

Planets and Life Forces in the Compost Preparations

Based on Dr. B. C. J. Lievegoed, "The Working of the Planets and the Life Processes in Man and Earth", presented 1951. Beginners are advised to read through the "Introduction to BD" class. The class material includes a glossary of terms.

Review Of Basic Concepts

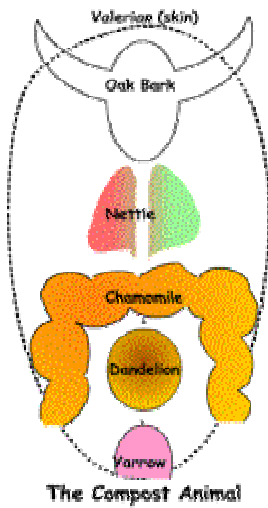
In the plant, we see life forces at work in the growing and forming of a living being. The physical and etheric forces (life-growth forces) work from within outwards, the astral forces work around it and spiritual forces of the archetypes from the far distance (zodiac). Physical forces work in space, that is, in forms radiating out from a solid center. Etheric and astral forces work in counter-space, that is, with forms radiating inward from the periphery to a hollow center. Etheric processes happen in time, with progressive developmental changes that demonstrate a history. Astral and higher forces are irrelevant to time because they are always streaming through the organism, however they typically unfold in a periodically repeating rhythm.

Organisms manifest in a threefold way; for the plant, the root, leaf, and flower correspond to the head, chest and limbs in animals. Etheric forces demonstrate four types, corresponding to the four states of matter. The Life Ether is active in the root (or head), the Warmth Ether in the flower and seed (or limbs) while Light and Chemical Ethers are active in the leaves (or chest). An organism does not come into being merely through etheric processes, but only where the astral principle presses its seal. The archetype induces the threefoldness based upon an opposing polarity with a middle rhythmically linking the poles. Non-living things may have polarity, such as a magnet, but they lack the threefold organization.

The astral principle is carried as a moving, dynamic activity based on a sevenfold archetypal pattern. These seven working principles influence the formation of specific organs in the animal, from which their influence permeates the whole creature. Spiritual working principles are archetypically arranged by twelve principles that reveal themselves in the zodiac. These principles are responsible for the specific individuality (Ego), that which makes a plant be a rose and not, say, sage. The seed is the carrier, or point of attachment, for the spiritual forces that define the species.

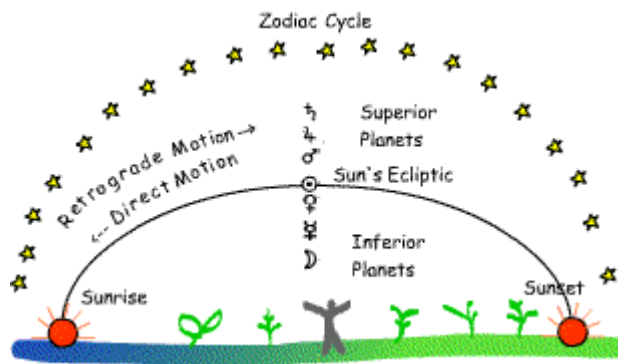
The seed only unfolds when surrounded by the physical, etheric and astral elements in such a way that these forces can all stream freely into one another. This is what fertile soil provides. Think of a super-saturated salt solution; just a small crystal is enough to induce the whole solution to crystallize. Similarly, a truly fertile soil "longs" to be a plant and is just waiting for the contact of a seed to give it an archetypal "instruction set". It's our job to make the "pre-plant" condition.

We do that with compost. Compost is formed from decaying plant and animal substance, so it still has something of their physical, etheric and astral forces. But these forces are dispersing and the spiritual forces have already withdrawn. We try to capture the dispersing forces and bring them into cooperation once again so that new spiritual archetypes can be received. The remnants of the old organs (leaves, etc) are to be destroyed but their etheric and astral principles are to remain united in the compost. Imagine a caterpillar in its cocoon; it must go through a period of chaos before the new body of a butterfly can form. Likewise the compost goes through chaotization, in order to be at the disposal of the seed. But there is an essential difference – in the animal, astral forces work from within, concentrated in the organs. While in the plant, astral works from outside, streaming through the plant. To conduct the chaotising harmoniously, we implant something like planetary organs in the compost pile.



We do this by inserting the biodynamic preparations. Six of the preparations represent specific planetary forces. The seventh is the balancing force of the sun, represented by the horn manure/horn clay preparations. The farmer should be conscious of these underlying processes and not just operating mechanically or dogmatically. The place to learn about such physiological processes is from the doctor. In fact, the farmer can learn much by considering how the physician treats the human body. And the doctor can enrich his knowledge from the observations of biodynamics.

The reader should be familiar with the sequence of the planets. Their “nearness” to earth is based on which planets can eclipse or come in front of other planets.



Planet		Associated Metal
Saturn	Superior	Lead
Jupiter	Beyond Sun	Tin
Mars		Iron
Sun		Gold
Venus		Copper
Mercury	Nearer than Sun	Quicksilver
Moon	Inferior	Silver



Notice that the sequence can be resolved into three opposing polarities shown by the arrows, with the sun as the harmonizing middle.

