

## ***“Dis net die oortjies van die seekoei”***

(South African proverb)

### ***A testimony from Swaziland***

***Contents: see p. 57***

#### ***An omnipresent life force***

Although South African, yet this saying is not unknown even in the neighboring country, Swaziland. It means : ‘You see only a piece’. Here : only ‘die oortjies van die seekoei’, only the ears of the hippopotamus. We would talk about “the tip of the iceberg,” but under a scorching tropical sun that doesn’t seem so appropriate. You might as well speak of ‘Dis net die oë of die crocodile’, the eyes of the crocodile, for only those you see when the animal is stalking you from below the water’s surface. The vast majority of both animals remain hidden. The last saying, however, with the crocodile, sounds a lot more aggressive. But that is precisely why it fits better with this testimony. And this will gradually become clear. Very generally speaking : we perceive only an extremely small part of reality. The vast and important part of it escapes us.

From Greek civilization - together with Christianity the two pillars of our Western culture - we know the Ancient Greek thinker Herakleitos of Ephesus (-540/ -480). This one taught that reality has two aspects. On the one hand there is what is immediately given to everyone, but on the other hand there is a more hidden part. The latter seemed more important to him because it determines and directs the former.

With his view, he is far from alone. Along with others, the Viennese psychiatrist Sigmund Freud (1856/1939) already illuminated the limits of our consciousness and he examined the influence of the unconscious and the subconscious on human thought and behavior. This subconscious could penetrate our consciousness only with great difficulty and then only partially, while the unconscious would escape us completely. Western man does not like to hear this asserted and believes that he or she has pretty good self-knowledge. That one would be at least partially unfree, that one might be more controlled by unconscious tendencies of one’s own soul-life, one does not really want to know that in our time.

In his book ‘Bantu Philosophy’<sup>1</sup>, Father P. Tempels (1906/1977), the Belgian Franciscan missionary born in Berlaar, notes that for a Bantu, the mysterious concept of ‘life force’ that a person may or may not possess, is much more decisive for his health and happiness than all the material that surrounds him or her. For example, a Bantu who is robbed does not demand the stolen object back in the first place, but rather restoration of his life force. The stolen object contains part of his own life force. And he or she wants that back in the first place. The object itself is of less importance.

Indeed, in such a view of life, a human being, an ancestor, a spirit or a deity, can multiply its own power by sharing in the powers of other beings. And that belief is shared in many African tribes. People there do not agonize over philosophical questions about what the gods are right, but rather what they do and how one can share in their power. This is to cope with the many challenges and threats of an existence in the wilderness.

In its way, the Bible also has a dynamic conception of religion. In *Luke 8:43*, Jesus says that someone touched him, because he had felt a power emanating from him. Then it turns out that a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhaging for years had held the hem of His garment behind His back. She believed that Jesus' garment also shared in His special life force, and that if she could touch His garment, she in turn would also share in it. Then, she believed, she would be healed of her ailment. The Gospel text continues that she was indeed healed. Jesus further added that her faith had saved her. *Luke 6:19* further mentions that a whole crowd wanted to touch Jesus because a power emanated from Him that healed all.

From this it is abundantly clear that religion is inseparable from that mysterious concept of "life force," and that sociological or psychological elements are rather secondary to it. The Gospel text does say that Jesus felt a power emanating from him, but does not mention that the woman, on receiving this power - it is precisely her faith that makes her able to receive it - noticed this in turn. This would have been possible, for example, if she had confirmed that she then felt tingling all over her body, or that she had "seen" a stream of myriads of luminous dots flowing towards her. Had she mentioned this, she would have confirmed that she possessed a certain 'sensitivity'. To 'feel' and 'see' such a force presupposes an empathic attitude, a certain 'sensitivity' or 'clear feeling' in the paranormal sense of the word. With this it is also clear that not everyone possesses this ability to this degree. Although every person is, at least in a minimal way, 'sensitive', but hardly ever pays attention to it and does not develop it. The Gospel text only mentions that the woman heals, but says nothing about the required energy flow from Jesus to her.

Only the fact perceptible to all, the healing, is described in this Gospel text. Not the full reality. That can only be ascertained in a clearly observable way. In Afrikaans, "Dis net die oortjies van die seekoei," which is what the Bible mentions here. However, one who notices the totality of what is happening, both the fact of healing and the fine material flow of energy, 'sees' 'the whole seekoei' rather than just the ear'. In a number of non-Western cultures, such clear perception is not so exceptional, and it is also passed on and developed through many generations.

Our Western world has become quite poorer for it since the 17th century, the century of enlightenment. Here 'autonomous reason' came into the limelight. People turned their gaze to this side, the material side of reality, a reality that then shows itself primarily sensually. But the light that had shone for centuries in the traditional cultures, with their view of that more extensive reality, was gradually extinguished in the West. Attention went mainly to "die

oortjies,” with the result that “that whole seekoei” gradually disappeared more and more into the water.

### *‘Die oortjies’? Or “die seekoei”?*

British occultist Dion Fortune, (1890/1946), who wrote a lot of unusual things about magic, says that all the stories in her book : “The secrets of Dr. Tavernier”<sup>2</sup> are based on reality, and that it is sometimes much stronger than what can be imagined. Her testimonies show above all that the unconscious in man is very much present, and that even events from a previous existence can play a decisive role, a role which the present consciousness is unaware of. And this vision also touches our theme.

On the other hand, the Frenchwoman Alexandra David-Neel (1868/1969), who made it as a Buddhist lama in Tibet, tells in her “Love Magic and Black Magic,”<sup>3</sup> , how black-magicians can steal the life force of young people. Of her novel describing these horrific practices, she says it is “true from beginning to end.”

Finally, summarize in the Bible, 2 Samuel 12. The Lord sent the prophet Nathan to King David and told him of a rich man who had many lambs, but for his feast took the only lamb from a poor man. The king was indignant at such behavior and said that this thief should be punished. Nathan answered David plainly : King, that man is you. You made his wife Uriah pregnant, then sent him to the front as a soldier and hoped he would die in a battle. That’s how it happened. You thought you could hide your mistake from God this way. Now the sword will never turn away from your house because you despised God. King David admits his mistake.

Told to the letter, such stories did not really happen. They model their original. For example, the term “lamb,” replaces the original term “woman. Their common characteristic is that they were both taken from someone. The narrator speaks in terms that express similarities or connections. David also understands this immediately because he confesses guilt. These stories convey an underlying truth that is far more pervasive, far more comprehensive and real than what is strictly said. Their superficial structure points to a deeper one.

Everyone is free in life to be content with “die oortjies,” or to question the existence or non-existence of “the whole seekoei.



### ***The little school in Eswatini***

Our testimony took place in Swaziland many years ago. The country is called Eswatini in its own language, Swazi. It is a kingdom in Africa, and is completely surrounded by the countries of South Africa and Mozambique. In addition to Swazi, people also speak English. Although it looks unsightly small on the map of Africa, it is about 5.6 times larger than Belgium. Compared to France, its surface area is about 1/3 that of France. The country has an approximate population of 1.1 million.

In northwestern Eswatini, in the mountainous region between the Lomati River and the Sondeza Nature Reserve lay a small village community where, a few decades ago, Western culture and Christian missionaryism had barely penetrated. However, that changed in the last century. An elderly priest, Father Henry, who had been in Eswatini for some time, and a dozen missionary nuns came to build a convent and a small school there. They could count on the enthusiastic help of the local government and of many villagers. There, their children received the first principles of learning to read, write and calculate, and some instruction in the Bible and Christianity. Like all pioneering work, it took some searching at first, but after overcoming many difficulties, the result was quite pleasing. The monastic community and the little school were doing satisfactorily, and Father Henry, who lived not in the monastery but in a neighboring village, regularly came to advise and assist everyone. To everyone's satisfaction, the religious community and the school flourished in an exemplary fashion. At least, so it seemed anyway. The years went by.



Source photos : see<sup>4</sup> and<sup>5</sup> .

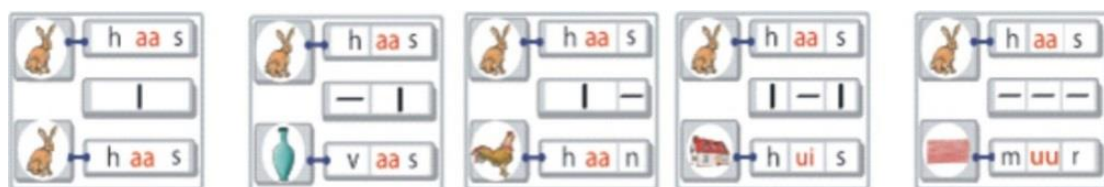
### ***The school year starts***

The Flemish Marie-Madeleine, after training as a teacher, had joined the convent. But her vocation lay in missions. And so she ended up in the village in Eswatini. There she had been in charge of the first grade for several years. And that suited her particularly well. There is something fascinating about helping children take their first steps into the wonderful world of grown-ups. Full of expectations and enthusiasm, she had once again been looking forward to the day when she could welcome so many new faces. And today was that day. Like her, the classroom was neat and tidy. And with an almost restrained joy she looked expectantly at what was to come.

