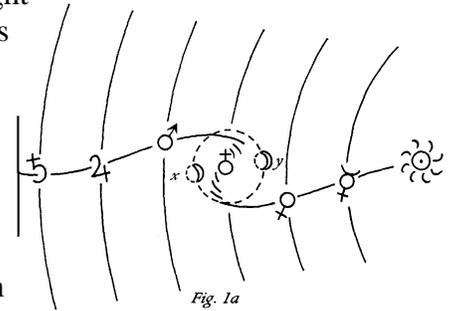


LECTURE THREE - 11 January 1956

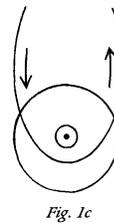
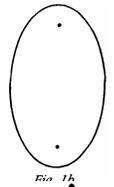
Dear Friends,

Yesterday we spoke about the Zodiac, and today I would like to recall what we did on the first evening when we spoke about the structure and function of our solar universe.

You will remember we came to the conclusion that streams of zodiacal substance or energy are drawn into our solar universe by the Sun, which is a “hole in space”, a kind of super-vacuum. And I suggested that it might be good to imagine those streams of zodiacal substance not just as straight lines or straight rays, but rather, and perhaps more appropriately, as waves which rush into the space of our solar system from the periphery of the solar universe. These waves starting at the periphery rise to a certain height (Fig 1a), form a crest, then break at the Earth, and proceed toward the center of the solar universe. Let us further imagine the planets which serve as indicators for their whole spheres. This planet then takes up the stream according to its capacities and abilities. Think of Saturn. Saturn digests and prepares, so to speak, the stream of cosmic essence according to its own nature.



We start with Saturn, leaving out for the moment the planets discovered during the past two hundred years: Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. These three planets have a quite special position and function in the solar universe. Pluto, which was discovered as recently as 1930, seems to reveal, at least to some extent, the nature of these newly discovered planets, for Pluto moves in an ellipse whose two foci are far apart (Fig. 1b). This suggests, in agreement with certain remarks made by Rudolf Steiner, that these planets were originally comets. Comets enter our solar system along parabolic curves. When we see a comet, we perceive it moving through one end of such a curve, the other part being outside the solar system. We say, therefore, that it is moving in an ellipse (Fig. 1c). This is correct with regard to certain comets but does not apply to all of them. It is quite possible that the planets Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto were originally comets and were “caught” by our solar system, held fast, and finally settled down as planets. That would explain Rudolf Steiner’s remark that they did not originally belong but attached themselves to our solar universe at a later stage. “Sie sind zugeflogen”, he says.



These planets thus have a quite peculiar and special nature, and we should not mix them up with the older planets of the solar system. In this sense, Saturn is the outermost planet. The next one, through which the cosmic streams would pass, is Jupiter and its sphere. Then comes Mars, and then we come to the crest of the wave, where we must imagine the Earth to be. In the lectures you are reading, we learn that the matter we find on Earth is “broken up” spirit. So we may imagine that on the crest of the wave, cosmic essence is being “broken up” into matter.

The Earth is encircled by the Moon’s orbit (Fig. 1a positions x and y). On the right, is the Sun which is the cause of the rolling wave movement. The Moon in position x receives the full light of the Sun, as we can see, and is at full Moon, while in position y it is a new Moon. In position y, the part which is lit up is turned away from the Earth so we cannot see it; the Moon turns its dark side toward us, and the part which is lit up shows its full face to the Earth.

The next stop, along the receding path of the wave, is occupied by the planet Venus (the one that is actually called Venus in astronomy). The last milestone toward the Sun is indicated by the orbit of the planet Mercury.

Thus Fig. 1a gives us more or less the positions of all the planets at any one time, or at least their spheres can be imagined in that order. The planets are moving in their orbits and are constantly changing position. They rarely appear lined up as they are in Fig. 1a, but their spheres are always in that order. Any one planet might, for example, be behind the Sun at a given time (on the right of Fig. 1a), but this would have little effect on the position of its sphere.