First polarity: Saturn – Moon, Sun as middle

Second polarity: Jupiter – Mercury, Sun as middle

Third polarity: Mars – Venus, with Sun as middle

Saturn -- Moon

Saturn is the most distant planet, just as the Moon is the closest. Saturn is like a gateway toward the spiritually active stars. The Moon leads to the ether spheres that are close to the Earth, where the Spirit wants to impress its seal into the world of substance. Thus, Saturn/Moon bestow the direction and strength for beings to incarnate. It is important during embryonic development and for the first thirty years of a person's life. In man, the Saturn process enters the hair vortex at the back of the head and radiates into the body, making Man into a picture of his individual Ego. This process terminates in the skeleton, where it becomes a lifeless image of the Ego. If Saturn were to work by itself, in thirty years man's body would have calcified and turned into a stalactite!

Saturn works as a differentiating force within warmth, the most spiritual ether. Where Saturn rarefies warmth, crystallized substance (bone) comes into place. Where it densifies, warmth's carrier blood (bone marrow) is formed. Blood cells are formed in the center of the physical, almost lifeless skeleton. After about three weeks, blood cells are absorbed by the spleen. So the spleen is the consummation of the Saturn process.

We can see two Saturn processes:

1. Incarnating: leading to a hard, lifeless image in physical space.
2. Resurrecting: the Ego, in the form of the blood, permits karma to play out over time.

Saturn is both death and resurrection. The image of the Ego occurs twice, once as the physical in the skeleton, and once, through the blood, as the being living in time. Lievegoed summarizes these two processes with symbols, ^ or v. Saturn leads the spiritual to the physical world, but in so doing, it brings dead rigidity. But Saturn leads the spiritual out of the physical in the course of one fulfilling one's life (karma), a form of resurrection. In the plant world, we usually meet with only the first process. As Saturn influence is coming in from the far outside, it can be effective only where working comprehensively from all sides, not in working from a center. Saturn is active in the Valerian preparation, which envelops the whole outside of the compost pile. Such compost bestows full expression of the seed's species.

Now consider the Moon – it stands opposite to Saturn and manifests continuity of qualities through a sequence of generations. Moon processes are active in propagation and heredity, in the sense of cellular reproduction. IN this case, we observe cell rising from cell, linked in steady growth. The Moon is associated with recurring repetition of the same. She is concerned with the sequence of generations streaming horizontally across the Earth and continuing over time. Moon forces are active in swelling growth, in cell division and in propagation. If Moon forces alone were active in Man, he would become a soft sphere of albumen and would grow forever. But the Moon finds a limit in the skin; it is not effective outside the boundary.

Moon forces enter in front, in the region of the bladder, radiate into the reproductive organs and eventually permeate the whole organism as far as the skin. While Saturn is the bearer of individuality to the skeleton, Moon is the bearer of the type and becomes evident in the skin. Humans with strong Moon forces have beautiful skin (note how we associate the beautiful skin of movie stars with a strong sexual attraction.) The skin as "Moon skeleton" gives an image of Man's heredity.

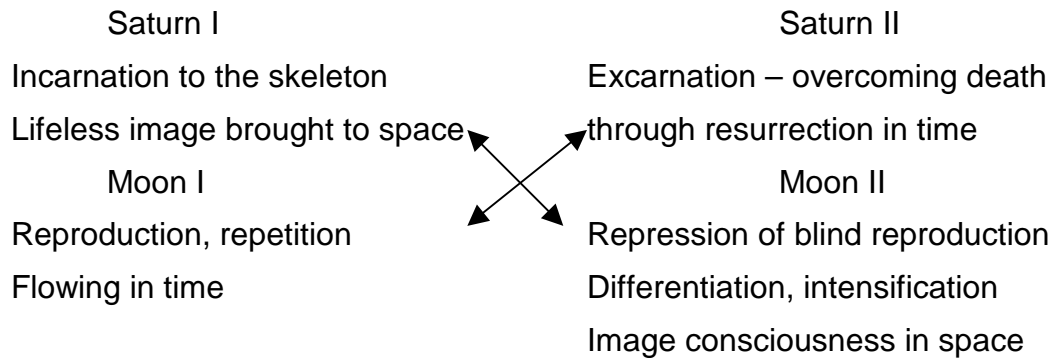
Moon processes are also differentiated. During embryonic development, the nervous system forms out of an invaginated strip of skin, placed within like a little island. This "inner skin" becomes the bearer of a second process -- that of the external world reflected through the nerve/sense system until it reaches the human's consciousness. Thus, the brain becomes where the Moon forces come to a rest. Physiologically, the force now holds back mere cell division and the brain tissue becomes the most differentiated in the body. Such tissue also suffers the most loss of connection with etheric life forces. Ironically, in giving us the ability of creative thought, the brain tissue becomes the least "alive", the least able to heal itself or reproduce. This end result of differentiation is called intensification.

So the Moon also shows two aspects:

1. Growth promotion: streaming in time, eternal repetition of the same type.
2. Repressing life: mirror-like reflection, life-forces bounce away, but the image of the outer world is preserved. (Note how the Moon shines by reflecting the Sun's light and that silver is used to make a mirror.)

