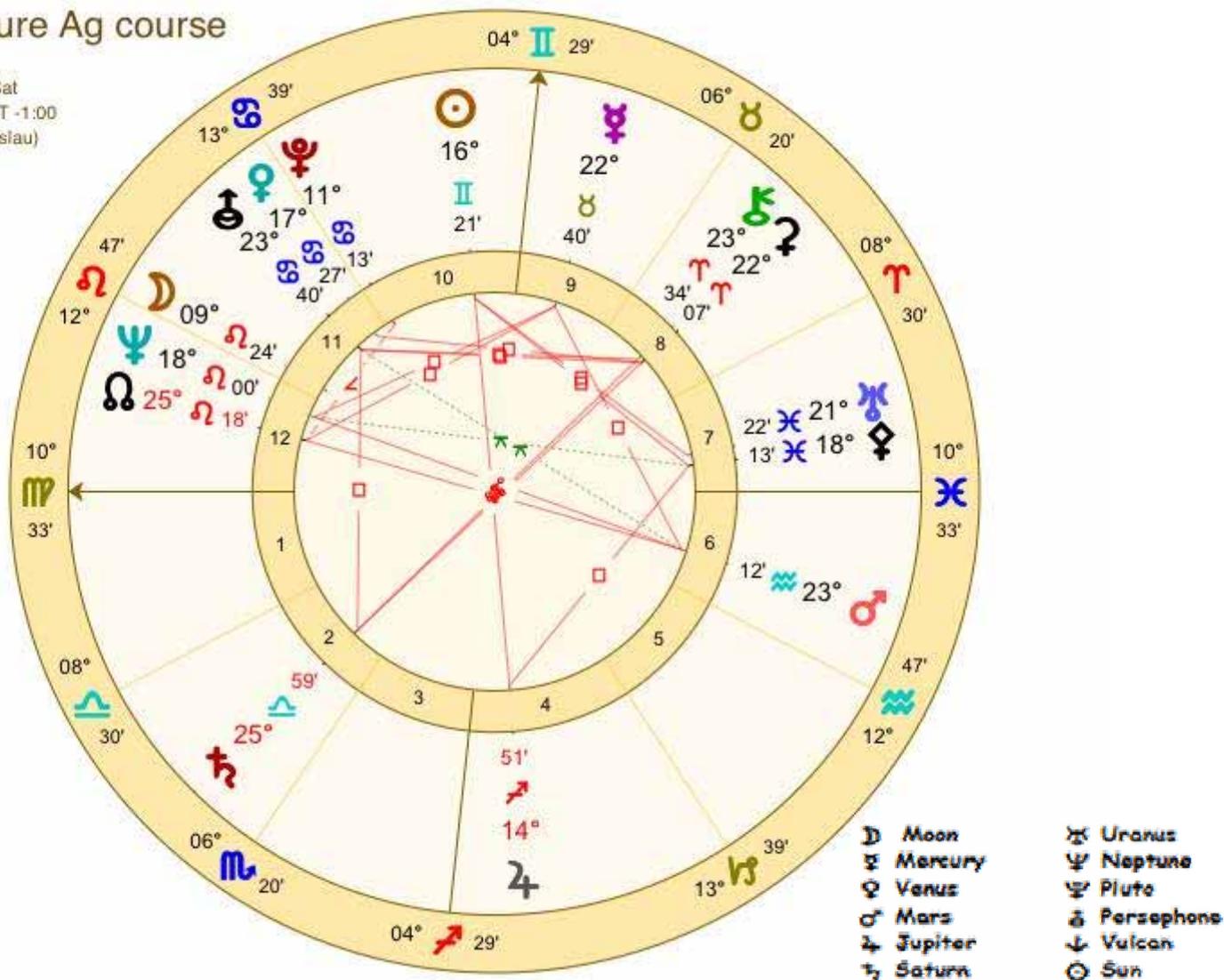
The **Ascendant** at the 11th degree of Virgo (along with Saturn rising) suggests a very measured and precise manner of expressing one self. Somewhat reserved but also sure of ones details. The sabian symbol for this degree is "**In her baby a mother sees her deep longing for a son answered**"

The **Midheaven** is 5 degrees Gemini, shows the goal, higher aspirations and the impact in the world of the event. The Symbol is "**A revolutionary magazine asking for action**".