Teaching children to read had pretty much become her hobby. She had given considerable thought to how she would get beginning readers to take those first steps through play this year. It had something to do with order, she knew, with seeing and hearing similarities and differences between simple words. Thought through: if you teach children order when they learn to read, she believed, then they acquire a method, which they can also apply later and in many areas of life. The lessons in logic and the premises “what is, is” and “what is so, is so”, which had been taught to her in her studies, came back to her mind. This is not a foolish repetition, but an honest affirmation, an affirmation of what exists. Thus the liar does not let “what is” or “what is so” be what it is, but on the contrary says of that “what is” that it “is not”, or of that which “is so” that it “is not so”. Logical ordering is related to seeking truth and affirming it. Thus, one who reasons logically validly is also reasoning conscientiously. And conversely, to reason conscientiously is also to reason logically.

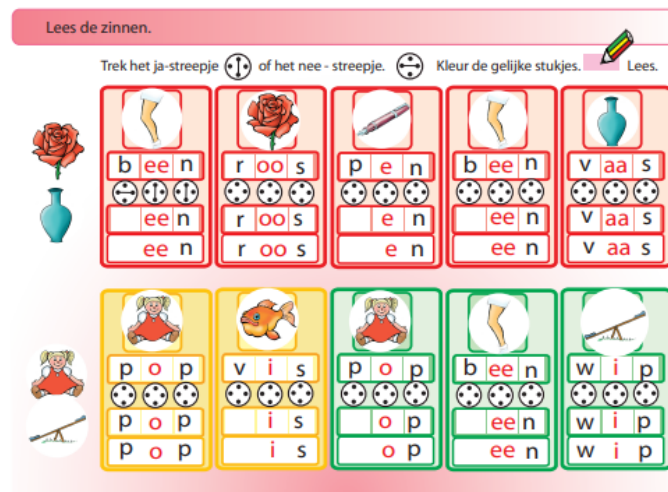
Then not only does this lead to making man’s psyche more healthy, but in a way it also connects with religion, she had understood from Father Henry and from his lessons in logic. And when she wrote to him of her plans to try to apply all this to the didactics of initial reading, he was very particularly captivated by it. “My ‘voice’ says you should continue with this,” he had replied. And that voice inspired him, just as the “voice” of Socrates did. This Ancient Greek philosopher and teacher of Plato also claimed to have an inner voice guiding him. Father Henry’s voice had identified itself to him years ago as a great saint of the early Middle Ages. She gave him advice in all kinds of practical life problems that people presented to Father Henry. And so Sister Marie-Madeleine was more than motivated to start this year not with word memorization for once, but by playfully comparing words with each other, leading to reading.

Moreover, simple words like “haas” (hare), “vaas” (vase), “haan” (rooster), “huis” (house), and ‘muur’ (wall) exist in both Dutch and South African. When a child sounds out two pictures and compares the corresponding words in sound and spelling, it very quickly comes to the conclusion that what sounds the same also has the same graphic sign, and conversely, what has the same sign also sounds the same. Then very quickly it has cracked “the key” to learning to read, and only the memorization of the “letters” remains.



For example, children see almost immediately that there is total similarity between the letters and sounds of the words ‘haas’ (hare) and ‘haas’ (hare). There is partial identity, or analogy, between the words ‘haas’ (hare) and “vaas” (vase). Both have an equal end rhyme. But there is also partial identity between the words ‘haas’ (hare) and “haan” (rooster), because of their equal initial rhyme. The words ‘haas’ (hare) and ‘huis’ (house) also show partial identity, given their equal initial and final letter or final sound. Finally, there is a total difference between the words ‘haas’ (hare) and ‘muur’ (wall).

One hardly thinks it possible, but in this way children can “read” sentences without having memorized a single letter, simply, as illustrated below, by sounding out the pictures, or parts of the pictures. The conviction that they can discover all that “by themselves” does motivate them very strongly.



a rose and a vase

doll is on a seesaw

See <sup>6</sup>

It is therefore impossible for children to make such exercises “silent. You hear them constantly sounding out words or parts of words and listening to themselves sharply. Then you see them staring strangely into thin air, while they mumble slowly and measuredly what the prints recite in all their eloquent silence. Hereby they listen to those many bizarre sounds which they had never before noticed in the words so familiar to them. How strange then is everyday language.

It will be some time before those “haan’ (rooster),” ‘haas’ (hare) and ‘duif’ (dove), for example, are again the familiar names they were. And it is amazing that those real ‘haan’ (rooster), hare (has) and dove (duif) remain so calm about it as if it all never mattered to them. Yes, as if they don’t even realize that something very important to them - their name - was taken apart into its smallest pieces and then put back together again as a whole. And that such happened, imagine.... In an ordinary child’s head. What a triumph! That as a novice reader you can pull off something like that. Deep inside you feel an indefinable sense of pride and satisfaction. Everything inside you tells you that you are on the threshold of making a whole series of momentous discoveries, discoveries that are simply not for ‘hanen’, (cocks), ‘hazen’ (hares) and ‘duiven’ (pigeons). No, that belongs only to children, when they are big enough to start learning to read. What a wonderful world all this is. And Sister Marie-Madeleine was a daily and happy witness to all this.

## *The diary*

Sister Marie-Madeleine took out her trusty diary. In it she wrote for herself, and from the heart, what moved her. She “crept into her pen” more often, as it is called. Nothing literary, just for fun. It was always a pleasure to reread the happy things she had written down. When the Sisters heard about it, they had asked her to read some of them at lunch. Yes, Sister Marie-Madeleine was willing to do that. She chose “Winter Life,” a verse from her student days, when Christmas was still celebrated in winter. Here, in Eswatini, it is summer then, and celebrating Christmas under the tropical sun, that feels a bit strange at first.

### *Winterleven* *(Winter Life)*

*Zie, sneeuw bedekt de bomen, de winter is weer daar.*

*(See, snow covers the trees, winter is here again.)*

*Ook Kerst zal weldra komen, en straks nog 't nieuwe jaar.*

*(Christmas, too, will soon come, and soon 't New Year.)*

*De velden dromen rustig, gehuld in witte vacht,*

*(The fields dream quietly, shrouded in white fur,)*

*En vlokken dansen lustig, als sterren in de nacht.*

*(And flakes dance lustily, like stars in the night.)*

*(Ah piece of nature so tender, though you seem silent and dead,)*

*Ach stukje aard zo teder, al lijkt je stil en dood,*

*Toch komt de lente weder, je draagt hem in je schoot.*

*(Yet spring comes again, you carry it in your womb.)*

*Zovele goede dingen, die krijgen nu meer tijd.*

*(So many good things, they now get more time.)*

*(Who wouldn't want to sing, of friendship that rejoices?)*

*Wie zou niet willen zingen, van vriendschap die verblijdt?*

*Van warmte die mag helen, van hoop nog in 't verschiet?*

*(Of warmth that may heal, of hope still ahead?)*

*Van liefde om te delen, of van gedeeld verdriet?*

*(Of love to share, or of shared sorrow?)*

*Ach, laat toch niets verstoren, al 't goeds dat zich ontplooft,*

*(Ah, yet let nothing disturb, all the good that unfolds,)*

*En blijft zo'n lied bekoren, dan wordt ons hart nooit oud.  
(And if such a song continues to charm, our hearts never grow old.)*

And a second verse, "Our Hands," she also went on to read. She wrote it when she saw two old people walking so sweetly hand in hand. It moved her and she certainly wanted to commit that to paper.

*Onze handen  
(Our hands)*

*Eenvoudig, als ons handen zijn, in lief en leed, bij dag en nacht,  
(Simple, as our hands are, in love and sorrow, by day and night,  
zo voel 'k ze liefste, jouw en mijn, ineengestrengeld saam gebracht.  
(so I feel them dearest, yours and mine, intertwined brought together.)*

*Bij grote ernst, bij 's levens spel, die zachte handen, zij alleen,  
(At great seriousness, at life's play, those gentle hands, they alone,  
zij weten van elkander wel, het groot geheim van ons getweeën  
(they do know from each other, the great secret of the two of us)*

*Steeds hebben zij die taal gekend, als troostend woord, of blijgezind  
(Always they have known that language, as comforting words, or joyful  
en teder, en haast zonder end, verteld hoe jij me steeds bemint.  
(And tenderly, and almost without end, told how you always love me.)*

*Ach mochten mensen met hun pijn, of vreugdevol, in stil gebaar,  
(Ah may people with their pain, or joyful, in silent gesture,  
eenvoudig als zo 'n handen zijn, zo hartverwarmend voor elkaar.  
(Simple as such hands are, so heartwarming to each other.)*

***A striking modesty***

But recently, for the first time, she had also confided less pleasant things to her diary, things that she was having a hard time with anyway. She flipped briefly to a particular page and silently read what she had written down earlier.

I have been working in this village for several years as a missionary sister and I don't have it so easy there. Especially the monastic rule that imposes unconditional obedience on me is very hard for me. And Mother Superior keeps this rule so strictly anyway. Because of this, our relationship was courteous, but never really friendly and affable. But recently something happened in our little school that further clouded our not simple relationship considerably.



One day, when classes had been going on for a week, Mother Superior, who was also principal of the school, was addressing parents about a late enrollment of a new child. I was working in my classroom adjacent to her office and inadvertently heard part of what was said. During that conversation, Mother Superior let slip that the old local religion was all wrong. That the many local customs were simply superstitions and that so-called psychic healings were more imaginary than real. I stood stunned. This was a frontal attack on their cultural uniqueness, I felt. How should such a thing come across in the village? Afterwards, she stressed rather at length her modest lifestyle, her service, humility and her high pedagogical and evangelical calling.