The planetary spheres are, in fact, a very complex matter and by no means as simple as may be thought. However, there is one thing which we ought to visualize very clearly, something already indicated in the idea of a wave. The three planets Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars—or rather their spheres—are situated away from the Earth and toward the Zodiac. Then we have the planets whose spheres come between the Sun and the Earth: Venus and Mercury. The Moon’s sphere alternates between the two as the Moon goes round the Earth. Thus we have two distinct sets of spheres: the one containing the planets Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn (called the superior or outer planets), and the other containing the planets Venus and Mercury (called the inferior or inner planets). The nature of the latter is totally different from that of those on the rising side of the wave.

Now let us work it out in detail. We have conceived the Sun as a “hole in space”, and we have come to the conclusion that it may be compared with the human ego or I, except that the Sun-ego is of spiritual and cosmic magnitude. We have also tried to define the purpose of the movement or wave activity that is directed toward the Sun as seeming to be a process designed to lead to something that is of a more or less un-individualized nature from beyond the Zodiac, through an inner experience of individualization. In this concept, I believe the purpose of all earthly evolution in the fourth stage or embodiment of the Earth is contained. (See the chapter on Cosmic and Human Evolution in Rudolf Steiner’s *Outline of Esoteric Science*. GA13).

Let us first look at the movement originating on the left side of the Earth. This is the night side, turned away from the Sun. It receives the impact of the stream which is mounting up to the crest of the wave. It culminates in materialism, as we said. So what do we have on the right? First, there is obviously a “breaking up”, the process of the “breaking up” of spirit into Earth matter. Then, further to the right, we would expect a continuation of the breaking up process. Would this not be a breaking up of matter, a differentiation, and finally a spiritualization of matter in the direction toward the Sun? In other words, here in this realm between Sun and Earth is where actual Earth evolution would take place, actual Earth embodiment. Here on the Earth (left), we may imagine a kind of precipitation into matter, and then to the right, a dissolution of that matter leading to differentiation and spiritualization. We may imagine it as an awakening on a higher level of something previously “broken up” into matter.

This morning we heard how Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition spring up from that which goes the inevitable path of decay and decline, for instance, in the moment of death (see lecture V in *The World Of Senses and The World of the Spirit*). Imaginations, Inspirations, and Intuitions arise out of the death experience and out of all other decaying processes on Earth. But we must realize that this matter, which is now “broken up” and spiritualized, has been imbued with Earth qualities. It has undergone the experience of the ego in the human being. This is the important point. The whole meaning of Earth evolution is contained in it. Spirit is precipitated into matter. It is experienced by the ego-endowed person and goes through a transformation in the course of that experience. Then it is dissolved again, and out of the dissolution rise humanized Imaginations, Inspirations, and Intuitions. The original spirit-substance is no longer the same; it has changed and evolved. Thus we may say that the actual Earth evolution—evolution at the level of “consciousness”—takes place between the Sun and the Earth (right side of Fig. 1a).

We now want to know more about the nature of the individual planets. Rudolf Steiner tells us that the superior planets of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars are milestones, as it were, of much earlier stages of evolution or embodiments of the Earth. In his book *Outline of Esoteric Science*, we read of the Ancient Saturn, Ancient Sun, and Ancient Moon conditions, which were followed by our Earth evolution where the precipitation of matter has taken place. In the final “Supplementary Notes” of *Outline of Esoteric Science*, we learn that the present Saturn is a kind of replica of Ancient Saturn. This planet and its sphere include activities and events which represent a repetition of the conditions on Ancient Saturn. This is the reason why the planet was called Saturn in ancient times. When the initiates and great sages of the temples looked up to Saturn, they realized that this planet recapitulated Ancient Saturn.

