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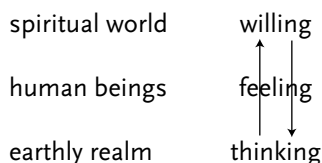
Manfred Klett

The Biodynamic Preparations as Sense Organs

This lecture was presented January 6, 1994 at the 8th International English-Speaking Conference for those concerned with Biodynamic Agriculture at Emerson College in East Sussex, England.

I would like to speak about two themes. One is the human element in working with the preparations, and the other is a special aspect of the sense-organs of the sheaths.

First of all the question I would like to deal with is, what is the reality of these preparations? Beholding the world, the only reality we are really fully aware of is that of ourselves as ego beings. The human being is actually a citizen of two realities which are concealed from him. There is on the one hand the spiritual world into which he reaches with his own spiritual being, and the earthly physical world in which he stands with his physical being.



We relate three soul faculties, thinking, feeling and willing to these two poles. These three abilities are still very much underway in their development. In our willing we are in contact, although unconsciously, with the spiritual reality by submerging into it in our everyday work. Also we enter the spiritual reality when we fall asleep every night. This unconscious encounter during our sleep enriches us with new impulses. The counter pole is our thinking, where we are fully awake and conscious, but disconnected from

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We are obliged to do most of our daily work with machinery, but working with the preparations, we have a space within our activities where we really can expose our free will and are able to converse between our inward being and the outside world. With this attitude we overcome the onlooker consciousness that sees it as a matter of cause and effect. But working with the preparations, building up this inner richness, we eventually behold ourselves as a creator of what happens to the interior of nature. We recognize it as our deed relating to our judgment. With this "seed" we endow nature not only with a substance, but also with the devotional consciousness of our spiritual being.

—Manfred Klett

Notes

For your spiritual summer reading, we offer Manfred Klett's invaluable lecture, "The Biodynamic Preparations as Sense Organs." Please note that Manfred's lecture is also part of the suggested study material for those of you planning to attend The 2005 Biodynamic Preparation Makers Conference (formerly known as The Future of Prep Making in America) in Fair Oaks, California next January.

Have you ever attempted to explain to someone how biodynamic preparations are forces? In this issue, Hugh Courtney's article, "Preparations Not As Substance But As Forces," provides the information and demonstrations (adapted from German researcher Maria Thun) that should make it clear to everyone why the preps are forces at work.

Even though the Venus transit of June 8, 2004 is now past, were you able to participate in one of the spray protocols as suggested from Hugh Courtney in the last newsletter? If not, you were not alone. Considering the time sensitive nature of the Venus transit article, the spring issue had run into countless delays due to software glitches and illness, to name just a few unfortunate circumstances. As the

newsletter finally was being mailed to you in late May, I wondered if perhaps the setbacks were not by chance, but intended to turn out this way; the delays from the previous months seemed to be almost one unseen hurdle after another to completing the spring issue in time before the transit of Venus. A few days after the mailing, I also came to an understanding that possibly the once-in-a-lifetime Venus transit didn't require a great number of biodynamic practitioners doing a prep spray sequence. As we all know, just a little influence from the preparations goes a long way. So maybe that's the way it was meant to be.

Please remember too, that the influence of the transit of Venus did not end at June 8, so opportunities for biodynamic practitioners to work with the "resonance factor", as Hugh calls it, are still possible now and well into the next transit of Venus in 2012. I hope this early notice of the next transit will give those who would like to participate in a biodynamic spray protocol, plenty of time to prepare for this rare planetary event.

—Patricia Smith, Editor

Applied Biodynamics

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Mission



The Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Bio-Dynamics Inc. (JPI), was founded to produce quality biodynamic agricultural preparations based on the spiritual-scientific research of Rudolf Steiner.

It serves as a living memorial to Josephine Porter, a pioneer for this work in America.

The mission of JPI also includes education and research in biodynamic agriculture. JPI undertakes these tasks so that the earth may be healed.

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The Biodynamic Preparations as Sense Organs

the spiritual. We only touch these realms by thinking. What enters our consciousness is the sun illuminated surface: the outer image of the creative being behind. We develop an onlooker consciousness. We are not able to penetrate the outer appearance. In the middle our feeling is active, half consciously, in a more dreaming state, merging the two poles and awakening thereby our self consciousness. That is the situation of the human being nowadays. The evidence of our self willing is manifest in our feeling. The present constitution of the human soul is such that these three faculties are merged into the unity of our conscious being. But we are passing a threshold to a further development of these abilities. In beholding ourselves we can become aware that we think something most clearly and yet may do the exact opposite! For instance, we drive our cars knowing the damage they do to our environment. Or there are large numbers of people deeply involved in scientific work experimenting with gene engineering, who are completely disconnected with the reality of where their results are put into practice. So we seem to know almost everything except this one small part: what we are actually doing. And the feeling life is left alone in between, separately nurtured by the media for example. Passing the threshold I mentioned earlier, these three soul qualities become more and more independent. The more they are falling apart, the more we are challenged to strengthen our ego being to harmonize these diverging soul abilities consciously. In so doing we step onto the path of inner schooling towards higher knowledge. That means we learn to feel the dark and light aspects of our thinking, and develop the faculty of imagination with our thinking, inspiration with our feeling, and intuition with our enlightened will. This marks the direction of recognition into the

future. These three faculties can only be developed when these three soul abilities become independent in the soul and are governed by our ego being. Rudolf Steiner developed these faculties to a far advanced extent and thus became a researcher in the spiritual world. He can be regarded as being the modern representative of humanity who developed, independently of the physical body, receptive organs by which he was able to sense and become conscious of the different regions of the spiritual world. From these realms, by spiritual research, the preparations have come about.

