

Christian Breme

The Image of the Human Being and the Life Sciences

An extract from:

Christian Breme



The Image of the Human Being and the Life Sciences

Elements of an approach to
Sex Education from a Spiritual
Viewpoint

(Translation into English
of pages 25—52)



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Examples taken from teaching practice

The spiritual image appears through activities

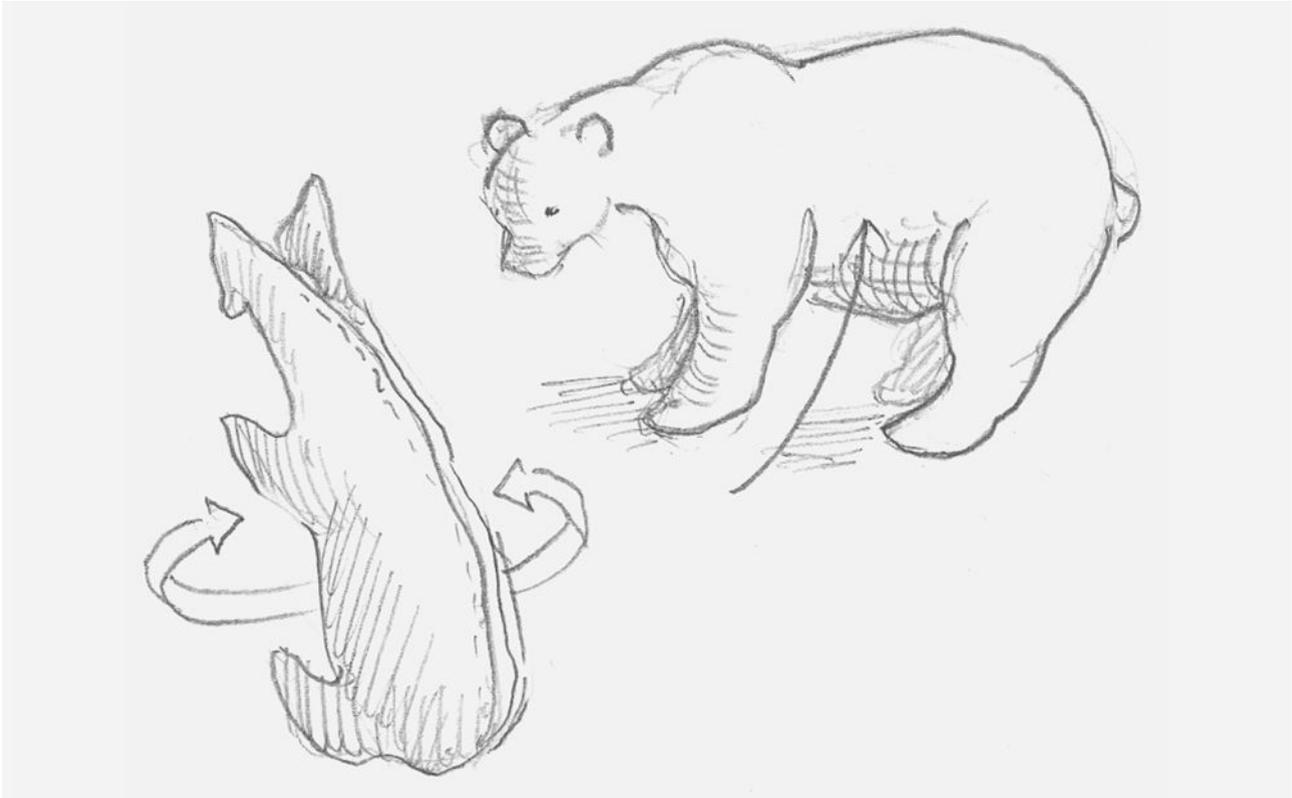
1. The “grasping” of the head sphere and at the same time of the incarnation process by knotting dolls at kindergarten.

A basket full of unspun wool and beside it another one over the side of which hang freshly-ironed colored silk scarves. Two of the bigger children draw a strand out of the wool and “spin” it into a longish thread. Then they take some more wool out of the basket and after a short while they wrap the small ball, rotated and shaped in their hands, in one of the silk squares. With the thread they tie the head of their doll and two corners hanging down are taken up and knotted into two hands. At the end of the morning they untie the dolls with which they had been playing intensely, put away the wool and the silk squares and expect as a matter of course that they will find the crumpled silk freshly ironed the next day so they can start anew to create the body of their doll child.

In this beautiful way our children accomplish playfully what they experience daily in their own bodies: the settling in of the soul into the freshened shell in the morning and the soul leaving the tired body in



the evening. Of the whole body only the head is used consciously. Since the child is still sleeping and dreaming in its thorax and in the extremities, it does not miss the absent body of the doll.



2. The “grasping” of the body sphere and at the same time of the incarnation process by forming animals in the crafts class of the 6th grade.

After drawing an animal the students make the pattern. The individual parts are then sewn together and to begin with first the shape of the “animal skin”, which has been turned inside out, emerges (the seams are on the outside). This is carefully turned back to be the right way round and now the soul may enter through the still open seam on the

stomach. Enter? No! It will be stuffed in, the wool will be pressed into each corner of the developing body and thus the form of the animal will take shape. In the preceding class in Zoology (4th grade) the mammals are described primarily as “chest animals”, that is to say that they have their center in the middle sphere, whilst the head and legs serve this center.

In the 5th grade the rhythmic system is maturing in the child. We talk about “breathing maturity”.

3. Regarding the “grasping” of the incarnation process with the help of Bothmer Gymnastics

There is a house built for us	Close and open
It’s well equipped	open and close
come and look at it	open again
as we like it.	close again.
Pillars built so high	Look, me and you
windows so wide —	me and you
come in, tall and small	you and me
always in two’s.	searching for one
	another
Open the windows	finding one another
wide into the world	me and you
high as the sky, wide as wings	you and me.
with a solid foundation.	Look,
Close window — peace.	look!

(From the Bothmer round dances for the 3rd grade)

Nothing can intonate more superbly the transmutation of the body-forming stream of incarnation into the socially effective stream of activity than what Count Bothmer achieved in his ritual of the round dance.⁶ In the round dance for the 3rd grade the focal point is the experience of the joyful entrance into the

body. It is not a dark dungeon as it might appear to a child who all of a sudden realizes that the paradise of childhood is coming to an end.⁷ This new “dwelling” has windows as high as the sky and allows the child to spread its wings widely. Instead of mourning the loss of the childhood paradise this dance affirms life unreservedly. This is important for the following years.

In the second part the viewpoint changes: we direct our strength towards the future, outwards, towards the “you” and support the idea of searching and trust in one’s destiny (“searching for one another”, “finding one another”). Everything is imbued with a mood of “joyful expectation”. The dance implies: “Don’t worry. Even if one day the family loses its present importance you’ll always find a “you”, a companion to share your life and destiny with. This way of looking at things will become all the more important in puberty. If it has not been adequately in-

⁶ Fritz, Graf von Bothmer, *Gymnastische Erziehung*, (Education in Gymnastics), Stuttgart, 1989

⁷ Bothmer clearly intended this round dance to be a help for children to enable them to complete the next stage of their development happily and courageously. This stage is called the “Rubicon” in Waldorf pedagogy.

teriorized a young person will be more interested in him or herself than in the world outside and all the more prone to fall foul of influences encouraging egoism, such as the lust for power and a trivializing eroticism.