What took place on Ancient Saturn? In *Outline of Esoteric Science*, we learn that Ancient Saturn was a planet consisting entirely of warmth. Only warmth; nothing else existed as yet. This warmth had come into existence through the great sacrifice of a certain divine hierarchy, the Thrones. It was inactive and still lifeless. It was like a kind of mirror or blackboard on which the spiritual hierarchies wrote their thoughts, through which they expressed their feelings and their will impulses. Ancient Saturn was a planet which consisted initially of the cosmic Will which the Thrones had sacrificed. During its middle period, this Will was densified into

warmth, and into that mirror-like inactive warmth were written the great Ideas, Imaginations, Inspirations, and Intuitions of the divine world—all that the divine hierarchies intended to bring into existence during the course of the evolution which was then beginning.

So we must assume that the present Saturn is a planet that recalls the Ancient Saturn embodiment of the Earth in a kind of great cosmic memory picture. It is chiefly connected with warmth and the function of warmth in the universe. However, this warmth is not simply what we call warmth on Earth. Rather it is a creative element, permeated with great imaginations, with great pictures and memories of the past conditions we read of in *Outline of Esoteric Science*. It is a living warmth, permeated with cosmic or Divine Imaginations.

To a certain extent, the external features of the planets betray their biography. How does Saturn's countenance appear to us through the telescope? Out there in space we see a globe which is surrounded by a ring, or rather by a number of concentric rings. In a certain sense this is a perfect image of Ancient Saturn. In *Outline of Esoteric Science*, we read that Ancient Saturn was a globe of warmth surrounded by a ring or huge circle of the divine hierarchies. That spirit circle around Saturn, that community of divine beings, is the foundation and the very first beginnings of the present Zodiac. Thus we can say that in their external features, the planets that we see in the sky somehow resemble and "remember" ancient conditions.

Let us now proceed to Jupiter. What is Jupiter's task in the universe? Let us first of all have a look at Jupiter. Through the telescope we are unable to detect a solid surface; we see only a ball or globe of clouds. In the past, it has not even been quite certain whether the planet has its own source of light beneath the clouds or whether the light of the Sun is reflected from them just as the sunlight is said to be reflected from the Moon. This again reminds us of the conditions prevailing on Ancient Sun, as described in *Outline of Esoteric Science*. What happened during that embodiment of the Earth? First there was a repetition of the conditions of Ancient Saturn, when warmth came into existence (Fig. 2a). Then this warmth was pushed back, so to speak, to the periphery, and a Sun was created in the interior of the globe.

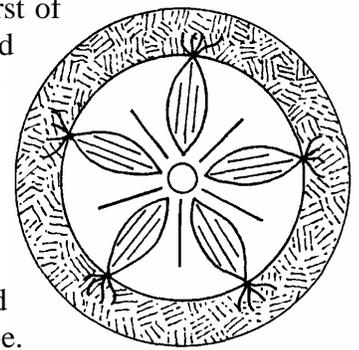


Fig. 2a

A kind of interplay then took place between the light of the Sun and the warmth. That sunlight cannot be compared with what we now call light. Light, warmth, and air existed. Light and air were added to warmth, and warmth and air interpenetrated one another.

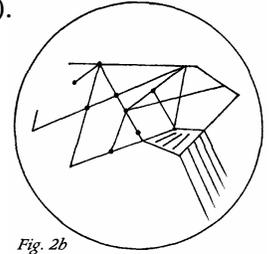
We must imagine the Ancient Sun as similar to our present Sun, consisting of a vacuum in which the divine hierarchies dwelt. In a sense, they breathed in that air, which cannot be compared with our present air. They spoke into it the Divine Word and created moving forces which, at least to begin with, were constantly changing their outer appearance. If we could have seen those forms, they would have appeared like our present day plants, but of gigantic shape and consisting only of a kind of mixture of warmth and air.

