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BIODYNAMIC PREPARATIONS AND FUTURE EVOLUTION

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The theme this morning deals very much with biodynamic work, although to discuss it is not easy. Before I introduce the theme, I would like to mention that before the agricultural course was held, people, farmers in those days, came to Rudolf Steiner and asked him what he would suggest in order to prepare for this event, the agricultural course. And he suggested that those who wanted to be well-prepared for the course study two books of his, that is *Theosophy* and *Occult Science*. *Theosophy* deals with the question, what is the human being, actually? What are we as human beings, as spiritual beings? What is our bodily constitution? What is our soul? What is our spirit? What is our spiritual origin? Its content is the being of man. In *Occult Science*, Rudolf Steiner deals with the evolution of earth, cosmos and mankind. And both aspects are, so to speak, the foundation of the agricultural course as well. So that in order to really come to a deeper understanding of the agricultural course — which is very difficult — it is necessary to have this foundation, these two works of Rudolf Steiner, *Theosophy* and *Occult Science*.

Now we want to deal with the question of evolution and how the preparations refer to it. Evolution, is a concept which is nowadays a bit deteriorated in the consciousness of the people. What does it actually mean, evolution? You see, there are two fundamental aspects or two fundamental laws of all evolution. The one fundamental aspect is that all future — that is to say, the reality that has not yet come into being — develops out of a transformation of the past. Future is nothing else than transforming past. That's the one fundamental law. You haven't got to expect in the future something completely new, that never happened before. It always relates to the past and how the past can be transformed into the future. The future is the transformed past. We want to work into the future — that is our goal in Biodynamics — we don't deal with the past, we have to go into the future. But yet in order to do that one has to be able to understand the past. We can't yet understand what is going to be in the future, but we can get an image into the future when we have a deep understanding of the past. In understanding the past, we may be able to transform this past which we understand out of this inner image, into the future. You see, that is a most crucial point, a very precious thing that we actually need to have as modern mankind, that we are able to focus the future. That is enormously precious because mankind nowadays hits a wall and doesn't know how to get on. Increasingly it is necessary to have an inner spiritual motivation, which is the path into the future, and therefore it is necessary to really understand the past.

That's one aspect. The other aspect of all evolution is that whatever should happen in the future, different stages of development of the past have to be repeated. The future is a repetition, in a sense. To work into the future, you have to repeat the past stages of development. And therefore you ought to know the past in order to know what actually should be repeated as a foundation, so to speak, to start off into the future. You must have something underneath your feet, and what you have to have underneath your feet, is the repetition, the past, and then you really can go on into the future. You have to transform the past once again, and then you can be sure that you won't fail. All evolution of the single individual being of man, or the animal, or the plant, wherever you look into nature, you'll see this second fundamental law, that in the individual biography you always repeat the past.

Let us now have a look at the development of agriculture from this point of view in order to know what is our direction into the future. What I want to say is not yet written down anywhere, it really is an insight that derives out of a sound study of anthro-

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posophy. I think we really have to try to relate the more historical events, the outer life of civilization, to spiritual science. Maybe they are, first of all, a bit apart, yet eventually you will see how they permeate, penetrate. And once you have this permeation within your soul, you are free to do whatever has to be done into the future.

As a first step, I would like to look at the pre-Christian times. What actually was the inner striving of the pre-Christian time, so to speak, the new step of mankind from the agricultural point of view, which we have to understand nowadays in order to have a foundation, to know what has to be repeated in our present time? Looking at these ancient times, we have quite a different agriculture than nowadays. We have streams within mankind. There's one stream that we may call the shepherd stream, a mankind which was deeply involved in breeding animals, working with the animals, transforming the animal into what we may call the domesticated animal. And it is a terrific deed. That is a real achievement of these early days — that an animal became a domesticated animal — because a domesticated animal is where mankind was able to change or educate the animal, not from the physical, but from the mental level, from the level of the astral being of this animal. So a domesticated animal is completely different from its wild relation. It has quite a different shaped head. You can study it, you see the whole body is completely transformed, but not by crossing, as one does it today, but rather as an education more from the astral body downward right into the physical body. It was an enormous achievement that was guided by the mysteries of these early days of mankind out of spiritual science. The shepherd stream. One also could call it the Able stream, if you study the Bible.