The three examples given above may serve as models for countless games with dolls, round dances and craftwork in the course of which children can project outwards the idea of what it means to be a human being or live out such images personally. In this way they can absorb the basis for the formation of their own personalities.

Now let us consider the telling of fairy tales as a means to help a child develop its feelings and its emotional disposition. These are the essential basis for the later ability to form meaningful relationships.

Fairy Tales, a domain for practicing emotional competence

Anyone who tells fairy tales to a 1st grade class — not as an exercise in text comprehension, not as material for a reproduction exercise, not as a reward for hard work, but as an essential teaching tool — frequently

finds it necessary to justify this activity in view of the spirit of our times (Zeitgeist). This need for justification, which is increasing constantly, must be seen against the background of the ever earlier introduction of children to a world dominated by technical developments and the demand for an ever earlier introduction of sex education.

“How can the pedagogy of an enlightened age give children ideals for life on the basis of a medieval view of things which is permeated with a belief in religion?” one may ask. Or, “Is it permissible to transmit a view of a person’s role in society in stories which date back to feudal times? When it is a question of storytelling, shouldn’t one look for materials that reflect the present time which the children live in? In the 1st or 2nd grades, instead of myths of all kinds of miracles, strange beings and magic as they appear in fairy tales, shouldn’t one make the children aware of the first simple elements and laws of a scientific view of life? Isn’t it more important to choose reading material that makes it easier for the children to understand our changing society and especially the transformation of relationships within the family?”

Such critical questions are understandable. They are based on the idea that children have to develop

self-awareness and a sense of independence in their dealings with contemporary society at an earlier stage than was formerly the case. We will come back to this later. Nonetheless, the telling of stories remains indispensable.

Johannes Gottfried Herder, the German philosopher and writer, put it like this, "A child that has never been told fairy tales will have in his emotional self a field that can no longer be cultivated."

Many people relate with heart-felt gratitude how profoundly their childhood years were influenced by fairy tales. On the other hand, no one says that they became unable to cope with life as a result of listening to fairy tales as a child!

Psychologists such as Bruno Bettelheim⁸, who specialized in the interpretation of fairy tales, are in agreement that these stories do not describe events in real life but that they relate to our inner feelings.

⁸ Bettelheim, Bruno, *Kinder brauchen Märchen* (Children Need Fairy Tales); Lenz, Friedel, *Bildsprache der Märchen* (The Picture Language of Fairy Tales); Geiger, Rudolf, *Märchenkunde* (The Study of Fairy Tales); Meyer, Rudolf, *Weisheit der deutschen Volksmärchen* (The Wisdom of German Folk Tales).

Whoever cares to study fairy tales from this perspective will see that he or she is dealing with a wise and realistic kind of psychology that has lost none of its validity since its inception. Such an approach does not see the lives described as simply going from birth to death. In many fairy tales, too, it is clear that for their creator the point of departure was the existence of a spiritual world, a cosmic and spiritual existence before birth from which one emerges slowly, step by step. This is very much the image of man we touched on in the previous chapter.

The spiritual world, in which in former times people could feel they were fully integrated, appears in many fairy tales as a kingdom, as the father's house which has to be left behind so that one can become stronger, develop into an individual and realize one's full potential as a result of being subject to various tests, deprivations and dangers while proceeding through life. When at the end of these travails the main character is rewarded with marriage to a prince or a princess this is not just the end of a love story but represents the marriage of the soul to the higher self.

It is evident that many of the stages of development and the changes that take place are identical

with what Rudolf Steiner described in his book “The Education of the Child in the light of Spiritual Science”. Similarly, in the book of Martin Buber⁹, “Ich und du”, which I would describe as being essential reading on the subject of Relationship Education, one can find a number of parallels.

What happens to the child listening to a fairy tale? Many fairy tales are the story of an individual who loses his or her home when young, has to endure loneliness, tests of different kinds and some form of combat and finally, after many years, reaches the ultimate goal. The child identifies with the hero and experiences the same feelings: care and trouble, worry and fear, distress and redemption. It delights in the good and the beautiful and is repelled by everything that is ugly and wicked. It laughs at laziness and idleness and turns away from lies and meanness. The child experiences these feelings with an intensity that we as adults are scarcely capable of. It wants to have this experience again and again and this is anything but unproductive. The sensitivity to emotional matters is developed and deepened in any manner of

subtle shades and nuances. The child absorbs the contents, a message that could be formulated like this: if you really want to reach an important goal in life, you must be prepared to make sacrifices. You must give up what you have grown fond of, help other people, sometimes be ready to wait patiently over a long period and above all make an effort to develop your own individual self. You must not let yourself be blinded by appearances and not become attached to what is superficial or you will wander away from your chosen path. Thus, the child to whom fairy stories are told repeatedly learns many things that otherwise we can only learn from a lengthy experience of real life. This approach does not make use of dogmatic theories and intellectual abstractions. It employs descriptions of real situations and demonstrates laws by giving examples. It shows the effects and results of different kinds of behavior. It encourages morality, but without inducing a sense of shame. It gives a sense of direction and reasons for a positive attitude to life. At the same time there is freedom from any kind of compulsion.

The pre-school child lives in close contact with its senses and the feelings they engender. In its memory it will not go over the events of the previous week but

⁹ 1 Buber, Martin, Das Dialogische Prinzip (The Principle of Dialogue), Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1962

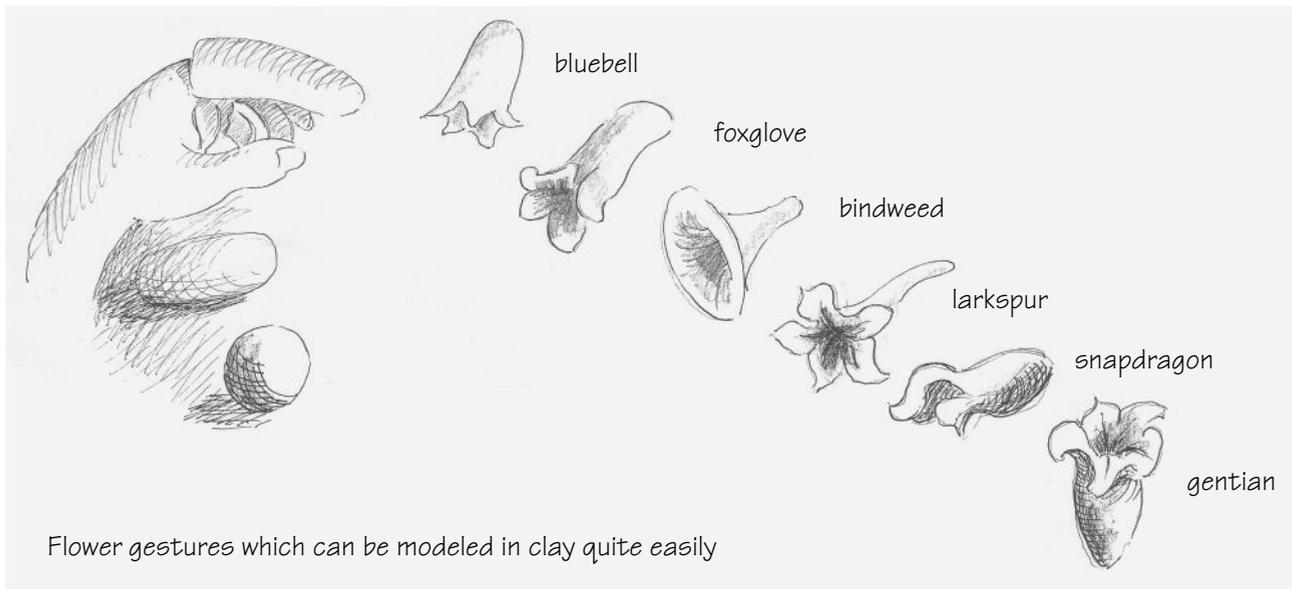
when it is of an age to be ready for school (Schulreife) it will be able to do just that. The schoolchild discovers an emotional inner world it can shape at will and in which it can call up imaginative pictures independent of the outer world. That is why it is happy to delve into the pictures provided by fairy tales. The child, always searching for what is whole and good, gains support, a sense of direction and a feeling of security when in contact with such pictures.