When I met them again after this conversation, I said somewhat humorously - I probably should have kept quiet, but it came to me so spontaneously - "Mother Superior, with your rather conspicuous modesty, you really do remain an expert in conversion work lol." I thought she would understand this amusingly intended contradiction and laugh at it as well. It would benefit our rapport, I thought. But then, to my great surprise, the otherwise disciplined sister lost her temper and called out to me in exasperation: "Sister Marie-Madeleine, who do you think you are? You don't think you can come here to voice a little opposition?"

I was violently shocked by this harsh and totally unexpected reaction. I was as if paralyzed and had to recover for a moment. I stammered that I had not meant it at all and tried to apologize for my rash statement. But I just didn't get the chance. With a jerk, Sister Superior bitterly turned her back on me and disappeared in quick strides toward the convent. There I stood. For minutes I remained speechless. Her retort echoed in my head for a long time. The whole thing made me think. How could a remark that was meant to be funny and yet, to my mind, innocent, cause such a violent reaction? I did not understand. Mother Superior avoided any dialogue with me about it. And I wanted so much to bring up the subject again, to be able to reconcile it. Yet she had no time for that. "The children came first," she insisted.

*I was so tired.*

Weeks later, the whole thing and Mother Superior's anger still kept me preoccupied. From the rather detached looks of some of the other sisters toward me, I understood that they must have sensed something of this tension, although I had not spoken to anyone about it. By now the start of classes was some time behind us. But the charged atmosphere did make my job satisfaction suffer. My otherwise calm self-possession seemed more distant at times. Moreover, Mother Superior had recently made it clear - no, she had not said it explicitly, but she had put it very subtly in the presence of everyone - that some showed too little enthusiasm for their teaching assignment. If this tendency were to continue for longer, she did feel compelled to assign some sisters to another year of teaching. She added that the first grade should certainly remain a model. Indeed, many parents relied on the smooth running of that grade to enroll or not enroll their child. I had clearly taken the painful hint.

But she spoke truth. Indeed, I had been looking tired and lifeless for several days, hardly taking any initiative and counting the hours of the day until my day's work was done. Mother Superior believed that my whole problem could be traced to a form of negative thinking and that my fatigue was certainly not in my body, but somewhere "between my ears. She herself taught the highest grade and believed that I was just imagining this unusual fatigue, but that there was really no objective basis for it. As much as I wanted to believe that.

She further set herself as an example. She was indeed brimming with energy. According to her, this was because she loved her work and really enjoyed connecting with the children. She probably meant well, but her words hit hard. Especially because I felt it was said with a reproachful undertone. In the convent you live so close together all the time, that even a semblance of disagreement is felt much more strongly than when you are not together all the time. Whenever she saw me, she stressed it again : "It is the joy of being able to work with children that gives you the energy to go on." "And," she continued, "this supply of energy is almost tangible for me. In your daily prayers, turn to the Trinity and the Virgin Mary and ask them for strength. It will surely help you". Yes, that was clear language. A number of sisters seemed to tacitly agree with her words. To me, there was an almost imperceptible triumph in her voice. She had, she believed, the right attitude. I did not. Throughout her speech, I sensed a somewhat reproachful undertone.

As a nun you have taken the pledge of obedience. So you do not dispute Mother Superior's statements. Yet, something in her reprimand is not right, I mused, though it is not immediately clear to me what. For days I thought about it. In vain. I sought counsel in cautious terms from some sisters, but they did not really support me. It was not openly expressed that way, but I felt they were behind Mother Superior's vision. It kept me busy, and despite my prayers, the fatigue persisted. Joy for your work can motivate you to put your heart and soul into it. Joy can make you love doing your work. But can joy, for example, also make you need less sleep? Does joy make you fit? Or do you still need to respect your rest even then? As mentioned, Mother Superior was brimming with energy. I don't.

However, that was not all, I found it increasingly difficult to stay in her presence for too long. And that feeling of uneasiness did not diminish. On the contrary. Nor did I last long at her little desk. If I had to say something to her, I usually stayed in the doorway. More and more it occurred to me that this little room was bathed in a deep, oppressive darkness. I really hoped it was my imagination, that I was deluding myself, and that there was indeed no reason for it. Still, I couldn't really convince myself. Intuitively, I felt all too well that there was indeed "something" going on, something objective, something entirely outside myself. If I stayed too long and too close to her, I felt unwell, as if my energy was being taken away from me. Yes it happened that I then developed a slight fever. How on earth could I explain such a thing to Mother Superior or to other sisters? I did not know. Talk to someone about it? That was not so obvious in our small community. Maybe it will go away by itself, I thought. Or will time tell? Maybe it will pass if I try to think about nice things?

### *Lovely things*

And so Sister Marie-Madeleine searched for texts that would cheer her up and turn her spirits for the better. She retreated to her little room and flipped through her Bible. She read the First Epistle of the Corinthians, verses 3 to 8, which deals with love :

Though I speak the language of men and angels, if I did not have love, I am a reverberating cymbal, or a shrill cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, though I know all secrets and all science, though I have the perfect faith that could move mountains, if I do not have love, I am nothing. And do I hand out all my possessions, even though I give myself away to boast of them, if I don't have love, it helps me nothing. Love is patient and kind, love is not envious; it does not boast, it does not imagine anything. It does not behave indecently, it does not seek itself, it does not allow itself to be angered and does not reckon evil. She does not rejoice over injustice, but finds joy in the truth; Everything she endures, everything she believes, everything she hopes, everything she endures. Love never perishes.

Then she flipped to the Sermon on the Mount in Mathew 6, 26 : Look at the birds of the sky: they do not sow nor reap nor harvest, your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than birds? Sister Marie-Madeleine let it sink in for a moment. Then she closed the book. She looked through the window and saw the birds and heard their cheerful whistling. She mused for a moment. She thought of St. Francis' sun song. Like him, she thanked God for all his creatures, for brother sun and sister moon and for the stars. For the wind and the water. For brother fire who gives us his light and his warmth. For mother earth who feeds us and adorns the land with beautiful flowers and plants. She thanked God for his love that forgives, she thanked him for peace.

Finally, she took out a book by Vladimir Soloviev<sup>7</sup> , a Russian thinker, flipped it open on the page where she had inserted a cardboard bookmark, and read: "The heart of loving man thanks God for all creation, for all that lives: for humans, for birds, for animals, for angels. Admiring all the good that exists, that man is moved to tears and an all-embracing and deeply felt endearment takes possession of him. An intense sympathy with the suffering of that creation penetrates deep into the heart of that man. Therefore, he cannot see or bear that a creature should endure even the slightest evil, even the slightest sorrow. That is precisely why he prays, moved to tears, even for the wordless creatures, for the enemies of truth, for those who harm him. Praying, he asks that God sustain them and grant them forgiveness. Even for the crawling animals he prays, with all-encompassing tenderness.

Sister Marie-Madeleine closed the book. She was already feeling better. It was gradually approaching Easter time. In Eswatini, a school year does not begin in September or end in June, but it coincides with a calendar year. The sisters all had pretty good voices, and they formed a small choir with which they livened up the religious services a bit. Sometimes they even sang polyphonically. Once a week, which was today, they practiced. And now it was

quiet time for that. Sister Marie-Madeleine loved music. Gregorian chants could sound so sublime. They also sang the “Veni Creator. Usually she listened to the beauty of the melody, but now she wanted to pay a little more attention to the meaning of the text. She had once learned a mouthful of Latin, and resolved to translate each phrase in her mind.

*Veni, creator Spiritus,  
(Come, creator of the mind),*

*mentes tuorum visita,  
(Let your spirit visit us),*

*imple superna gratia,  
(fill with divine grace),*

*quae tu creasti pectora.  
(the bosom (heart) that you created).*

### ***An anniversary***

It was almost fifty years since Father Henry was ordained a priest, and that should not go unnoticed. He had done so much for the convent and the little school. And today, as he did more than once, he came into Sister Marie-Madeleine’s classroom to greet the children. He came to encourage them in learning to read and do math. He also wanted to know how well they already knew their prayers. Mother Superior thought there should be a short opportunity address to the schoolchildren and the faithful in the little school of the convent, immediately after the Easter High Mass. She wanted Father Henry to be honored and for us to thank him for all the work he did for the school and the convent. She felt that Sister Marie-Madeleine was the appropriate sister for this because she did write more of a poem.

Sister Marie-Madeleine wrote in her diary, “Although such a speech requires a lot of work, I was delighted to do it. I was in such awe of Father Henry. Years ago in my training I had taken a course in philosophy of religion and logic with him. I was amazed each time then at his thorough expertise, his great reading and the way he could relate seemingly disconnected data.”

Then she went over for herself what else she remembered about Father Henry. For example, he was at home in the customs of non-European religions, and he was, as one of the few, very knowledgeable about their paranormal practices and their magic. It was even whispered in wider circles, while he was still living in Flanders, that he had cured sick people who had been given up by the medical profession in a paranormal way. He himself remained

very silent about this. Perhaps out of modesty, but also out of safety. After all, it is forbidden by law in Belgium to practice medicine illegally. Even if medical science claims to be powerless. And this because of the many abuses. Too bad, because in this way an abuse leads to a ban on the use....

Later, Father Henry continued his studies, became a professor of theology and then taught comparative religious studies for several years. Yet a life as a missionary appealed more to him. He left for Batéké, on the banks of the Ogué River, in the border region of Gabon and the Congo. He worked there for eight years and then became something of a traveling missionary throughout Eswatini. He helped where the need was greatest.

