



# Embryo in Motion - A dynamic Embryology and Morphology in search for the Soul (Mind) in the Whomb and in Our Body Embryo in Us, Sweden 2024 - Tribute to the Phenomenological Work by Jaap from the Wall

with Jaap van der Wal MD PhD, 6. - 9. June 2024

Organized by Ming Niku. Spånga Wellness & Healthcenter, Stockholm, Sweden

Venue: Museum of Ethnography, Museivägen 7, Stockholm, Sweden

*This course explores human prenatal development and how the shaping of the body (morphogenesis) expresses essential attributes of the development of the human being as a being of spirit and matter, of body and mind. Or like Andrew Taylor Still mentioned it: Man is Mind, Motion and Matter (The Triune Man concept). The scientific approach of phenomenology is used to open a truly holistic understanding of the human being. In this way it will appear to be possible to get through to the spiritual essence of this phase of our human existence and to the embryo in us. Amongst others attention will be paid to Fascia as The Organ of Innerness.*

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 behaviour. And as a kind a pre-exercising of what later will appear as physiological and psychological functions. *"The body developed out of us, not we from it" (Rumi)*

The human body gets its shape and form during the embryonic development in a continuous process of change and metamorphosis. Using the phenomenological approach, it is possible to understand those gestures as human behaviour. During the early phases of human existence, the processes that accompany the (at least conceivable) 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 biography and biology meet. The embryonic existence is not merely a passed phase of human life, the embryo still exists in us: also in our unconscious physical existence and body we act as beings of soul and body.

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 trunk and the vertebral column (the so-called Middle) the typically human quality of going upright and balancing seems to be preserved.

The aim of this course is to make the attendants aware of the great processes and forces of becoming that work in the human body as the necessary conditions for being a human individuality. Not only with the intellect but also by the heart: phenomenology is the approach of experiencing and participation instead of pure thinking and observation. Prior knowledge of embryology is not required. The lectures and discussions will be alternated with practical exercises like form drawing and bodily motions ('eurhythmy' and 'anatomy dancing').

## Themes and accents

„The Body developed out of us, not we from it" (Rumi).  
Mind and Body in the womb.  
The Embryo in Us: Man is Mind, Motion, Matter  
(Andrew Taylor Still)  
The human Being and Environment as placenta: small  
in a big world. Balancing as The Human Principle.  
The Shaping of an Inner and the "Middle" with  
threefoldness (triueness) in all body dimensions.

Conception: Our children do not come from us but  
through us „Your children are not your children“.  
Polarity in the human Gestalt as Expression of the  
„twofoldness" of Spirit (Mind) and Body.  
Becoming Human: The upright standing Human as the  
Image of Freedom. Man as „grownup embryo“.  
Fascia and Blood as Organs of Innerness.  
The Polarity in the limbs: „Arms mediate“.



### 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 Embryoscopy. Also look at his website: [www.embryo.nl](http://www.embryo.nl). He now teaches his 'Embryoscopy' 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](http://www.embryo.nl)**



### Some literature on Embryology (a.o.)

Bie, G. van der, Embryology – Early development from a phenomenological point of view, Louis Bolk Instituut, Driebergen, Holland, Publ. Number GVO 01, [www.louisbolk.nl](http://www.louisbolk.nl).

Blechschildt, E., The Ontogenetic Basis of Human Anatomy – A Biodynamic Approach to Development from Conception to Birth. Ed. Brian Freeman, N. Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 2004.

Blechschildt E., Gasser R.F., Biokinetics and Biodynamics of Human Differentiation, North Atlantic Books, Berkely USA, 2012 (1978), ISBN 978-1-58394-452-3

Drews, U., Color Atlas of Embryology, Thieme Verlag, 1995.

Grossinger, Richard, (2003): Embryos, Galaxies and Sentient Beings – How the Universe Makes Life. North Atlantic Books, Berkeley USA, 2003, ISBN 1-55643-419-7

Sadler, T.W., Langman's Medical Embryology. Philadelphia, 2005

### On Morphology

Foundations of Anthroposophical Medicine – A training manual, Guus van der Bie & Machteld Huber (eds), Floris Books, 2003, ISBN 0-86315-417-4.

Companions for the study of medicine, Anatomy and Physiology and more! Produced by Louis Bolk Instituut, Holland. Look [www.louisbolk.nl](http://www.louisbolk.nl), choose Companions 2001. **Free download**

Functional Morphology – The dynamic wholeness of the human organism, Johannes W. Rohen, Adonis Press, 2008, ISBN-10 0932776361.

### Books by the author

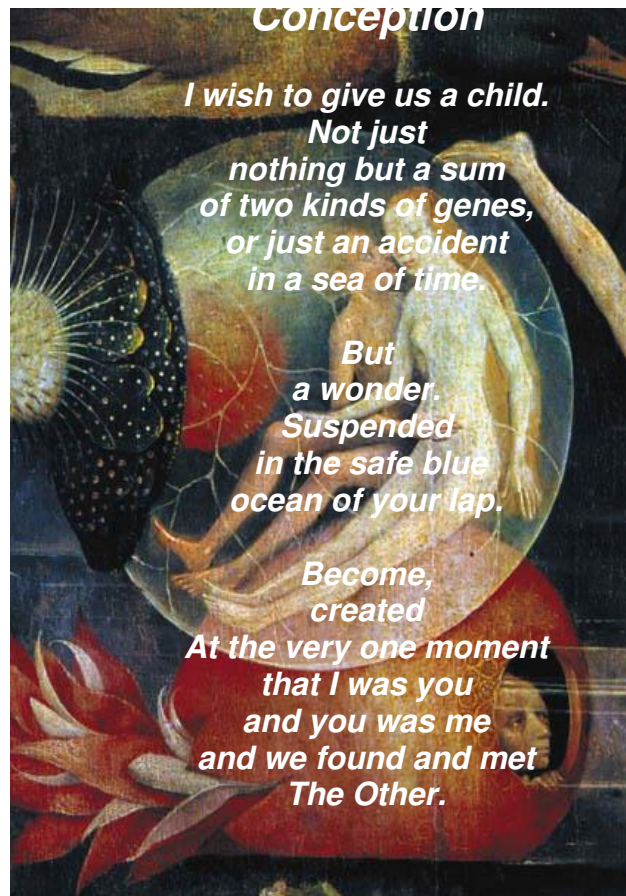
Jaap van der Wal, Michaela Glöckler (Hg.) ***Dynamische Morphologie und Entwicklung der menschlichen Gestalt***, Verlag am Goetheanum, 4th revised edition, 2016, ISBN 978-3-7235-1552-5. German, extensive English abstracts.

Jaap van der Wal, Dynamic Morphology and Embryology. Chapter 4 in Guus van der Bie and Machteld Huber (eds), ***Foundations of Anthroposophical Medicine***, Floris Books, 2003, ISBN 0-86315-417-4.

### 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



## 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.*