

UNDERSTANDING AND DEALING WITH PESTS

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

PART 2 - MEDITATIONS



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UNDERSTANDING AND TREATING PESTS – Pt 1

A PATH TO UNDERSTANDING PESTS AND A MEANS OF CURE

1) Who is the pest?

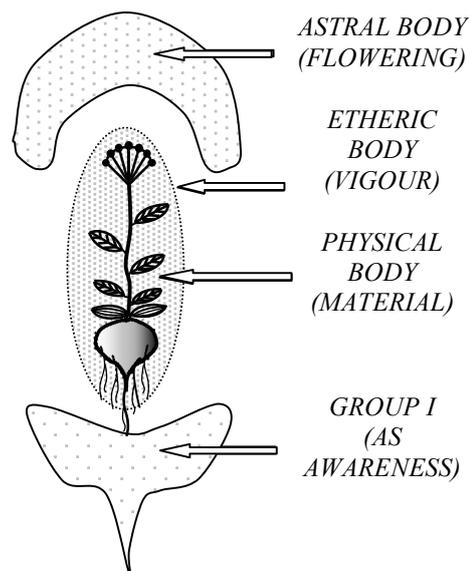
Pests are definitely one of the biggest and most profound issues for agriculture. As Rudolf Steiner said in his Agriculture Course it is possible and even desirable, to minimize the impacts of pests using only meditation, namely the power of concentrated thought. But before addressing the issue at this levels it is essential to understand exactly *who* are the pests and what forces bring about their manifestation. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a totally different cognitive approach from the conventional one that is only concerned to know *what* a specific pests is so that it can be prevented, combated or killed. Without understanding *who* the parasite is, or what it represents in the larger context of Nature, the only intervention conceivable will be its physical elimination.

To pursue our goal we should also look for the subtle relationships that govern a pest's manifestation, relationships that are connected with a pest's deepest being: with its essential identity of *who* it is.

2) Why does a plant get pests?

Anthroposophical Spiritual Science informs us the plant has a physical body in which an etheric body - a life body - is incarnated. The astral body hovers around, especially around the top, while the consciousness of its ego is in the area below the roots. We also know that diseases are mainly caused by the astral body, the body which we've just said is not within the plant. So we must ask how it is possible that a plant can become sick, considering the fact that the etheric body or vital body (the only incarnate one), being the body of life, is also the body of vitality.

From what we have said the presence of a disease must be read as a sign that there are factors of deep imbalance around the plant to hinder the full manifestation of life within it.

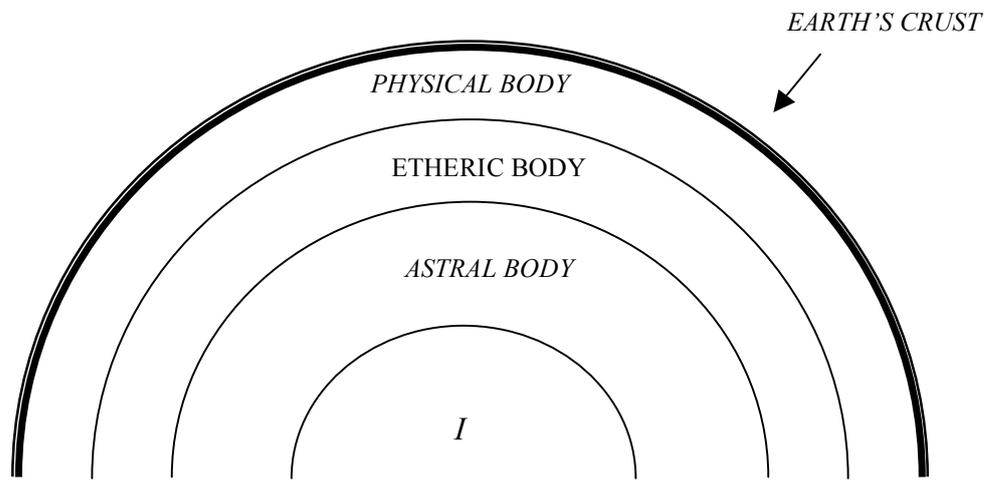


The plant and its 'bodies'