And then opposite to this we have another stream, more or less disconnected. It is what we may call the arable work, to work with the soil, to cultivate the soil, and to breed the plant. All of our cultivated plants are a result of these early days. And we may call it the Cain stream, if you like.

So we have a mighty polarity within mankind in these early days, when our people were able to interfere more in the astral body of the animal and to interfere in the living body of the plant in order to create fruit formation. The fruit, the being of the fruit, the existence of the fruit, is an achievement, is living capital that has been established in these early days of mankind.

Then there's another stream that more or less derives out of this one. The farmer stream and cultivating plants, the gardener and we have the fruit tree grower. These streams have developed more or less independently out of the spiritual faculties. So, you see, even in the Greek time and right into the Roman time, people did not learn in any school how to grow fruit trees, how to prune them. It was learned by inheritance. The blood stream. This faculty was inherited. It was bound to parentage. They have developed independently in pre-Christian times. That is the achievement of these early days of mankind: to create the domesticated animal, to create the fertile soil, to create especially the cultivated plant.

Then came, as it were, a kind of evolutionary death. This evolution came to an end. And this death marks at the same time what we call the beginning of Christianity, the mystery of Golgotha. One could say that at this most crucial event within mankind and the whole development of the earth, there really was a moment where this early evolution came to an end. It suffered, so to speak, a kind of cultural death. And nobody really knew in these early days how this development might continue into the future.

Let us look now at the next step. What happened now is a transformation of the past into the future. And this transformation became visible in the seventh, eighth, ninth century, especially in Europe in those days. What had happened? It took place together with encountering Christianity. This transformation took place. In Europe in those days it was all covered with forests. This landscape was cleared and within such wilderness there was built a chapel. A monk went there and lived on his own, within the wilderness, the forest. Now in the ninth century it happened that the people began settling around this center building their farms. There was a wonderful transformation. One couldn't say new plants were cultivated or new animals were domesticated. No. Nothing like that. But what happened in the pre-Christian time was now transformed via the mystery of Golgotha. The domesticated animal became somewhat

settled and they were now living under the same roof as the farmer himself. Not any more roaming around the countryside. Shepherds had been nomads. But these people were settling. So here we can see that around the center, the animals lived with the people, very close to the center. And then the gardening developed, also grew around the village. And you can still see in many villages in Europe today that all around the farmhouses, the farm yards, you have these peasant gardens where all vegetables, all medicinal herbs, are cultivated around the village farmhouses. The pre-Christian development of the fruit tree grower that was highly specialized also developed around the center of the village. All types of fruit trees were cultivated. And finally the arable areas developed around the village and all around this was forest.

So you see, this really is now a transformation. The village assembles around a center and builds a kind of organism. This was actually the birth of the organism of agriculture. There was not something like this in pre-Christian time. For the first time the animal related to the arable. Here the fodder was grown to feed the animals and the cow dung or cow manure was spread on this whole area of the farm. For the first time in the development of mankind, an integrated context of an organism came about.

This organism was the first repetition of the pre-Christian development. No new animal species were domesticated or new plants invented, but they were somewhat adapted to the system. Each valley or wherever you came, had its special varieties of grains, vegetable, and fruit trees. Enormous and endless spectrum of different varieties. That is the achievement which came about in this post-Christian time. And the same happened with the animals. Each village had its special cattle breed and so on. So we see the past is repeated within a new stage of development. And so this achievement is transformed by this impulse, developing new varieties that are very much adapted to the different landscapes, to this fundamental invention, one could say, of the organism of a farm.

This had been the foundation of all human culture through a thousand years. All cathedrals — gothic, romanesque, came about as a result of this village organism. All the cities in Europe, the towns which are now big cities, they actually have their origin in this organism of the farm, of the village. Think of that. Agriculture really was the foundation of all human culture. Now this has developed throughout a thousand years. Referring to this, one can say if this just would develop out of itself, it would be that which can be understood out of the Russian expression for this village system. In Russian it's called *mir*, and *mir* means village. But at the same time it means peace. So peace and village are the same. And you can imagine that actually this really is the foundation of all peaceful evolution within mankind. It has been the center of evolution throughout the last thousand years, a real evolution. But you see, you can never expect that something stays forever. With the beginning of the fifteenth century, a new consciousness came about within mankind, and this upcoming consciousness meant that people had to leave this wonderful, peaceful environment of cultivated nature in order to become free, to really become a free human being. One couldn't develop one's freedom in the village. One had to leave it. One had to migrate into the city or maybe to America.