Those plant forms on Ancient Sun were the ancestors of the human race. Our present Jupiter expresses externally that element of cloud-like air and light formations. It "remembers" the events on Ancient Sun and the presence of living air. What we call air today is not alive, for it is, in a sense, too chemical and lifeless. We must imagine an air which was constantly permeated by the sounding of the Divine Word creating those forms. This process, where living air is permeated by the Divine Word, may be called cosmic Inspiration. To "inspire" means that profound speech penetrates space, a reminiscence of the mighty divine process of cosmic Inspiration which is still working in the sphere of our present Jupiter.

We can now imagine the stream of zodiacal essence passing through these spheres. Initially it is engendered, as it were, by the warmth on Saturn that bears the imprint of cosmic Imaginations. The zodiacal substance is then brought down to its first stage of manifestation in the world of space. Then Jupiter takes it up, and it enters the stage of air formations permeated by the memory of cosmic Inspiration. Thus a further densification of the stream or wave takes place (Fig. 1a).

Then we come to Mars. This planet is again a kind of "milestone" of ancient cosmic evolution, the evolution of Ancient Moon that we read about in *Outline of Esoteric Science*. What happened on Ancient Moon? It is rather complicated but, generally speaking, a further densification took place. Part of the air which had existed on Ancient Sun condensed into water. This Ancient Moon water cannot be compared with our present day water. It was much more powerful in consistency and capacity. An impression of what that water was like is given by our present Mars as seen through the telescope. It appears to have a geometrizing capacity. As seen

through the telescope, Mars displays peculiar lines crossing the face of the planet (Fig. 2b). The lines are interconnected, and knots or nodes appear at the crossing points. It is as if a great cosmic geometrician had taken his ruler and used the surface of the planet as a blackboard for geometrical exercises and experiments. Sometimes he even seems to wipe off what he has drawn. These lines or “canals” sometimes appear double, forming parallels which may disappear again after some time.



This may remind us of events that took place on Ancient Moon. Toward the middle of Ancient Moon a separation took place. On the one hand a Sun—the predecessor of our present Sun—came into existence as the abode of hierarchical beings who were not willing to endure the densification into water that was taking place in part of Ancient Moon. The condensed part was left behind as the actual Ancient Moon, which was then in a watery condition. In this water, the original spirit-substance which had originated in the Will of the Thrones, or Spirits of Will, had entered a further phase of condensation into physical objects. The rudiments of the present kingdoms of nature were already appearing. It was a world that no longer displayed the spontaneous response to the spirit world that the creatures of Ancient Sun had shown. The forms of the Ancient Moon kingdoms were highly fixed and no longer as pliable as they had been. The physical bodies of the creatures had fallen so far from their origin that the creative power of the spirit was not able to penetrate sufficiently to allow them to change their forms in response to the spontaneous impulses of the divine world. The spirit was becoming completely submerged in the physical world, and the objects of the physical world were becoming manifestations of the precipitation of the spirit into substance. The countenance of the spirit was still revealed in them, but they were becoming more and more inflexible. They became like statues representing the reality of the spiritual world. It is only in this sense that we can speak of this stage as a cosmic stage of Intuition.

Our present Mars recapitulates the precipitation of spirit into matter. This can be corroborated by the experiences that we have in the sphere of Mars after death. We meet the archetypes, the thought beings, of all that has surrounded us in the physical world on Earth, of all the objects that we find in the physical world. There is thus a gateway in the sphere of Mars where the stream or wave coming from the periphery prepares to fall into the world of the multitude of physical objects.

Finally, we have the crest of the wave on the Earth. The precipitation into matter, the ultimate breaking up of the spirit into matter, takes place there. We see, therefore, that the three steps of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars are essential. They are successive steps of the condensation of zodiacal essence into Earth matter.

Now we come to the Moon. What is the Moon doing? First of all we notice that the Moon may be full, or it may be a new Moon. There are, of course, also waxing and waning phases in between. We can say that the Moon has a double aspect. The full Moon in Fig. 1a position x is like a receptacle for what streams in from the periphery. It would seem to receive this stream in the crescent phase. In fact, it is this waxing Moon moving toward the full Moon position that is used in agriculture for sowing and planting. So what are farmers and gardeners doing when taking note of the waxing phase of the Moon for their practical tasks? They are trying to make use of the unique opportunity that occurs when the Moon is receiving the full impact of the essence that has been prepared step by step. Originally the essence came from the Zodiac as archetypal forces. We might call them spiritual-astral forces. By moving through the spheres of the outer planets they have gradually become condensed, and now the Moon can receive them, reflect them, and pass them on to the Earth.