These unbalanced factors find their outward expression as pests, symptoms of a

profound degenerative process within the plant world. This degeneration can almost entirely be laid at the feet of Man, both because we are using wrong techniques (fertilizers and cultivations) or for the loss of an appropriate farming ethic. The result is that our relationship with the Earth and plants is viewed only in terms of personal interest, and so justifies practices such as grafting, hybridization, meristem propagation and genetic manipulation, causing severe imbalances in the etheric body of the plants. We have already talked extensively about the inappropriate activity that man habitually inflicts upon the plant kingdom. This time, however, we will approach the pests from the perspective of *the elemental beings (who are etheric in Nature)*, *the spirits of cyclical periods* (of astral nature) and *spiritual beings* that motivate them, in order to achieve a correct diagnosis and therapy.

Even if one can find material-objective reasons of the onset of a disease, such as a weak rootstock or notice that the environment is not suitable for cultivation, however and as already mentioned, the most important variable is Man because the four bodies of man have a deep relationship with the four bodies of the Earth. The Earth, in fact, has an I (located in the centre of the globe), an astral body a little further out, an etheric body (which brings us almost to the earth's crust) and a physical body (represented mainly by minerals of the earth's crust).



The bodies of the Earth

How one buries the biodynamic preparations makes it possible to affect the forces of the various bodies of the Earth: it is possible to vary the depth or change the seasons of burial (since different bodies are subject to expansion and retraction like a breath), in relation to the type of terrain, the location, the season, and the evolutionary phases.

We can, therefore, consider the plant as a channel within which the four bodies of Man and Earth meet and resound. As the *mercurial* aspect of this arrangement the plant has the disadvantage of focusing any problems in this dialogue within themselves.

Pests, as we have shown in the second part of our work, (“Understanding and treating Pests by meditation”), originate from the inner layers of the Earth and make their appearance in our fields because they resemble the individual’s astral body and our collective astrality with all its untransformed aspects unprocessed, and these then interact with the astral body of the Earth. It follows that any efforts to purify our astral body should significantly reduce the presence of pests in our plants, although we must still take into consideration environmental factors and the inherited characteristics of the plants. Meditation, that is, our ego taking greater control over our astral body,

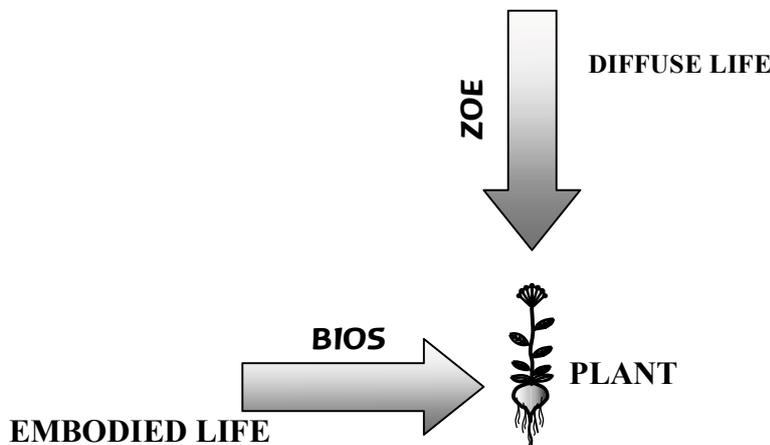
helps to achieve this goal.

3) Incarnate and unembodied life

We have considered the plant as a "bridge" between the Earth and man, but to understand the complex problem of plant pathogens we must also explore another point of view. To do this we must introduce the concepts of *incarnated life*, and the diffuse or *unembodied Life*. Diffuse Life is a stream of Light ("*.. and the Life was the light of men ..*" - *John. 1.4*) that descends through the Zodiac and planets until it reaches the Earth. The diffuse Life was not originally intended to reach the physical-material plane but, due to the fall from the Garden of Eden, it had already become embodied life (inasmuch as in earlier epochs the plants were only ethereal in nature) and now entered the physical-material plane and became (a sort of fluttering etheric flower) the biological life that we know today. The Greeks were well acquainted with this distinction so it had two words for our word "life". They called widespread Life *Zoe*, and incarnated life *Bios*. *Bios* is what usually is understood by us as *life*, but it is more appropriate to call it *existence*. Life, *Zoe*, is integral, eternal, and is a gift that descends from heaven. The Fall made it that death (and thus disease) tapped the diffuse life and it was transformed from the current vertical stream into a horizontal stream, so that the earthly *existence* has a beginning and an end. Death really is just a change of consciousness, the return from *Bios* to *Zoe*. Illness and death are only present in the stream of *Bios*, because *Zoe* is the healing stream, the divine life that heals.