Growing older and somewhat weary of traveling, he chose a permanent residence near the Lomati River, not far from the monastic community. From there he helped anyone who appealed to him. Because of his wide contacts and experience, he was open to non-Christian religions and their dynamistic and paranormal aspects. He often stressed that Christianity also had many dynamistic aspects. Later in life, he also spoke more readily about his medial and healing gifts in restricted circles, something that enhanced his contacts and his rapport with the sangomas, the local healers in Eswatini. One day he whispered to Sister Marie-Madeleine that she, like anyone who cares, possessed a rather modest sensitivity herself, which would gradually develop. She would notice that in time. But our sister had hardly experienced any of that already.

### ***The opportunity speech***

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. “In my occasional address, I tried to express the merits of Father Henry in a poetic way. In verse form I had somewhat sketched his life’s journey and humorously and in evocative language mentioned a number of amusing anecdotes. He was just standing next to me at the time and was figuratively, and afterwards literally flattered. I touched on the high and noble nature of his pastoral work, referring repeatedly to the platonic world of ideas. A world that, as you may know, is very much in line with biblical thought. Platonic ideas were later seen by Albinus, a church father, as the thoughts of God. And ideas, created by the giver of all life force, are naturally brimming with energy. I would experience that in a moment.”

“The hundred and fifty or so people present in the little church were particularly captivated and sympathized with every word and image of the verse. They felt particularly involved in this, after all, they had helped build the little school and convent, and were also very touched in their emotional lives. Father Henry, even behind the scenes, had provided so much help. Their “hearts” agreed with the thoughts expressed, and all present sympathized with the rich images and energies evoked by the text. Their gratitude was great. During the short pauses I put in my talk, everyone remained so captivated listening that one could even hear a pin drop. The Father was almost palpably showered with feelings of gratitude. How it

came about, I did not know, but I felt that something was going to happen, that something had to happen. An indefinable tension rose to a climax. I couldn't put it into words then as I do now. But the concentrated attention of those present, the quantitative particulate energy they were sending to me, was about to take a qualitative leap."

"Suddenly it was as if I was literally and quite abruptly pushed out of my body. The phenomenon was unknown to me at the time, but I was undergoing a fine-material out-of-body experience. I suddenly found myself about two meters behind my own body, which fortunately continued to recite the verse on a kind of autopilot. For the most part, however, my consciousness was in my particulate body. I "saw" myself continuing to recite the text in front of me, but I also "saw" the subtle cord that connected me to my biological body. To my utter amazement, I also noticed that from the stomach region of every person present there was a fine material thread running to my stomach region. It was an extremely curious sight, an audience literally attached to me by thin cords."

"I knew that the climax of my text was yet to come. There I articulated in images, which moved me greatly, the high ideal that Father Henry always pursued. And behold, all the threads of those present bundled together in my stomach region, and suddenly, just like that, the world burst open high above me. My crown chakra dilated and out of it came all the threads, but united, bundled into what seemed to me to be one strong and thick rope. This thicker "rope" went straight up into the sky. "

"Still reading on autopilot, I 'saw' high above me an overwhelming and brilliant light, like a firework bursting open. A heavenly music sounded, such as I had never heard before. And behold, myriads of luminous dots descended and clustered together into an even much thicker cord than the one that had gone up. That thicker cord came to me, went back through my crown chakra, and on through my subtle body to my stomach region, to the solar plexus. From there it did not go back to the audience, but it did go back to Father Henry. The latter quite suddenly received the entire bundle of subtle energy in his solar plexus. At that moment he became very emotional and had to hide his emotion for a moment."

"After he collected that energy in his aura, the whole image faded away. I felt myself being pulled back to my biological body, and found myself back to my text a moment later, just in time to read the closing words. To prolonged applause, Father Henry was put in flowers. Many also came to tell me afterwards that they had found the whole event just wonderful. I think that the energy and like-minded thoughts of the many listeners, formed in the fine dust a form, a kind of luminous cloud. And that this cloud must have attracted similar, but much more powerful energies. 'Similia similibus' is what it is called. In the totality of reality, the like seeks the like. Thus the energy that came from above must have become a multiple of the energy that was first built up. And that amplified particulate energy was destined for Father Henry, who thereby gained more strength to continue his noble task. And what I realized afterwards, I had now experienced firsthand that I apparently possessed a certain sensitivity after all."

“So much for this experience that is still very clear in my mind many years later. I admit, it is not hard science, but it was a particularly overwhelming event. It has since become clear to myself: thoughts ‘work’ in the fine material world. Especially when they are reinforced by the thoughts, feelings and will of many like-minded people.”

“After the lecture, Father Henry came to thank me at length. He also inquired about how I was teaching the children to read. “That goes surprisingly smoothly,” I had replied. Then he asked me if everything else was satisfactory. I was somewhat surprised at that question. I nodded, though with some hesitation. It was as if he sensed my need for conversation. “Then show me how that reading is done,” he said. And that gave us an excellent opportunity to retire to my classroom for a while, where I could speak freely.”

### *A class visit*

Broadly, Marie-Madeleine told of her out-of-body experience when she read the verse, of the peculiar flow of fine energy she saw, She also brought up Mother Superior’s anger, and even of the fever she, Marie-Madeleine, got in the presence of Mother Superior.

Father Henry listened intently. “Good that you have experienced such an out-of-body experience yourself,” he began. “Now you know it from your own experience. The Bible, Ecclesiastes 12:6, also mentions its existence already. There it speaks of a silver cord, which connects the biological and particulate bodies. The phenomenon is common in almost all cultures. If this bond breaks, your particulate body will not find its way back to your biological body. The particulate body then can no longer feed your biological body with life force. Then your biological body dies. But your particulate body continues to live”.

We also find testimonies elsewhere from others who tell us that highly concentrated thoughts can generate powers. That, by the way, is the basis of magic. For example, the Hungarian E. Haich (1897/1994), in her book *Initiation*<sup>8</sup>, that she asked her husband to think intensely about something, and she would try to catch this thought intuitively, in a psychic way. To her surprise, something very different happened. As she waited for whatever would arise in her imagination, she clearly felt - she just ‘saw’ it - that from his stomach region a stream of myriads of tiny grains of mist, about ten centimeters in diameter, flowed out and snaked around her body like a lasso, and this also at the level of her solar plexus. Then this fine matter “pulled” Haig up to the window, “pushed” her arm up, “brought” her hand up to the curtain. Finally, this matter ‘forced’ Haich to push this aside so that she could see through the window. At that same moment, that mass left her body and she could move freely again. And then it turned out that all this time and with all his thought-power her husband wanted her to perform just that : that she would walk to the window, lift the curtain and look out.

Then Father Henry was silent for some time, as if what he wanted to say next weighed very heavily on his mind. He sighed and continued in a hushed tone. “Yes, in a way your problem

with Mother Superior does not surprise me. But keep what's said here in private anyway. She is not exactly a calm and amiable lady. She does see some things very black and white, without nuance. Should she be more open to what is going on among the people here, and what these themselves tell about their religion, that would make things easier. To claim that the local religion with its magical practices is just superstition, without really going into it, is very brutal. And then to expect these people to renounce their ancient culture and traditions? That's just impossible."

"The contacts could go a lot better if she listened to what these people were saying themselves, and only then tried to make a thoughtful connection with the Christian faith. That opens doors, and it must surely be doable. How else to explain anyway, that during the consecration, the bread and wine turn into the body and blood of Jesus, and at the same time forbid them the magic? How to tell them of the existence of saints and angels, and deny them worship to their ancestors and their gods? Mother Superior also looks a little too much at the Church's legal system, and definitely wants to see it applied. But this makes it difficult for her to empathize with these people, to come into a deeper contact with them."

"And then there is your unusual experience with Mother Superior, your comment about her striking modesty. Indeed, her reaction here is completely disproportionate to the cause. You clearly sense that she has a problem, almost as if with your spontaneous statement you caught her on something she doesn't want to have known."

"And such people, 'realize' but rather on an un- and subconscious level that 'something' in them is not as it should be, but they cannot and will not accept it on a conscious level. So they suppress and repress it. And they 'play' a role, they exhibit a behavior that, for those who pay due attention to it - for those who think it through rigorously logically - comes across as unreal with the regularity of a clock. It is the overly flattering, the haughty and vain view of themselves that prevents them from discovering and abhorring their own wrongness, the truth that does not grace them. It could well be that Mother Superior cannot really have you and that she thinks of you with a suppressed anger. I am almost certain that this repeated fever of yours may be the result of that".

"And apparently her attitude toward you also infects a number of other sisters. These behave 'exemplarily,' as is expected of them. They see no further and count themselves among 'the good guys.' They don't phrase it that way, of course, but easily believe that with their willingness to listen and their adherence to Mother Superior, they are doing better than you. Do we call it a form of vanity? Of pride?"

Father Henry continued. "It reminds me so much of a little play I attended at the end of the school year in a little school near Mdabene. The theme was 'a world full of angry people.' And that was portrayed by the children in many situations. It was not my thing at all. So I suggested that next time, they should take as their theme "a world full of good people. Immediately and decidedly the amused response sounded, "No way, we're not like that!". The directness and



spontaneity of those who speak in this way clearly reveals something of the depth of their souls. One allows oneself to be “caught. It is out before one realizes it, uncensored. But then such people, especially after some self-reflection, actually know very well what their deeper soul is really like. And something similar, Sister Marie-Madeleine, you have unknowingly provoked in Mother Superior with your spontaneous rejoinder.” Father Henry looked at the sister somewhat worriedly.

Surely they were intriguing and fascinating things he knew how to tell. And he did it in such a conversational and calm manner that she sensed she could safely communicate all that to him. So her trust in him grew. She told Father Henry what else was on her mind.