When Rudolf Steiner came back to Dornach from Koberwitz, he gave a lecture reviewing the Agriculture Course and mentioned that, "it is possible for anthroposophy to work from both the most highly spiritual side and from the most practical."¹ And truly in the Agriculture Course the highest spiritual reality is combined with the most practical life in the physical world, the result of which is the invention of the preparations. We can look upon the preparations as being very closely related to the human being, as the three most advanced faculties of recognition radiating into the spiritual world have brought them about. As Rudolf Steiner widened his ego being in full consciousness to the polarity of both concealed realities, he was able to create a new technique in the living sphere which is justified by the truth endowed in it. With our normal onlooker consciousness, we deal with the preparations and recognize that they do not correspond right away to our thinking, feeling and willing.

So working with these preparations, we must become aware that we must work on our thinking, our feeling and our willing at the same time. The first question we have to pose is, are the preparations simply recipes out of spiritual science? Don't they work for themselves once they are made? Is the human element an essential condition for their working? In attempting to answer, we must first say that the spiritual concept of making the preparations cannot be found in nature. You might observe nature as precisely as possible, but you would never discover the ideas to make preparations; they are not inherent in the wisdom of nature as an evolutionary fact. They derive from spiritual insights resulting from research into the spiritual origin of nature which has developed further since it has physically come into being. Something new is added by the human element. I would like to put our relationship to the preparations into a picture. It is like a painter who intends to paint a picture. He takes his canvas, his palette and his brush and starts painting. After a while when it is finished, a visitor comes along and looks at this picture and, although he hasn't created it himself, he may be inwardly enormously moved, simply by looking at it. When we make the preparations we have to consider two steps. We make them; that is like painting the picture. We

Biodynamic Preparations Legend

BD #500 – Horn Manure

BD #501 – Horn Silica

BD #502 – Yarrow

BD #503 – Chamomile

BD #504 – Stinging Nettle

BD #505 – Oak Bark

BD #506 – Dandelion

BD #507 – Valerian

} Compost
Preparations

BD #508 – Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*)

create a reality. Then we take this picture and offer it to the beings active in nature and they, although hidden, look at it so to speak, and are moved by the moral perspective giving a new direction to their activity.

First of all, we can study word for word how Rudolf Steiner introduces the preparations. We have to do it as regularly and intensely as possible. In the end we ought to know the Agriculture Course by heart. So our first approach to the indications in the Agriculture Course is through thinking; we ought to think how the words and indications are linked to one another, having been spoken out of imagination, inspiration and intuition. If we take for example the dandelion preparation, we ought to find out through thinking about it, why he speaks about the dandelion as being a messenger from heaven. Try to picture the relationship between the silica in the cosmic environment, and the potassium process streaming upwards from the earth via the root. Think over the relationship between the flower and the mesentery, and how the finished preparation makes the plant sentient. Take the words the spiritual researcher uses as a phenomenon. The phenomena of spiritual science are the words which the thoughts are clothed in. We meet these phenomena with our thinking in the same sense as we meet the sensory world by natural science. The spoken word in the Agriculture Course is an outstanding expression through which the spiritual world appears to us as phenomena.

In a second step, we must try to learn to feel beyond the words into the realm out of which they were spoken. We must try to feel how the indications are related to one another and thereby feel into the sphere of intuition. So we might build up and paint ever and again an inner picture which becomes more and more alive and releases the enthusiasm to really get down to work and make the dandelion preparation for instance.

In making the preparations we are not primarily involved with our thinking, but we expose our will by going out at the end of April to collect the dandelion flowers in a basket. Wandering over the pasture, we might just stand still for a moment and dwell on the situation we are meeting there. Try to feel the mood, the springtime atmosphere, this bright yellow-spotted pasture with the urgent green growth underneath. Try to feel how this single dandelion plant, ever since last spring and throughout the summer, autumn and winter, collected from heaven and earth enormous powers. It has concentrated them to lift up this stalk for a moment and open its flower so we can gather it. Try to behold all the details you have observed whilst gathering the flowers. Take a spade and have a look at the roots, how they grow down to seek out the potassium in the salty earthly realm, and try to picture how this process is transformed in root and stalk

in the white sap pressing upwards. Try to picture how the leaves are shaped and arranged in a rosette. Observe how, during the course of the year, maybe over a hundred leaves are formed. Behold how such a plant develops within its rosette a metamorphosis towards the flowering stage of the shaped leaves. Be aware how overnight the plant lifts up a second story, a loft of single florets that form this one bunch of the dandelion flower. And finally admire how, in the space of a few hours, the flower bases bend down and form the sphere where the seed appears ready to be carried aloft on its little umbrella. So while standing still there we can build up an image through thinking, through feeling and by being willingly involved. The outer, apparently simple deed of gathering the flowers is accompanied by building up this inner image which may become ever richer.

