Understanding ourselves as embryo - Where Biology meets Biography

Fundamentals of a holistic and spiritual Human Biology

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Orientation and introduction

Understanding the stages of human development is a foundation for therapeutic recognition of embryological forces in all later stages of life. Craniosacral Therapists have been urged to comprehend embryological forces at work in sessions because the forces that formed the body are continuously at work throughout life, carrying the blueprint of Health into manifestation at every moment. This seminar is a rare opportunity to hear a world authority on modern scientific understanding of embryology who has developed a unique synthesis of this science with spiritual principles. The view on the human embryo as presented here, will introduce the embryo not as a phase in human life in the very past but as an actual fundamental principle of the body of everyone of us. The threefoldness philosophy practiced here is an unmissable addition to the image of man of AT Still (“triune man”) and the philosophy of Randolph Stone (“polarity man”).

In the human embryonic development we are dealing with what could be mentioned as 'still functioning in forms'. By this is meant that the gestures of growth and development that the human embryo is performing could be interpreted and understood as human behavior. As a kind a pre-exercising of what later on will appear and be 'freed' as physiological and psychological functions. The embryo exhibits human behavior.

The human body gets its shape and form during the embryonic development in a continuous process of change and metamorphosis. Using the phenomenological method of observation it is possible to understand those gestures as human behavior. During the early phases of human existence the processes that accompany the act of incarnation may be “read” from the biological facts. Those gestures also are a kind of echo or recapitulation of the gestures of development of man as a species. In this way of becoming a human and becoming human, biography and biology meet. The embryo may teach us real and essential patterns of human development.

The human embryo seems to be a kind of continuous empathetic equilibrium between 'introvert antipathy' and extravert sympathy' in relation to its context and environment. This polarity seems to be active in various dimensions and directions a.o. between head and extremities and between cranial (head) versus caudal (pelvis), while in the vertebral column the typically human quality of going upright seems to be preserved. During its total development the embryo is the expression of the presence of a being, which is able to mediate between ‘heaven’ and ‘earth’.

The aim of the seminar is to let attendees share in the mighty processes that form the basis of every human individual, participating not only with the intellect but also with the heart. This innovative way of considering embryonic development will open completely new perspectives as to polarities and threefoldness, microcosm and macrocosm, heredity and incarnation, evolution and the development of mankind.

This phenomenological embryology is indispensable for Craniosacral-therapists, Osteopaths, Polarity Therapists, Yoga therapists and representatives of other truly psychosomatically and spiritually oriented therapies as Body-psycho therapists or Trauma therapists. Also accessible for physicians, midwives and laymen. Specific foreknowledge of embryology is not required.
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**The Speech of the Embryo Mind and Body are One**


**Life between Chaos & Cosmos Conception - Heaven & Earth?**

Breath of Life between Chaos and Cosmos, Yin and Yang within in the Middle health and dialogue. Meden Agan. Death has two faces, Life is the Middle. Trimeria of the animal body with trunk as the ‘functional elevation’. The lemniscate principle as the signature of ‘The Middle’ with Health and Life as balance. Dynamic morphology of human conception. Phenomenology as method to see the ‘invisible’. Sperm cellularity versus ‘egg cellularity’ with Steigerung in the Middle as a result. In the beginning Celestial and terrestrial forces: the PCAC. ‘Passing on, not the beginning of life’?

**The vegetative Embryo Interaction and Innersness**

Third and fourth week: dynamics of individuation and embodiment. Meso: fascia (and blood), major appearance of mesenchyme as the dimension of the Middle and ‘organ of innerness’. From growing out to growing in as the ‘animal’ way of being. The incarnation process of the heart ‘coming to here’. Individuation of the body. Craniocaudal axis: the organization of the midline. Head and tail and Left and right as body dimensions. The animal body with dimensions of antipathy and sympathy. Neural tube and gut tube. Metameria of the body: rhythmic segmentation of the middle.

**The psychosomatic Embryo Human: Four ways of being**

A new placenta? Mirroring the macrocosm in the microcosm of the bodily organization. The psycho-morphology of the germ layers: organs as psychosomatic dimensions. Awareness and consciousness.

