

Spiritual Science



Deep Dive Article

The Elementary Kingdoms

Source: https://anthroposophy.eu/The_elementary_kingdoms

Spiritual science describes seven kingdoms: three elementary kingdoms and the [Four kingdoms of nature](#) that we know on [Earth](#). See also: [Conditions of Life](#)

The spiritual beings or entities of the three elementary kingdoms, short-notation EK1, EK2 and EK3, constitute the form-giving forces for the three kingdoms of nature. They lie at the same level as the group souls of these kingdoms of nature.

From higher [spirit world](#), EK1 forms the mineral kingdom, from the lower spirit world EK2 shapes the form of the plant kingdom, and from the astral world EK3 gives form to instincts and desires in the [animal kingdom](#). The three interpenetrate and act together in the various kingdoms. They also work in Man: all three EK's can be found in human blood (see eg [FMC00.285](#) on [Blood is a special fluid](#))

During the night, they provide nurturing forces whilst the [human I](#) and astral body are not in the physical and etheric bodies. (see [What takes place as we sleep](#)).

Aspects

- relationship between the spirits in the elementary kingdoms and the [Third Hierarchy](#), see Schema FMC00.142A below.

Illustrations

Schema FMC00.175 gives an overview of the three elementary kingdoms, as an offspring of the [Third Hierarchy](#) H3 (see quote of 1904-GA11 below), and positioned at the same levels as the group souls of the three kingdoms of nature for which they provide the form-giving, the formative forces. See schema FMC00.142A below.

		description	separated and form	spiritual ether colour/ tone, expressing a characteristic property	formative force in	In Mineral, Plant, Animal Kingdoms	In Man	relation with Group-Soul
higher spirit world	EK1	first elementary kingdom indefinite thought substance which gathers together, dissolves in a double manner, and thus flows along. One cannot speak of independent entities, but only of an irregular, general mass.		the formless thought seeds, like the intention preceding the thought, formless, before the form has actually arisen (so the intentions before the form of a spiral or semicircle arise)	Archaic shining colours radiating from itself, wonderful glistening wood	minerals .. in everything which molds and works upon the minerals, the Beings of the first Elementary Kingdom are to be found... it is the Beings of the first Elementary Kingdom who form the minerals.		The atomistic forces of the minerals, active as attraction and repulsion, proceed from the groups of minerals.
lower spirit world	EK2	second elementary kingdom shadowy images or phantasms similar to the conceptions of the dreamlike image consciousness.		.. forms woven by thoughts, thought-figures; arranging and ordering the things according to order of measure, number and shape Thus providing structure without the qualities induced by the senses EK2 is the formative element of, and underlies the Third Elementary Kingdom.	Archangelic free tones beings very mobile	plants .. physical forms of the plants originate from the Beings of the second Elementary Kingdom... they mould and form the shapes of the plants .. the Beings that work from EK2 and help it to take form, fly toward the plant from all sides, like butterflies. The renewal and repetition of the leaves, blossoms, etc., is their work. .. that which builds up the body of a plant consists of the forces belonging to the second Elementary Kingdom.	.. the activity of the beings of EK2 extends and works into all elements in Man which have a plant-like character — nails, hair, etc. These are not permeated by the astral body, but merely by the ethereal body, for no reason they feel no pain.	Within the plant are active both the Plant-I, which permeates the ethereal and astral bodies and the Beings of EK2. Whereas the I of the plants works upon the plant from within, these other beings work upon it from without — forming it, making it grow and blossom. The whole plant is permeated by an ethereal body.
astral	EK3	third elementary kingdom indefinite image-like entities with no independence, that manifest forces similar to the passions and emotions of men and animals non-independent, buzzing emotions [For dreamlike image-consciousness or conscious image-consciousness, these creations of the third elementary realm are] .. permeable as a floating light, as flakes of color, as smell, taste, as various tones and sounds, but all such perceptions must be imagined to be phantom-like		coloured clouds floating through the world, sounds resounding through the world, .. all of sense impressions, the qualities of perception... filling space, streaming through space without being bound to a form; (elements of light and warmth permeating space) .. thing in itself and together in interpenetrating lines: Everything expressing beautiful forms having the power of light within themselves. They are like bodies of light flying hither and thither in space, winning from within.	Angelic coloured forms lightning-like forms (suffering) or plant-like forms (higher emotions)	animals .. the animals are given their form, which enables him to have certain instincts, and which is the bearer of these instincts, by the Beings of the third Elementary Kingdom — the companions of the animal Group-Souls. .. the animal group souls and the Beings of the third Elementary Kingdom both work from the astral plane, they must work together in harmony. The one supplies the instincts, the other the bodies, forming and moulding them, so that the instincts may live within them.	.. in addition to the I, Beings live within it whose consciousness dwells on the astral plane. These beings permeate the astral body just as maggots live in cheese. This is EK3 which forms impulses and passions of an animal nature. .. during the night, these Beings work in our blood as a body of heat and permeate the blood which heat — and at the same time, lives upon the astral plane with its body at hand. .. they are able to act as a substitute for the human I, and work down from the astral plane and fill man's astral body with impulses, desires, and passions.	Example: the animal group soul directs the migrations of the birds which take quite definite courses in their migrations; from the northwest to southeast and from southwest to northeast. In these migrations instinct comes to expression.
general for all EK		randomly floating spirit substance, whose movements and form or less permanent formations are not driven or motivated by their own consciousness				These three Elementary Kingdoms permeate one another, flow into one another. Our world consists of interpenetrating regions; only if we are able to make our thoughts mobile and fluent, shall we gradually be able to understand such things.		
		1904-GA011, 1905-10-27-GA093a, Maximilian Rehbolz		1900-08-06-GA001		1907-12-04-GA098		

Schema FMC00.175A is a simplified variant of Schema FMC00.175 that summarizes the formative forces proceeding from the Elementary Kingdoms, all three active and interpenetrating all the time. They work together with the intelligence of the group soul from the different worlds.