How does the Moon impart them to the Earth? In astronomy we are told that the Moon is a cosmic “cinder”, a lifeless world. It has no water, no air. Where water is absent, there can be no vegetation as we know it on Earth. Likewise, where there is no air, there can be no conscious life. So the Moon is a complete desert and can receive nothing from the cosmic forces for its own consumption, so to speak. It is like a mirror, a silver mirror. It receives the cosmic impacts but has to give them away by reflecting them.

Thus the Moon is really a paradox. It is, in a sense, a dead body, and yet, it is the creator of the fullness of cosmic life for the Earth. The Sun, by the way, is another paradox in the cosmos. It is a non-spatial entity, but it creates space by means of the “suction” which it exerts on the surroundings. It is because it is the contrary of space that it can hold solar space together. This shows how complex the cosmos is and how we must be prepared to think in paradoxes in order to discover the truth.

What about the Moon in position y ? It is a new Moon. Seen from the Earth it is in front of the Sun, and only the side turned away from the Earth is lit up. We cannot normally see it, except in the case of an eclipse of the Sun, when the surface of the Moon appears as a completely black disc. What sort of effect does the new Moon have on the Earth? Observations on the moods that prevail during full or new Moon may help us to draw some conclusions. At the time of full Moon, we find that there is an abundance of life and vitality about the world. People are usually more taken up with impressions coming from the outside world than they would be otherwise. They feel animated. This is because we, in so far as we are bodily beings, participate more fully in the stream that enters the night sky of the Earth when the full Moon is actually there. At the time of the new Moon we find the opposite. People are usually much quieter, more withdrawn, and animation and vitality are suppressed to a certain extent; consciousness can then arise.

Thus, in connection with the new Moon, we have a lessening of the influx of cosmic vitality. The new Moon is obviously not fully within the stream of energies and essences entering from the cosmos. Indeed the opposite seems to be the case. The cosmic essence which has been “broken up” into matter is on the way out, so to speak. We see that the forces of growth and vitality are being held back to some degree, but that at the same time consciousness is being enhanced. This is the key that we need for an understanding.

The new Moon is present in that part of the solar universe where we picture the wave to be receding. The spirit which has been “broken up” into matter is entering a different phase of development. This results in the rise of an impulse toward the differentiation of matter, with the ultimate aim of dissolving it. At the same time an enhancement of consciousness appears to be brought about. Ultimately the cosmic movement on the right side of Fig. 1a will facilitate a harmonization of the Imaginations, Inspirations, and Intuitions which we give back to the cosmos when we go through the portal of death.

A grand cosmic order is already apparent in this whole process. On the left side of Fig. 1a is Mars, which we said was the last stage where the zodiacal essence is getting ready to be precipitated into matter. A tendency is arising for it to “fall” into the objects of the physical world. It is there that we find the thought-archetypes of the physical objects, which the waxing Moon takes up and passes on to the Earth. On the other side, the waning Moon retreats from the process initiated in the sphere of Mars. Thus the Moon has a certain connection with Mars.