Having dried the flowers in the loft, the first stage of preparation making follows. We take the dandelion flowers and wrap them in a mesentery. We sew it up into a parcel. In this step we are fully challenged humanly, because it really becomes a free deed. Nothing pushes you to do it. It is simply a spiritual insight which we have internalized and work out of. It seems so easily done and not especially significant. And yet what are we doing? The dandelion flower is led beyond its natural destiny, which is seed formation. It is combined with something beyond, a sheath from the animal kingdom. Spiritual insight has led us to use a mesentery. We normally obtain one from a slaughterhouse, but ideally we would slaughter a cow ourselves. We do not do so, because we are not qualified to, but we should ideally be present at this event and observe the incredible beauty of the inner world of organs when the dead cow is opened up. It is as if the curtains of the astral heavens are opened. Experience the colors there and smell the inner astrality that is suddenly released of such an animal. We can try to sculpt these wonderful forms in our minds and behold their profound composition. We can take out the mesentery and see its transparency. Thus, we get a true picture of the mesentery in the context where it has been formed in the animal.

Then we take the second step of preparation making. We dig a hole and bury these parcels of wrapped dandelion flowers, covering them with an earth layer. Again it seems an easy deed, and yet it is a tremendous challenge to our will, because nothing forces us to do it. The more we enter this step with our understanding, the more our free will matches this challenge. In the second step we not only combine elements of the plant and animal kingdom, we also relate them to the mineral realm. In doing so we lead our thinking and feeling into our will. We search for an appropriate spot, maybe at the edge of the pasture, in the orchard or garden, and there in a sheltered spot we dig the

hole. We put the parcels in the hole. Before covering it, maybe we put some elder twigs over the dandelion parcels so that the animals won't get to their wonderful contents. After we level it up with earth, we stand still and dwell upon how the atmosphere is on the very day we do it, maybe Michaelmas, or some sunny golden day in October. Try to feel the autumnal atmosphere. We try to sense that this deed can be a fulfillment of celebrating Michaelmas. We might feel that our deed stems from a spiritual concept which has been brought down by spiritual research out of the realm of Michael into the earthly realm, enabling us to make these preparations. Michael governs this spiritual concept. He shows us with his directing gaze the path to follow to put it into reality and leaves its realization to our freedom. He delivers the concept. At this stage of our work we try to feel such an image, and at the same time we observe the conditions in the outer world, of the earthy, sandy or loamy nature of the soil. What kind of rock underlies it? Is it sandstone for instance, or limestone or granite? We must feel right down in the darkness of the solid rock that enables us to stand up. Furthermore, we should picture the situation of the surroundings; perhaps there is a fruit tree nearby, a hedge or a garden wall. In winter we might walk across the farmland and come to this spot. We remember what we experienced in autumn and compare it to the frosty atmosphere we are now in. Perhaps snow covers the earth, and crystallizing forces penetrate the earth. We try to imagine how are the forces relating to the dandelion flowers wrapped up in the mesentery. Thus we accompany the preparation process throughout the year and, by building up these pictures, we enlighten our will and our thinking pictures the surrounding while our will is active. Thus the image is more enriched and can be sensed in its spiritual reality.

In springtime, when we dig up the dandelion, we try to picture the situation that we encounter once more. We perceive the color, smell and structure of the dandelion remains, and compare it to what it was like in autumn. Again we stand still and dwell upon the unique phenomenon which we have created. What we have is a completely newly formed substance. It is humus-like and thus belongs to the earthly realm and yet it has become a carrier of a spiritual reality. What we have in hand is a germ in substance and force, wherein the cosmic and earthly realities are united but yet concealed, like in a seed. We are the creator of this new kind of seed. It is completely different from, and even polar opposite in its function to a plant seed. A plant seed contains impregnated in its mineral substance, the cosmic form of a plant. This form is present as a spiritual reality in the seed as a germ, as a potential. When the plant seed unfolds, this potential is determined into this specific physical form.

It becomes a defined outer image of its cosmic reality. The "seed" we are producing by making the preparations is different in its germ function. It does not contain a cosmic reality as a potential, an ideal form which may then unfold into an outer image. It contains a potential to germinate as a substance. It is the potential to enliven the earthly itself. When the preparations are placed in a compost heap or manure heap, they unfold a germinating force in the physical realm. What unfolds is not an outer image; it is the cosmic reality we are dealing with which opens the mineral world up to the processes in time.

The second step I was speaking of is applying the preparations. We are deeply involved with our thinking, feeling and willing, and must learn to harvest all the fruits of our efforts and of our experiences over time. We take a tiny little amount of this newly formed substance, put it into the compost or dung heap. We try to build up a picture of the decaying matter, of the microbial world being active in destruction. In this decaying process which tends to end up in mineralization, the preparation now radiates forces that stand against this decay and have the capacity to transform the manure heap to a kind of organism. The decaying forces are thus balanced out by the working of the preparations. When it is ready, we take the compost or manure and spread it onto the land, the diaphragm of the farm individuality, the soil. So we go out in the field and observe how the manure has now been worked in and try to imagine how from above and beneath, the spiritual reality is uniting with the middle sphere. We must open ourselves in our inner being to the reality we are creating. Don't just leave it and let it happen in the sense of cause and effect. If we accompany this process consciously all the time, we really do produce a work of art. We are painting a picture which is perceived by the beings active in nature.