	Elementary Kingdom	Formative force EK	+	Group soul force
higher spirit world	EK1 first elementary kingdom	form the minerals		The atomistic forces of the minerals, active as attraction and repulsion, proceed from the groups of minerals.
lower spirit world	EK2 second elementary kingdom	shape and build physical forms of plants		Within the plant are active both: - the Plant-I, which permeates the ethereal and astral bodies (and works from within) - and the Beings of EK2, work from without, forming it, making it grow and blossom.
astral	EK3 third elementary kingdom	mould and form physical bodies of animals		Instinct comes to expression, for example, in the migration of birds who take quite definite courses. This is directed by the animal group souls.
	1904-GA011, 1905-10-27-GA093a, Maximilian Rehbolz			1907-12-04-GA098

Schema FMC00.143 is a schema developed by Maximilian Rebolz in his book published in 1936, and further elaborated upon in his essays on the Elementary Kingdoms in 1948 and 1950. It also appears in a GA091 lecture of 1905 which was published for the first time in the GA in 2018.

The schema shows that on Old Saturn, the thoughts of the archai created the human phantom in the first elementary kingdom (blue). With each planetary stage - and the [Three dimensions of evolution](#), these 'thoughts of a hierarchy' ripple down from higher to lower spirit world where they are developed into form, then clothed into astral, etc. As a result we currently have a mineral physical body on Earth(blue). And Man has become fourfold, with an etheric body developed 'down' from 'thoughts of the archangels' on Old Sun (green), and an astral body developed from the initial 'thoughts of the angels' on Old Moon (red). On Earth, Man is also developing thoughts through his I. The [seeds for future worlds](#) that Man is creating today will also develop further to form the basis of future developments in the next planetary stages of evolution.

In the future, Man will further develop (down on the third column from left on this chart) into different [Conditions of Consciousness](#). On Future Vulcan, Man's I - the core of Man's being, see [Man's higher triad](#) - will have developed into the mineral kingdom.

world	elementary kingdom	consciousness	Old Saturn	Old Sun	Old Moon	Earth	Future Jupiter	Future Venus	Future Vulcan
higher spirit world	1st elementary kingdom	deep sleep				I			
lower spirit world	2nd elementary kingdom	sleep				astral	I		
astral world	3th elementary kingdom	dream				etheric		I	
physical world	mineral kingdom	waking self	archai	archangels	angels	Man's physical body			Man Creator .. of mineral substance
	plant kingdom						physical		
	animal kingdom							physical body in animal kingdom; master over desire and pain	
	human kingdom								physical body in human kingdom

1905-08-07-GA091
Maximilian Rebolz 1936

Schema FMC00.143A depicts the cornerstone insight how the Elementary Kingdoms lie at the basis of Man's principles and the forms we find in the other Kingdoms too. The 'substance' considered are really spiritual beings, at each planetary stage.

world	elementary kingdom	consciousness	Old Saturn	Old Sun	Old Moon	Earth
higher spirit world	1st elementary kingdom	deep sleep				I
lower spirit world	2nd elementary kingdom	sleep				astral
astral world	3th elementary kingdom	dream				etheric
physical world	mineral kingdom	waking self	archai	archangels	angels	Man's physical body

Schema FMC00.143B extends the schema to the future planetary stages of evolution to highlight the correspondence with the thoughts of the hierarchy going through the human stage of CoC=4 (see [Twelve conditions of consciousness](#))

It shows how how the archai's thoughts are the creator of the blue in the higher spirit world, corresponding to the current mineral kingdom. Similarly for the archangels on Old Sun and the green etheric principle, and the angels on Old Moon and the light red astral bodily principle.

On Earth today, it is Man who has become a creator through the **Human 'I'** principle.

See also Schema FMC00.142F on [Q00.005 - How to understand the impact of the higher ethers for Man](#)

world	elementary kingdom	consciousness	Old Saturn	Old Sun	Old Moon	Earth	Future Jupiter	Future Venus	Future Vulcan
higher spirit world	1st elementary kingdom	deep sleep				I			
lower spirit world	2nd elementary kingdom	sleep				astral	I		
astral world	3th elementary kingdom	dream				etheric		I	
physical world	mineral kingdom	waking self	archai	archangels	angels	Man's physical body			Man Creator ... of mineral substance
	plant kingdom					physical			
	animal kingdom						physical body in animal kingdom; master over desire and pain		
	human kingdom								physical body in human kingdom