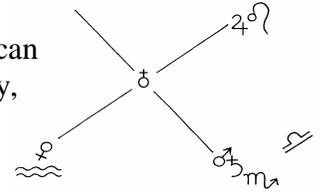
We have been speaking of Mars as a kind of cosmic entity which recapitulates the Ancient Moon evolution. Mars is at present in a watery condition. But this is water which is ready to receive Cosmic Intuition, namely, spirit which manifests itself in physical objects having lost its original momentum of union with the spiritual world. It is, as it were, a recapitulation of Ancient Moon. Our present Moon reflects the internal side of Ancient Moon in its rhythms. For example, it reflects what the ancestors of the human race experienced on Ancient Moon. Metaphorically speaking, Mars is the outside and the Moon the inside of Ancient Moon. It is the Moon which finally weaves the cosmic essence into earthly objects and differentiates them. That is why the Moon is so strongly connected with embryonic development, also with germination and growth in general. But on the waning side of the Moon, these forces can also open the way to an enhancement of consciousness. If we take up these possibilities through our own efforts, we can develop the consciousness of Imagination.

Similarly, Venus can be regarded as the “inside” of the sphere of Jupiter, as a recapitulation of Ancient Sun, on which the densification of warmth into air had taken place. It was an air through which cosmic Inspirations were resounding and creating. In the realm of Venus, therefore, we find a recapitulation of what a being on Ancient Sun had experienced inwardly. At the same time a “breaking up” into differentiation is being initiated. This then is the contribution of Venus to the processes within the solar universe. How can we imagine this in a practical sense?

We have said that, in a certain sense, both Jupiter and Venus are connected with the Ancient Sun. In Jupiter there is a recapitulation of the Inspiration-permeated air and light of Ancient Sun. In this capacity the present Jupiter is preparing the stream of cosmic essence that is coming in from the periphery of the Zodiac and moving toward the Earth. Venus is also connected with that aspect of light and air, but in this case it is already on the way out, so to speak. Venus is helping to “break up” the air through differentiation, etc. In a certain sense, it is lifeless air, compared with that represented by Jupiter. It is what we actually call “air” (and also “light”) here on Earth. Hence, the working of Venus in the solar universe is especially connected with the events in the meteorological atmosphere of the Earth.

This could actually be corroborated if research were carried out into atmospheric rhythms and the unexpected changes of these rhythms over the whole surface of the Earth. For instance, in 1943, India suffered a terrible famine: floods had destroyed the early rice, then the monsoons failed to come and drought followed. A similar situation threatened India in 1951, eight years later. In both cases, certain rhythms in the Earth's atmosphere as a whole, broke down. The changes could have been observed beforehand by a study of the movement and gestures of the planet Venus, together with other cosmic facts. However, it would have needed a consideration of the whole sphere of Venus.

I should like to give another example of how these forces work and how they can become of practical importance in our work. (Later I shall be speaking about Mercury, but as we have now come so far, it may be desirable to make things a bit more realistic.) The planet Jupiter is at present in the constellation of Lion (Fig. 3). You will remember that we were speaking of Lion last night. At a distance of 90°, in the constellation of Scorpion we find the planet Saturn, and Venus stands in the constellation of Waterman. Thus all three planets occupy the three ends of the beam of a cross whose crossing point would be the center of the Earth. Furthermore, in just a few days Mars will be in exact conjunction with Saturn in Scorpion. It is already quite near, perhaps only a degree or two away from Saturn, so it is actually in conjunction.



What do we read in this? Well, let us first consider Saturn. We have said that Saturn is connected with the warmth condition of Ancient Saturn. This was, from one point of view, a warmth that was permeated by cosmic Imaginations. However, Saturn is in the constellation of Scorpion. It represents a point of crisis. It is a stage in the Zodiac which signifies the moment at which a being or an evolution is confronted with the question of rising to new heights of doing. Three difficult steps of inner discipline must be accomplished in order to enter the sanctuary of effective deed, otherwise Scorpion means death and destruction. It is a constellation which pronounces the words, "Do or die!" Thus the warning contained in the cipher "Saturn in Scorpion" is that warmth, cosmic warmth filled with the power of divine Imagination, may have entered a stage of crisis.

Before entering the constellation of Scorpion, Saturn was in Scales. This was already an indication that something was becoming critical, was in the balance. But with Saturn in Scorpion, it has become obvious that there is some kind of crisis in the sphere of warmth. At least, there is an indication. In order to understand it fully, we would have to study the atmospheric and meteorological events of the past 30 years. During this period Saturn has moved from Scorpion through the whole Zodiac and back to the same constellation.