Until now, we have only followed the steps of how the dandelion preparation comes into being. But try to imagine the richness of all six preparations and the manifold interweaving images we may perceive throughout the year while making and applying them. When we penetrate all our work with these images, we may become true biodynamic farmers. We are obliged to do most of our daily work with machinery, but working with the preparations, we have a space within our activities where we really can expose our free will and are able to converse between our inward being and the outside world. With this attitude we overcome the onlooker consciousness that sees it as a matter of cause and effect. But working with the preparations, building up this inner richness, we eventually behold ourselves as a creator of what happens to the interior of nature. We recognize it as our deed relating to our judgment. With this "seed" we endow nature

not only with a substance, but also with the devotional consciousness of our spiritual being.

I want to refer to one remark Rudolf Steiner made in a lecture given in 1911.² There he said we will see in the course of this century and all the more in future, the decaying of the earth, of all our natural environment. He continues by saying that we will be very sorrowful about it, and yet when we are really aware of this decaying world we will see that since the beginning of this century, all of a sudden here and there something refreshing will spark from it. And finally, he mentions those who are able to look into the background of this appearance can recognize new elemental beings which will become the servants of Christ. They come into existence through a new relationship we seek to build to the decaying earth. With this in mind, imagine what we are doing in making and using the preparations. In making them we combine out of spiritual insight what is separate in nature. When using them we implant in nature a new material, the composition of a new quality, which cannot be defined. The wisdom which reigns in nature is finite and somewhat defined by the ruling laws. But the quality of the matter we are now implanting is the most irrational. It is in its essence related to the quality of love: love is nothing but enlightened selfless will, the inauguratory substance of all future development. Love is the virtue to redeem, heal and transform all social distress. Why should we not be able to externalize this virtue and produce a force of irrational quality which redeems, heals and transforms what is in a state of natural decay in nature? While working with the preparations, I think we have to bear in mind this picture that we really do plant something into the earth that she longs for, but cannot create herself. It needs the free deed of man.

Now I want to look at another aspect. We are dealing with six preparations:

valerian	
dandelion	
oakbark	
stinging nettle	
chamomile	
yarrow	

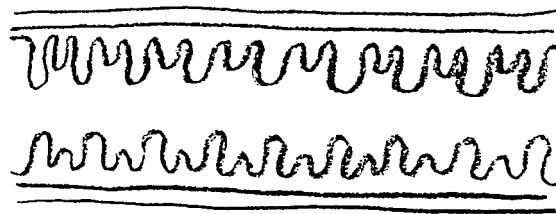
If we follow up the sequence, we see as I pointed out in last year's conference, that the first three and second three preparations belong together.³ Seen from the earth's surface, the first group works from below upwards, the second group from above downwards. They form a polarity and in the midst is the diaphragm, the soil, where the plant sends roots downwards and the stem upwards. The third of each group, the stinging nettle and valerian, don't require a

sheath. All the others require animal organs as sheaths, each of a different kind. If we look at the sheaths from the point of view of their sense activity, we also find a polarity.

In describing the first, the yarrow preparation, Rudolf Steiner mentions the bladder of the deer – normally the bladder of a stag is used – to be the appropriate sheath to envelop the yarrow flowers. Now is not the time to go into detail. A more comprehensive description of the yarrow preparation and its components were given in several talks at the conference in Dornach last year. They have since been published in German.⁴ The bladder is a concentration organ and at the same time an excretion organ. Rudolf Steiner refers to the bladder saying we have to consider the form aspect: “a deer bladder is almost a replica of the cosmos.”⁵

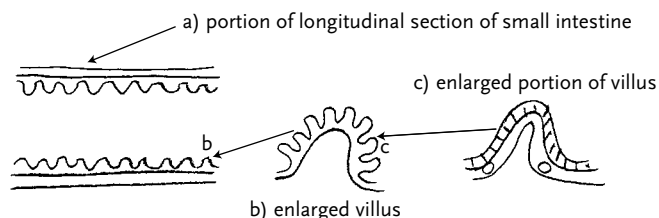
The second aspect is the substance of the bladder. It is built up in three layers. The inner layer is the mucus membrane, which secretes slime to recreate the wall which is continuously attacked by the urine, especially the uric acid. It is therefore a layer with an active metabolic activity. A second layer consists of very thin muscles which rhythmically contract and expand. This layer represents the rhythmic pole. The third, the outer-membrane belongs to the serosa which is part of the mesentery; this inner skin that lines the abdominal cavity and envelops all the metabolic organs. It is a sense membrane and represents that pole within the threefold structure of the bladder skin. So when we put the yarrow flowers into the bladder, they come in contact with the inner, more lively metabolic membrane. The outer layer is exposed to the elements and the working ethers when the balls are hung up in the air in the summertime and buried in the soil in winter, in the watery, salty earth below. Its sensory activity relates it to the outside world and whatever works there is now transmitted to the inner – to the yarrow blossom. It is concentrated there because it is preserved by this metabolically very active inner layer. The blossoms come into the inner, concentrating and preserving realm while the outer, sense active layer is exposed to the forces and substances of the outside world.

The sheaths of the next, the chamomile preparation, are the intestines. Their skin shows the same threefold structure as the bladder, although being an organ of digestion it is completely different.