In every plant, as in every living being, there is incarnate life as a daughter of the diffuse Life, and the means by which the plant maintains its connection with the diffuse Life is the flower - which recalls its origin etheric.

Because of inappropriate farming techniques the plant may not be able to maintain their relationship with the diffuse Life, and this establishes the decline towards disease. This applies to all forms of existence: if a person has a good



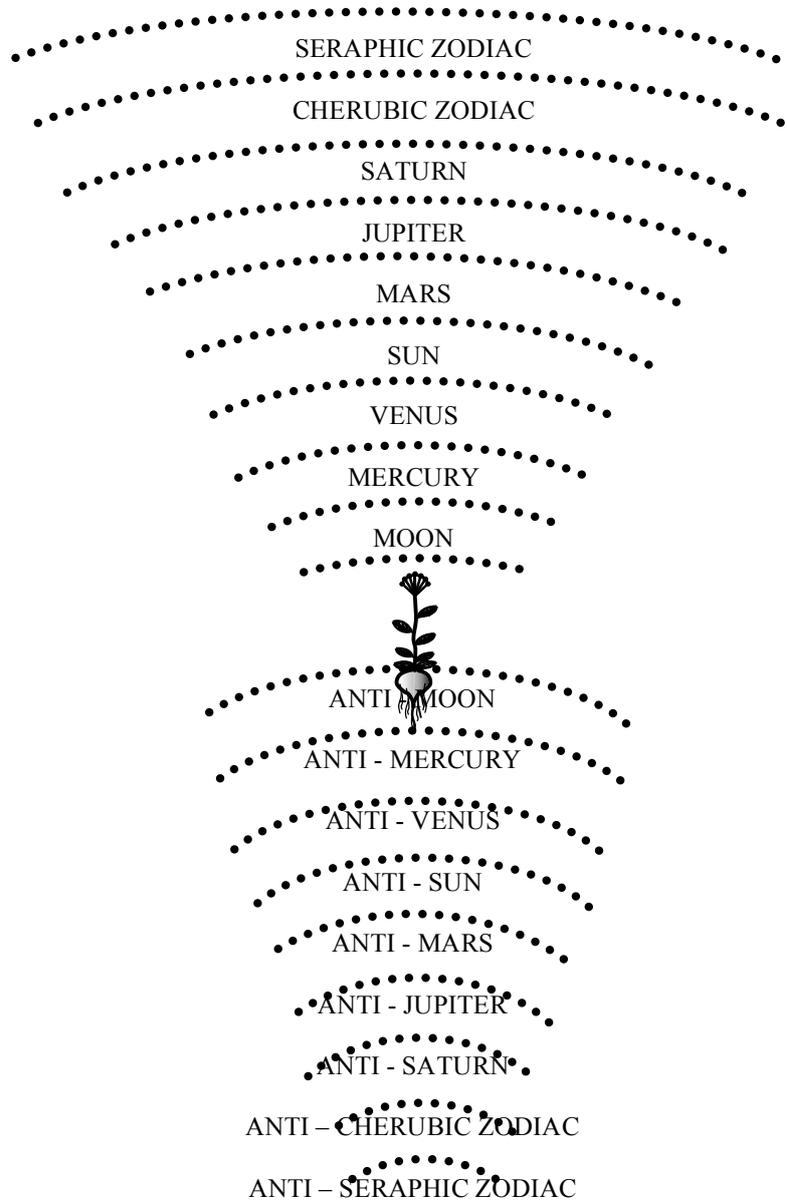
connection with the cosmic forces that person will be less prone to disease.

Widespread and life embodied in the plant

Before forming the flower the plant develops anabolic processes in itself, ie constructive processes. Once at the flowering stage the predominant processes are catabolic or destructive.

