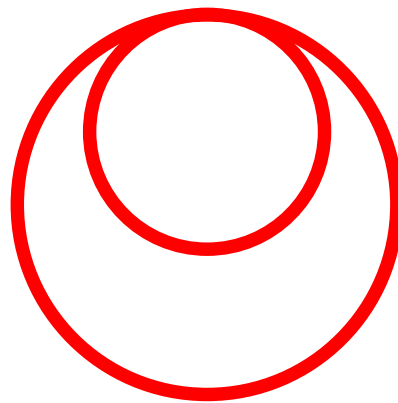


EUREKA

**INTRODUCTION TO THE
HOMEODYNAMIC METHOD
OF AGRICULTURE**



by

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1 - FOUNDATIONS

The Association ‘the Tree of Life’ has the role of making information available about the homeodynamic method. Primarily this goes to interested agriculturalists, but it is also available to anyone who wants to deepen their relationship with Nature and with life in its wider aspects. Therefore, it has become necessary to prepare a basic introduction to the method. Perhaps just because there are already more than sixty publications, of which more than 20 directly concern our agricultural method, it is necessary to offer a general overview of its principles, values, and methods to those who are approaching the method for the first time.

Similarly, this ‘primer’ addresses those who have not yet attended a basic homeodynamic agriculture course but who want some familiarity with the subject, or those who have acquired fruit or vegetables from a producer that follows the method, and who want to understand how the grower manages to produce the food that ends up on their table.

1.1 - Origins of the Homeodynamic method

Homeodynamic agriculture was founded in 1984 to address some of the problems that organic and biodynamic growers were facing. These include the continually degrading vitality of soils and of seed stocks: the deficiency and deteriorating quality of water: the loss of a conscious relationship between man and plant and in general terms between the life of the soil and the Life of the cosmos^{*}. Some tragic events have acted as accelerators of the development of the method. We refer to the

* *vita ‘terrestre’* - life which is born, grows, peaks, and then withers. This is what is commonly known as life, biology or Nature.

Vita ‘cosmica’ - The homeodynamic view understands that there is also Life that does not suffer death and which, in good conditions, continually flows into and informs biological life-forms. This *‘vita cosmica’* (Italian) flows from the periphery inwards. This influence is also called ‘cosmic Life’, ‘diffuse Life’, or ‘unbound Life’, and is given a capital ‘L’ to differentiate it from matter-bound biology.

tragedy of Chernobyl and the consequent radioactive contamination, to the practice of genetic manipulation, to the continuous degradation of the environment, and to climate change.

We should not let this catalogue of disasters drag us down, but let it prompt us to change our ways and seek a new relationship between Nature, humanity and the cosmos - a relationship that enables us to comprehend Life in its widest sense. In order to make a start in this direction we will make use of the work of the Austrian philosopher and scientist, Dr Rudolf Steiner (1861 - 1925), that has formed the foundation of the discipline known as biodynamic agriculture, of which the homeodynamic method should be considered, to all intents, as a necessary broadening.

1.2 - The basis of agriculture

Agriculture is not simply an economic activity like some industry. From a purely utilitarian point of view we can see that agriculture (in which we include also animal husbandry) is the basis for the subsistence of all humanity, one of the main sources of raw materials and of nutrition. For this reason it would seem sensible to take care to maintain the environmental equilibrium. But we consider it to be extremely reductive (or better - 'egoistic') to value agriculture as a 'merely economic' undertaking.

Farmers and gardeners work directly with the laws of life that do not offer any guarantee that all the seeds that have been sown will become viable plants, or that the weather will not obstruct their daily tasks, because life is neither a predetermined or negligible variable. Perhaps for this reason in old Persia, that is in the culture that introduced agriculture into the history of humanity, only the most capable students were taught agriculture. Only those people in a position to understand the laws of Life and with a connection to the Sacred, were taught a way to interpret these laws for agriculture.

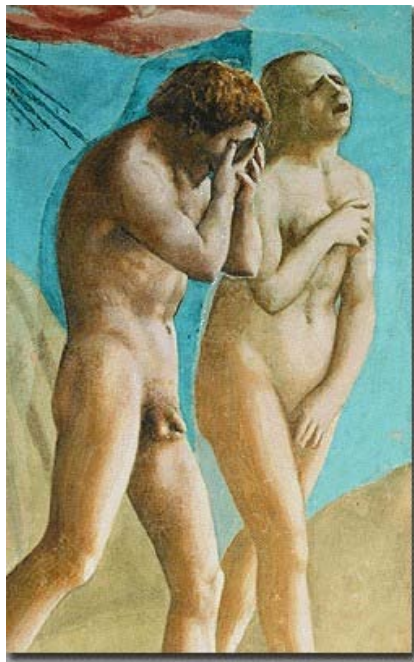
Normally we do not consider the laws of celestial Life, but only those of terrestrial existence, that is of life confined within matter. To know and to cooperate with Life requires a new type of agriculturist that can discern with consciousness not based on self-interest (with the consequent exploitation of the Earth) but founded on the good of the Earth herself. These new farmers must prioritise the good of the Earth and of all her children from the point of view of cosmic Life. The Earth, moreover, must be considered as much more than a medium in which to grow and to cultivate, a substrate that often hinders our labours by accommodating so many varieties of weeds and pests. The Earth is living, a mother who lovingly and generously allows us to nourish ourselves from her yields. She is a creature that must maintain a dynamic equilibrium in order for us to survive. Through human activities such as chemical agriculture and pollution this dynamic equilibrium is now fluctuating wildly.

1.3 - Natural and moral order

The Earth and her plants are intimately tied with humanity, possibly more than we can imagine. When we look around, we very soon discover that all of Nature is woven through with a dynamic and living order manifesting profound wisdom and economy. This ‘natural’ order seems to be just a given fact, but when the one passes from the role of ‘observer’ of Nature to the role of actively collaborating with Nature, that is of being an agriculturist, it becomes necessary to ask ourselves about the origin of this natural order, with the aim of being able to collaborate appropriately with its being and its becoming.

With regard to the origin of this natural order, the answer for one with a spiritual view of life, must lead back to God, the Supreme Being that generated and formed it all. If we deepen our thought still further, we would have to become clear that humanity has also been inserted in the primordial order, but that we have become somewhat distanced, removed, or separated through the process known as the ‘Fall from Paradise’, having ‘eaten’ from the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil.

In both Genesis and in Anthroposophical spiritual science as developed by Rudolf Steiner, these events are depicted - the former in imaginative forms, the latter within the scientific method. Before the Fall, humanity was inserted in an order that we could most aptly characterize as 'moral'. Humanity was obedient to the will of God, did not have a physical body (its lowest 'substance' was an organism of vital currents), and had access to the fruits of the Tree of the Life. For these reasons, humanity and Nature were immortal.



The expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise

In Genesis it is also written that God gave humanity the task and the responsibility 'to name' the plants and animals. With that the Creator has acknowledged the human faculty to recognize the spiritual reality in each creature and, inherent in the requirement 'to name them', to take them under our wing to guide them in their evolution. With the Luciferic Fall, that is to say with the introduction of egoistic forces into humanity, we separated ourselves from this moral order. Cosmic Life, understood as a divine gift (that the Greeks called 'Zoe'), fell to the plane of physical-material existence (and became what the Greeks called 'Bios'), thereby

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