

**NINE MEETINGS**  
**About**  
**BIODYNAMIC AGRICULTURE**  
**(Basic Course)**

**With Enzo Nastati**

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## THE EARTH AS A LIVING ORGANISM

For this first meeting I propose that we study the vital forces that have given form to environments, landscapes and, in general, the planet Earth. From this we will abstract the laws that serve us as conscious men and agriculturalists in order to recreate the landscape which is now compromised or destroyed in our agricultural organisms.

Our aim as agriculturalists will be to produce quantity and quality without damage to the environment, and to regenerate the forces of the environment and the natural world. In this way there will be a return to the state of being and working according to the laws of Life, and not according to a programme of systematic exploitation. In order to observe the laws of Life we must read the forms of Nature that are presented to us as 'open secrets'.

We have to go back to ancient Greece to find a time when man still was conscious of the world of forces that brings life. In that time they knew of the polarity existing between the expansive Elements (Air and Fire) and the compressive or absorbent ones (Water and Earth). Aristotle considered 'Earth' to be all that which is solid/material, 'Water' all that which presents to us as liquid (water, milk, blood, etc), and similarly for the other two.

Besides these four Elements (which are represented by the four corners of a square), man was able to perceive the qualities which were called, humid, dry, warm and cold. These qualities are born of the combination of the different Elements.

**EARTH + WATER = COLD = NORTH      WATER + AIR = HUMID = WEST**  
**AIR + FIRE = WARMTH = SOUTH      FIRE + EARTH = DRY = EAST**

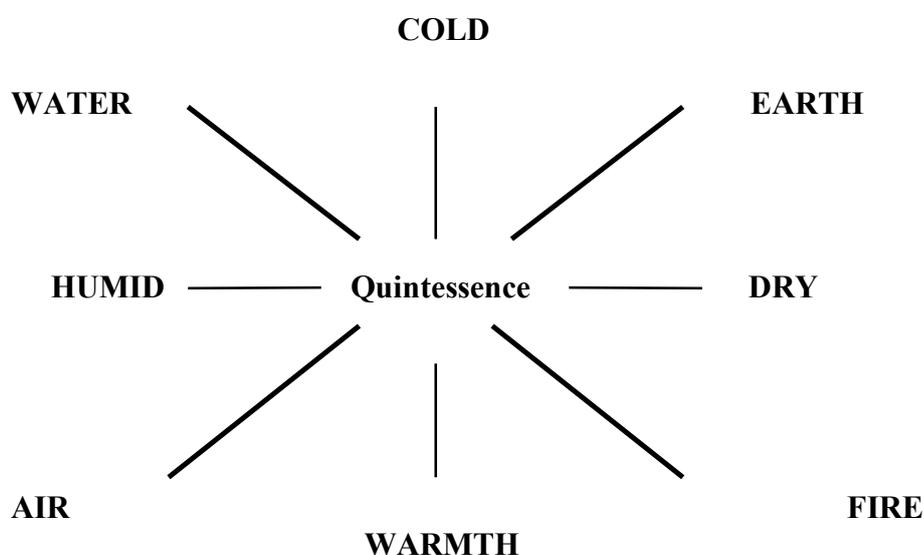


Fig 1

The centre of the cross formed by the four Elements represents the ‘quintessence’. This 5<sup>th</sup> element really represents the etheric world, ie Life which works, which flourishes, which gives form as one can see in all that grows and reproduces, because Life wants to realise the capacity to grow, to metabolise, to reproduce.

The plant, whose life is characterised by having only a physical body and an etheric organisation, stops living when the seed comes to maturity. The animal, as well as having a physical and etheric body, has another body which is shown by the fact that an animal can reproduce for years. This animal, which we can say is ensouled or “of anima”, is the bearer of soul and shows itself in the capacity for reproduction as well as movement and making noises. It shows inner mental activity and sympathy or antipathy towards an object or a being. There are also some animals which die shortly after exhausting their capacity to reproduce.

Man also has a physical body, an etheric organisation and an interior psychic life, but continues to live for a period after his ability to reproduce has finished unlike the animal which dies soon after its reproductive capacity is exhausted. This does not relate to any of the three aforementioned functions but to his spiritual being, his *I*. This is shown in the development of his consciousness to exhibit awareness of self-consciousness, in short, in his etheric being. All these aspects of the four kingdoms of Nature will be further developed in the next meeting.

When a man dies and his physical body is buried, ie when he is returned to the sovereignty of physical laws, this corpse decomposes. But what is it that allows the physical body to resist these laws when he is living? What keeps it from falling into the scope of the laws of disintegration, of decomposition of matter? It is his etheric body that achieves this.

In Indian philosophy the etheric world is called *prana*. There were two currents of prana. *ida* and *pingala*. One is absorbent and the other radiating, in the same way that in Greek philosophy we have on one side, Earth and Water and on the other, Air and Fire. Each of these forces has a characteristic ‘gesture’: the Air (expansive) gesture forms triangles when acting freely, that of Water (absorbent) forms half moons. If you put a mirror under someone’s nose, on breathing out you will note that on one part of the misted surface a triangle is found and on the other a half moon. With Pranayama techniques, the yogis of India tried to work with the action of these two living streams within the organism through breathing exercises.

In Chinese philosophy the knowledge of the etheric world was profound, this world they called *ki*. The polarity was not called *Ida* and *Pingala* as in the Indian philosophy, but *yin* and *yang*. The first was expansive (the feminine principle) and the second was compressive (the masculine principle). Nothing is totally yin or yang, but one of the two aspects is predominant over the other, in a dynamic search for vital harmony and equilibrium.

It is very interesting to point out one of the principles of this philosophical view: extreme yin transforms into extreme yang. This principle can also be found in the Goethian laws of metamorphosis when Goethe says that Nature “expands itself” and “flows over” and in this way a discontinuity or change of form comes about. The Chinese, in their theory of knowledge (consciousness), speak of five elements. The 5<sup>th</sup> element is none other than the quintessence of Greek philosophy.

Most alternative therapies (acupuncture, shiatsu, reiki, pranotherapy Do-in, etc) are based on the study of the etheric currents in man - their points of entry, exit and crossing and their manipulation. In man a “net” is ‘seen’ which is formed by these currents and if the whole is not in harmonious balance, this is made clear to us as a

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