Eventually we see that these villages lost their population gradually throughout the centuries. In the 19th century waves of people went away. And then a new death came about. A mighty death that we are still in. That is the death of materialism. Materialism has its origin — well, it was prepared throughout centuries, but its actual beginning is about the year 1840. That is the final breakthrough of materialism in the 19th century and the result of it was that more and more the people went into the city to experience materialism. Materialism is again a kind of foundation towards human freedom. Materialism disconnects you from the world, disconnects you from nature, disconnects you from the spiritual world, disconnects you from belief. It only connects you to matter and matter is nothing. So you are just thrown back on yourself and you awake and therefore you become a free human being.

What is the result of this transformation, this development of agriculture? The reality is that people thought, well, life is too complicated here in the village. You can't be free in here. You are bound to nature, you are bound to the social life within the vil-

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lage. So let's "go west", so to speak, and they specialize the garden, the peasant garden, with all its diversity. They began to specialize it in the very sense it is done nowadays in hydroponic, to just produce vegetables on the basis of nutrient liquid. High specialization. Then they continued to take out of the village all the fruit trees, specialize them very much. (And just have a look at the situation here in California. We have a wonderful picture of this result.) They started to take out the animals starting with the chickens and continued with the pigs. And finally one ended up with the feed lots, the cattle taken out of the village context. The result is mass production, animal mass production. (Hopeless business!) And then finally — and it happened very early here in the 19th century in the States — one was now developing monoculture in farming. Grain farming and so on. Monoculture. What's the result? That this wonderful being of the village, one could say, was cut into four, was completely smashed. And that's the situation we are in now, that this wonderful context of the organism of a farm as a transformation of the pre-Christian *by* Christianity — Christianity is the foundation of this — that this is now smashed, has completely come to bits, by materialism, by this awakened freedom, which, of course, appears in its first stage as egoism. It doesn't exist any more. So we are free. We are not any more bound to this system. We are now completely free to look into the past and come to an understanding of what were the real steps of the development in agriculture throughout the centuries and millenniums.

We are now able to try to understand this next step in the evolution of mankind. What is it we have to do? We have to repeat this cultural development on a new stage because we can understand this now. What was the basic development throughout a thousand years? What was the basic development throughout the pre-Christian development? We can now understand it and we now know what to do. The first step in conversion of a farm is to repeat these cultural steps.

So the first thing, in this system, what we have to do now is to re-establish this farm organism. You have to build up an image out of an understanding of this. Build up an image and work out of it. You are completely free. You have the choice to do conventional farming — industrial farming — this system is all around, or really build up an image of the farm organism within yourself and start developing, educating a piece of nature, your farm, towards such a self-containedness. You see, what Rudolf Steiner refers to in the agricultural course, that a farm should be self-contained, that's not an invention by Rudolf Steiner. He refers to something that already has happened throughout a thousand years, to build up this wonderful self-containedness. A body.

So that's what we have to repeat first as the foundation towards doing something new into the future. Within this we have again to repeat this step and its first transformation. Next we have to care for our cultivated plants, for our domesticated animals. That is the capital, the living capital of mankind. You see what's happening to this capital nowadays. People are deteriorating it completely by genetic engineering. Because they don't know what to do. Out of materialism, you never know what you do. You know a lot, of course, and all is sophistication, but you don't know what you do.

We really have to come to an understanding of this development, how it was formed, and what we have to do now, that we become animal breeder, that we become plant breeder, that you educate life, educate the astral of the animal within the repetition of the farm organism. And you see, to understand this you really know that it is worthwhile to become a farmer. Because you feel yourself in the stream of development, of evolution. Just by chance that you are here to do that, that is your responsibility, to grasp this idea of the past, transform it into a foundation for something new.

That already is a terrific challenge, to do that. Just that. This is what we call normally organic farming. The organic movement actually is not much older than 20 years, 25 years. It actually has developed since the sixties when finally this organism was completely smashed to bits. But the organic movement is an awakening of your consciousness towards this system. Although one is still a bit dreaming about it, one realizes somewhat everything has to be linked to one another. It must inter-relate, the livestock, the animal husbandry, the gardening, the fruit tree growing. Everything has to be linked. Forestry as well.