The soul which has thus acquired the correct attitude and direction in childhood is the substance which stands us in good stead as adults in our meetings with others and when forming a relationship. Far more than the intellect, the cast of mind laid down in early years is decisive when we have to decide where we are going, what to give and what to take, whether we can develop our own personalities or whether we can help someone else to develop their own personality. An attitude to life cor-

responding to the teachings of fairy tales can be summed up as follows:

“I am not yet a whole individual. Much about me is still awkward and foolish. I am the youngest one, a silly Billy. I am not really myself in many ways. But I am always seeking and striving. I have definite aims before me. Or, at any rate, I can imagine what they are. One thing is certain, though, I do really want to develop further. I meet other people and behind the outward appearance I suspect that they are searching, too, but that they have not yet quite spread their wings. They are as if bewitched and I would like to free them from their enchantment.”

If one is to give up the attempt to train the capacity to form relationships in the first years at school, where and when, then, is this training to take place and what means are to be employed to shape and nourish the capacity to develop deep feelings and a will of one's own?

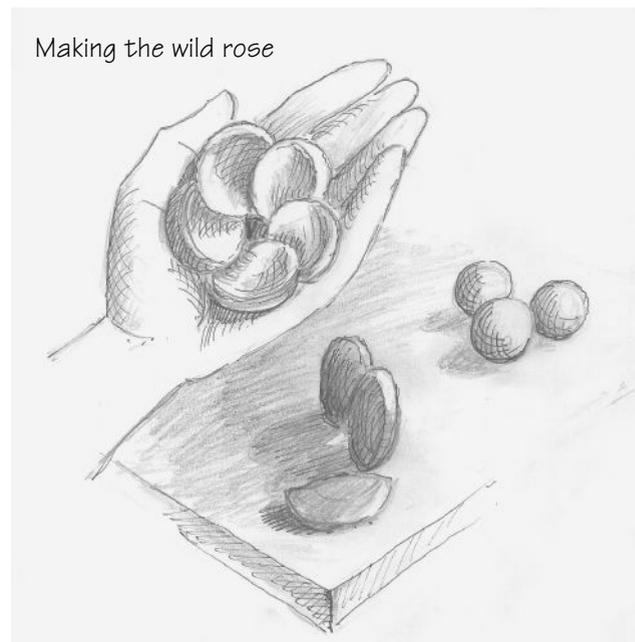


Some preliminary remarks with regard to the development of a human being

In the subsequent years there awakens in the child the desire to observe Nature and then to use its mind and thoughts to better understand what it is observing. With Nature Study, which begins in grade 4, we have another area of observation which enables us to make the connection to human sexuality in a number of interesting ways. Some examples of how the mysteries of human development may be discovered through learning by doing will be discussed in what follows.

Regarding the precious blossom (Botany)

On three consecutive days we model various gestures of plants and flowers: the mushroom, the horse tail,



the garlic pearl, the scented Solomon's-seal, the arum with its magic mantle and the threatening wand it uses to attract flies before it catches them in its trap. In addition, the foxglove, the snapdragon and lastly the blossom of the wild rose. We read their language in their shape¹⁰, acquire an eye for the emotional force of each gesture and in the end we can see at once if a plant is poisonous or not. We try to imagine the fragrance and the color, the sunlit air and the night sky studded with stars. Then we talk about the opening and closing of each blossom and about Goethe's flower clock — it was a bed full of flowers that showed the time of day with the time at which they opened. Yes indeed, the flowers do know the course of the stars!

We then speak about the sun, the life-giving light that makes the seeds germinate, the little shoots sprout and afterwards model the rays of the sun much as the potter makes his thin rolls of clay in order to fashion a pot. Each child carefully puts his "sunbeam" to one side.

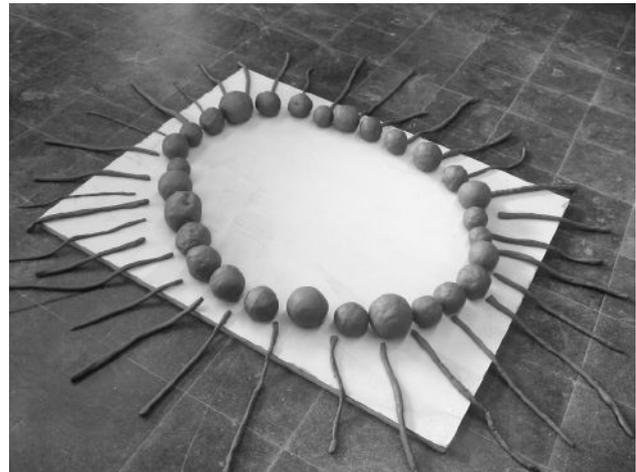
¹⁰ E.M.Kranich, *Pflanzen als Bild der Seelenwelt (Plants as an Image of the World of the Soul)*, Verlag freies Geistesleben.



Then, we take two balls of clay about the size of mandarins and use them to make two semispherical bowls. We stroke these to smooth them and then put them together to make a hollow ball. While holding this hollow ball in our hands and taking care not to

squeeze it we tell how each fruit is preceded by a blossom which provides a basis on which the fruit can grow. Similarly, a newborn child is in a way also a fruit that grew out of the blossom which was the womb of its mother.

This is always closed and is lined with crimson. In its mysterious darkness it is aware of the course of the stars, of the phases of the moon and at certain times is ready to receive the fruit. As each flower in Goethe's garden has its own time to open to receive the light of the sun, so each woman also has her own time. She is not dependent on the course of the stars,



but she has internalized the rhythms of the moon and every 28 days she renews her own rose color. This is also the time it takes from one full moon to the next.

Now the children may arrange their closed blossoms in a circle in the middle of the room. Next, they arrange their thin rolls of clay in the form of a circle of "rays", each ending at the closed blossoms.