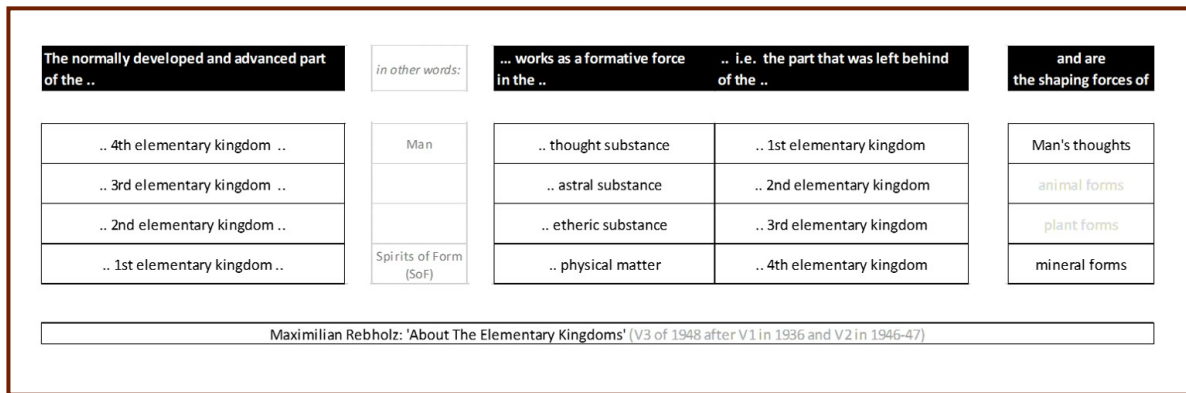
Schema FMC00.147 is placed next to FMC00.143A above, because it shows how the Archai developing their consciousness principle in the warmth substance of the Thrones, and how their thoughts lie at the basis of Man's physical body. See EK1 above, in FMC00.143A. Maximilian Rebholz puts out the hypothesis that human EK ripened 'inside the Archai', in other words that the originator or creator of these thoughts remains connected through further evolutionary stages. And this will be the same for Man, see [Seeds for future worlds](#).

Kingdom	mineral	plant	animal	Man
Kingdom developed from the original thoughts of the ..		angels	archangels	Archai
developed during evolutionary stage ..	Earth	Old Moon	Old Sun	Old Saturn
then also creating the spiritual archetypes (EK) for ..		soul	life	mineral
<i>in an environment with</i>				
.. substance sacrificed by ..	SoF	SoM	SoW	Thrones
.. thereby creating the <u>new</u> elements and ethers of:	life earth	chemical water	light air	warmth core
Hence an etheric world consisting of:	warmth, light, chemical, life	warmth, light, chemical	warmth, light	warmth (subst+eth)
<i>and on current Earth</i>				
.. giving the kingdoms incl. Man, a(n) ..	physical body	ether body	astral body	I

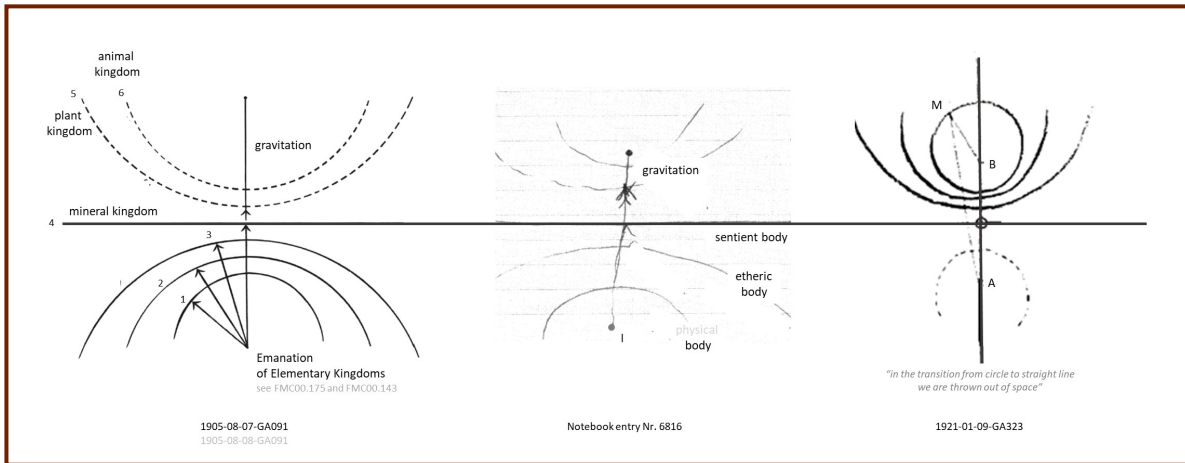
the SoF on Earth
created the physical
realm
and body of Man
and the kingdoms