Four phases of growing and autonomy. Balancing and centering as fourth principle: unfolding the human erect posture. Limbs as next ordering principle with the polarity arms vs legs but also head (skull) versus limbs with the trunk in between as the image of freedom. Three pair of limbs: arms mediate.

**What do we do as Embryo? From Yond to Here**


**In the Beginning (Big Bang)? The Polarity Embryo**

Conception, not the ‘making of’. The biology of incarnation. The first week: the undivided body vs cellularity, differentiation and organization as the essentials of embryo life. Time is not there yet. Nidation as a dialogue of binding and de-binding. Blastula with center and periphery, back and front as first two dimensions of the body. Ectoderm and Endoderm as two fundamental ways of interaction with environment. Through crisis of nidation into the second week, vegetative being. *Tat tvam asi:* Man is not ‘there’ yet.

**The animal / sentient Embryo Embodiment & Individuation**

Polarity of external vs internal motion and of animal (somatic) and vegetative (autonomic) nervous system. The act of birth pre-exercised. The organization of Innerness: fascia and blood, architecture and continuity as complementary to anatomy. Magnet principle: in all body dimensions the polarity principle appears. The holographic principle of threefoldness. Neuro-pneumo-viscero-. The V of symmetry. Muscle as connective tissue: three types of muscle and motion. Cycles, rhythms and vibrations.

**The Embryo of Freedom Embryo and Evolution**


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Lectures will be alternated with practical exercises like form drawing and bodily motions (‘eurhythm’ and ‘anatomy dancing’).

The Tao brings forth the One  The One brings forth the Two  The Two brings forth the Third  The Thirds brings All creatures

All creatures carry the resting Yin in themselves and contain the moving Yang
About the author
Jaap van der Wal Ph.D. is a medical doctor and till his retirement in 2012 he worked as associate professor in Anatomy and Embryology at the University of Maastricht, Holland. After his medical education in 1973 he became specialized in the functional anatomy of the locomotor apparatus with (later on) emphasis on the architecture of connective tissue and fascia and its role in proprioception. Gradually he developed as teacher in Philosophy of Science and in Medical Anthropology. “My passion however was and still is human embryology. The human body is a process, developing and functioning in time. The embryo moves and behaves in forms. It is in this area that I encountered the Goethean phenomenological approach. I apply the method of dynamic morphology to understand what we actually are doing as human beings when we are embryo. With respect I can find in the embryo cautious answers to questions as to the meaning of human existence.” After his retirement he fully devotes his energy to Embryo in Motion, a worldwide project on teaching Embryosophy. Also look at his website: www.embryo.nl. He now teaches his ‘Embryosophy’ in Europe and USA in institutes for Craniosacral-therapy, Osteopathy, Polarity Therapy but also Prenatal Psychology and Trauma therapy and so on. Also look at his website: www.embryo.nl

Some literature on Embryology (a.o.)

On Morphology
Companions for the study of medicine, Anatomy and Physiology and more! Produced by Louis Bolk Institutuut, Holland. Look www.louisbolk.nl, choose Companions 2001. Free download

Books by the author
Jaap van der Wal, Michaela Glöckler (Hg.) Dynamische Morphologie und Entwicklung der menschlichen Gestalt, Verlag am Goetheanum, 4th revised edition, 2016, German, extensive English abstracts.
Documents available FOR FREE!
In principle it is possible to download the PowerPoint presentation that is used during the course from the website. This also concerns articles and chapters that Jaap has published (plus some articles about the fascia) and includes animations that are shown during the seminar and poems and tales that are quoted. There is available a complete package of articles and audiovisual material either via Dropbox or, if you take with you an USB-stick, one may get this package downloaded directly.

Poetical Thoughts

Conception

I wish to give us a child.
Not just
nothing but a sum
of two kinds of genes,
or just an accident
in a sea of time.

But
a wonder.
Suspended
in the safe blue
ocean of your lap.

Become,
created
At the very one moment
that I was you
and you was me
and we found and met
The Other.

Embryo

An embryo is a human being.
A phase, a chapter
in the unique biography
of a human creature.

We are expecting a child:
Who is it going to be?
Not:
What is it going to be?

Who only recognize the
recapitulation of a species:
for those the mystery
is not meant.
They already read
what has to be
written yet.