### *Two green eyes*

Sister Marie-Madeleine continued. “Father, moreover, I slept very badly. No matter how I tried to really make the most of my sleep and keep my mind empty and relaxed, it didn’t work. For hours I lay in bed, exhausted, and yet, I hardly dared to sleep in. Then, when I did close my eyes and gradually felt my attention fading, just before me, just like that, out of nowhere, two menacing green eyes appeared. I tried to make myself believe it was pure imagination. It must be my fatigue, I consoled myself. There is no such thing. But when I felt sleep coming on, they were there again. If I woke up again, they were gone. When I became sleepy again, they reappeared. They grew in strength and, moreover, looked at me wickedly.”

“But staying awake constantly was not going to work either. If I did fall into a slightly deeper sleep, it was as if a large mass was pressing down on my body and preventing me from breathing more and more. Then I would wake up again, in terror. Only to doze off again a little later from great fatigue.” Sister Marie-Madeleine looked questioningly at the Father, as if expecting an explanation from him for this frightening phenomenon. Suddenly both heard hurried footsteps approaching.

It was Mother Superior. She came into the classroom. “You sure have a lot to say,” she said with a smile. But the suspicion in her voice was obvious. “Just fascinating how Sister Marie-Madeleine works with the children,” sounded Father Henry’s calm and diplomatic reply. “Especially the way she teaches the children to read intrigues me. And I think she is far from finished. I look forward to seeing the progress of our young readers again in a few days.” He smiled briefly at Sister Marie-Madeleine, followed by an almost imperceptible nod of the head. Then he left. She understood. Both would soon be able to pick up the thread of their conversation, she felt. And if Mother Superior were to ask difficult questions about this conversation, she would definitely pull herself out of it with some generalities.

### *And again those eyes*

The two green eyes occupied her much more than Mother Superior's curiosity. Sister Marie-Madeleine pondered. She searched in her memory where apparitions are mentioned somewhere in the Gospels. Then she took out her Bible and flipped fleetingly through a few pages. At some texts she paused a little longer. But suddenly she had the impression that already while browsing, and indeed while reading, both her palms began to tingle gently. Now she remembered that she had sensed this before, but then she had hardly paid any attention to it. Her Bible lay open at Matthew, chapter 3, where she read that the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove. A voice came from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I find joy." Then she read in John, chapter 20. On Easter Sunday, she found Mary Magdalene, to her dismay, found Jesus' tomb empty. She did see two angels there, who asked her why she was weeping so much. Suddenly Jesus stood beside her, but it did not yet dawn on her that it was him. Only when Jesus called her name did she recognize him and see that he was risen. Shortly thereafter, Jesus also appeared to his apostles. Afterwards to the disciples at Emmaus, with whom he even took a meal. The apostles recognized him after he broke the bread, blessed it and gave it to them. Then he disappeared. And finally, he appeared to some disciples at Lake Tiberias. There they ate together the fish that the disciples had just caught.

Sister Marie-Madeleine was lost in thought. These are also apparitions, she thought. And she repeated it : the Holy Spirit takes the form of a dove, which is an animal that symbolizes peace. She did feel a little guilty for that comparison. The gospel was always about peaceful and heavenly things, and you don't compare those with "something" that makes your night's rest almost impossible, she felt. She looked further. In the first letter of the Corinthians, 15, 44, the apostle Paul teaches us that man has both a natural and a spiritual body. But a spiritual body is still a body, not a pure and incorporeal soul. Then you come to a threefold division: the incorporeal soul on the one hand, the material body on the other, and between the two you have a fine material body. And apparitions must be related to that fine substance, Sister Marie-Madeleine concluded.

That left the question of whence, or perhaps even from whom, those green, frightening eyes did come. She would definitely bring that up at Father Henry's next visit. So she resolved to ask him with some cautious and still general terms if he knew anything about such unusual experiences. She was convinced that he would take her seriously. At least, she was willing to take that risk. She looked forward to the day when he would once again visit the convent and the little school. And especially, that, as he had told Mother Superior, he wanted to check the children's reading progress in her classroom. Then the two of them would be in class again, without a Mother Superior. And then Sister Marie-Madeleine could speak freely. And that day came, and even sooner than she had expected.

### *I'm expecting you.*

A few days later, Father Henry knocked on Sister Marie-Madeleine's classroom door. He came, as he often did, to greet the children and encourage them to do their best in learning reading and math. He also wanted to know how well their prayers were progressing. And taking that opportunity, Sister Marie-Madeleine asked him if he had a moment for her after school. As expected, he nodded in the affirmative. After school, both stayed to chat in the classroom. Sister Marie-Madeleine pounced. Broadly speaking, she told again of Mother Superior's anger, afterwards of her grim dream, and of her feverish feeling.

"We're not going to resolve that in a few sentences," Father Henry replied thoughtfully. "I suggest that you come and see me sometime, then we will have a little more time for a more extensive conversation and we can go into all this in a lot more depth. I will inform Mother Superior that I expect you at my house on Wednesday." And with a telling silence, he conjured a barely noticeable smile on his countenance and winked briefly. "See you in three days, I expect you," it still sounded in the doorway, and he left the classroom.

Sister Marie-Madeleine was so grateful to him. Apparently, the Father also sensed that raising this topic in the convent, in the presence of others or of all the Sisters, especially then in the presence of Mother Superior, would not go down at all well. It seemed as if he knew that Marie-Madeleine's own request to Mother Superior to visit him would meet with refusal. And so he was not really going to ask Mother Superior, but simply inform her. He was already going to present her with a *fait accompli*, so to speak. He, not Sister Marie-Madeleine, had then already arranged it. And it was a lot harder for Mother Superior to go against a wish of Father Henry. Sister Marie-Madeleine felt particularly relieved.

### *The crocodile*

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. "It was late in the evening. I was lying in bed and longing for a refreshing and deep sleep. I took my prayer book and read in it for a while. Then I felt sleep coming on. But behold, still somewhat between sleeping and waking, on one occasion I "saw" that which weighed upon me. life-sized fine-material crocodile began to materialize on top of my body. I was in danger of suffocating under its weight. The smell of the unbest filled the bedroom. Now I was certain, this was not a dream. This was real. It was just about the most horrifying experience of my entire life. I was awake, wide awake, and thoroughly unnerved. I didn't know what to do. I began to pray an "Our Father" slowly and with conviction. And yes, the beast seemed to fade more and more. It seemed to gradually dissolve into the darkness, until finally it disappeared completely. I could breathe again. Later, when I dozed off again, it reappeared. It kept repeating itself. Until the morning. But once daylight arrived, I could sleep without being teased. Not very practical if you try to keep the hours of monastic life and work with the children during the day.

Sister Marie-Madeleine continued. I woke up. It was already light. I had only been able to sleep a little in the early morning hours. I tried to convince myself against my better judgment that it had been a hellish nightmare. But I couldn't. The animal had really been there, as real as I see the trees and the huts through the window, or the other people. And you don't reason those away either. I tried to inform myself. But in the closed circle of our small community, that was not so easy. I sensed that Mother Superior and the other Sisters would have no place for this rather crazy story. They would think that I was not quite in my right mind, or they would even advise me to see a doctor or a psychiatrist. Later that day, I searched in vain in the few reading materials available in our convent for anything about such apparitions. I remembered that in the Bible there was mention of a battle against deep-sea monsters. So I looked further into this and found a few texts. Among others, in the prophet Isaiah, 51;9 also in Psalm 148;7 and in Psalm 89;10-11. As best I could, with a few sentences from these, I put together a little prayer of my own. I memorized it and resolved to pray it a few times just before falling asleep.

*Awake, awake, clothe yourself with the strong arm of the Lord, awake as in former days, in the days of past generations. Were it not you who cleaved Rahab and pierced the dragon? Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep, and through the depths of the sea made a way, a passage for the redeemed? God does not let His wrath be subdued, even Rahab with his allies must bow before Him. Heaven, Lord praise your wonders. Lord, God of powers, who is like You? Strength and faithfulness stand around You. The tempestuous sea You restrain, proud waves You calm? Rahab, your enemy You have mortally struck, with strong arm scattered his remains. From Thee is the heaven, from Thee is the earth.*

I slept restlessly the next night, but fortunately the angry animal had not shown itself again. Although I still felt quite tired that morning, I was still able to complete my lessons. In the evening, after the close of the day, and after Compline, I hurried again to the small library of the monastery I continued my search of the previous day, hoping to find some reading material that could make me a little wiser.

### ***“There were many of us”***

Sister Marie-Madeleine tells of her search. At first glance I found nothing, until suddenly a book caught my attention: J. Teernstra, *Sketches and Stories from Africa*<sup>9</sup>. I flipped through it quickly and found a contribution from a certain Father Trilles, entitled: ‘An outgoing magician’. I read that Trilles had been a missionary in Gabon, West Africa. His story was about Ngema, a village magician. This one liked to come and talk to Trilles at nightfall. Ngema saw in the missionary a white magician and treated him as if he were a colleague who also engaged in magic. Many times they had talked about Ngema's magic and spirit summoning. One evening, Father Trilles asked Ngema if he wanted to go fishing with him.

- “Too bad,” said Ngema, “can’t you put that off for a day?”
- “For what reason?” asked Trilles, “You can come with us, can’t you?”
- “The ‘master’ has called us all, my colleagues and myself, together for tomorrow;” he said.
- “What are you saying? Which master?”
- “Well, the master I say anyway, the one who can.” Trilles understood.
- “Well done, and which colleagues are still coming?”
- “Well who live in the circumference, and also beyond. Some come from thirty days away”.
- “And where is this meeting being held?” Ngema hesitates a moment.
- “On the table country of Yemvi, near the old abandoned mine, four day’s journey from here.”