In the plant world, we see Moon effects in cell growth. Calcium acts with the watery element as mediator of this growth. The Oak Bark preparation, containing high calcium, is prepared in the animal skull (as if a brain) and held under water. Steiner said this preparation would counteract plant diseases by suppressing an overly rampant etheric element. One could also say, by setting a limit (a skin) to the Moon forces.

As we look at these processes weaving into one another, we see Saturn as the image of the Ego individuality, placed in space but becoming another opportunity in time. Meanwhile Moon places into the stream of time a sort of type-heredity that is not individualized. The human overcomes the sequence of generations by repressing blind growth and, in reflecting the external world, the mind awakens.



Jupiter – Mercury

Jupiter is the molder of the world. While Saturn creates a bare image in the skeleton, Jupiter molds the rest of the body around the skeleton in fullness and flowing beauty. Jupiter works down from above, rounding and recreating the celestial sphere in rounded (plastic) forms. All the internal organs are rounded, sometimes with hollows where another organ's roundness presses in. Jupiter forces radiated from the rounded brow, molding the brain, and later the thoughts, especially those concerned with bring order and universal connections. From there, these forces work deeply into the body, forming organs and muscles. At the same time, Jupiter strives for super-human gestures. If Jupiter worked all alone, at about fourteen years old, we would all be like beautiful Greek statues, with soulful bearing and gesture but completely rigid.

From this rigidity, the Ego individuality frees itself in movement and gesture. The alternating play of muscles contracting is deeply connected with the liver. Muscle movement is due to chemical changes in the tissue, but these chemicals must be controlled and balanced by the liver. This organ is the most fluid and life-filled, that is, it is the organ least permeated by Jupiter processes so that it can have the role of controlling those forces.

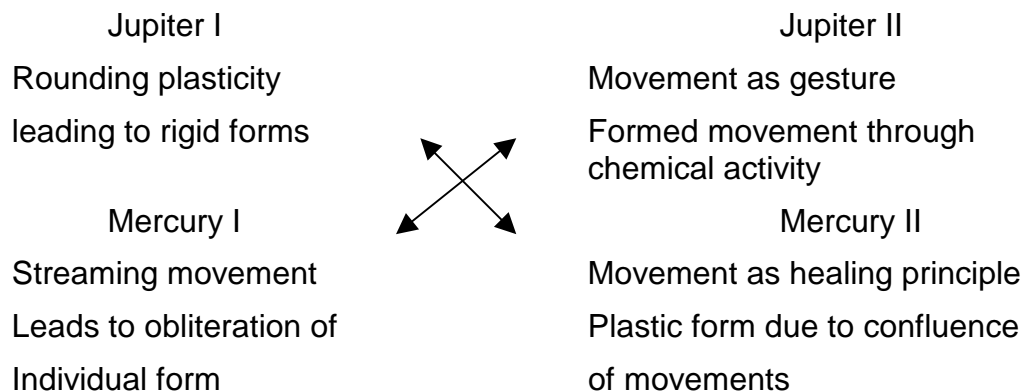
In the plant world, we see Jupiter forces creating the rounded molded forms and secondarily in chemical changes, where Jupiter and Mercury work together in the flowing sap. Jupiter is represented by the Dandelion preparation. Molding forces are handed into the plant through silica, the mineral associated with forces from beyond the Sun. Rudolf Steiner described dandelion as the mediator between

the cosmic silica forces and those surrounding the plant, bringing health and stability.

While Jupiter gives harmony and order, Mercury brings chaos, but one we might call “sensitive chaos”. This is movement without any particular direction, but ready to flow into anything, adapting to any resistance by flowing around, always in movement. One has only to think of liquid quicksilver for an image. Whatever kind of movement happens, it is in response to outer circumstances. In the human body, this type of streaming movement is represented by the lymphatic system. The blood vessels may be fixed but lymphatic streams can move as they chose, as long as they reach the lymph glands. While Jupiter is harmonious symmetry, Mercury has a tendency to asymmetry. If a feature is oblique or crooked in the human face, that is Mercury confounding Jupiter’s intentions. Mercury has a sense of humor and is pleased if divine intentions don’t quite come off. Thus, the gods never finish their work because a state of flux remains. If Jupiter is the king sitting on his throne, at his feet is Mercury as the court jester. Mercury tolerates all conditions, heat and cold, sun and shade, but wants life to go on. In extreme cases, Mercury becomes dishonest and even leads the plant into parasitism. Mercury was the god of merchants and thieves, making sure that earthly goods do not remain in one place but are constantly changing hands.

This faculty for adaptation would lead to loss of character; Ego avoids this by diverting movement with more movement. We see when two streams meet, they form whirlpools and empty spaces. This is Mercury’s second principle – creating a responsive “newness” by combining movements. The organs taking shape from dynamic movement become different from the archetypical images being projected to Earth. In the plant world, we see these two principles. A beech leaf is completely different from an oak leaf – variability is a Mercury expression. Merging forces are healing, but true healing requires not only that forces merge but also that something new results from the merger. Mercury is active in the Chamomile preparation. This preparation stimulates plant growth through potassium and calcium and has been intensified by the intestine.