We need only look around and take stock of the tremendous variations and changes in temperature which we are encountering at present. Something seems to be in disorder, and not only here in the British Isles. We are constantly reading that other continents bordering on the North Atlantic are also undergoing violent meteorological extremes. North America has been experiencing tremendous changes of temperature. Even in Florida, which is famous for its winter temperature of 70°, temperatures have dropped to 45°, which is quite unusual. So we have a kind of deterioration, a breaking up, taking place in the sphere of warmth. (During the last spell of extremely cold weather the meteorological stations were constantly reminding us of the fact that the present conditions are similar to those of winter 1928/29. Saturn was then in the tail of the constellation of Scorpion.) This effect of Saturn is accelerated as Mars draws near to the conjunction mentioned earlier. The actual time of the event is not necessarily of significance. It is the approach of Mars and its moving away that are important.

What does Mars contribute during the event of the conjunction? Mars is connected with the "living water" of Ancient Moon. So we have a combination of two forces, possibly a kind of struggle, perhaps even a sort of paralysis: a breakdown in the sphere of warmth is combined with events in the sphere of water.

All this can be worked out precisely and in detail; for instance, we can take into account the positions of the planets relative to the Sun. These and other details add to the impression that the present is not a very good time for the streams of zodiacal essence entering in here. Right from the beginning they have a one-sided and deviant tendency.

Jupiter is in the constellation of Lion. We have said that this planet appears to be connected with the "living air" and "light" of the Ancient Sun, which was a vehicle of tremendous cosmic Inspirations. It seemed to be permeated by forces coming from the direction of Lion. The problem with Lion is: which one of the two principles predominates, the central or the peripheral? There is a kind of undecided situation, almost an

irritation, a movement from the center to the periphery, from the periphery to the center. This may result in a kind of disorder, a kind of great excitement in the air sphere, in the airy mantle of the Earth. (Here we are reminded of the cyclones and anti-cyclones of meteorological terminology.)

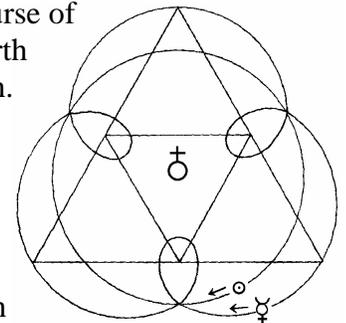
All this is drawn somewhat into a state of tension, as indicated by the fact that Venus is in opposition to Jupiter. Venus, as we have said, is also connected with the element of air, but with a differentiated air which has arrived at the end of its evolutionary career. So we would expect unusual developments and changes in the atmosphere of the Earth.

Thus we actually learn to read the conditions which may prevail on the Earth at a certain time. We are able to take stock of the cosmic forces that are affecting the Earth. It would be possible to evolve a kind of balance sheet, with the forces coming from the cosmos on the one side and those which are Earth-conditioned on the other. Of course, what we have just been doing is still very crude, yet it can be cultivated, and a start must be made somewhere. Also, we must take into account the pace of human evolution. This cultivation of cosmic knowledge cannot proceed without the development of those capacities of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition mentioned earlier. I believe that such cosmic wisdom cannot become effective unless we ourselves develop inner warmth and inner light, etc. In previous ages of Earth evolution, the rhythms of the kingdoms of nature were enacted and guided by divine beings. We know that in the Middle Ages an awareness of this fact was still in existence. But this guidance has now largely ceased. In future, we will be called upon more and more to become a wise and beneficial master of these forces in nature and the cosmos. If future humanity does not respond to this call, or if we misuse our assignment for egotistical purposes, then these forces will run riot. They will lead to destruction and possibly to the elimination of humanity and our planet.