Trilles is puzzled:

- “How can you still get to a place four day trips away from here tomorrow night? Never will you get there in time.”

Distraught, Ngema looked at Trilles:

- “White fellow, can’t magicians travel with you then?”
- “Yeah sure, but not like you.”
- “No, certainly not like me. You know, you can come to dinner with me tomorrow. At night you will see how we black wizards travel.”

That evening, Ngema became very solemn.

- “I am starting it. While I am busy, do not disturb me, if at least your life is dear to you. Both for me and for you every disturbance means certain death.”

As a trial, Trilles asks him, when he does go to Yemvi, if he will pass by his friend Eseba in Nshong, three day’s journey from here, but on the way to Yemvi, to ask him if he will urgently bring the box of bullets that Trilles had forgotten there, to bring. Ngema agrees. In the evening, Ngema begins some ritual preparations. He sets up idols and keeps a fire burning, containing fragrant plants and sharp, fragrant wood. Then he begins to hum a monotonous melody. This is his supplication in honor of the spirits who are to help him. He also rubs his whole body with a red liquid. Then he begins a slow dance around the fire, also spinning on his own axis, faster and faster. For hours. Then he stands still.

From the ceiling of the cabin, a sharp hiss suddenly sounds. Trilles looks up. A large snake wriggles down, keeps looking Trilles staring at him and moves its venomous tongue back and forth. Trilles understands that the snake is his “elangela” or “nahual,” his helper spirit<sup>10</sup>. She wraps herself around Ngema’s neck and rocks her head back and forth to the beat of his magic song. Afterwards, he puts himself into a deep sleep. The snake too goes to rest. All night long, Trilles stays with Ngema, whose body seems seemingly dead all the time. He is totally unresponsive. Trilles pulls open one of Ngema’s eyelids. The eye is white and glassy. Trilles lifts an arm of Ngema, then a leg. They fall back down without any sign of life. A white foam shows at the corners of his mouth. Heart palpitations are barely perceptible. In

the morning, Ngema awakens convulsively. It takes a while for him to regain full consciousness. Then he says, “There were many of us and we had a good time.”

Trilles is skeptical, however: “Nay, you were here all night, in a deep sleep!”

Ngema: “I was not lying on the bed. That was just my body. But what is my body? IK was on the plateau of Yemvi.”

Three days later, Eseba arrives at the mission:

- “Padre here are the bullets you ordered through Ngema.”

Trilles: “When has Ngema been with you?”

Eseba: “Three days ago, at 9 p.m.”

Trilles is surprised: “Just when Ngema was asleep. Did you see him?”

Eseba: “No Father, you know that we are afraid of spirits that pass by at night. Ngema knocked on my door and that’s how he conveyed the message. But I didn’t really ‘see’ him.” For Trilles there was hardly any doubt: Ngema had been to the celebration. In a few moments, his ‘I’ had made a journey that normally takes several days. Moreover, his ‘I’ had acted, listened and spoken there.

Sister Marie-Madeleine had read the whole story with rising amazement. She had never heard of this before, even in her training as a mission sister. How could someone make such far journeys in such a short time? And then even with a body other than the biological one. That must be some kind of fine material body, she thought. And she recalled the apostle Paul’s threefold journey and her own exit at Father Henry’s jubilee. Moreover, the book still had what is known as an “Imprimatur,” a permission given by the church authorities to print and publish it. Which meant that it contained nothing in its content that contradicted Church teaching.

### *Seeing the past*

Browsing even further in that same book, Sister Marie-Madeleine found a second contribution by Father Trilles<sup>11</sup>, This time he is visiting the village of Okala, where the chief, also a magician, is predicting the future to him. Trilles is not very interested, yet the magician has him called.

- “And you, white man, don’t you want to know what awaits you soon?”

- “Dear friend,” I said, “I care little for the future: it belongs to God .. You can read into the future, you say, can you also see into the past?”

- “Sure.”

- “Will you check my past then?”

- “Yes, please.”

- “What did I do before I became a missionary?”

With a telling smile, the magician raked the fire a bit and blew over it three times in different directions. He again began to invoke his spirit with wisps that I have not been able to catch. (Note: that is his form of prayer). Then he held a mirror over the pot of water that

was on the fire so that vapor formed on it. Then he pulled the mirror away and looked at the vapor on it, which again slowly disappeared. The vapor left a whimsically shaped pattern of intertwining squiggly lines. The magician watched them intently.

- "You carried weapons, you were a soldier."

- "How long?"

- "As long as."

- "And before I became a soldier?"

The same ceremonial was repeated.

- "You read many books, you wrote, you were with many children in the same house."

- "Do you also see the house?"

- "I see it, it's very big."

- "Do you see my bed?"

- "Yes, in that and that place;"

- "How many brothers and sisters do I have?"

- "So much."

- "How many children do my sisters have?"

- "So much."

All those answers were absolutely correct.

- "What is my mother doing right now?"

- "She weeps."

- "And my father?"

- "Your father? He is in a big coffin under the ground. He is dead".

- "Ho Ho, friend, this time you guessed wrong. Less than two weeks ago, I received a letter from him".

- "He's dead."

I was leaving. I had had enough. And on top of that, I had an anxious premonition. When I arrived at my mission a week later, I found the sad news that my father had died.

Sister Marie-Madeleine closed the book. This was not about stepping out, but about clairvoyance. What makes Ngema able to step out and Father Trilles not? And what makes a person able to be clairvoyant? Is there any preparation for that? Does that require training? Is it a gift you already have or not? So many questions, so few answers. By now it had become very late. She was already looking forward to the scheduled conversation with Father Henry. Perhaps he had the answers. Sister Marie-Madeleine went over the prayer she had composed the night before, got into bed and quickly fell into a deep sleep.

### *To Father Henry*

Sister Marie-Madeleine awoke. Finally the day arrived when she could go to see Father Henry. It was quite a walk to his house, but she enjoyed it. And it gave her a chance to leave the convent for once. She let her thoughts run wild. How relaxed she felt and filled with an almost childlike joy. She had rarely been to the Father's cottage before, and the expectation that

the conversation would definitely be worthwhile filled her with a barely contained joy. She knew that Father could listen well, and only then speak. With Mother Superior it was more often the other way around, she thought. But she immediately felt a little guilty and repressed the, by her standards, sinful thought. She quickened her stride a little. Tall eucalyptus trees and the broadly incised leaves of banana trees cast shadows across the dirt road. To its left and right, a few cows were grazing in the plain. By the way, the animals seemed to meander wherever they wanted, free, just as Sister Marie-Madeleine felt today.

The river snaked like a white ribbon in the bright sunlight. The rolling and beautiful landscape that passed by her seemed much more beautiful to her than on other days. She felt the breath rising from the fields and trees. The whistling of some distant birds ebbed gently in the valleys. And suddenly, just out of nowhere, the words and music of the Veni Creator came to her again, but now much more tangible, much more powerful than when she sensed it at Mass. An indefinable joy filled her soul. The afternoon sun was in its highest position in the steel-blue sky. It was getting quite warm. Fortunately, Sister Marie-Madeleine could already see the first mud huts of the small settlement in the distance, and a little later she reached Father Henry's home.

### *The first conversation*

She was expected. Father Henri was already standing in the doorway and his broad, generous smile convinced her once again that she was welcome. His little room was very soberly furnished: a table with two old chairs, one of which had its wicker seat sagging and the resulting hollow was filled with a thick pillow. In one corner was a closet with a bed next to it, half hidden behind a curtain. In the other corner you could see an overloaded bookcase. You know that. The cupboard is too small to put the books neatly side by side, so the spaces above the lesser books are filled with books that then come to lie horizontally on top. Finally, in front of the window was an old desk, with some books lying open, and next to it some sheets of written paper. Next to the window hung a wooden icon. It apparently represented three angels surrounding an altar, or so Sister Marie-Madeleine thought, and she was somewhat fascinated by it.





“Rublov,” suddenly sounded the Father’s voice. “It is a depiction of the icon representing the Holy Trinity, and was painted by Russian monk Andrei Rublov. The original work dates from the 15th century and is perhaps the most famous Russian icon. It is said to represent the Old Testament story of the three angels who visited Abraham at the Oak of Mamre, as described in the book of Genesis 18:1-8. But it could just as easily be said to represent the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Sensitives claim it has a particularly benign appearance. If they hold their palms close to the icon, they are said to feel tingling. The icon is said to be protective. And this is precisely because it represents the Trinity, the creator and giver of all life, including all life force. That is why it hangs here. Sister Marie-Madeleine went to it and held the palm of her left hand at the level of the place of the altar and the chalice. Involuntarily, she was reminded of her experience with her Bible when she looked up the texts in the Gospel. Was she feeling those tingles again now? Or was she imagining it?”

Father Henry pulled out a chair from under his table. “Take a seat,” he said. “And you certainly have a lot to say. Let’s start with a prayer of protection, which is always good.” And he offered me a piece of paper on which he had written a text. “I hope it is readable,” he said, “and if you wish we can recite it together. Then it will be as Jesus told us: where two or more are united in my name, there I am in their midst.”