"Look how the forces related to the sun awaken life in the closed blossoms which, for their part, are related to the moon." In conclusion we recite the poem which is on the blackboard next to the picture.

This is a description of a scene which takes place at the end of a three-week Botany course. In this lesson we were not alone, though. The class teacher, the school's woman doctor, three mothers and a father were also present. The parents were deeply moved by the reverence and sincerity with which the children turned about the closed blossoms in their hands for some time before they put them down in the circle. Although ultimately we have the physical image of insemination before us, for the children everything remains in the emotions, a feeling for the cosmic qualities which had emerged in the course of the Botany lessons of the previous weeks



The Birth of a Human Being

The child is the fruit of the mother.
Her womb was the blossom,
Her soul the leaf,
But its roots are in Heaven.

The father cares for the seeds
Of the life-giving light.
His lucid thoughts
Accompany the child on its way

“It is infinitely important for the human being to receive the secrets of existence in parables before these secrets are brought in front of his soul in the form of natural laws.”¹¹

We have tried to respect this principle of Rudolf Steiner for the healthy development of the life of the body and the soul. (in: “The Education of the Child in the light of Spiritual Science”) The choice of the pictures and of the words and the attempt to treat the experience poetically have prevented any straying off into rigid and trivial ways of seeing things.

The rose color of the closed blossom represents the mucous membrane of the womb and the monthly renewal of this color stands for menstruation. It is obvious that some of the girls knew what was being talked about and others may well have guessed it. The parents were informed about the hidden meanings in some detail afterwards. And perhaps some of them will use these images again when they talk to their children about becoming an adult.

¹¹ Steiner, Rudolf, Die Erziehung des Kindes vom Gesichtspunkt der Geisteswissenschaft (The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy).

In the beginning was the egg (Zoology in the 6th grade)

Why the egg of the guillemot has a point and that of the ostrich does not.

Why the egg of a shark has arms and the egg of a human is quite round.

And why the human egg is so tiny that one can barely see it with the naked eye.

The children model a hen’s egg from a ball of clay. We hold up an ostrich egg. What is the difference between the ostrich egg and the chicken’s egg? It is bigger, and does not have a “point” The egg of the guillemot is striking for its extraordinarily pointed end. The children imitate each shape in clay. Why are they shaped so differently? I talk about the narrow bands of rock on a cliff by the Atlantic where the guillemots lay their eggs. No protecting nest there, and great danger at the edge of the abyss. I roll the egg on the floor. It makes a very small circle and returns to its original position. Then I roll the ostrich egg. It moves in a straight line. One of the children solves

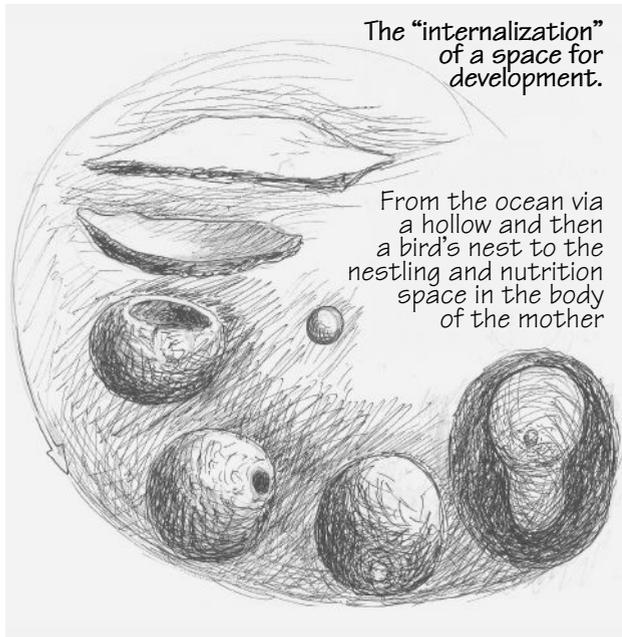
the puzzle: the ostrich lays its eggs in the sand. There it does not need a point. Now I show them the egg of a shark, one of those small rectangular “pillows” that has tiny arms at the edges which end in hooks. “...so it can get caught in the seaweed and when hidden cannot be discovered and devoured so easily.” Here something becomes clear which had been talked about on previous days: fish entrust their eggs to the water and do not practise the care of the brood.

While this is being talked about the children are shaping a ball of clay the size of a walnut. Now I ask the question as to why the human egg does not have any arms. Great astonishment on all the children’s faces! It appears that none of the children has ever heard that at the beginning of human life there is an egg, too. “Yes, that’s the way it is”, I assure them. “We also began as an egg. It matures in the body of the mother — yes, it is placed in a nest, into the very same closed blossom we talked about a year ago, in the womb. It nestles there. And this egg has the shape of the ball you have just made. Except that it is a thousand times smaller. It is so small that it could easily go through this hole.” Then I make a hole in a piece of paper with a pin. Now we admire all the little shiny balls the children have made which are like

miniature suns. “But why don’t they have arms like the shark eggs?” “Because they can’t get lost in the womb,” comes the answer.

Each child has a piece of clay and flattens it to form a shape about as big as its palm and extended fingers as well. We speak of the endless sea, to which the fish entrust their eggs. We begin to make a hollow in the clay by pulling up the edges and speak of the hollows that serve as nests for hens and ostriches and in which they lay their eggs. We deepen the hollow space and pull the edges together: a robin’s nest takes shape, and finally that of a wren with its tiny opening, lined with fine moss or with wool which the little birds have picked up from some hedge near a pasture. Now we can put the egg we made before into the nest and close the opening.

From here it is not very far to the closed structure, which reposes deep in the body of the mother and is lined with a fine skin. “We talked about this a year ago, and we called it a blossom. Now we can see that it is really a nest, too. We call this nest: the womb. The renewal of the skin which it is lined with we call menstruation. This happens about every 28 days after one has reached the necessary maturity. The shape of the womb is not really spherical, but more pear-



shaped. But it is about as big as the object we are holding in our hands now. A baby will grow and develop in this precious "nest" in the warmth of the mother's body. Then the space would soon become too small, you may think. No, this wonderful "nest" can grow with the baby. It can expand and even have room for twins. Tomorrow we'll talk some more about that."

The next day we start with a sphere that we turn round on the tips of our fingers like a turntable whilst holding it at the height of our diaphragms. With our thumbs — that to begin with rest lightly on top of the revolving ball — in a rhythmical fashion we push in the curved surface to make a hollow and finally a shady inner space.

The alternate turning and pressing takes place in silence.

"Now we have made a hollowed ball that rests in a nest as in the body of woman. Next we'll give it a more pear-like shape so that the narrower part points downwards. The "nest" is the rounder part. We call it the womb or uterus. The lower, narrower part is called the neck of the womb. We'll draw it in a moment. But where does the egg come from before it's put in the nest? It comes from above." I put two branches on top of the ball that look rather like horns and which end in little funnels. The children imitate this. "Above the funnels there are the sources where thousands of tiny pearls lie hidden until each month one detaches itself and goes on its way downwards. These hidden sources have the shape and size of acorns. We call them ovaries."