In these four images, sitting at the base of the 'positives' outlined above, I see the fulfillment of RS journey. He has come of age as a striving human, and presented a gift of renewal for Agriculture, as an expression of his skill and competence, as a seer of truth, meeting a need of the time.

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Bill Watson offers— *I sometimes check out the Part of Fortune, (Ascendant + Moon — Sun) which also has an apt symbol for this event: “A youth carries a lighted candle in a devotional ritual”. –The educative power of ceremonies (and symbols) which impress the great images of a culture upon its gathered participants.” Consider that this lecture was delivered 95 years ago, and still has educative power through its symbolic meanings and stirring rituals.*

Bill offered 4 other astrological references that supported the basic themes outlined in my assessment.

So all very good.....

But.....and there is always a but.....**there be demons lying under that log.....** which brings us to the **tensions in this chart**. The chart above, highlights the tensions. In it we can see three fairly defined groups of planets. While they do not talk to each other, they do converse through the positive relationships. This suggests resolve is possible, into a cohesive ‘personality’. Nevertheless ‘the dragons’ need to be taken seriously and bought to consciousness , if they are to be turned into positives.

Red 1 — Neptune, Moon, Mercury, Mars (Pluto Node)

Red 2 - Sun, Uranus, Pallas Athene, Jupiter

Red 3 — Saturn, Persephone Venus Ceres Chiron.

Red 1 — The Curse

Mercury is communication and one's personal ideas, **Mars** is the assertiveness one puts behind those ideas, while the **Moon and Neptune**, indicates those ideas are hard to bring to awareness, and can be highly imaginative, and easily heading towards complete delusion. The **Pluto** tension to Node off this, suggests this tendency can have a debilitating effort upon the ultimate destiny of the endeavor.

This aspect suggests (a) people will have great difficulty understanding what is being said, as they perceive it to be too vague, abstract, waffly or unattainable. (b) people will take the information provided in the course, and make up all manner of delusory stories from it. With all of this encompassing the Moon in Leo, it suggests people's confidence in their own inner vision of what is said, will take precedence over what might be consciously presented to them.

Add to this the basic tenet of RS and Goethean perception, that we must honor the individual's perception, and we have 'free play'. Anything is possible. This aspect plays into RS own 'unaspected' Mercury Neptune in Pisces. He is already often, fuzzy and difficult to follow, so adding this 'natural' tendency to the course chart, creates a very strong indication of 'a problem'. **Herein lies the largest danger** of this time for starting the course. (Interestingly, as I write this Mercury is conjunct Neptune in Pisces. Is this a phenomena whose time has come for it to be brought to consciousness? Also I recently finished my Enzo Nastati critique, where I discussed the effects of his Mercury Neptune conjunction.)

A credible science must have some central pillar it can 'bounce off'. My suggestion is RS medical lectures and the worldview the very substantial Steiner medical movement uses, is that pillar. Some will say Anthroposophy should be that pillar, however I suggest this larger body of work, with its lofty unprovable stories, feeds into this aspect's delusory potentials. The medical lectures are focused upon practical applications, and so has boundaries and patterns of thought, to guide our observation.

Red 2

Plays into this tendency. **Sun, Jupiter, Uranus, Pallas** are all strong 'I' statements. These planets provide a very strong self confidence in one's ability to understand multiple levels of understanding and applications. This is a person who can boldly take leadership towards their implementation, without concern for what anyone else might say. The multi dimensional nature of the information and its implications, can seem 'mind boggling' to the 'average' person. 'Its all too far out'.....yet to people that can cope with this 'big brain' aspect, are provided with a work of genius, that can be applied to many fields of application.

The positive flip side of this, is the ability to carry on with one's ideas, regardless of the outside world's persecution, due to seeing 'a bigger picture'. Which we might say is a very necessary 'arrogance' one needs to birth a reformative movement. However if this arrogance is used to support a delusion, and we have someone, who is not listening to critique, then we have a problem.