Jupiter and Mercury weave into each other; the preordained form of the organs meets Mercury and is changed according to the circumstances. The chemical expansion and contraction of Jupiter give direction to the streaming movement of substance through Mercury. Jupiter comes to rest in muscle, then the activity changes to chemical and the resulting muscle movement overcomes what would otherwise be rigidity. Muscle movement sucks at the liver. (That is, the muscles fetch substances from the liver rather than the liver sending to the muscles.) Mercury streams in an irregular way through the lymph vessels and rests in the lymph glands, where the fluid stream leaves the body. The one exception is the lung, which as an empty hollow lacks the fluid streams present throughout the rest of the body. Thus, the liver and lung are the consummation of Jupiter and Mercury respectively.



Mars – Venus

Mars, the last of the outer planets, carries purposeful movement that is directed towards a goal. Mars-force is the process by which the archetype penetrates into the physical sphere but also that which pushes it out again into the world. Mars is at work as the growing point of a plant pushes out and conquers space. Mars brings an inner activity of determination and direction – without Mars, no plant would exist. Mars forces work in the shooting and sprouting of spring growth – as an athlete throws his javelin.

Mars forces enter Man between the shoulder blades and penetrate into the iron processes of the blood. They also radiate into the speech centers; Mars is formed in the words streaming from the human mouth. The Mars type of human is outwardly active all the time but finds himself unable to preserve what he has created because he can't stand to finish anything. Rather than care and cultivate, the Mars type destroys and builds anew. He has a strong creative urge but, if blocked, becomes consumed with wrath.

Mars does not yield to soft measures, so if the Ego is to resist being carried away, it must summon strong resistance. Such opposition creates a damming up of the direction but surprisingly, this transforms into sound. Think of the string on a musical instrument. Force and resistance interact as tautness – and the string forms a musical tone. If we take a metal plate, cover with fine sand and strike a tone, we observe the sand particles form “sound figures” indicative of the particular tone. On Earth, substances come into existence according to Tone Ether forms. Cosmic music starts from Mars and is passed on to the Earth through the Chemical or Tone Ether. In the human or animal body, Mars orders and forms the substances working from the astral body through the organs. In the plant, there is no astral body and Mars works from the cosmic sphere.

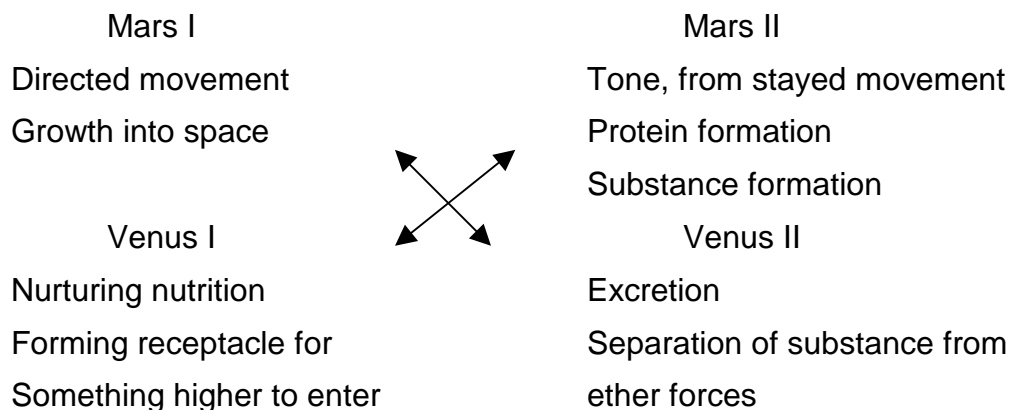
Iron forces are active in blood hemoglobin and end in the liver where the hemoglobin molecule is dissociated into gall. Iron is held back within the body. Out of this holding back are born albumen-forming forces like “sound figures”. The process of building protein in the liver is one of arranging the chemicals like sound figures. Mars is manifested in the Nettle preparation, which harmonizes forces in the soil, bringing true nutritive value to the plant. This is connected with

a health protein-building process and also the formation of starch, because each starch granule is surrounded with a protein sheath.

While Mars is out there, Venus is goes deep and stays hidden. Venus is connected with deeper nutrition (at the cell level) and the deepest building process of the organism where inanimate substance is first received into the life stream. Venus is connected with clearing space for something else to unfold. Think of the home belonging to a quite and attentive host. In this home, people can meet and have a productive exchange of ideas precisely because the quiet host has arranged the conducive environment. As Mars is associated with speaking, so Venus is associated with listening. Goethe called conversation more precious than light because of this harmony between partners.

To become Venus completely would mean to renounce the self; the Ego could no longer exist. Ego overcomes this by “sucking away” or excreting products of the life forces, through the kidney-bladder system. From these organs, the sucking power of excretion reaches into all the living cells. The Venus process comes to an end in the kidney. Here ether force and substance are separated, the substance is excreted and the ether forces radiate upwards into the eye, combining the act of seeing with the force of going out into the world. Mars and Venus have a strong cooperation. Protein, formed through Mars, nourishes the cells along the Venus path. The ether forces freed by the kidney unite with the determinations and direction of Mars in the eye’s force of vision.