Now comes the moment to involve the boys. All the children get up and hold the shapes in front of them. I gently turn the shape around its horizontal axis so that the two ovaries are now projecting downwards. The children do the same. "...this is how it is when instead of a girl it is a boy. Then the ovaries move downwards, leave the interior of the body and get another name...testicles, and they rest in a fold of the skin which is called the scrotum. Also there are no tiny pearl-shaped egg cells issuing from them, but the very mobile sperms. The Fallopian tubes become the spermatic cords and so both sexes have a source for new life but they have to unite to form a new living human being. Only the female organism can give it the necessary space to develop, though, in her womb, which is the "nest" we talked about yesterday".

From a scientific point of view

Day 1 — Life Sciences, 7th grade

The following teaching unit was intended for a class which had not received this material in Grade 6

"The day begins with the reading of the first paragraphs of Goethe's "Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily". That is followed by a performance in the open, which depicts in twelve parts the movements of a ferryman¹² who guides his boat through a flat stretch of shallow water.

The goal of this week is to address the questions of sexuality in the human being, which had been carefully prepared in the 4th Grade and dealt with in Nature Study in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades. This should be done so clearly that the students can relate their own, sometimes very disconcerting experiences and burning questions at this new level of insight.

Another goal is to relate the anatomical and physiological facts to the all-embracing natural

¹² The exact movements are described on page 50.

processes in which all life is embedded, ultimately in the light, air and water processes in the atmosphere.

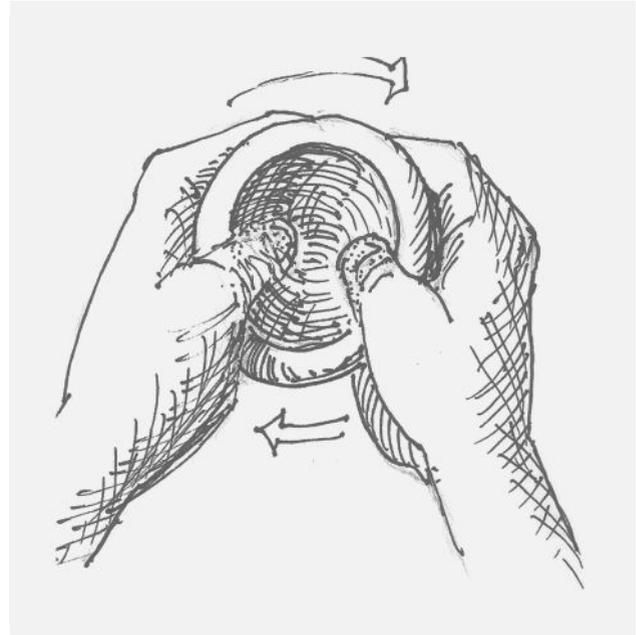
I begin by referring to the Botany lessons that had been studied in the 5th grade (see: “A First Cosmic Glance at the Development of the Human Being”). Perhaps the older 7th graders will smile with amusement at the pictorial means the teacher has used to explain the process of menstruation to the younger students. They will remember their own now long overcome dreaminess and they are happy to give the correct scientific term for each picture in turn.

Closed blossom — womb

Renewal of the rose color — menstruation

Rays of sun — sperms or spermatozoa

Meanwhile all of the students have made a hollow ball which they now hold in their hands with care. Now I can explain a number of things in more detail. The womb is a pear-shaped muscle, which during pregnancy can increase in size up to 50 times its original dimensions and which contracts when the baby is being born. The mucous membrane of the uterus is the spiritually related first nourishing medium for



the fertilized egg. Here it can put down roots and grow. Since the image is very detailed in both the spiritual and the pictorial sense many things can be said at some length without appearing tactless.

Now we talk about two additional spaces in the human body that are very similarly constructed and serve similarly mysterious life processes within the body. They are the heart, and the mouth cavities. We

can observe that all three spaces have something flowing through them. In the case of the uppermost one it is the air, in the case of the second one it is liquids, in the case of the lower one it is the forces that bring about the growth of the developing child

and give it its earthly form. When searching for the light level of these processes we come across the highest space in the human body, the brain. It is flooded with the light of thought.

I note on the blackboard:

Spaces in the human being characterized by flow:

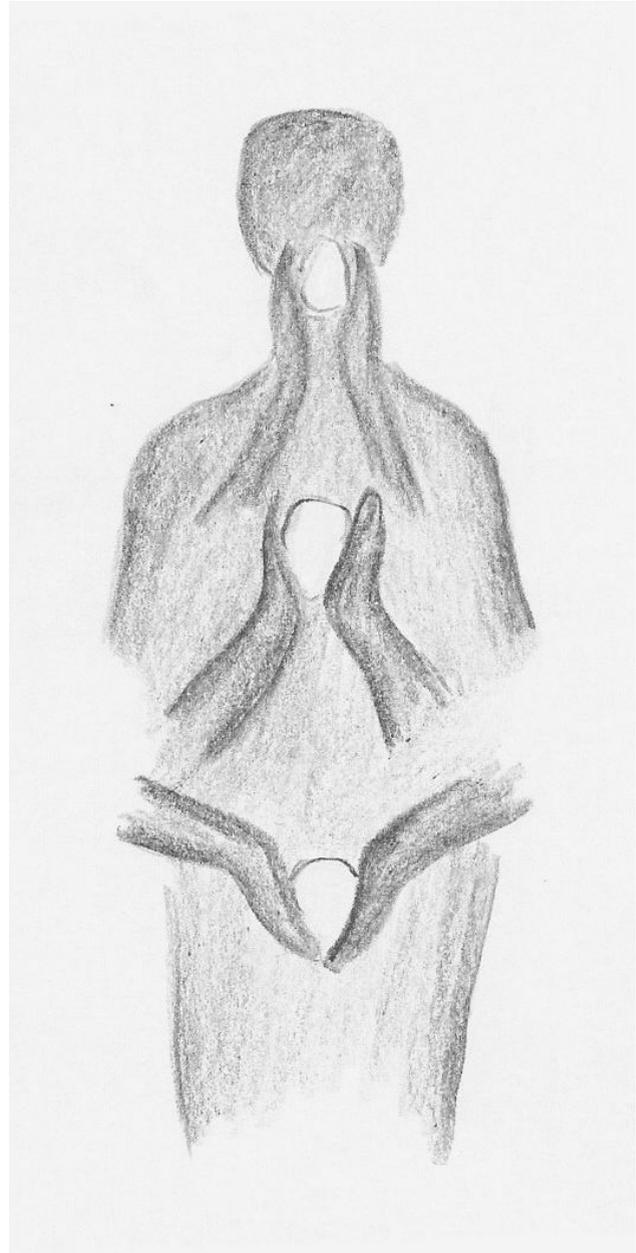
The brain	is	flooded with light
The mouth	is	flooded with air
The heart	is	flooded with liquids
The womb	is	is flooded with the seeds of life

On all these levels the flows are shaped by us:

We form the stream of the light	thinking develops
We form the stream of the air	words develop
We form the stream of the blood	feelings develop
We form the stream of growth	a human being develops

The teacher speaks these words line by line while the students hold their hollow ball opposite the forehead, mouth, heart and trunk. Later we replace the personal pronoun in each case with "...is formed". For example: "The stream of light is formed...thinking develops." Now the children can add to their hollow ball two small tubes resembling horns but which each end in a little funnel. I tell them about the two scientists, Eustachio and Fallopio, who, in Padua, in Italy, around the middle of the 16th century described the passageways from the mouth to the ears (Eustachian tubes) and the passageways from the ovaries to the womb (Fallopian tubes). I show the children that the heart also has two similar "horns" which are their connection to the lungs. We see that all of the four hollow spaces have the same basic structure. Something flows through them and the flow is towards the light (fontanelle), towards the ears (Eustachian tubes), towards the lungs (the lung artery) and away from the ovaries (Fallopian tubes).