We still have to speak about Mercury, which from a certain point of view is closely connected with Saturn. Saturn, as an act of cosmic memory, recalls the external side of the Ancient Saturn evolution. Mercury, however, is connected with the inner aspect of the warmth of Ancient Saturn. From a certain point of view, Mercury reflects what the spiritual hierarchies of the Archai experienced in that warmth.

Thus Mercury is connected with warmth, but it is obviously working mainly in the realm of differentiation and individualization (Fig. 1a). How does it enact this? With regard to the human being, this is comparatively easy to see. Mercury helps to build the organism during embryonic development in such a fashion that during its life it can become the vessel of an intelligent personality; this is obviously a movement toward differentiation and individualization. In the plant world it acts by impressing the form of the archetypal plant on to the single plant. It tries to differentiate and force matter into that invisible plant form through the stages of plant-life metamorphosis, in systole and diastole. Mercury can do this because it is connected with the warmth whose element the divine hierarchies reflected in their great Imaginations on Ancient Saturn. Of course, this is only one aspect of Ancient Saturn.

This ability is also reflected in Mercury's movements and gestures during the course of a single year, as seen from the point of view of the Earth. Here in the center is the Earth (Fig. 4). In the course of the year the Sun appears to move in a circle round the Earth. Mercury's movement is close to the Sun, but at intervals it is in front of the Sun (performing a so-called loop), and at other times it is behind the Sun. A three-foldness is indicated in Mercury's path (Fig. 4): three times a year it is in front of the Sun and three times a year behind it, describing a threefold cosmic movement of systole and diastole in the course of the seasons. This is connected with the very ancient division of the year into three seasons, a fact mentioned by Rudolf Steiner in the Torquay lecture cycle *True and False Paths in Spiritual Investigation*, 11 August, 1924, GA243. It also reflects three stages of growth and manifestation in space. It seems to be naturally connected with three-foldness in the kingdoms of nature and in humanity.



Again, we have here a means of gauging, so to speak, the particular conditions prevailing in the cosmos at certain times. Of course, we still have a lot to learn; experiment alone is not enough, it must be accompanied by the development of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition. For the sum total of the cosmic facts that we have discussed so far is too complex to be comprehended by the intellect alone.

What we have been attempting during these few days has been no more than a rough sketch of the working of the cosmos in earthly substances. It would need much more time and preparation to go into greater detail.

However, perhaps we have succeeded in shedding a little light on the road we still have to travel. A practical measure that we might visualize for the future is a calendar containing information and events in the heavens in accordance with the aspects and methods we have been trying to apply. We need precise knowledge of the ever-changing nature of the cosmic forces streaming in from the cosmos and amalgamating with the Earth; otherwise, all talk about the interplay between the Earth and cosmos will remain vague and will not be able to contribute much to practical achievement.

To conclude, I would like to draw the picture in Fig. 1a from a different perspective by turning the diagram 90° in Fig. 5. Saturn is now at the bottom. But at this stage, whether it is “top” or “bottom” is not essential. Jupiter follows higher up and Mars higher still. The Earth with the Moon comes in the central position and above it are situated the orbits of Venus and Mercury. Finally, the Sun concludes the picture. This will remind you of a diagram you probably know very well, namely, the sketch contained in the *Agricultural Course*, lectures by Rudolf Steiner, 10 June, 1924, GA327 (See Lecture II). So what we have actually been doing during these evenings has been to attempt an approach to the suggestions given to agriculturists by Rudolf Steiner.

We have only worked out a few isolated facts and aspects. The future will have to show whether this is a workable idea and a way that promises success. The main point is that we keep moving. The corrections which may be needed will come in the course of sincere work.

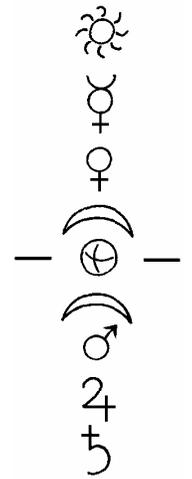


Fig. 5