Think of the violin. The determined movement of the bow is halted by the stable string and tone results. The resonance of the instrument creates the opening for the tone to develop and individuality adds musical quality to the tone. In the plant world, e can see the force of the growing point, directed outwards, is surrounded and filled by nourishing Venus force. Both are needed for growth. Building up and excreting cooperate closely; the dammed force of the growing shoot makes protein formation, while the force of excretion is in the bark and its deposits. Venus is manifest in the Yarrow preparation, which is prepared in the stag bladder, at the end of the kidney sucking process. Thus, the yarrow is strengthened in its connection with Venus so it can receive cosmic substance to enliven the soil and balance exploitation. It is associated with potassium processes.



Working of the Sun

The Sun stands in the center of the three polarities. It provides balance, not a dead equilibrium but a living interplay, for each. The activity of the Sun is both expanding, spreading out in space, and contracting, into a point. Neither follows a straight line but both are spiral processes. We see this contrast as “Winter Sun” and “Summer Sun” as well as in “night” and “day”. In making the preparations, it is important that the material be exposed to the right stage of the Sun. This breathing and pulsing of the Sun goes through all the planets, creating a rhythmic interplay. In the human body, we see the Sun rhythm in blood circulation. First, the blood streams from the heart into the periphery of the smallest capillaries. On its return journey, it flows slowly, then gathers speed and rushes back into a vortex in the right atrium of the heart. Similarly, the Sun condenses cosmos into substance, then transforms it back into cosmic. Horn Manure, exposed to the “Winter Sun”, and Horn Silica, exposed to the “Summer Sun”, are the two preparations representing the Sun aspects. Both are stirred before use, with a rhythmic stirring that produces a spiral vortex, releasing the Sun forces preserved in the materials. Because plants are really a Sun-Earth being, these preparations are the most important. After the Earth has received the treated and harmonious compost, the Sun-breathing process brings all into movement. Thus, the Sun preparations are applied at the last moment before sowing and maturation. Horn Manure brings the forces that are concentrated on the Earth as germination and growth; while Horn Silica brings the outer cosmic forces that produce quality and aroma.

If we combine with the images of planetary processes, we see the group of outer planets represents cosmic influence coming down to Earth.

Saturn I	From cosmic distance, Spirit works inward, contracting, the archetype seal is impressed onto the Physical, reaches as far as crystallization.
Jupiter I	Rounding-off forces add plastic beauty to the severe Spirit forms, creating noble and sublime patterns.
Mars I	What has been created is now placed forcefully into space, directed growth becomes visible.

These three influences are the incarnation of a living being. The archetypes want to place themselves in the world, but without paying attention to earthly conditions. The world, however, imposes a counterforce that is a responsive adaptation to local conditions. The Earth responds, answers, receives and nurses the cosmic influence through the inner planet processes.

Venus I	Opens the body as a chalice for Etheric Formative forces, nourishes what Mars thrusts into space.
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Mercury I	Brings fluid, streaming movement, completely adaptable to the momentary conditions, changes rigid Jupiter forms into what is possible for the local conditions.
Moon I	Through reproduction at the small-scale (cell division) and large (species reproduction) creates chaos into which Saturn can impress its seal, where in every cell the archetype can be received anew.

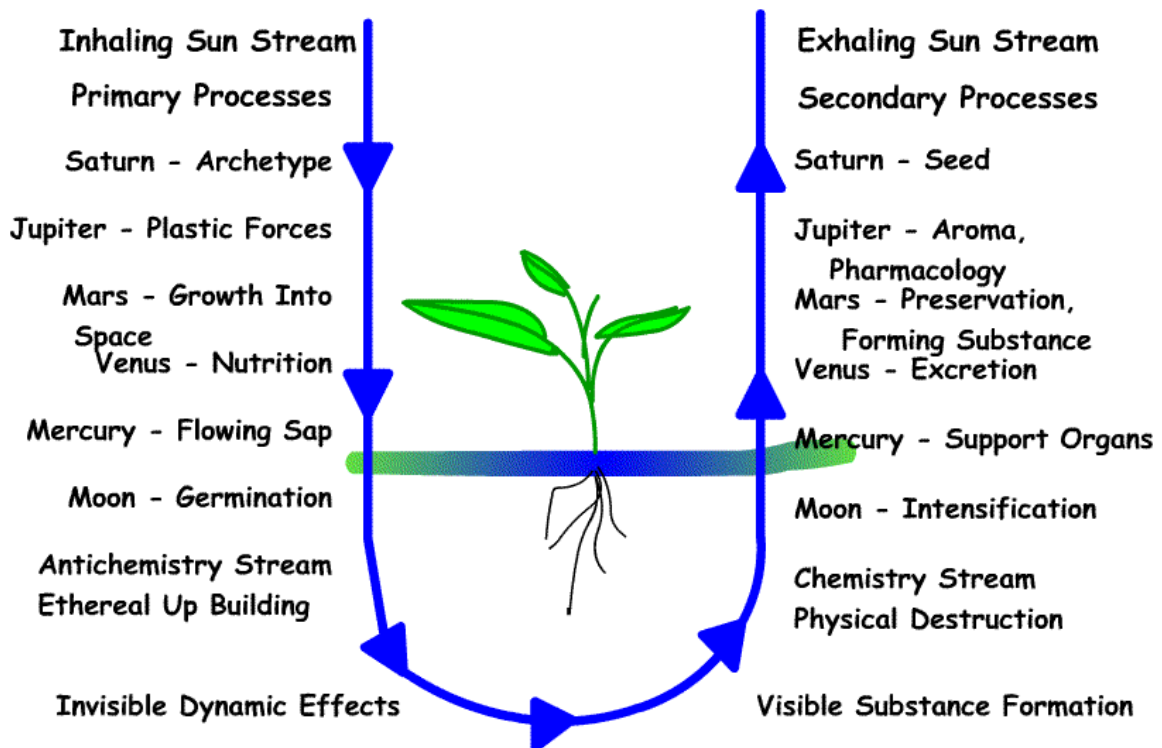
The outer and inner planets weave together to bring about birth and growth. But the driving force behind is the contracting force of the Sun, condensing from the periphery through the planets into Earth. This is what happens in the human embryo and in the case of the plant world during autumn and winter. On a large scale, this dying process occurs during the fall season. On a small scale, it happens all the time because the single cell must die for the organ to grow. Life is a continuous, dynamic living and dying. The retarding forces of death are as important as those of growth. In plants, we can see that an excess of up-building forces creates a disease condition, in which alien organisms become parasites. To understand how these disintegrating processes are organized, we must look at the secondary processes.