the I is the
remaining warmth
as a result of the
sacrifice of the
Thrones

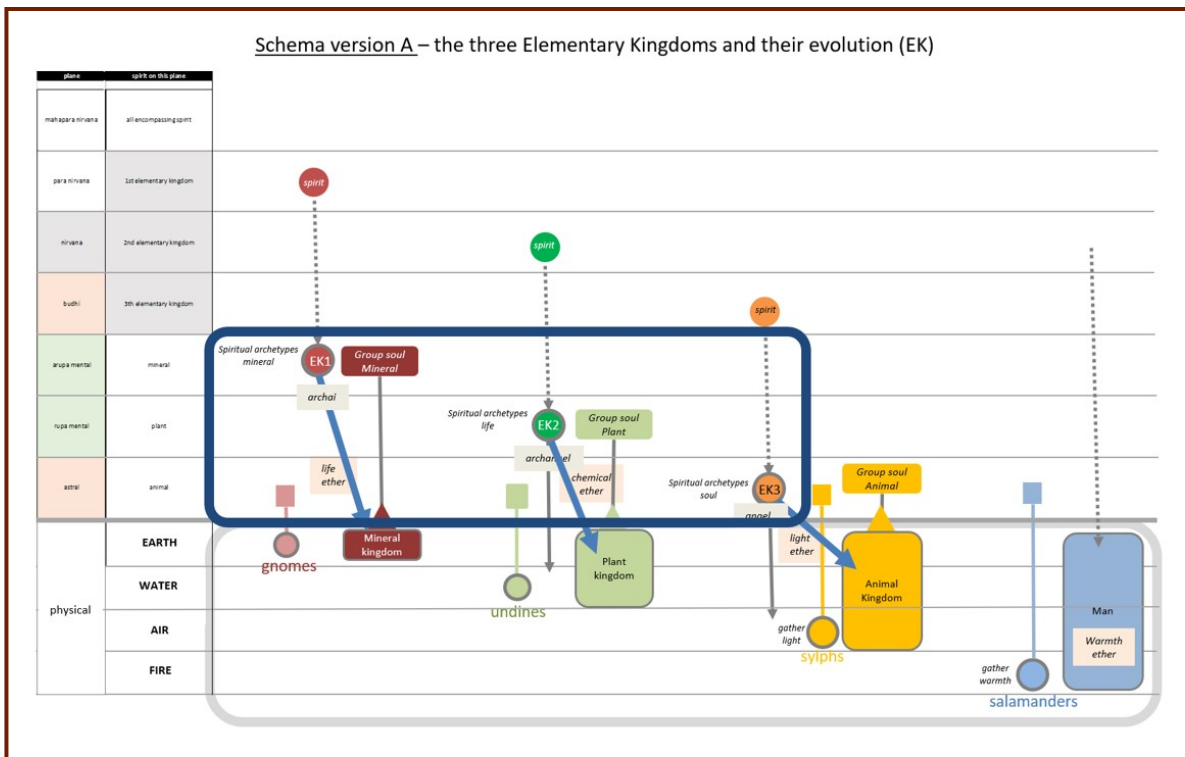
Schema FMC00.198 follows from the study of the evolution of the elementary kingdoms, and gives the link with the formative forces in Man



Schema FMC00.511 combines a number of drawings whereby the workings of the spiritual forces is explained as underlying the rendering of nature's kingdoms in the physical world, see also [Cosmic fractal](#). On the left, the 1905-08-07-GA091 lecture uses the Elementary Kingdoms as a basis, see Schemas FMC00.143 and FMC00.175. On the right, from the Astronomy course GA323, with the etheric and counterspace as a basis, see [Mathematics of the etheric](#). First (left) is explained how the mineral physical world and gravitational forces are just a weakening of the spiritual whereby the radiation from the ever larger circles below gets ever weaker. See also Schema FMC00.172 on [Force substance representation](#). In [1921-01-09-GA323](#) this is explained starting from a mathematical perspective with lemniscate cassini curves, showing by logical reasoning that "in the transition from circle to straight line we are thrown out of space". This is followed by a reasoning by analogy of how these forces of the kingdoms of nature are also working within Man: "the human organisation is of such a nature that it cannot be embraced by the anatomical approach alone. Just as we are driven out of space in the Cassini curve, so in the study of Man we are driven out of the body, by the method of study itself. ... In this way ... we describe what is within the human being in comparison with what takes place in nature outside him. ... We say: ... I must place myself within Man and say that the curvature is facing this way. I then consider what is inside, without taking into account that I have reversed the curvature. I will make the interior of the human being into an outer nature. I simply imagine outer nature to continue through the skin into the interior."



Schema FMC00.142A lifts out one aspect from Schema FMC00.142, focusing on the Elementary Kingdoms. Compare with schema FMC00.143 above: currently there are spiritual beings of the EK3 in the astral, EK2 in the lower spirit, and EK1 in the higher spirit world. See 1907-12-04-GA098 below for a description of how they work in [nature's kingdoms on Earth](#).



Lecture coverage and references

Overview coverage

This topic deserves thorough study and contemplation of both the schemas and the limited coverage in lectures by Rudolf Steiner, and can be approached from a holistic perspective of Schema FMC00.142 and how the hierarchies work.

The best approach to this important topic is to study the three essays by [Maximilian Rebholz](#), who wrote a unique contribution on this topic with his three essays on the Elementary Kingdoms (first in book and the other two as part of his newsletters); followed by the coverage by Oskar Kürten (see Further reading section below).

Rudolf Steiner describes the Elementary Kingdoms in Cosmic Memory (GA011) and 1905-10-27-GA093a, but quite succinctly. Steiner gave very few lectures of relevance, a full lecture on the topic in GA098 (first published in 1983!), another in GA089 (first published in 2001!), and two short in 1905-08-06-GA091 and 1905-08-07-GA091 (first published in 2018). These lectures had to wait 76, 97 and 113 years to be made available to the world.

As a basis for study, start with 1907-12-04-GA098 (and more in GA098 but not translated/published yet, see below)

Reference extracts

1904-GA11

*.. At this stage of development we are concerned with four realms: a mineral, a plant, an animal, and a human realm. Along with these however, in the course of the development up to this point three other realms have come into existence. In the time when the animals separated from the Fire Spirits at the thought stage (Rupa stage), the Archai also separated certain entities out of themselves. These consist of indefinite thought substance which gathers together, dissolves in a cloudlike manner, and thus flows along. One cannot speak of them as of independent entities, but only of an irregular, general mass. This is the **first elementary realm**.*

At the astral stage something similar separates from the Archangels. It consists of shadowy images or phantoms similar to the conceptions of the dreamlike image consciousness. They form the second elementary realm.