Portion of longitudinal section of small intestine

We also must distinguish an outer layer which is part of the mesentery, the peritoneum, a mediating muscle layer, which causes the peristalsis: contraction and expansion. Finally, there is an inner layer which consists of innumerable villi and has an enormous enlargement of its surface. Look at a villus, it has a wave-like skin and therefore again provides an increase in the active surface. The villi have a double skin of cells through which the completely broken down substances of the intestinal tract are absorbed and carried away. Embedded in the mucus skin between the villi we find many lymph nodes and glands.



In this inner layer of the intestines, the ether body unfolds an immense activity by excreting juice into their cavity. This juice has the capacity to break down the food completely, right down to its mere mineral components. Although the threefold structure of the intestinal membrane resembles the make-up of the bladder, it is polar opposite in its function. The bladder is an organ of excretion at the end of the organism. It concentrates and releases what has become useless to the life processes. In contrast, the intestines are the entrance where the food is taken in and actively broken down. It is dissolved in water to enhance the life process. Into the intestinal tube through which the food passed and was digested, we fill the chamomile flowers. They come in close contact to this very lively mucous intestinal wall. Again, we have the phenomenon that the flowers are completely incorporated in this very metabolic realm, while the outer sensitive layer is in direct contact with the surrounding solid earth when the intestinal sausages are buried in wintertime. The rhythmical middle layer mediates what is sensed from outside to the interior, where it permeates the chamomile flowers and is thus preserved.

Considering the sheaths of the first two preparations, we move from the bladder, the exit of the metabolic system, to the intestines, its entrance. When we come to the stinging nettle preparation, what sheath would be appropriate? We must step beyond the threshold of the diaphragm into the rhythmic system, the realm of the pulsating heart and the breathing lung. But heart and lung are not organs that can be used as a sheath. Now Rudolf Steiner makes two most remarkable comments about the stinging nettle. On the one hand he points out that in making the stinging nettle preparation no sheath is required, and then describes how the

stinging nettle “should really grow around man’s heart, for in the world outside—in its marvelous inner working and inner organization—it is wonderfully similar to what the heart is in the human organism.”⁶ We must not only be aware of the words with which Rudolf Steiner pictures the results of his spiritual research, but learn to listen and feel behind these words, in order to deeply grasp the idea in its spiritual context. If we try to imagine and feel this picture of the stinging nettle growing around one’s heart, we may discover a most remarkable truth. We may grasp the idea that what actually envelops the heart of the human being is the peripheral circulatory system. The arterial blood streams into the periphery is then transformed to venous blood and streams back. It is most remarkable that the circulatory system evolved before the heart did. The heart is a later evolutionary development. If we take this picture seriously we could say that the stinging nettle should be enclosed by the whole circulatory blood system. But this is of course not feasible. On the other hand, Rudolf Steiner mentioned that the stinging nettle does not need a sheath. It has the capacity to as it were, cover itself. If we study the stinging nettle, we will find that all the leaves are covered with tiny silica stings which break and release the burning histamine and formic acid when you touch it. Towards its periphery the stinging nettle is strongly astralized. It has the capacity through this outer silica coat, to perceive what is working in the earth during summer and wintertime while it is buried there. It provides its own sheath to perceive and to preserve what is concentrated in its “inner organization.”

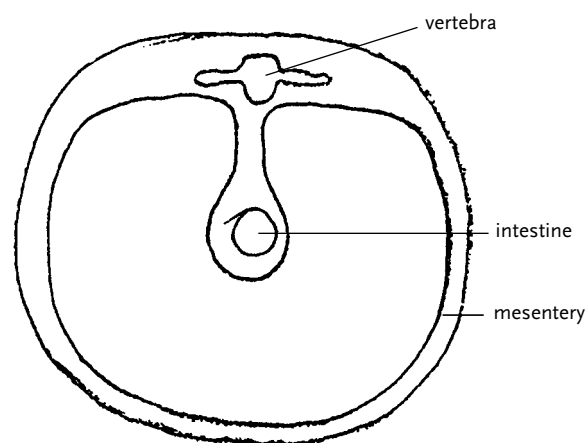
Now we have considered the first group of three preparations, which work from down below the earth to enliven, to refresh the soil and to sensibly organize its processes. With the second group we pass the threshold of the soil. They work from above. The first of these is the oak bark preparation. We take the oak bark and put it in the skull of a domesticated animal. So regarding the sheath we now pass from the rhythmic to the head, or sensory system. Why do we take the skull from a domesticated animal? The latter can be distinguished from the wild animal because in its physical and mental being, it is kept back in a more embryonic state. A domesticated animal does not develop right into the wild. When we approach it, it doesn’t run away, it comes towards you. It is ever and again a most remarkable experience which seems so obvious, to enter a cow stable and see all the animals standing or laying there somewhat expecting you to come to milk, feed and care for them. Their being is open towards you, to your guiding ego and towards their group soul. Looking from a higher aspect, domestication means that in former times people were able to keep the animal back in its evolutionary development – manifest

in morphological and physiological features – and thus to open its soul being to the group soul and to the guiding consciousness of man. This is the reason why I think that the skull of a domesticated animal is used for the oak bark preparation.