Moon II	The sequence of generations-through-time is thrown back out of the world of space into that of time by reflection. Intensification is the retarding, congesting of growth forces so that these become finer and more configured, as the cotyledons lead to the leaf and then the flower petal. This is in opposition to unfettered growth that would otherwise lead to a single giant leaf. Refinement happens while expansive growth is restricted, and brings more the individual archetype of the plant's Spiritual nature.
Mercury II	Formative forces are countered through the meeting of flowing movements. Empty space is created, falling out of the stream of life. The forms of supporting organs are created, such as wood out of cambium.
Venus II	Excretion is closely connected with Mercury II, allowing ordered substance (protein) to be present. The process harmonizes substance but comes to rest in dying substance. That is, living protein is swirling albumin chaos; only dying protein falls into a definite structure. Once substances form, they decline into increasingly rigid patterns.
Mars II	After St. Johns Day, the forces of maturation increase in the plant. Leaves and buds harden off. From living, streaming fluid-life, food substances are stored as solid deposits, a submission to Earthly gravity, a preserving condensation. Up-building is over but substances will be saved for future renewal.

Jupiter II	Jupiter's activity is that of chemistry. Aromatic substances are the finer Jupiter processes. Starch is formed out of sugar, oils out of carbohydrates, alkaloids out of disintegrating proteins. These substances bestow specific properties on the seeds and fruits. The cosmic influence is made denser (to roots) and thinner (to aromatic fruits).
Saturn II	The resurrection from space into time occurs through the formation of the seed. The whole plant disappears from the world, contracted into a minute point, handed over to a future time. Excess contraction means that protein contracts to carbon-nitrogen bonds (cyanogen). Stone fruits exhibit cyanogens aroma in their pit, showing their strong connection to Saturn.

To summarize the Sun-planet connections:

Primary and Secondary Planetary Processes



The "Summer Sun" stimulates the cosmic influences coming downward to become the forces that drive plant growth invisibly. In the secondary processes, the plant becomes visible – what we can see has already fallen out of life – life itself is an invisible dynamic process. Only after the life process has passed through the Earth sphere, overcoming the Earth forces, do we see substances formed. These bear the impress of life but are no longer living. The visible plant is left behind in the resurrection of forces, as a butterfly leaves its chrysalis.

The Spring-Summer-Day Sun is inhaling or incarnating.

The Autumn-Winter-Night Sun is exhaling or excarnating.

In the first Agricultural Lecture, Steiner pointed out these two streams in plant growth. First, the growing forth (primary processes of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars), then propagation and reproduction (primary processes of Moon, Mercury, Venus). The outer planets work via warmth and silica; the inner ones via calcium and water. In the Second Lecture, Steiner points out that it is more complicated through the three-fold form. Now, we find the Earth's surface compared to the diaphragm, as a breathing surface for the Sun. During incarnating, near planets work directly on the plant through rain and dew; outer planets work through silica in the air and are reflected by silica in the Earth. Below the ground, the secondary forces begin in order to set limits to growth. The disintegrating processes lead to contraction of form, intensification (of leaf to petal), and preserving nutrition. These forces work from the Earth to the root. So above the ground, primary incarnating forces are active; below the ground retarding, excarnating forces are preparing.

During winter, the situation is reversed. Above the ground is rigidity and cold, the plant withdraws, secondary excarnating forces rule the atmosphere. Life processes withdraw to below the soil, preparing to unite with the seed. Water processes condense to crystals, but when they thaw in the spring, they carry to the seed resurrection, protein formation, aroma and quality. The Earth is at its most crystalline, exposed to primary outer planet forces, absorbing the force of the archetype. The secondary inner planet forces wait by the roots and become active after January 28 as sap begins to rise, even if snow still covers the Earth.

This is the picture of "Heavenly forces rising and descending, passing from one to another the golden buckets".