Now comes the moment for including the boys. The hollow shape held at the level of the trunk is turned upside down. Now, the ovaries become the testicles and the Fallopian Tubes are spermatic cords. It is im-





possible, though, to find the real equivalent of the womb in the male organism. All that remains is a little indentation in the prostate gland, the “utriculus masculinus”. In the embryo this is the equivalent of the womb. So both sexes have a source of living seeds and they can combine to form a new human being. But only the female organism has a space, the womb, to provide for the development of this new living being.

Day 2 — Life Sciences, 7th grade

A small but significant reflection begins the lesson for the next day.

We note that in the upper spaces (the brain and the mouth) the will is free, but in the lower ones it is bound to the wisdom of Nature and the instincts. Awareness diminishes as one goes from the upper parts of the body to the lower. In the head alertness of mind dominates when solving a mathematical problem, but deep sleep always characterizes the areas of procreation.

We have acquired some initial anatomical and physiological information on the first day in conjunction with clay modeling. Now, on the second day we will for the first time consider the emotions that are

the basis for sexual attraction. Again we will look for a way involving art work.

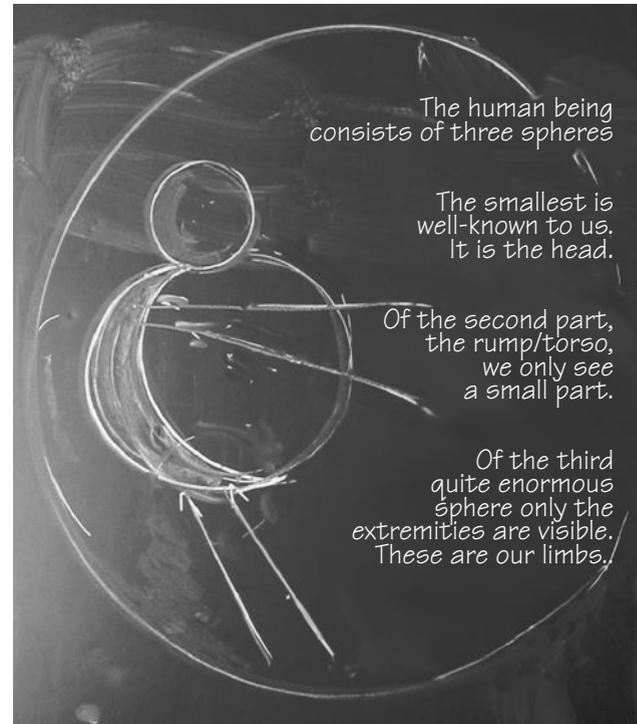
We could begin the conversation like this. “Yesterday we dealt with anatomical matters. Today we want to have a look at psychology, which doesn’t have to do with the shape of the body but describes our emotions. (There are always young people who are conversant with the relevant expressions.) Can anyone tell me how big the soul is?” After a few suggestions we carry out the following experiment

Get a male student to approach a female student slowly. She can say “stop” if he comes too close to her. The distance she regards as acceptable seems to be quite clear to her. It is a matter of inches. Now one can have all the students stand opposite each other and repeat the experiment for everybody.

Reflecting on what has taken place one can remind the students of the sketch of the human body we first saw in grade 4.

Could it be that we have just experienced the influence of the middle invisible sphere?

Now we can talk about the question of reciprocal mutual respect and the danger of overstepping the limits. We establish that it is not permissible to enter



the space belonging to another person without their permission. One can “knock at someone’s door”. Everyone must respect other people’s space and protect their own. The experience we have acquired is summed up in a short text we write down at the end of the lesson.



Every individual has a space that belongs to them.

We must protect our own space and respect the space of others.

Only we ourselves can open our space to another person and permit greater nearness.

Everyone has their own secrets.

To reveal one's innermost feelings demands courage and the trust that can only grow out of long-lasting companionship.

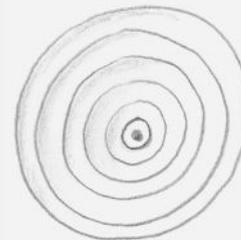
Two people who come to trust each other so that together they can stand the tests of time and overcome its burdens are sure to attain much in life.

Trust of one another and a shared sense of responsibility are the environment children thrive best in.

The breakup of a relationship which has been characterized by trust and openness causes wounds that take a long time to heal.

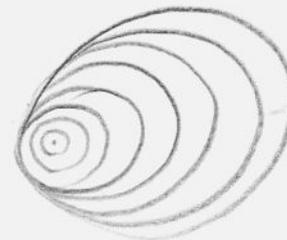
Now we will try to look at the emotional space more closely. Everyone takes a sheet of paper and a pencil and draws increasing concentric circles round a dot in the middle. This is the diagram of increasing interest in the outside world. (figure 1)

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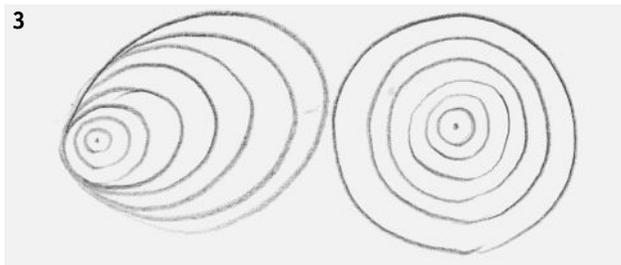


Now we draw a dot with circles which are displaced to one side and see that this is the interest in a specific object. (figure 2)

2



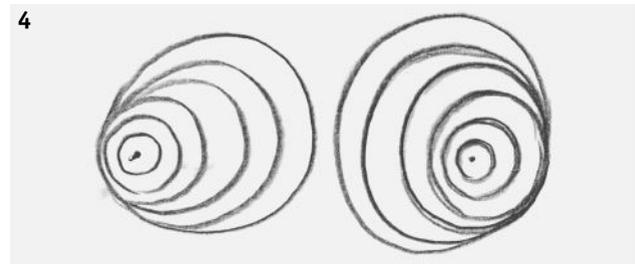
On the next sheet we draw two dots both surrounded by bigger and bigger concentric circles, first the one and then the other, one after the other. Both individuals are interested in everything around them. But suddenly, from one day to the next, one of the two develops a special interest for the other. On the way to school the boy is wondering if the girl is already in class. Now his circles grow in her direction. (figure 3)