*In the beginning of the physical stage, indefinite image-like entities finally separate out of the Angels. They too have no independence, but they can manifest forces which are similar to the passions and emotions of men and animals. These non-independent, buzzing emotions form the **third elementary realm**. For beings which are endowed with a dreamlike image consciousness, or with conscious image consciousness, these creations of the third elementary realm are perceptible as a flooding light, as flakes of color, as smell, taste, as various tones and sounds, but all such perceptions must be imagined to be phantom-like.*

*One must therefore imagine the earth, when it condenses as a refined etheric body out of its astral precursor, to be a conglomerate of an etheric mineral basic mass and of etheric plant, animal, and human beings. **Filling the interstices as it were, and also permeating the other beings, are the creatures of the elementary realms.***

1907-12-04-GA098

The main lecture is 1907-12-04-GA098, and it will be quoted here in extenso. It is worthwhile to study not just the whole lecture but also related lectures in the GA098 volume.

Other Beings must come to their aid; other Beings must take over the work of man. From other worlds, other Beings must pour their activity into man

where does the human I really live, when it lives here, upon the physical plane?

In which one of the three kingdoms does it live?

EK as maintainers of I and astral body (SWCC)

*..the group-souls of the animals reside on the astral plane, but there is **another species of Egos, dwelling upon the astral plane, which work upon the human being and vitalize his blood, when the I of man has abandoned it.***

By what means do they accomplish this? And what is it that they bring into the blood?

*They bring into it that which, ever since the time of Saturn, must always be present in the human body — namely **warmth**. These are spirits which have never descended as far as the physical plane — **spiritual Beings that live on the astral plane and have a warmth body.***

*In the mineral kingdom, everything appears to us endowed with a certain degree of warmth. Warmth is met with as a quality of solid, liquid, and gaseous bodies. But try to think of warmth independently, quite by itself ... it does not exist as such upon the physical plane. But **upon the astral plane, you would meet with such warmth, streaming there and thither — warmth as an independent being — and within it, you would discover Beings embodied**, such as we were ourselves upon ancient Saturn. These Beings **enter into the blood during the night, and vitalize it with their warmth.***

*But something else must also take place — for the **astral body also abandoned the blood**, and this body too, is indispensable to it. Thus it is not sufficient if these I-beings alone approach man during the night and work upon him with their warmth-bodies — but **other beings as well are needed, which work upon the blood in the same way as does the astral body.***

***These Beings have their I in the spirit world, and this I possesses a still higher body, which is not even condensed as far as heat.** It permeates the blood and carries on within it, an activity which corresponds to that of the astral body during the day.*

*Thus you may see how **we are cared for and protected during the night by higher Beings which do not live in the mineral kingdom.***

*These have remained behind the human kingdom during the successive stages of evolution; they form the hidden **Elementary Kingdoms, which lie behind our physical world, and which work down into it.***

The Beings of the third Elementary Kingdom have a warmth body on the astral plane. During the night, they permeate the blood of Man with warmth. They are the companions of the Group souls of the animals — they belong to the same region.

In our astral body, in addition to our I, live spiritual beings whose I dwells upon the astral plane. These Beings permeates the astral body just as maggots live in cheese. This is the third Elementary Kingdom: it is the kingdom which forms impulses and passions of an animal nature [in us].

Similarly the second elementary kingdoms is described

*.. the second Elementary Kingdom **moulds and forms the shapes of the plants.** But its activity extends also to the human being — to his many elements which have a plant-like character — nails, hair, etc.*

(Hair and nails are products from which the astral body has already withdrawn, they are not permeated by the astral body (any more, as was the case before) but merely by the etheric body; for this reason they feel no pain and it is possible to cut them, without causing pain.)

*Many things in the human being are of a plant-like nature, and within all these plants-like elements, the beings of the second Elementary Kingdom are active. Hence, **that which builds up the body of a plant** consists of the forces belonging to the second Elementary Kingdom.*

*Within the plant are active both the Plant I (which permeates the etheric and astral bodies) and these Beings of the second Elementary Kingdom. Whereas the I of the plants works upon the plant from within, these other Beings work upon it from without — **forming it, making it grow and blossom.***

The whole plant is permeated by an etheric body. But it does not possess an astral body of its own; instead the entire astral body of the Earth forms the common astral body of the plants. The I of the plants is to be found at the center of the earth. This is true for all plants.

For this reason, if you pull up a plant by the roots you cause pain to the earth; but, if you pick a flower, the earth will have a feeling of well-being, as a cow has a feeling of well-being when her calf sucks her milk. It is also a wonderful experience when the corn is moved in the autumn, to see how great waves of well-being streamed over the earth.

***The Beings which work upon the plants, from out of the second Elementary Kingdom, and help it to take form, fly toward the plant from all sides, like butterflies. The renewal and repetition of the leaves, blossoms, etc., is their work.** This is what acts upon the plants from out of the second Elementary Kingdom.*

and the first elementary kingdom

In like manner, there is a first Elementary Kingdom, which gives the minerals their form.