Disclosure: I have this planetary combination in my birth chart, and so my efforts are a good example of this aspect's various manifestations, and probably why I can chase down the wild ideas this aspect develops.

Red 3 - holds its own dragons.

The key players in this conversation are **Saturn and Venus**. While these might be considered in wide aspect, and therefore a weak influence, bringing in Persephone, Ceres, Chiron and by association Pluto, we do get a significant 'beast'.

Saturn and Venus in tension leads to an experience of **emotional abandonment and isolation**. In a person, they feel 'unloved' and 'unappreciated'. Add Pluto and we have feelings of persecution, and with Ceres, these come from within the family. While Persephone says it is an international family. Hence members of the family easily feel abandoned and persecuted.

Again we do not have to look far for this phenomena. Herein lies the many hurt feelings between all the various sects and individuals, obvious within the international movement. Place this within the setting of individuals and sects, being arrogant about their delusions, and we have a right royal festering sore.

We can see this in the immediate separations that occurred after RS death, in the general Anthroposophical society, and flowed into the BD movement, which appears to have given Wachsmuth free reign to lead BD down the 'distracting' Ethers road. To the regional 'divisions' we saw in Australia (Podalinsky and the rest) , New Zealand (Proctor and Atkinson) , and in Europe (Erbe, Fenstalin, and Nastati and the rest) to name a few. I do not know of the details in the USA, but I do know of several ongoing 'hurt feelings', over there as well.

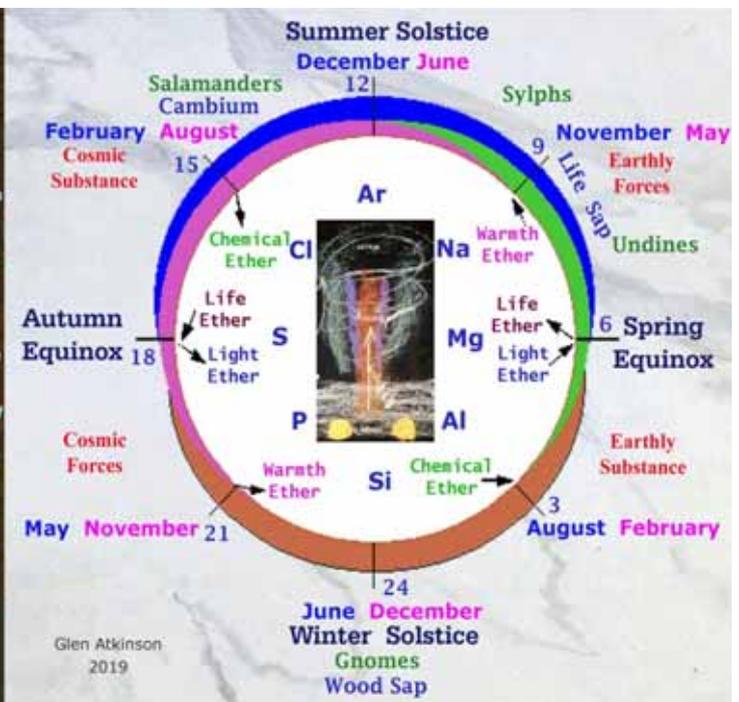
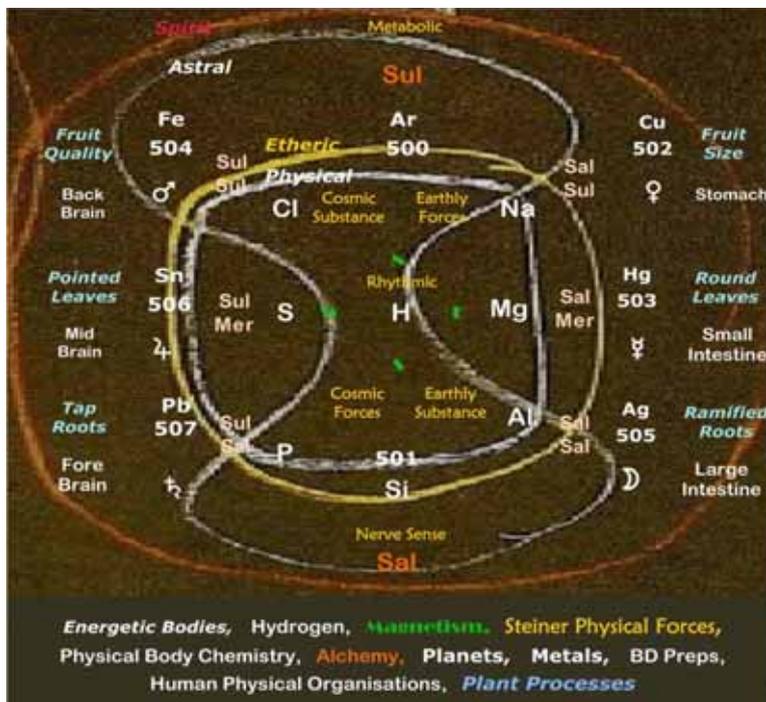
At the seat of all these disagreements often sits '**the arrogant holding to individual positions', without any central truth to help with finding a resolution** . The fairly common 'rule by isolation' technique of the central groups, feeds this demon and does little to consciously address this. However when deluded, arrogant people 'feel isolated', they go off and form their own 'BD kingdoms'. Which leaves the people left in the middle completely confused, and, with many different stories that do not mesh together. With no means of integrating these wildly divergent views, we come to 'lets keep it simple', add some *spiritus fermenti*, and we have the naive BD 101, we see running about today.