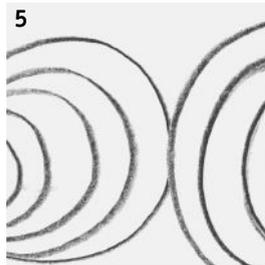
Will she notice it? Of course she will. But what if she does not have the same interest in him? A situation develops that is disagreeable for them both. Let us ask ourselves first, though — what can someone do if they sense the interest coming from another person but cannot feel the same? A girl puts up her hand and says, “I would talk to him.” She is asked to come forward and a boy is made to stand in front of her and

look at her passionately. (This always produces a lot of laughter.) An amusing pantomime begins because everything she says to him in the hope that he will stop her “chatting her up” seems to have no effect on his ardor and optimism. What is to be done? Both must come to understand that there is not much you can do. You must put up with it as long as the other keeps their distance. What advice can you give to someone who is lovesick? School comrades mostly know the answer. “Everyone has had that problem. It’ll pass. Try with someone else you get on well with. It’s not the end of the world”

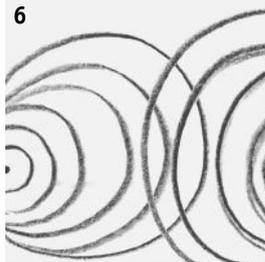
Next, on the fourth piece of paper we draw two dots again. (figure 4) Now two people develop an interest for one another at the same time. The circles grow towards each other. The distance between them is now very small. “What will be the next interesting detail in the geometric process?” “The circles will



touch each other.” (figure 5) “What does that mean in real life?” (We have already agreed to deal only with the emotional plane!) For example, the boy says, “You know, I really like your T-shirt a lot.” He is showing his liking for the girl. The other person is sure to get the message.

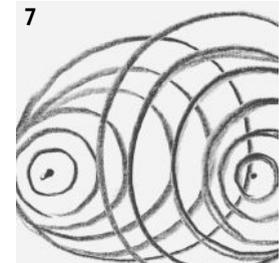


What is the next interesting detail in the geometric process? The intersection of the two circles. (figure 6) What does that mean in real life? It shows things being done in common — happiness, argument, reconciliation, the experience of a sustainable relationship. Above all, trust.



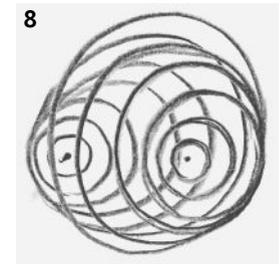
What is the next thing in the geometric process? Touching the center of another circle. (figure 7) How can you touch the center of the feelings of another person? Do the feelings have a center? Is it a specific point or a space? If it is a space, is it light or dark? Can you ever come to know it completely? When do I feel more at home in it?

When I am happy or when I am unhappy? On what condition do I allow another person to see into it? The answer is that it is when I trust them. Why that? What another person sees puts me at their mercy and they could exploit the situation.



The dialogue takes place seriously and calmly. Everyone looks deeply into their own emotions and turns over the question as to whether he or she could ever let another person enter this space — without feeling fear or shame or masking one’s own true feelings. But there is the desire to experience this one day.

What is the next element of the geometrical process? (figure 8) The encircling of the center of another person. How do we interpret this? The young people see this as the taking possession of someone else and describe in some detail their experience of this kind of behaviour.



Many situations involving the emotions in encounters

with friends or in groups can be portrayed with some precision by making use of this simple kind of sign language. Things that cannot be expressed in language or cannot yet be expressed become clearly visible in pictures of this kind. Young people are generally very appreciative of this lesson.

Day 3 — Life Sciences, 7th grade

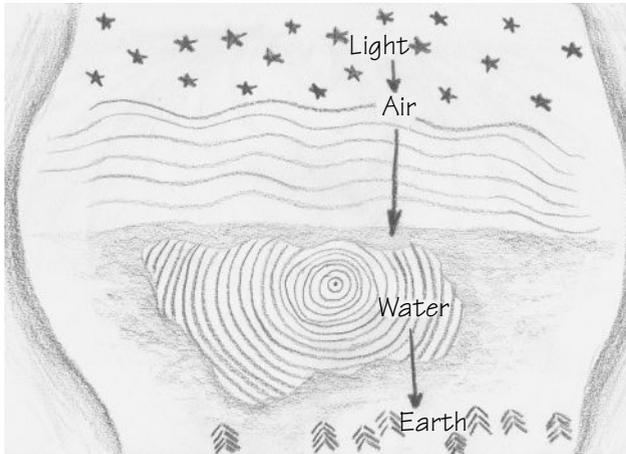
Today we are going to talk about the spiritual plane, about what relates to the third sphere. I tell the story of the Australian aborigines.

When the first missionaries came to Australia they got the impression that those “totally unenlightened” indigenous people were not aware of the connection between the act of procreation and birth. As an answer to the question of how the birth of a child comes about, they would show the missionaries a stream or a water hole and tell them about the “Jalalas” that could be found there. The missionaries would inwardly shake their heads at so much naiveté. On the other hand, the aborigines got the impression that the Westerners did not know the true prerequisite for conception, because they apparently were not clear about the fact that there had to be a soul wanting to be born before anything could happen.

And these souls they had called “Jalala” since time immemorial. A man who wants to become a father has to find one at a sacred water hole before he sleeps with his wife. Should he not want to become a father at this time, he can braid this Jalala into his hair and give it to his friend in a dream. Or the mother has to hear the name of the child at the side of a brook. Only when one of these two things occurs can a child be conceived.

We reflect for a long time as to who is right, the missionaries or the inhabitants. We come to this conclusion: what is needed is the egg cell of the mother and the sperm cell of the father. But this alone is not enough. There also has to be a soul that would like to come to these parents. Because many parents yearn for a child but have to wait for a long time before one comes

Now we draw a pond whose still waters are disturbed by a bird landing on it. Concentric, expanding rings result, which extend into the most distant tributaries of the lake. Above the lake we draw the gusty air and above that the starry sky. Under the lake we indicate the earth with crosshatching. Now we see the ladder that the soul of a child has to descend. It can be received on the shore of the lake



and then a body can be prepared for it on the Earth. But, is it like this where we live? I read a few dreams that women in Europe had before they conceived. On one occasion there is talk of shining garments, of starry clothes, another time of paper planes floating through the air. Again and again we read of water, or a city gate, where the child is expected and is to be greeted. One woman dreamed of a starfish that wanted to attach itself to her leg. Therefore it seems that also in our culture sometimes souls announce themselves in dreams if we are open enough.