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So all is dead. And because it is dead, we can understand it because we can understand with our present thinking what is dead. You can't understand what is life, but you can understand what is death. And that is very essential because death guarantees your freedom. This has all come to an end and now we can understand it and now we can make it alive by building up this inner image within ourselves. And that is the motivation to start to convert one's farm. Inner motivation.

But now what is the next step, the new step into the future? I was talking just about the past and the present, we can grasp in the present. But what is the future? Now things become very difficult because how can we describe the future? The future has to come in order for it to be described. But what is the image of the future? Now you see, looking at such a farm organism, you actually organize the surface of the earth in a special sense. You relate the animal livestock towards the arable land, you build up a crop rotation and you integrate the fruit trees and you integrate whatever else, and so you build up this wonderful organism. But this is more a horizontal orientation within your farm. But we still have another orientation in our farm. This is the vertical orientation. In order to build up a living organism of a farm, it has to be a self-contained one. It has skin, like a body, as a limitation. But you see, that's only half of the reality. The other reality is what is underneath. What is underneath, so to speak, the surface of the earth? The soil. And what is above the earth? We take it for granted that there is something underneath and there is something above. And it always inter-relates somehow, to building up our plant. But we are completely unconscious of it, and just take it as given. Is there a chance to relate this world underneath the earth to this world above the earth? Is it possible that they really can inter-relate here in this middle sphere, the soil, the skin of the earth, where all living creation comes about? Is it possible? That is actually the fundamental question of Biodynamics. That is the future image, to build up a vertical orientation. Not simply this horizontal orientation. And you see, we are looking at realities which are actually invisible, what is underneath the earth and what is working in out of the cosmic circumference, that is really invisible. How are we able now to condense it somehow in this middle sphere so it becomes visible in the living creation?

The fundamental approach of Rudolf Steiner in the agricultural course is not to say, well, let us reestablish this world here, in a sense of building up a wonderful organism in the macrocosm, to have the macrocosm as the image for building up a farm. The principle on which Rudolf Steiner bases all agricultural development into the future, is the human being, the microcosm. The world in the pre-Christian time was very much related to an understanding of the macrocosm, the stars. How everything is somewhat influenced out of these two spheres. That's from the past. And now the new approach is to really understand not only these steps of the past but to understand the human being, as the cosmic world and being incarnated into this world. Can we really understand the human body? Can we really understand what really incarnates in this human body? And can we then gain an insight out of this understanding for a new approach towards farming?

Therefore Rudolf Steiner speaks about the agricultural individuality. The agricultural individuality — and the notion of individuality, you won't find anywhere realized in nature. It's only realized in the human being. The human being is an individuality. It has a body and in this body is incarnated the spiritual being of the individual man and woman. This ego. And each human being is an individual one. And how are we able to individualize the earth, each spot of the earth, according to this individualization of mankind? That is a fundamental question. You see, looking at this reality we can say that what is underneath the earth . . . morphologically that this is very much relating to the sensory system, to the sensory realm of the human being, which is concentrated in our head. And this realm above the earth very much relates to what is our metabolism, so to speak the belly of the agricultural individuality. Everything is alive. And here in between there is something which is very undeveloped, just a skin. The earth, the soil. And this very much relates, although undeveloped yet, to what is in between, between head and metabolism, that corresponds to heart and lungs, to the rhythmic organs within us. It actually is the beating heart of this agricultural individuality, the soil. As yet it is undeveloped, a germ. Or less than

a germ. The question is now, how are we able now to condense, so to speak, these two invisible worlds which are the actual poles out of which the visible world appears? How are we able to condense those worlds so that this middle sphere really becomes enlivened?