The crumbled oak bark is filled into the cavity within the skull. The interior of the skull is lined with the bone skin. In contrast to the belly sheath we have been speaking of in which the inside was lined with a metabolic layer, we find the bone skin in the skull to be a sensory membrane. It encloses the brain and reflects and concentrates into it all the forces of inner and outer perception that constitute the specific animal consciousness. Without this sensory sheath they would tend to get lost in the void. But by being reflected into the inside, the animal is able to unfold its conscious soul being. Now in place of the brain, we put the oak bark inside the skull and submerge it into decaying organic matter in a vessel or alongside a brook, and let rainwater drain through it throughout the wintertime. The abundance of disordered etheric forces, which are released by this watery, decaying organic matter, have an affinity to lime. They are absorbed by this well-structured calcium skull bone of the domesticated animal, sensed by the bone skin and then reflected and concentrated in this uniquely plant-born calcium structure of the oak bark. What happens is exactly the contrary to what we have observed in the metabolic realm. There the outer layer of the organs had a sensory capacity. The inside layer is metabolically active preserving organic residue (bladder) or enhancing organic decomposition (intestines).

In the middle is the rhythmic layer of the expanding and contracting muscles. Here we compose outside an environment of an active metabolism. Moon forces absorbed by atmospheric water permeate organic matter. Inside we have the sensory active skin which transmits to the oak bark what the middle layer, the skull bone mediates from the outside.

Now we step forward to the dandelion and to the question what kind of sheath is left in the sequence we have discussed so far. Can there be a further intensification of a sensing capacity in another organ beyond the skull? There is none. We have reached the forepart of the animal. And yet when we consider the ruminants, there is an intensification. We find it by returning to the metabolic realm. There ruminants, and especially cattle, develop their higher but dreaming-sleeping intelligence. The mesentery is the physical carrier of this intelligence which the cow for instance, develops in performing the “cosmic qualitative analysis” of the fodder and thereby comparing and composing the quality of the manure. In a higher sense, the mesentery is the brain of the cow. As a sensory membrane it lines the inner sphere of the abdominal cavity and envelops all the organs within.



Vertical section of cow's abdominal region

Going backwards in the cow and yet on a higher level than its sensory concentration in the head, we find this inner heaven, this wonderful mesentery which forms the serosas, the outer layer of the metabolic organs. As a thin interwoven transparent membrane, it comes down from the spinal region of the abdominal cavity, envelops the intestines and goes back upwards again. So in between the spine region and the intestines we have spread out a double membrane, a sensory organ which is sensitive to both sides. We really have an intensification of the skull/head function, because this doubly active sensitive organ reflects and concentrates whatever the cow has perceived in analyzing the composition of matter in the process of digestion. This happens mainly when the bloodstream as carrier of the nourishing forces coming from the fodder, flows up into the head, into the horn bone. There it cannot get any further; it gets dammed by the horns. The horn reverts the bloodstream back into the belly and then the peritoneum senses the result of this fodder analysis. It is within this region that the cow develops her consciousness and her powerful astrality. We now envelop the dandelion flowers in the mesentery and we have an inner and an outer sensitive preserving layer towards the flowers and an outer sensitive perceiving layer towards the elements and working ethers, which we expose the wrapped up balls to when we bury them during wintertime.

So I think the mesentery of the cow as part of the peritoneum is the utmost we can find in nature to make this preparation. It really serves as a preserving, transmitting, concentrating and preserving organ.

When we finally come to the third of the second group of preparations, the valerian, there is no appropriate animal organ left in nature that could further enhance or concentrate the working of this unique herb. The diluted juice of valerian by itself has the faculty to create a sheath, wherever

it is sprayed. As I understand, it is a sheath which consists of condensed warmth ether. It opens towards the spiritual, protects against influences of the natural environment and preserves the workings of its brother and sister preparations when we spray it over the compost heap. The compost or dung heap is enveloped by a warmth-sheath and thus becomes an individualized realm of well organized decomposition of organic residue and humus formation.

In concluding, when we look at the different sheaths we can comprehend their specific function, both as being sense organs towards the outside world and concentration and preservation organs towards their inner content. Their sense activity is a most essential part of the preparation process. It is the condition of what becomes this powerful concentration of forces in the humus-like substance of the preparations. But are the preparations themselves sense organs? Yes they are, in the same sense as a germinating plant senses the sunlight and all the workings of the cosmic circumference. As germ they are sense organs in the physical-mineral world. They sense the progressing cosmos and thus have the potential to overcome the physical, dead material in nature. They are as it were, a resurrection substance. They do not perceive and concentrate into a picture, like an ordinary sensory organ, something which is there which has already evolved. The preparations draw in, by a kind of perception, forces and substances from the cosmos, which endow the earth with the power of a new becoming. They

are germinating carriers of spiritualizing, evolving forces in the decaying physical-mineral world.

Notes

- 1) Rudolf Steiner, *Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture* (Kimberton, PA: Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, 1993), 9.
- 2) Rudolf Steiner, "The Christ Impulse in the Course of History II", Lecture given in Locarno, 19 September 1911. *Anthroposophical Quarterly* 12, No. 13, Autumn (1967).
- 3) Manfred Klett, "The Biodynamic Spray Preparations" (East Sussex, England: Biodynamic Agricultural Association, 1992).
- 4) *Zur Frage der Dungung im Biologisch-dynamischen Landbau* (Dornach, Switzerland: Verlag am Goetheanum, 1994).
- 5) Steiner, *Spiritual Foundations*, 96.
- 6) Rudolf Steiner, *Agriculture* (London: Biodynamic Agricultural Association, 1984), 95.