- *The animals received their shape, or form — a form determined by instincts and desires — from the Beings belonging to the third Elementary Kingdom.*
- *The leaves, etc., of the plants are formed by the second Elementary Kingdom; this work consists chiefly of repetitions.*

- But **performing, shaping forces of the minerals, which workout of the formless element, are to be found in the higher Spirit World ['form', Arupa-Devachan].**

These three Elementary Kingdoms permeate one another, flow into one another.

*For, with the incomes of the Ego, the human kingdom first arose upon the earth. **It is the blood which first makes man a human being; all the kingdoms are contained within it. But the I can for the present, penetrate with its cognitive forces only into the mineral kingdom; it must leave the other kingdoms to the Beings of the Elementary Kingdoms.***

introduction to the lecture 1904-06-02-GA089 in Evolution file/book.

also check 1908-06-27-GA104

Evolutionary aspect

1908-06-27-GA104

*And on the earth we can, indeed, describe these more easily, although **it is extremely difficult to give an idea of the three elementary kingdoms.***

People think they have a true conception of the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms, though this is not really the case.

Perhaps you will succeed in forming some kind of idea of the three elementary kingdoms if you consider the following.

- *Imagine parts of the mineral kingdom, stones, metals, etc., becoming finer and finer, so that you see less and less of them; they dissolve, so to speak, into finer and finer substance.*

- *Suppose it all volatilizes into an extremely delicate, transparent, invisible substance.*
- *If you continually refined these substances you would at length produce something which is no longer mineral kingdom but the third elementary kingdom. Then we should rise to a second and a first elementary kingdom.*

*It is difficult for our present qualities of perception to form ideas about **these kingdoms** which **are secreted in and condensed into our world.***

*It is as if these elementary kingdoms had condensed and disappeared, so to speak, into our world. They precede our mineral kingdom. We have seen when this mineral kingdom itself was formed. **In earlier periods of the earth's evolution the mineral kingdom existed in the condition of the elementary kingdoms.***

the GA091 reference

Hagemann section

*Rudolf Steiner's indications do not make it completely clear whether the group of higher beings he calls elementary spirits are the group souls of the elemental beings. But they probably are, and Rudolf Steiner describes the supervisory activity of these elementary beings in great detail in three lectures of his book, *The East in the Light of the West*.*

He says that they are creative forces or beings behind what is physical, but they do not belong to the four groups of "very useful" elemental beings. After giving indications about the elemental beings, Rudolf Steiner describes their interaction with "elementary" or "sun beings". With the clairvoyant vision that sees through physical solids, liquids, gases and warmth

- *"we then ascend to the creative beings who are connected with the spirits who live in the elements...the*

forces which stream to us from the sun are creative and fructifying forces behind physical things...a lower stage of clair-voyance enables one to experience certain elemental beings...When one has reached a higher stage, what one can call the midnight hour of existence becomes clearer, and one sees the elementary spirits...one experiences higher, creative sun beings...One goes through the various stages of experiencing the elementary beings, that is, one experiences that great moment when fire, air, water and earth beings become beings among whom one walks and with whom one converses, as with human beings in everyday life. ...One experiences the primal nature of these elementary spirits." (2045)

In the next lecture, Rudolf Steiner returns to these two kinds of beings.

- *"I would like to ask those of you who have studied spiritual science for some time to weigh each word that is said very exactly. I did not say elemental spirits, I said elementary spirits, therefore we are only speaking about one or the other at any one time." (2046)*

In the next lecture, Rudolf Steiner again mentions elementary spirits.

- *"Higher consciousness perceives that the spiritual world is much more complicated than its external manifestation in the physical world...we must realize that in addition to hidden spiritual phenomena and beings such as the elementary beings of fire who stand behind fire, there are also many other spiritual beings and facts." (2047)*

Since Rudolf Steiner has very seldom mentioned elementary beings, one can only guess at their hierarchical rank. They are called sun beings but no further details are given. They are also called primal beings behind elemental beings, also or higher, creative Sun beings who create things for the elemental beings. Therefore elementary beings may be at the

level of the group souls of the "very useful" elemental beings, or they may be the group souls themselves. These group souls are at the level of animal group souls. (5915).

Rudolf Steiner points to the elementary spirits in the Foundation Stone mantram:

- "The elementary spirits hear it in east, west, north, south. May human beings hear it!"

S4846 is one also in Hagemann

*"As soon as we ascend into the ether, we encounter warmth ether, light ether, the so-called chemical ether, and life ether. **If we look at these kinds of ether with the spiritual vision which sees elemental beings...we find the elemental beings of the etheric spheres: we find light beings. We find number beings, and we find the beings who let life stream through the cosmos, and who carry it. These beings are quite different from the beings in the lower elemental kingdoms.**"*

1922-05-28-GA212

*"We should point to the fact that **just as the lower elements-earth, water, air, and warmth-are peopled by elemental beings, so there are other beings in the etheric elements: light ether, chemical ether and life ether. But the latter elemental beings are very different from the elemental beings in the lower elements.**" (4849)*

more complete extract of 1922-05-28-GA212 about Elementals inhabiting ethers

What we have considered so far amounts to one aspect of what in the future threatens mankind.