Sister Marie-Madeleine accepted the prayer, slowly and with conviction it sounded from both their mouths a moment later:

*You, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, are the creator of daylight. You alone, in Your eternal wisdom, through the sun, the moon and the other heavenly bodies, have established order in the darkness of the universe. With great reason, therefore, we praise Your glory. Rightly do we daily say with emphasis, "Glory to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, now and always and throughout the ages of ages.*

Then Marie-Madeleine saw that at the beginning of the new paragraph there was a small frame with a cross on top. “Now think about your problem,” Father Henry continued.” And think that your problem is contained in the little frame. That way it is neatly defined and delineated and God and his helpers know what to focus on to help you.” Then he continued the prayer, along with Marie-Madeleine. She situated for herself and silently in the frame “a healthy sleep.



*Jesus died but was resurrected. You, Heavenly Father, sent us the Holy Spirit with all His gifts of grace. Save us Father, save us Son, save us Holy Spirit. For eternity save us, Heavenly Father. Thy name be glorified forever.*

### *A nahual*

And now she finally told Father Henry her previously delusional dream about that beast that had so frightened her. The Father listened intently the whole time. “Perhaps,” our sister reasoned aloud, “the particulate phantom does come from a human being, from someone who sleeps at night and then also takes the form of a crocodile. And that someone is then apparently not very well disposed toward me”.

A brief silence followed. Father Henry looked at Marie-Madeleine penetratingly and yet with a warm heart. “Dear Sister,” he began, “what you are saying now is indeed particularly grim, and yet, it is really not as rare as you might think. So don’t worry about your mental health at all. There is really nothing wrong with that. Such things do exist. The phenomenon, stepping out in animal form, is well known in religious philosophy and is called “nahualism. The animal in question, here a crocodile, is then called a ‘nahual.’” Sister Marie-Madeleine had already come across that word, in the story of Trilles, there the nahual of the magician Ngema was a large snake.

“People also speak of the person who causes this as a ‘porte-poisse,’ as one who carries poison, anger, within him and also spreads it around him. Sometimes, when it concerns a woman, one speaks of ‘a Lorelei.’ This is a lady who seduces a man with her “sex appeal. Once he accepts this, and ‘opens’ himself to her, he also - literally - unlocks his aura, the fine material body that surrounds his biological body. To put it in still other words, this gives her the opportunity to rob him of his life energy. In a number of cases, this ends with the man’s death. Seen from the other world, sacred thus, he then has little or no life force left. Prophetically this may manifest itself in some disease. His weakest organ, heart, liver, kidneys, etc., then becomes even weaker, so that biologically speaking, this part of the body finds it more difficult or impossible to fulfill its function. One becomes ill, possibly dies.”

“People then say: his heart gave out, or his liver, or his kidneys. But the reason why, that remains in the dark. This stealing of energy, this vampirism, is known in all cultures, although its name varies from tribe to tribe, or from people to people. The tragedy is that one who steals energy from others may have the best intentions, but still remains “pernicious,” still continues to cause mischief around him. This too has its reasons. We will come back to this later. But first I must show you something else”. A long silence followed.

### *Father Diëgo*

Then Father Henry got up wearily, went to the bookcase and took out a book: I. Bertrand, *La sorcellerie*<sup>12</sup>. He flipped it open on a page where he had previously inserted, as a kind of bookmark, a piece of paper and continued. “In it you will find a curious history that took place in Mexico. The book is from 1900. So the story must date from before. It is about a certain Father Diëgo, a courageous man like many of the first missionaries.

One day he punished an Indian who had committed a serious offense. That Indian was very dissatisfied and wanted revenge. He knew that Father Diego was on his way to a dying Indian to hear his last confession. On the way, the Father, who was on horseback, had to ford a river. The punished Indian secretly hurried to that place, made the necessary preparations and set up an ambush.

A little later the Father, quietly breviating, arrives on his horse and enters the river. Once in the water, his horse feels stopped. The Father looks down and notices a cayman, who tries to pull the horse into the water. At this he gives the animal the reins and prays so fervently for God's assistance that his horse drags the cayman out of the river. A series of hoof and stick blows land on the animal's head. It is forced to release its grip and is left dizzy and badly injured. The Father travels on.

Arriving at his destination, he begins to recount the incident. Moments later, a messenger approaches him and tells him that the Indian the Father had punished moments before had been found severely injured on the riverbank and died a little later. Father Diego went to investigate: the crocodile lay dead on the bank. The animal had injuries similar to those inflicted on the Indian. The latter had apparently died under the hoof and stick beatings of Father and his horse!

Father Henry paused again, looked at the sister with a look of, yes, such things do exist, and continued, "So here you have a description of a somewhat similar phenomenon to the one you experienced. The Indian has mastered the technique of stepping out, and as a conscious act. His phantom, his particulate body does not begin to materialize delicately, as you experienced when falling asleep, but it takes possession of the cayman. In a way you can say that the cayman is then "possessed" by the Indian and the latter can thus impose his will on the animal, so here killing the priest. But the prayer and strong reaction of our missionary decided otherwise. Surely stepping out in a conscious and willed manner requires a solid knowledge of magic, and if your goal is to kill a fellow human being, then that is patently 'black' magic."

### ***Who does such a thing?***

Father Henry continued. "Now back to your unbest. The crocodile that began to materialize may be the out-going soul-body of a human being. Who is doing that is not yet clear, nor is it clear that it is a conscious outgoing. People can be, let us say, naturally magically, here then "black magically," gifted. It is sometimes enough that just before falling asleep they think of someone with intense anger. Their unconscious comes into action, their subtle body can then exit without their awareness, but the result remains the same. Thus, they can do severe harm to someone, both biologically and subtly."

"The biological damage is only the consequence of the particulate damage. If one black magically damages a fine material organ, this has its repercussion, its repercussion on that same biological organ. When the victim, the target, then wakes up, that person may have more the

memory of an evil dream, but know nothing of the evil that has been done to him or her in the meantime. It will either work itself out fairly quickly or gradually. The thought of revenge that a person harbors when falling asleep is like the electrical ignition that, once he or she is asleep, gets the more powerful starter motor of the unconscious soul-life running. As a result, such people step out of their bodies, and perform -finally- the revenge spirit on their victim. This is also why Christianity recommends that when falling asleep, one should always cherish good and peaceful thoughts, or better, just before falling asleep, recite a prayer for protection.”

“For example, psalm 72 (71) - as you know the psalms in the Bible have a double numbering - halfway through the text states :

*“For you, Holy Trinity, the animal will pass through its knees.”*

Father clarified : “The term ‘animal’ here stands for ‘all powers, hostile to the Biblical God. “And psalm 59 (58) says:

*“Free us, Holy Trinity, from our enemies, enemyesses. Protect us from those who attack us. Free us from those who cause harm, free us from the grip of those who want blood.”*

The latter then is not about the blood in itself, but about the blood as the carrier of that subtle life force.” The great axiom is, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood possesses my life force.” This last phrase will sound familiar to many. These words are also said during a celebration of Mass. And this during the consecration. The principle is similar. Yet the difference is towering. Here it is Jesus who allows us to share in his divine energy. So this is a lot more than a “grateful remembrance” of the Last Supper. Sensitives will feel the energy emanating from a consecrated host. Seers will see them surrounded by a brilliant white light. At least, if the celebration is done in optimal conditions. Should the priest lead the consecration without too much attention, or if his radiance is not good, then similar subtle beings - the similia similibus already cited - will show themselves, trying to abort the Eucharist. As, incidentally, they try to do with all sacraments. And this succeeds more easily if the priest is not prepared for it, or as it is called, is not “in a state of grace.

For a moment, Father Henry paused. Then he continued, “Return to your crocodile. So the assumption that those who sleep cannot do evil is, in this view, completely wrong. Psalm 19 (18) e.g. warns of this:

*“Who, Holy Trinity, is aware of all error? Purify us in all cases from unconscious evil”.*

And again, the Bible states that the cause of evil is self-importance. Listening to the sequel:

*“Safeguard those who serve You from self-righteousness, so that such a thing will not control us. Only then shall we be blameless, and free from the great sin.”*

That great sin, according to the Bible, is a pride or vanity that makes one fail to estimate oneself truthfully. It is an exaggerated esteem of oneself, a self-righteousness that makes one believe that any estimation of one's worth is superfluous. In this way, one becomes blind to one's own faults and shortcomings. Psalm 131 (130) also speaks in this sense:

*“Holy Trinity, haughty, We will not be. A proud look, Not we. The way of those who are too self-righteous, In no way are we committed. Nay, in our souls we keep peace and control. On Thee, on the contrary, we count, Holy Trinity, from now and forever”.*

Again the Padre paused. He looked at Sister Marie-Madeleine for a short time and asked, “Am I not telling you all too soon? Am I not making it too difficult for you? I can imagine when you hear these subjects for the first time that you have to take some time to digest them.” Yes, the sister agreed. “It’s incredibly fascinating what I’m hearing here, Father. Gladly I will have a little more time to think it over and process it, but so gladly I will come to you again another time, that will help me further.” “That’s how I feel about it,” was the reply.

“You know,” he continued, “we’ll stop there for today. The other themes, your search in the Bible and your stories about Father Trilles, we’ll go into that a little more deeply next week.” Again he paused, smiled and concluded with a wink, “I’ll let Mother Superior know in time that we had a good talk and that I expect you back here next time.” Sister Marie-Madeleine hurried to the convent to still be in time for vespers. She enjoyed the beauty and tranquility of the evening walk back to the convent and she went over in her mind everything she had heard again.