Editor's note: Reprinted with kind permission by the Biodynamic Agricultural Association in Great Britain. The lecture is reprinted here with some minor punctuation and spelling changes to reflect North American usage.

Manfred Klett is a long-time biodynamic farmer and former director of the Agricultural Department at the School of Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland.

Hugh J. Courtney

Preparations "Not As Substance But As Forces"

In late winter of 1989, it was my privilege to attend the several lectures presented by Maria Thun at Kimberton, Pennsylvania. During the course of those lectures, Frau Thun described a particular practice in connection with the use of the Barrel Compost (a.k.a. Thun recipe or Biodynamic Compound Preparation) and the BD #500. The technique used was an application of the Barrel Compost followed by a cultivation; this procedure was then repeated twice more for a total of three sprayings and three cultivations. Then, a three times application of BD #500 was made, again followed by cultivation after each application. It was my understanding that the purpose of this practice was to thoroughly incorporate both the Barrel Compost and the BD #500 into the top few inches of the soil. One unit of each of these preparations is sufficient to treat a large garden or even a full

acre, since one is not irrigating the soil, but simply using the water to distribute the "forces" of the preparations.

Subsequently, when preparing garden beds that spring, I decided to put the technique to use on a garden scale at least. A unit of Barrel Compost was stirred in three gallons of water, transferred to a five gallon backpack sprayer and sprayed on three beds of approximately one hundred feet in length. The beds were then cultivated with a Gravely PTO-operated front tine tiller with the tines set at a depth of no more than three to four inches. A second and third spraying was made with cultivation following each application. Next, BD #500 was stirred and sprayed in the same manner followed by a cultivation after each of the three sprayings. In the process of doing the tillage, one became aware of an enormous difference in the ease or smoothness

of the last cultivation in comparison with the initial ones. This difference was so noticeable that the whole process was used again on another bed a few days later, but with a garden rake used for the cultivation part of the procedure. Again, the almost effortless movement of the rake through the soil during the last cultivation as compared to the difficulty of movement during the initial cultivation, was quite noticeable.

A year later, in April of 1990 during a gardening workshop here at JPI, I decided to have the workshop attendees try this process for themselves. We set up two garden beds side by side and had each participant take a certain section of each bed which would be theirs to rake. To one bed we applied the stirred Barrel Compost whereupon they proceeded to rake their section of that bed, plus their section of the second bed which had not been sprayed. A total of three applications of Barrel Compost followed by three ap-



After digging out the Biodynamic Compound Preparation (a.k.a. BC) from the brick pit in foreground, participants Catherine Kazlo, Kim Youngblood, Lenna Keefer and JPI staff member Laura Riccardi screen the BC during JPI's Seminar Part 1, which took place in late June. Photo ©Patricia Smith

plications of BD #500 were made. Each application was followed by a raking of the assigned sections of both the sprayed and the unsprayed beds. All the participants detected a significant difference between the two beds by the final cultivation. The untreated bed could be compared to trying to butter one's toast using a stick of butter just removed from the freezer, whereas the biodynamically treated bed had a smoothness comparable to using a stick of butter that had been sitting on the back of a warm stove. Some participants objected that the second bed at least should have been sprayed with water so that a comparison could be made on a more equivalent basis. So the next day, the other half of the group of workshop participants tried the same exercise with one bed sprayed with the Barrel Compost and the BD #500, and the other bed sprayed with water. Again, the three times for each BD treatment and the six times for the treatment with plain water on the "control" bed were followed by raking each section of both beds. Once more, each participant was able to detect a significant difference in smoothness of the soils in the two different beds. That is, the rake moved with much greater ease through the soil in the bed treated with the preparations.

For anyone interested in presenting an experience of the difference of biodynamic agriculture detectable rather immediately by the human body, I would suggest trying the above experiment to see if you can detect the same kind of results we experienced with our Virginia soils.

An additional observation which provides evidence of the "forces" inherent in the preparations can be made when plant roots are carefully examined. If one is weeding plants of equal maturity, for example, lamb's quarters from biodynamically treated soil and from untreated soil, a substantial difference in the root "expression" can be seen. The plant from the biodynamically treated soil will have more of a "tap root", "carrot-like" form or, "cosmic" force expression (Figure 1), whereas the plant from the untreated soil will have a more "ramified," horizontally diffused form or, "earthly" forces expression (Figure 2). Careful observation will sooner or later give the biodynamic practitioner the possibility of observing a "cosmic" and "earthly" forces difference in above ground portions of the plant.

As additional means of experiencing the biodynamic preparations as "forces" rather than substances come to our attention (or yours), we will hope to share them.

Editor's note: The preceding article has been available from JPI as an information sheet since 1991.