*There is another aspect — just as the lower elements of earth, water and air are **inhabited by elemental beings, so are the higher elements of light ether, chemical ether and life ether.***

*However, these beings of the higher elements differ considerably from those of the lower ones. The beings of light, and particularly those of life, do not aim at becoming multitudes. The ones who strive the most to become multitudes are the beings of the earth element. **The beings of the etheric element strive rather towards unity.** It is difficult to differentiate them from one another; they do not express any individuality and rather strive to amalgamate. Certain initiates in ancient times, through whom certain teachings of the Old Testament originated, turned their attention particularly towards the etheric elements. The strong tendency of these elements towards unification created an influence which resulted in the strict monotheism of Judaism.*

The religion which is based on the worship of Jehovah originated mainly from a spiritual vision of the realm of the ethers. In this realm live spiritual beings who do not strive to separate from one another and become many individuals. Rather do they strive to grow together and disappear into one another; they seek to become a unity.

If these beings are disregarded by man — i.e., if he does not turn to spiritual knowledge and the insight that what exists up in the sky is not merely the physical sun, but that with the sun's warmth and light etheric beings stream down to earth; if man's comprehension stops at the external material aspect,

then the possibility exists that these beings will unite with ahrimanic powers.

In order for the earth to become what it was originally intended to become, man must wake up to the dangers that threaten from both sides

- *on the one hand, the danger that those beings who dwell in the lower elements will join forces with ahrimanic powers,*
- *and on the other, that the ahrimanic powers will unite with those of the higher elements in their striving for unity.*

The significance of spiritual knowledge for man's earthly destiny cannot be emphasized too strongly. Unless man draws near to spiritual reality something completely different from what ought to happen will happen to the earth.

*No matter how far or how deeply our sophisticated sciences of physics and chemistry investigate the material world around us, the fact remains **that what is investigated will all disappear along with earth existence itself. In the last resort, chemistry and physics have no value whatever beyond the earth. When the evolution of the earth comes to an end, all mineral substances will turn to dust and dissolve in the cosmos.***

***Only what pertains to the plant, animal and human world will pass over to the Future Jupiter existence.** Therefore, all the magnificent achievements of these sciences are related only to what is transitory. It is essential that knowledge is attained of that which endures beyond the earth.*

As already mentioned, whatever physical laws are discovered, whatever is investigated concerning the atomic weight of individual elements or whatever chemical formulae are produced, all these things are concerned only with what has merely transient significance. Man must grow beyond earth existence through knowledge of the kind of things I have explained. These are matters of great import and significance

1914-07-05-GA286

and specifically about the Sun cross four chambers:

When the clairvoyant consciousness of the occult seer enters into a certain relationship with these three heavenly bodies, that is to say, with what they represent spiritually, the whole universe seems to be pervaded through and through with the interplay of the spiritual content of these various heavenly bodies. **Beings have their home on all the heavenly bodies, as you have often heard; not only so, but they send forth their workings. Higher beings inhabit the heavenly bodies for long ages; subordinate beings are sent from one heavenly body to another and are the cause of currents being set in motion in the cosmos. These currents are often nothing less than the beings who are sent forth by certain elementary or higher beings from one cosmic body to the other**

In the first place, therefore, clairvoyant consciousness perceives how magnetic or electric currents in the cosmos flow from one heavenly body to another; in more exact observation this resolves itself into a host, **a stream, a swarm of spiritual beings passing from one heavenly body to another. ...**

.. To this end I will first divide the Sun diagrammatically as it actually appears to the occult seer when he directs his attention to these things. The Sun is seen divided into a kind of cross, into four chambers. The remarkable thing is that in the first moments of vision **we see a kind of streaming current, but closer scrutiny reveals the fact that here we have to do with hosts of beings passing to and fro.** We can see such a stream of spiritual beings passing from a certain "chamber" of the Sun to the Earth, penetrating the Earth and vitalising the Earth with solar essence, that is to say, with the spiritual force of the Sun, and thence streaming to their own chamber in the Sun. ...

Spiritual Beings are hovering up and down between the sun and moon!

"Like heavenly forces rising and descending,

Their golden urns reciprocally lending."

(From Goethe's Faust. Scene I.)

Golden vessels link

1916-04-13-GA167

describes, how in spring time, when – thanks to the activity of the nature-spirits – the green plant covering of the earth sprouts forth, clairvoyant vision can behold, how

"... forces pour down in order that these elemental beings can receive the power in the spring in order to form the plant covering for the earth. The forces of certain spiritual beings are carried down which impart themselves to these elemental beings so that a new world of form can sprout forth in the spring."

Maximilian Rebholz

was first to point out that the elementals receive steering from higher ranked spiritual beings.

Rebholz writes:

*In springtime, they carry the living ether into the roots of the plants. The sylphs and undines weave the formative forces of the elementary kingdoms, assisted by the light ether and chemical ether, into the growing plant, and regulate their sap circulation. The elemental beings of fire supervise, with the help of the warmth ether, the ripening process of the fruit and seeds. The nature-spirits of the elements, however, are not only the servants of the world thoughts, by enchanting, weaving and condensing the spiritual substance of the elementary kingdoms into the earthly structure, but **they also give this elementary quality back to the cosmos, when – at the time in which the earthly forms wither and die – this quality becomes free again from its spell.** Also,*

infinitely many life germs in the plant and animal world, especially those of the lower species, decay without being able to fulfill their purpose, to become fully fledged living beings.

1912-05-24-GA155

about meaning of life (see ppt FMCbis)

1917-12-16-GA179

What does the spiritual investigator see when the eye of his soul sees such repressed processes of life? The physical eye sees that eggs, or germs, perish in this case, but the eye of the soul, or of the spirit, sees that ..