Just as embodied life and diffuse Life exist, there are also respective points of view such that a catabolic-destructive process in terms of *Bios* is a constructive process from the perspective of *Zoe*. Similarly to be alive (biologically alive) on Earth is to be dead to the spiritual world, and to die in the body is to leave the physical existence and enter fully into spiritual life.

4) The fallen hierarchies



The nine hierarchies of good and the nine hierarchies of Evil

Zoe was not the only aspect to suffer the consequences of the Fall: part of all nine spiritual hierarchies followed the fate of man and became confined within the Earth where they act in opposition to the nine hierarchies. In the same way that the celestial sphere closest to Earth's surface is the Moon - the home of the Angels or Children of Life - so the inner layer of the Earth closer to the surface corresponds to an anti-Moon, from which act the fallen angels or the 'Children of Death'. These layers follow each other until the centre of the Earth where the fallen Seraphim live, which act as the most powerful forces of opposition, commonly referred to as "evil."

Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the

Garden of Eden and now people on Earth live between the nine spheres of life and nine layers of Death, between Good and Evil. We are given to know both.

The principle of good and evil entered the very soul of man, for he *tasted* (feeling) the fruit (apple), and so the astral body - the seat of sensation - is the seat of disease. The astral resounds and has dialogue primarily with the physical body, while the ego interacts more with the etheric body, as if there were two sources of Life (a coarser source - the etheric - and a finer - the ego) and two sources of death (a coarser - the physical - and a finer - the astral). The combination of the two sources of life, the I (life in spirit) the etheric (life in the body), governs the formation of the immune system.

The lower part of the schema above was known to the Greeks as Hades, the underworld. Here lives the deadly aspect of the upper hierarchies. The Greeks called the gods of the underworld the *Chthonios or Chthonic gods*. In Greek the word "chthonic" means "one who divides," or "one that obstructs." In our language there remains a memory of these entities: we call *indigenous* plants specific to a given environment the autochthonous flora. The Chthonic gods are strongly bound to the environment, and this can be experienced by anyone personally. When we move the environment in which we have lived for a long time evokes nostalgia, a homesickness that can be so strong to make us properly sick. This is the effect of the chthonic deities on us.

Related to these nine inner layers of the Earth, there are animal specific animals that the popular imagination has placed in fairy tales and myths like the snake, wolf, frog, etc. ...

5) The Influence of the Chthonic Gods

As we have seen the Earth has an astral body. It is bound the chemical element nitrogen which is a large proportion of the air we breathe. From this we can deduce that the astral body of the Earth is manifest in the air, wind, and in meteorology more generally. Meteorology, from this point of view, should be understood as rhythm and order. In past years in India, for example, the monsoon appeared punctually on the same day of the year and at the same time. Now its arrival has shifted by at least a day. In recent years there has been a real upheaval of the sphere and this weather is a symptom of a profound disturbance brought about by the chthonic deities. In particular, the orderly and harmonious succession of the seasons, governed by spirits of the cyclical periods of time who act from Mars in that they are dependents of the Virtues (or Dynamis) that reside there¹, and are now severely constrained by the forces from the fallen Martian subterranean sphere. Mars also governs everything that can be considered as animality, so if disorder has come disrupt the climate we may suppose that they have also disturbed the world of animals. As a result we have an increase in animal disease and disharmony in the world of insects due to falling from control of their superior guides.

This disturbing activity was first countered without great difficulty by the positive hierarchies who were greatly fortified from 1850 onwards by the fifth spiritual sacrifice of Christ - his crucifixion on the etheric plane.² From that moment the period described by John in his Apocalypse began, and there was the start of a reawakening of a powerful entity of evil. After 1850 the materialistic tendency of humanity also grew and all this peaked around 1930 with the advent of Nazism. A few years later, with the explosion of the atomic bomb, the forces of anti-life came to contaminate the sphere of the Sun, ie the star that brings cosmic life.

We consider it useful to point out that we are experiencing an unusual moment

¹ For more see Rudolf Steiner's, "Spiritual Beings and in the cosmos and in the natural kingdoms."

² See "The Christianisation of Nature" by the author.

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