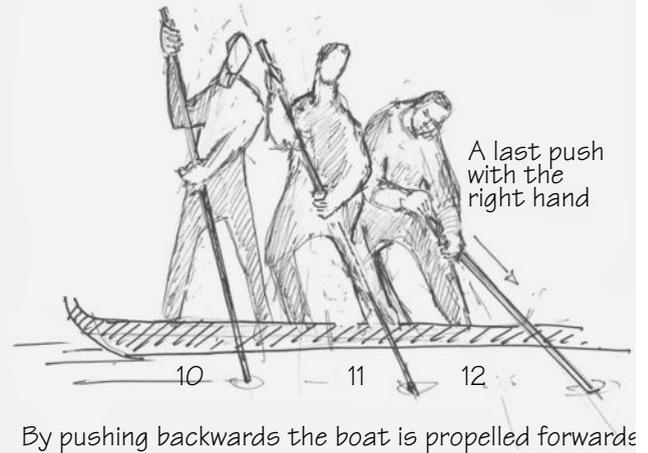
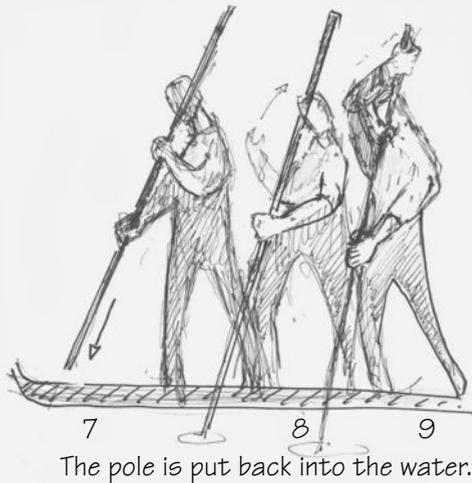
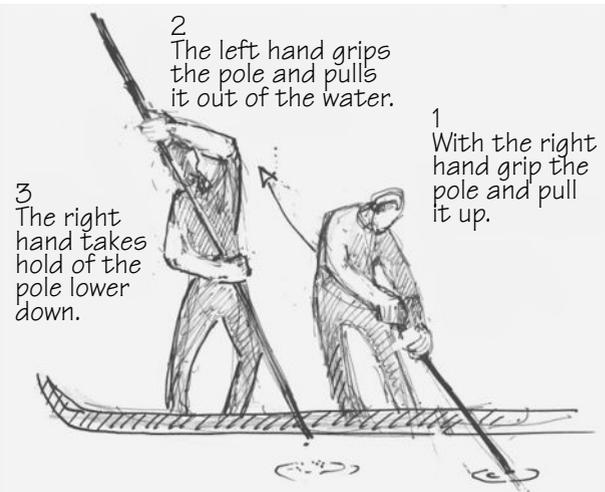
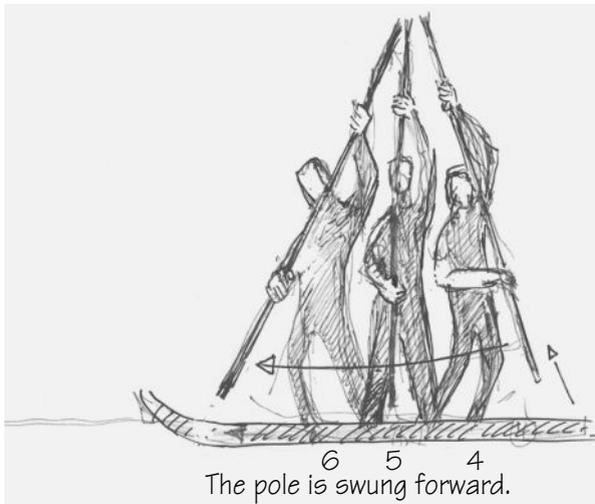
Day 4 — Life sciences, 7th grade

We begin the day as usual with reading the beginning of Goethe's fairy tale of "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily." There we read that "the ferryboat is rocking, sit down, you Will' o' the Wisps!" And a little later: "For heaven's sake, what are you doing?" shouted the old man. "You are causing me great misfortune! If a gold coin had fallen into the water, the River, which does not like this metal at all, would have risen in enormous waves and swallowed the boat and me and who knows what would have happened to you!"

We look back on the previous day. The children have written a short essay about the encounter with the aborigines. They are able to talk with great openness about these events that are so far from their lives and yet so near.

"Today we shall lift the veil on the puzzle of the ferryman. I had promised you that. Why read this fairy tale at the beginning of the lesson and why this rowing every morning?" I begin like this:

"The day before yesterday we talked about the middle sphere. We called it the sphere of friendship. We have seen that we can have a great effect on the feelings of other people because of our behavior.



The movements of a ferryman who is propelling his boat forwards in shallow water. By mimicking these movements — you stand at the same place with legs apart and only make the movements indicated but with an invisible pole — through the raising, swinging, lowering and pushing with the pole (4x3 movements) after some practice and some repetitions you come to experience a number of sense impressions: that of the depth of the water, the distance above you of the sky, the extensiveness of the sea and ultimately of the unity of ego and Cosmos

Beautiful effects but also bad effects: sadness, disappointment, jealousy, a general mess. We are responsible for what we are and what we cause to others. Yesterday we talked about the great sphere. We can call it the sphere of love. The effects that we can produce with this are even more powerful. They can produce and give light and warmth and cause feelings of great happiness. They can even attract a new human life. That is the wonderful side of what is connected with our sexuality. But we can also produce great sorrow, disappointment, despair, bitterness and last but not least, the tragedy of an abortion, which is of great concern for all those involved.

What can we do? We should not act like the self-centered Will-o-the Wisps in the realm of love. They are only really interested in themselves, they cannot wait and do not ask any questions; with their high spirits they can throw the Great River into turmoil and make the boat tip over. We should become masters and servants of the Great River, we should, like the ferryman, steer our course with great calm and mindfulness and have faith in our destiny”

The descent of the soul

Next, we went to the school yard after this. The girls to one side with a long rope, the boys with long poles on the other. After a short explanation they approached each other step by step. At a distance of about 15 yards they stopped. Now the girls sat down in a circle, the boys formed an outer circle. Now the performance began: the poles were rhythmically swung in and out while the girls opened their arms while turning to the outside and then closed them in an O-gesture when turning to the middle. Then the vertical poles were tilted to the right and to the left, which was accompanied by the raised arms in the inner circle. Now a boy, now a girl was allowed to lead and the others had to follow as before. In the background was the image of the soul that descends into the consciousness of the aborigines.

Back in the classroom we wonder if there had been a moment when we had the feeling that we had entered into the consciousness of primitive peoples. A boy said that he had the feeling he had dreamt something similar once. A girl spoke of an awakening in her back, another of noticeable and increasing calm. Are not these the qualities needed when dealing with this River?



The anthropology course of the 7th grade is devoted to the subject of nutrition. How can one destroy the illusion of our independence of Nature better than by giving a detailed description of the exchange of substances, combustion and growth? The human organism is intimately connected to life in the kingdom of Nature, to the elements and to cosmic laws, all of which the student has become acquainted with during gardening lessons. "Thank you, speechless stone, I bow down before you" is the way Christian Morgenstern put it in his poem, in which he expressed his deep gratitude to the stones, plants and animals we owe our lives to.

We will not neglect the opportunity to touch on the related subject of reproduction by way of a com-



parison at the end of the course. We speak of the human being that will similarly only grow and develop because it is situated in and dependent on a metabolic environment, being linked to the mother's blood circulation through the umbilical cord.

Some time ago the students were presented with the idea of the human being as resembling an inverted plant. We take this up again and apply it to organic processes. We describe the metabolism and the sexual organization as the blossom and fruit regions of the human being. Then again we link human fertility to the cosmic nature of the plant world. Next, the young people will turn their attention to the forces of the Earth. We will talk about that in what follows.