Where to

A few years ago this inability for a central story to act as pillar of truth, lead to my article "Any Old Story Will Do".

Herein lies Biodynamics 'curse', if we allow these unconscious nesses to carry on, why would anyone take us seriously. Everyone needs to **Come and Scratch their story upon, the Medical Lectures Pillar**.....please believe RS medical lectures. They are very practical, there is over 100 of them, and they have been worked upon by very conservative professional doctors, for 90 years. They know what they are talking about and what RS said. I am confident my story fits within their framework, which is why I present my efforts, and critique others, where I see glaring errors.

Yes, we have an astonishingly good gift for the renewal of Agriculture, but we need to find a compassionate way, to achieve a consensus reality, upon which we can move forward. **It is not OK that 'Any Old Story Will Do', we owe RS much much more than that**.....



Here is my summary of RS Medical and Agricultural Lectures.
Do they make sense to you?

Critique

Given the challenging, and potentially subjective nature of Astrological interpretation, I have given this essay to two competent astrologers to critique for its 'accuracy'. Their assessments say -

As a professional astrologer and bioenergetic medical practitioner, with forty years' experience, I found Glen's reading of the event chart for the first of Dr. Steiner's lectures on Agriculture, to be both accurate and fascinating. As I explored the chart it occurred to me that the date and time of that first lecture may have been "elected", i.e. specifically chosen for the quality of energy, rich with meaning. I believe the chart provides deep insights into the way forward for BioDynamic Agriculture, as expressed in Glen's concluding remarks on the subject.

*Prof. W.D. (Bill) Watson
Auckland, New Zealand*

Bill voiced a concern about the 'wide' planetary orbs used in this assessment, eg. The Moon has a 8.5 degree, applying orb to Neptune. Questions like this are very 'personal' judgments amongst Astrologers. The orbs used in these charts, are those set as default in the Astrology program I use, so within the accepted norms of the wider community. I have come to see wider orbs as OK. In 'old astrology' aspects between 'planets in signs' were considered functional. I do not go that far, but do see the universe does not have hard edges.....things often merge into each other, especially the longer they live. So I am on the 'wider orb' side of this discussion.

The second critique gave me a 5/10, and suggested his edits would make it a 10. They were expressed within an 'Anthroposophical Astrology' language, that complex's things somewhat. I suggested placing his additions as an appendix to this article, however I have not heard back. So I guess I have to take the 5/10 (and no changes to my content), as being an OK mark for accuracy. Maybe he and many others will present their own interpretative versions of this chart, at some future date.

Thank you both for your time and effort in critiquing this article.