Now you see, our task as modern mankind is to behold one's self as a human being. It's a most crucial task for all social life in future, that we really behold our-self. What are we? And if we behold ourselves, then we will find this polarity. Sensory, where we are awake, thinking; metabolism where we are absolutely unconscious, and the sphere of activity of our will, our limbs. And here in our head we belong right to the past. The head is, so to speak, really a revelation of the human being of former incarnations, while our metabolism, our limbs, are so to speak, an image of something that will develop into the future. Where we are really present as human beings is not in our thinking, not so much in our willing, as in the middle, in our feeling. Where we feel the other human being, there we really sense far more what actually is spiritual presence in the present time. And this middle, between these two poles, this is actually the sphere where we realize what development means, what evolution means. If you want to get hold of the inner quality of evolution of development, we have to be aware of this middle sphere where these two poles meet within us. And it is, of course, our will, if we want to be different tomorrow, maybe better than we are today, we are free to be better tomorrow than today by our will. That is the future in us. But to realize it, that we *become* better, or maybe not better, that is within our middle sphere. The inside, the spiritual inside, to direct our will to become better, that is realized in the present time by our feeling. And therefore we know as human beings that we are developing ones. That we really are evolutionary beings. And therefore we work into the world, to the evil and to the better. That is up to us whether we work into the evil or whether we work into the better — it is our choice, our free choice. And in order to work to the better, we have to have spiritual insights because we are relating in our inner being towards the spiritual world, and this spiritual insight has to direct our will in our daily work. And the result of it can be felt, and then you become sure you are on the right way.

Now, just take this picture that you gain if you behold yourself, and transfer it into the outside world and turn it upside down. Then you have, in a sense, this human being in your farm. But you have to have it as an image within yourself. The question is, are we able to realize it outside by our working out of this inner image? And to realize it, to make it real, it is a question of manuring. A question of manuring. What do you do when you manure? You work with matter. And matter is the substance which has come to death, which has no future out of itself. Also the plant has no future out of itself. And also the animal has no future out of itself. Observe an elephant. Observe even a dog. You always see somehow there is a kind of aura of tragedy around such an animal. No future. It is just the end of an evolution. The only being which has a future out of itself is the human being. And so we encounter in our outside world, a world which has come to an end. And our responsibility for the earth results out of recognizing this fact, that we have to introduce our force of evolution which we carry within us into the future of the outside world. We have to implant ourselves as human beings, into the outside world. Work our own future into the world. And the means to do that from the point of view of agriculture are the Biodynamic preparations.

The time already has gone and I'm sorry, but maybe I'll finish off with one aspect. You see, we have three preparations, the first three in the series. That is the yarrow, the chamomile and the stinging nettle. And what do these three actually do? We have in the lower sphere somewhat at the border to the subnatural world, certain substances. And these substances are calcium, soda, and potassium. If you fertilize with potassium and take a Geiger counter, then you can find that this Geiger counter starts to *tatatata*, because natural potassium is radioactive. You can see these salts, these elements that are able to form salts, especially the potassium, are related to the subnatural world. Now these elements, are now transformed, resurrected so to speak, out of their death, by the three Biodynamic preparations, yarrow, chamomile and

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stinging nettle; so that a new element comes about which does not yet exist in nature in this quality, although it exists in another quality. A transformation takes place into a kind of nitrogen. You have plenty of nitrogen here in the belly of the agricultural individuality, which we breathe. Seventy-nine percent of the air we breathe is nitrogen. Nitrogen is the carrier of astral forces in nature, and oxygen is the carrier of etheric forces or life forces in nature. These two substances belong to the past and they only introduce life and etheric forces that belong to the past. They are the carrier of these forces in nature that have come to an end. But by the transformation of these representatives of the earthly world we receive a kind of a nitrogen which becomes the carrier of astral forces from the future.

In the future we will have the possibility to introduce, by transformation of substance, an enlivening point, that these forces also may relate to this middle sphere of the agricultural individuality. And that is what Rudolf Steiner means when he speaks about enlivening the soil. Enlivening the earth. It means to enliven what is dead. The resurrection of substance, of matter. The matter which has fallen out of evolution, which has come to an end, to introduce into life processes, the beginning of a new evolution. Out of death, a new evolution. Not to start with the animal, not to start with the plant. No. To start with what is really dead and from there, a new evolution may develop in the future. The result is that not only the spiritual origin of the past works into the present, but also the spiritual origin that out of the future works into the present. Two streams entwined. The stream developing out of the past and the stream developing out of the future into the present time. These two streams we have within us. We are not only the result of our own past biography, we also are human beings that have their inner relation to something that is going to happen into the future. This quality of the past and the future meeting in the present to enliven the soil, that is the actual focus of Biodynamic farming from the evolutionary point of view. And it is our freedom to do it, and think of it, what that means. If you really grasp this idea, everybody should actually become a farmer.