.. where such eggs apparently perish, ..

something endowed with being arises in an earlier stage, in a stage which is not as yet material. ... Beings arise from such repressed life-germs that are only accessible to imaginative thought. ... the angeloi dream of the beings that rise up every year in great numbers from the sea and from the earth, as elementary forms; these are nothing but the products of the life-germs that have apparently perished.

1923-11-04-GA230

describes in a wonderfully clear manner, how the undines, sylphs and elemental fire-beings connect themselves with these being-essence, and present it to the higher hierarchies as nourishment. The undines, for example, see these products of decomposition in the sea as glimmering and glittering colours, which they avidly take in.

*They draw these colours into their own bodily nature. ... Then in a vast, in a magnificent cosmic picture, one sees how, emanating from earthly water, **the colours which are carried upwards by the undines and which have spiritual substantiality, provide the higher hierarchies***

with their sustenance, how the earth becomes the source of nourishment in that the very essence of the undines' longing is to let themselves be consumed by the higher beings.

A similar description is given for the sylphs and fire-beings.

1923-11-02/03/04-GA230 (lectures 7,8,9) are on the life of the elementals in nature

Maximilian Rebholz

The four ether types must become the carriers and mediators of the elementary kingdoms, so that these elementary kingdoms can work upon the physical plane.

[EK1]

With the help of the first elementary kingdom, the Spirits of Form shape the mineral nature out of the warmth permeating the earthly element.

"In the act of making manifest what we call matter, it announces itself as the essential Being of the Thrones;"

GA122. Genesis, Lecture 6 from 22.8.1910.

(All physical substance is a condensed sacrificial substance of the Thrones originating in the Saturn existence).

"... in so far as this basic substance takes on form, takes on shape, it announces itself as the external revelation of the Elohim (editor: SoF) ... They are the smiths, forging in their warmth element the crystalline forms of the different earths and metals, out of the formless matter of the Spirits of Will (editor: Thrones)" (Ibid.)

*The formative **forces**, which they use for that purpose, are the forces of the **first elementary kingdom**.*

There are yet other forces, those which constitute the substances as chemical **elements**. In in a lecture about the elementary kingdoms given in Arnheim , it is said about these forces:

"... The forces of the minerals, active as attraction and repulsion, the atomistic forces, proceed from the group egos (group-'I's) of minerals. **But it is the Beings of the first Elementary Kingdom who form the minerals,...**"

1907-12-04-GA098. The Nature of the Elementary Beings, Their Activities, and Influence. München, 4.12.1907.

behind which, as already mentioned, the Spirits of Form stand.

[EK2]

The light-ether is the mediator of the **second Elementary kingdom**. It works from the Devachan domain, especially from the second region, in which the archetypes of life dwell. Accordingly, it says, in a lecture from 1905:

"The light-ether has its life on the Devachan plane."

GA 93a, Foundations of Esotericism, Lecture 5. Rephrasing by Rebholz.

[EK3]

The Chemical ether becomes the mediator of the astral impulses of the **third elementary kingdom**, which has descended to the astral plane, and exercises its influence from there. Accordingly,

"... here on the astral plane the chemical ether has its life."

(Ibid. Slight Rephrasing by Rebholz).

[EK4]

*The life ether becomes the mediator of the mental impulses of the **fourth elementary kingdom**. We have already seen, that man, as the fourth elementary kingdom, imprints his thoughts into the substance of the first elementary kingdom, and we have equally concluded, that he does this on the physical plane. But in order to be able to think with the physical brain, he needs the life ether, with which the forces of the first elementary kingdom can become connected.*

*Outside, in nature, the Spirits of Form enter instead of the human 'I'. They imprint the cosmic thoughts of [physical] matter upon the forms of the crystals. As we have seen, they also use for that purpose the forces of the first elementary kingdom; and they also need, for **mediating these mental impulses, the life ether**. The bodily nature of the gnomes, their servant in this business, consists in itself of life ether, as well as of certain subsensible forces.*

"... We harden, we strengthen..." etc.,

says the choir of gnomes in 'The Soul's Awakening',

"With our bodies' spirits, Of mental matter formed,"

by which the life ether is meant.

If the life ether has its life on the Devachan plane, and the chemical ether – on the astral plane, one would have to say of the life ether, in the sequence of the ether types, that it "has its life on the etheric plane, or – if we consider the ether as part of the physical plane – then it has its life on the physical plane.

*And this is also actually said, in fact, in the above-mentioned lecture from 1905. The life ether **is**, in a certain sense, the 'physical plane'. How can one say, then, and in what sense is the life ether the physical plane, cannot be further elaborated here, because it would lead us too far from our present theme.*

Discussion

[1] - Future kingdoms beyond the current three Elementary Kingdoms

Schema FMC00.143 already triggers this point for the attentive reader. With each planetary stage and CoC, an EK is added and 'spiritualized'. Contemplating this schema and purely by logical deduction, one can already imagine that with every future planetary stage the current kingdoms will disappear and take form in Elementary Kingdoms.

And indeed this is described in the [Earth Rounds perspective](#), see Schema FMC00.298, where is described in the lecture coverage that the basis for new human kingdoms are laid in the next CoF (eg 1905-02-27-GA090B).

Another reference is made in 1905-03-06-GA090B (p92) to the fourth Elementary Kingdom 'glory' on the sixth planet. This is an error in the text, it should be the fifth planet Future Jupiter. Indeed in 1905-02-27-GA090B already is described how 'glory' in the fifth CoL round on Earth is a preparation for what is to come on Future Jupiter.



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