Summer Conditions

Warmth	Flower warmth	Archetype – plastic forces growing forth	Reflected by rocks (Si)
Air	dead		
Water	Rain	Germination – flowing sap, nutrition	Drawn down by lime (Ca)
Earth	living		
-----	-----	Sun (Diaphragm)	-----
Earth	dead	Intensification, support, excretion	Root tendency working up
Water			
Air	Root warmth	Food substance, aroma, seed formation	From below working down
Warmth	living		

Winter Conditions

Warmth	Distant	No point of contact	In spring, these start downward drawn by lime
Air			
Water	Snow	Resurrection, food formation, protein formation, health	Trickle down as melted snow
Earth			
-----		Sun (Diaphragm)	-----
Earth	Crystalline	Communion of seed and archetype	
Water			
Air	Root warmth	Germination forces, flowing of sap	Working upwards after January
Warmth			

502 – Yarrow Prep

Steiner says sulfur effects are here brought to highest perfection, works as in medicine to remedy weakness of the astral body. This ability to create a favorable influence is characteristic of Venus. Yarrow is prepared by placing in a stag bladder (terminating point for Venus), exposing to the Summer Sun, then buried over winter. Steiner says it quickens the soil to receive more distant cosmic substances that come to Earth in homeopathic quantities. These are outer planet effects. Potassium, active in the plant framework, is quickened by yarrow. Excretion of cellulose and salts to assemble the plant framework is a secondary Venus process.

The stag's antlers are a naked extension of the skeleton into the air. Here something Saturnian pierces the usual skin covering and reaches outside the animal. The inmost skeleton mingles with the distant cosmic forces in the air. The horn is the exact opposite -- in the horn, Moon closes the gate and reflects back the interior forces that the antler allows to radiate out. Formation of the antlers is a rhythmic process over the course of the seasons while horns are permanent. During excretion (a secondary Venus process), disintegrating substance is sucked to the kidney. Physical substance is drawn off to the bladder while ether-astral forces ray upward. In the case of the stag, these forces drive the antler growth. Once the antlers are completed, they become a sense organ. Astrality leaves the animal and communicates with the Earth's astral where distant planets are active. The flow of forces manifests as the "nervous" awareness state of the stag.

During the summer, the bladder sucks in the distant planets active in the homeopathic silica of the atmosphere. In the winter, these same forces are active in Earth's subterranean crystals. The bladder acts as if the antlers were still in existence, extending etheric into space. The yarrow (its medieval name was Venus' Eyebrows) becomes more able to unfold its Venus nature, to create a space wherein distant formative forces can manifest into the life stream.

503 – Chamomile

Steiner indicated that chamomile as simulates calcium (and potassium). Manure thus treated has a more stable nitrogen content and kindles healthy growth. The herb is placed in cattle intestines and buried where snow water seeps into the ground to bring the cosmic-astral influence.

Medicinally, chamomile is widely used for mucous membranes and is particularly healing for the intestines. Typically, the herb induces sleep. Insomnia is a case where the astral body cannot separate from the physical because the etheric body is too weak. A chamomile compress brings the etheric body into movement and allows the astral to separate. Intensification of the etheric stream through motion and pacifying the chaos of the astral are Mercury processes. Digestion is a Mercury process of dissolving substances into fluid chyme and moving through the intestines. The intestine wall is a gland excreting digestive fluids into the foreign foodstuff. The substance of the foodstuff needs to be completely

destroyed to the point of inorganic so that it can be absorbed and quickened with the body's own ether-astral force. When chamomile is buried in the Earth, the secondary processes of the distant planets are active, coming in with snow water. The intestine wall continues its function of sending astral forces into its contents, but now those forces of the Earth not the animal body. The intestine connects the chemical and protein forming forces with the flowing, healing Mercury forces of the herb. This is why Steiner says the manure will be digested to a more stable form of nitrogen with better nutrition and health for plants.

504 – Nettle Preparation

Steiner says the nettle has a kind of iron radiation as beneficial as the iron in our blood. The prepared nettle does not permit any wrong process of disintegration in its neighborhood. The Earth becomes individualized for the plants we want to grow and the plant products are more nutritious. Steiner called it a "jack-at-all-trades" that can do very, very much.

Nettle has a Mars attitude, aggressive against anyone coming too close and throws its arrows into its opponent. Medicinally, nettle is a remedy for blood anemia and to stimulate milk. We meet here a preparation in which the planets from beyond the Sun are active and they require less potentising than the near planets. The nettle doesn't require an animal sheath for burying in the Earth. Recognizing that the secondary Mars process involves the building up of protein for preservation, Steiner described the preparation as developing a sensitive awareness in the soil such that no wrong decomposition or loss of nitrogen occurs.

505- Oak Bark

Steiner described oak bark as a remedy against plant diseases. It contains high levels of calcium of which he said, "It restores order when the etheric body is working too strongly, that is, when the astral cannot gain access." It damps down an overly rampant etheric body but in a gentle, regular way so that it does not create shocks. Plant diseases are a symptom of the etheric body being too attenuated to hold on to the astral-spiritual archetype. The etheric seeps away and allows disease organisms to enter. When that happens, we need to add a force from below with oak bark and its polar partner, the silica active in equisetum. The effect is a regulation of Moon influence. Steiner described the effects of a thoroughly wet spring. Then the Moon forces enter the Earth too strongly and work from below upwards too strongly. That which should occur only a seed formation happens too early and the seed becomes like soil for other organisms to arise. Equisetum works from above to remove super-abundant Moon forces. Oak bark becomes active in the soil to restore normal Moon forces.