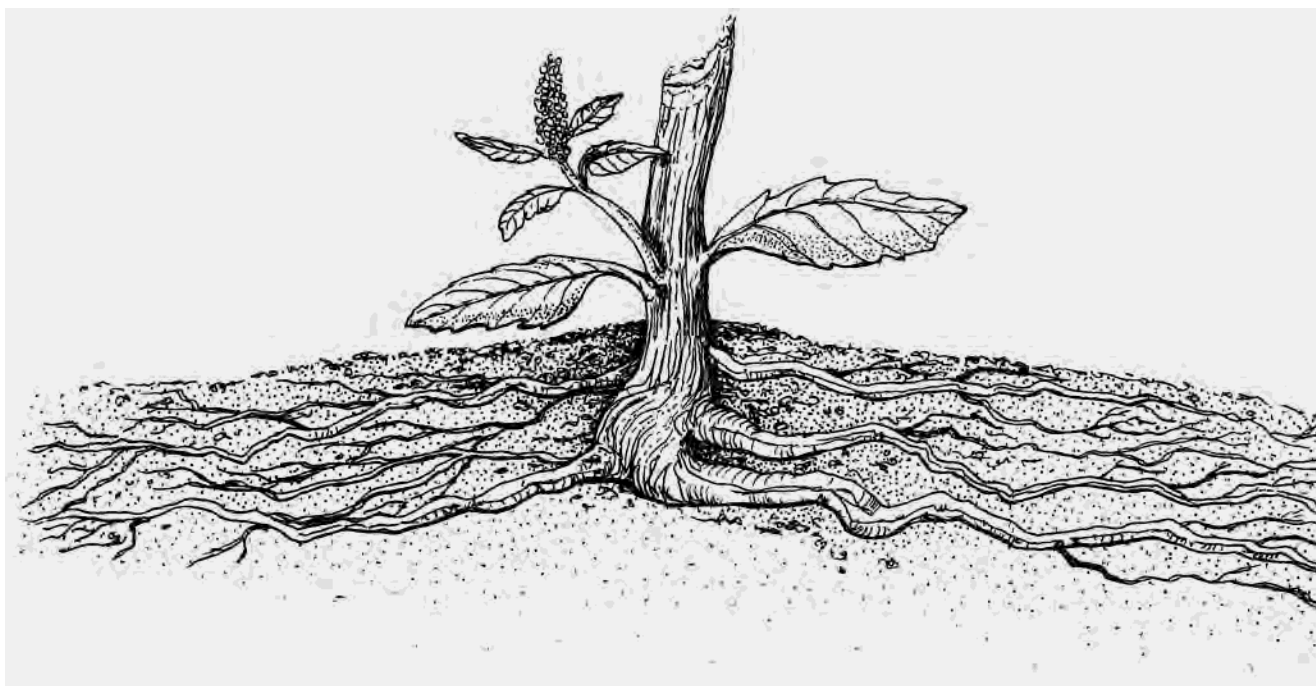
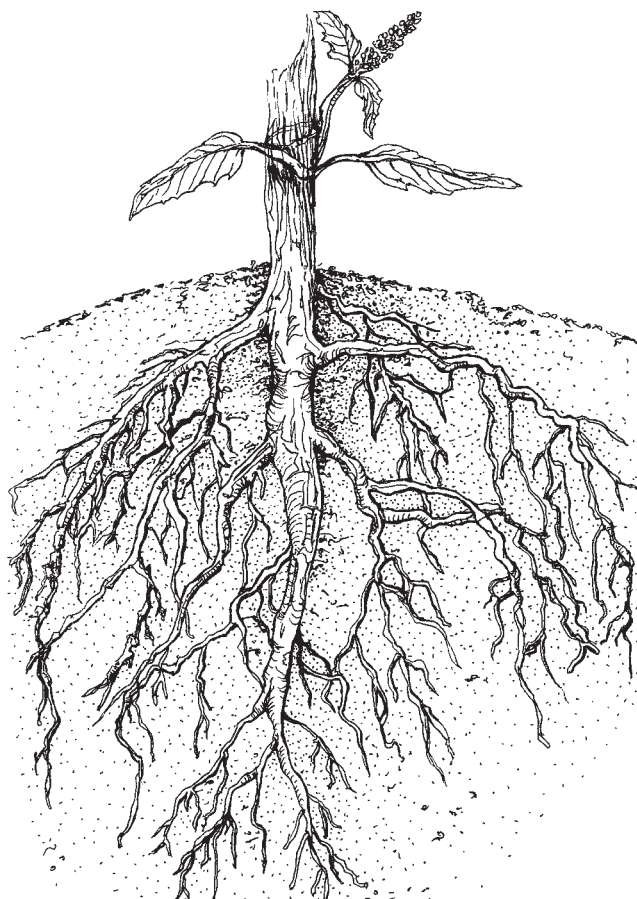
**The root system of Lamb's Quarters
(*Chenopodium album*)**

The comparison of cosmic forces and earthly forces

Figure 1 (right) – From biodynamically treated soil. Notice the “tap root” formation, an expression of the influence of cosmic forces.

Figure 2 (below) – From untreated soil. Notice the lateral formation, an expression of earthly forces.

Thanks to biodynamic practitioner Lenna Keefer for the illustrations. Lenna is a botanical illustrator, flower essence practitioner, herbalist and an ethno-botanical arts and crafts creator in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.



“Precisely from the example of agriculture, we can see how necessary it is to derive forces from the spirit, forces that are as yet quite unknown. This is necessary not only for the sake of somehow improving agriculture, but so that human life on Earth can continue at all, since as physical beings we depend on what the Earth provides.”

Rudolf Steiner – *Spiritual Foundations for the Renewal of Agriculture*, Introductory, p. 3



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