Oak bark is associated with the nearest planet and needs to be consolidated to develop a closer connection with the Earth. This is the purpose of the animal skull. Oak bark fills the skull and then it is buried where snow water can flow past it during the winter. We recall that distant forces live in the snowmelt, bringing resurrection (Saturn), chemistry (Jupiter) and protein formation (Mars).

In the skull, the secondary Moon process dampens germinating forces and reflects the world inward. This “killing” dampens down the etheric while it allows the astral to form an image within the substance so that the calcium of oak bark dominates the Moon process of blind growth.

506 – Dandelion

Steiner said that “we need silicic acid to attract and draw in the cosmic properties...there must be a clear and visible interaction between silicic acid and potassium.” The dandelion is described as being made “inwardly sensitive” to draw in things from distance. Medicinally, dandelion is a “spring tonic” against liver problems. Silica effects are active in bringing in the outer planets; potassium is active in the upright frame of its flower stalk. The dandelion root reaches straight down deeply into the dead strata of lower sub-soil. The seed receptacle forms a crystalline structure. Jupiter forces are at work in the silica form and in the chemistry of the milky sap. The plant parts do not need a lot of treatment – they are placed within an animal membrane to enhance their forces. Then the herb spends the winter in the crystalline Earth, exposed to the distant planets.

The sheath is the thin and shining mesentery from which fat has been removed. This membrane is unique in being sensitive to pain even though it covers organs that are not sensitive to pain. Thus, it serves higher consciousness but in the lower part of the body. When a person forms a mental image in the upper body, it is carried down to the organs in the process of forgetting. There the image is reflected by the organ’s surfaces and can be remembered again by inner vision. What Jupiter has formed passes thorough and is preserved for later activity. In the mesentery, the dandelion is exposed in the Earth to distant winter forces that pass through. The package now attracts formative forces into itself. The “Earth brain” relates to the preparation as the human brain relates to the metabolic organs; forces formed above are preserved for memory.

Steiner says that this preparation makes the plant sensitive so that it can attract what it needs even from adjoining fields or forest. Thus, the whole farm becomes a greater organism in a noble arrangement worthy of Jupiter.

507 – Valerian

Steiner said little – only that this preparation stimulates the plant to behave properly towards phosphorus. Valerian gets little preparation. The flowers are pressed and the extraction diluted with water and sprinkled over the compost pile. Diluting and potentising are enough because we are dealing with Saturn, the most distant and already potentised planet. Steiner described the medicinal effect of valerian as strengthening the Ego (for the plant this means the spiritual archetype) against a too strong astral influence. With oak bark, we regulated astral against a rampant etheric. Valerian root is a sedative that lowers nervous excitement.

Summarizing the preparations:

Planet	Herb	Sheath	Location	Season
Saturn	Valerian	--	In Water	--
Jupiter	Dandelion	Mesentery	In Earth	Winter
Mars	Nettle	--	In Earth	Both winter and summer
Venus	Yarrow	Stag's bladder	Both above and below ground	Both summer and winter
Mercury	Chamomile	Intestine	In Earth	Winter
Moon	Oak Bark	Skull	Under Water	Winter

Observations:

Mars-Venus preps need both winter and summer.

Jupiter-Mercury preps made only during winter.

Saturn-Moon preps are placed in water.

Outer planets are spiritualized already, need less treatment.

Broad Function	Organ in Animal	Intensified Influence -- (Derived From Primary)	Chemical Element	Works With Other Factors	Herb	Animal Sheath
Capture life force from outside, bring species pattern to the seed	Reproduction	Intensification (From Germination), contract rampant etheric growth, resist disease	C	Horn Manure, Water, Moon, Ca	Oak bark	Skull
Digestion -- break down food, rebuild with own life force	Intestine	Supporting Organs (From Sap Flow), stabilize N	O	Horn Manure Mercury, Humus, S manages Ca/ K	Chamomile	Intestine
Excretion -- remove life by-products, open life force to astral	Kidneys, Bladder	Excretion (From Nutrition), retains Si, corrects weak astral	S	Horn Manure, Venus, S manages Si/K	Yarrow	Bladder
Energize and distribute -- harmonize dynamic animal functions	Heart, lungs, circulation and breath	Protein (From Expansion In Space), heart-like rhythm and sensitivity	N	Horn Silica, Mars, Fe, Sand	Nettle	Itself
Regulation -- capture self-consciousness bring to physical body	Liver	Fragrance, Essential Oils (From Plastic Forces), draw in Si, transmutation	H	Horn Silica, Jupiter, Clay enlivens soil	Dandelion	Mesentery
Sensitivity -- develop animal nature into self consciousness	Skin, nervous system	Seed (From Archetype), brings warmth	P	Horn Silica, Saturn, K	Valerian	Water