### ***A testimonial***

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. “It had been a long time since I had met my brother. On the night of July 22-23, I was suddenly awakened by a man standing next to my bed. I was immediately wide awake, but realized a moment later that I was in an out-of-body state and that my physical body was asleep. Only then did it dawn on me that the man standing next to my bed was not there with his physical body either, but with his subtle body. I noticed now that it was my brother.”

“When he saw me his mouth literally fell open in amazement; he had no idea what was going on with him, and with me. He knew that I had a great interest in religion, and he always looked down on me somewhat pityingly with a decidedly materialistic view of life. But now, in his disengaged state, there was nothing left of his superior feeling, on the contrary. Not only was he infinitely surprised by “the full reality” he was now confronted with, which was almost diametrically opposed to the overly materialistic image he had cherished all these years, but he was likewise in utter panic.

“Only now did I see a large bloodstain at the site of his solar plexus. The umbilical cord was broken. I immediately understood that he had died but that he did not yet realize his true condition at all. I tried to calm him down and make him realize his true situation. I reminded him of our earlier conversations, in which I argued that there was a lot more to the world than what was only physically demonstrable and that death does not have the last word. However, he always argued that dying was the very last thing that could happen to a human being.”

“I now argued that surely he recognized that there is life after death, for after all, there he stood, ‘in the flesh,’ but without a biological body. He replied that he was not dead at all “for surely you can see that I have my body and can still think” he argued. I agreed that he had a body and consciousness, but that it was neither his physical body nor his earthly consciousness at all. I therefore suggested to him that he put his arm through the closet. It seemed to him such an absurd thought that he refused at first. I insisted. “How do you think you got in here? Certainly not through the door.” Finally, he moved his arm in the direction of the closet and noted to his infinite surprise that the hand disappeared completely inside it, through the wooden door. He stood nailed to the floor. I went on to tell him that he was indeed dead, but now had only a fine material body, and that he could now see that his thoughts of death as the end of everything, were completely wrong.”

“Gradually he seemed to see the reality of his true situation. I then tried to convince him that he must now go his own way, away from this world. Otherwise he would remain a spirit bound to earth, who could only continue to live by stealing the subtle life energies of other people still living in their biological bodies. Especially then his widow, his daughter and all those who had been close to him in his life. He seemed to gradually understand, continued to look at me hesitantly for a while, and a moment later disappeared into thin air, almost like a mist slowly dissolving. When I awoke that morning, I noted this ‘dream’ in my diary.”

Sister Marie-Madeleine adds the following : “And now I am running ahead of time to conclude this story, but a month and a half later I received the news that he had died on July 22. So he appeared to me during the night that followed the day of his death.”

### *Clairvoyance*

We are a week later. Sister Marie-Madeleine is back with Father Henry. Their conversation continues. She informs Father Henry about her search in the Bible, about the resurrection of Jesus, about his appearances to Mary Magdalene, to the apostles, to the disciples at Emmaus, and finally to some apostles at the lake. And afterwards, of course, she tells of the nocturnal visit of her brother’s shadow.

Then Father Henry took the floor. “That the Bible is bursting with paranormal phenomena, by now you have found that out for yourself. If you imagine religion without that paranormal aspect, you strip it of all power. True clairvoyance does involve reality. Thus seers always make

a thorough distinction between the terms “imagination” and “imagination. ‘Imagination’ refers to what they can subjectively imagine for themselves. A person can imagine anything, a tree, a house, a human being ... and they do so just like everyone else, with their imagination. Such images can be changed at will. It is very different with the “imagination. The latter concerns an objective reality, outside them, which imposes itself on them in images they cannot change themselves.”

“Do we think e.g. of Saul<sup>13</sup> , the later Paul, on his way to Damascus, when suddenly a heavenly light enveloped him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Saul replied : “Then who are You, Lord?” “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. Come, get up and go into the city. There you will be told what to do.” His traveling companions stood speechless. They heard the voice, but saw no one. Saul stood up, but although he had his eyes open, he could see nothing.”

“Or do we think of the many dreams mentioned in the Bible that come from Yahweh or from His servants, His angels. For example, we read in Matt. 2:12: The shepherds, after visiting the Christmas manger, were warned in a dream not to go back past Herod. Or do we think of Matth. 2:13, where Joseph was warned in a dream to flee to Egypt. This is how Jesus escaped the infanticide ordered by Herod. And further in the same text we read: The angel of Yahweh appears to Joseph in a dream. He announces to him the death of Herod and leads him to the promised land”.

“In addition, we read John 4:16/19 where the evangelist depicts a conversation between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. Jesus told her that she had already known five husbands and that her current partner was not her husband, to which the woman replied, “Lord, I see that you are a prophet.” The Samaritan’s response shows that for her, a prophet was familiar with what we today call ‘clairvoyance.’”

“Or again: Luke 22: 8/13 mentions that Jesus had sent two apostles ahead to prepare the common Passover meal”. Jesus said, “Look, when you enter the city, you will come across a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him to the dwelling where he enters. To the owner of the house you say, “The master will let you say, “Where is the hall where I, with my disciples, can hold the Passover meal?” This one will show you a large upper room. Bring everything there in order”. When they went there, they found everything just as He had said. They prepared the Passover meal. So much for this Bible text. Here, too, Jesus shows His clairvoyance. Mantically, He ‘sees’ what will occur in an immediate future.”

## *Healings*

Father Henry continued. “Clairvoyance, perceiving is one aspect, but directing the fine substance, really working magically, that’s one step further. The Bible also bears witness to this. Mark 6:56 likewise establishes it: “Wherever Jesus wherever Jesus went, to villages or towns, the people laid the sick in the marketplace, and these asked Him to be allowed to touch at least the hem of His garment. And whoever touched Him was saved.” And further in Luke 6:19 we read, “The whole crowd sought Jesus to touch Him because a power, a’ *dunamis*’, emanated from Him that healed all.” Give us an inventory of this.”

“The New Testament tells of 32 miracles, 15 of which are physical healings. They involve the most diverse ailments, the ‘eternal miseries’ of people: cripples going back, the dumb talking back, the deaf hearing back, someone being healed of a withered hand. Furthermore, there are devil exorcisms and resurrections of the dead. Lazarus is raised from the dead, also the son of the widow of Naim, and the daughter of Jairus, and of course there is Jesus’ own resurrection.”

“Finally, there are the miracles related to the control of nature: the transformation of water into wine, the miraculous catch of fish, two multiples of bread, walking on water and the stilling of the storm. In Acts 19:11/12 we read, “God worked, through the hands of Paul, remarkable miracles. So much so that it sufficed to lay the cloths and linen that had touched his body on the sick. The diseases drew out and the evil spirits went away.” Repeatedly, a connection is suggested between physical healing and evil spirits then leaving the sick person. You can’t really read the Bible without passing by all those power effects. You also notice that Jesus starts from a very different point of view than medical science. He heals the fine body, frees it from unsavory creatures. And that affects the biological body: it is healed. Medical science makes the biological body healthy as much as possible. But the particulate body remains virtually untouched.”

Father Henry summarizes somewhat : “Religion, conceived as an experienceable force, is then the actual founding and sustaining life force behind the visible and tangible world. The attention of the religious man reaches beyond the profane. He knows that the sacred reaches far beyond it. The believer assumes that there is such a thing as the sacred, and considers what results from it. Experiments and sampling in the realm of the religious and the sacred confirm some assumptions and refute others. Throughout a lot of sampling, religion, and immediately the sacred, becomes a given. How far we are from Freud who claims that God is merely an invention, a projection of man in need of a loving father.”



### *God's court council*

Father Henry continued. "But think now of that grim dream of yours. You assumed it came from someone. I feel the same way. You know that Eswatini has a lot of 'sangomas.' They are traditional healers whose role is somewhat similar to that of shamans. They practice divination, clairvoyance, ritual initiations and magic. Sangomas are held in high regard here. For them, illness is often the result of the work of an "umtsakatsi," a black magician or sorceress, who, unlike a Sangoma, does not heal but rather causes mischief. I am friends with a good sangoma around here."

"Let me tell you the following about that. The American J. Hall, author of the book *Sangoma*<sup>14</sup>, interviewed the mantically gifted singer Miriam Makeba (1932/2008), nicknamed "mama Africa. Hall learned from her that he has healing powers through the spirits of his ancestors. This comes as a complete surprise to Hall, who is a professor at a university in the United States. On her advice, he decides to train with us, here in Eswatini, to become a sangoma, a traditional healer. You can imagine how that must have come across in his academia. But he did it."

"Miriam Makeba also tells him that her mother, an Xhosa - Nelson Mandela was also an Xhosa - was also a sangoma. She received her education in Eswatini. Miriam continues: my mother had no choice but to become a sangoma. Her lidlotis, her ancestor spirits, required that of her. Because Makeba's mother did not accept it at first, her spirits began to "possess" her and cause her all sorts of difficulties, such as swelling her feet and also giving her other mysterious illnesses. The medically trained doctors understood nothing about it and were powerless. And this "possession" is the point we need to dwell on for a moment. The lidlotis do not respect the individuality and moral freedom of the sangoma, but subjugate him or her. And so do a lot of gods and goddesses in many non-Biblical religions."

For example, A. Bertholet notes., *Die Religion des alten Testaments*<sup>15</sup>, notes that the Bible refers to pagan deities as fallen "angels. As Job 1:6, says, they originally made up God's court council. However, instead of conforming to God's authority and to his decalogue, his ten commandments, in their pride they wanted to govern their assigned portion autonomously, at their own discretion. Indeed, the Bible says that some of them rebelled against God and were therefore relegated to the underworld. For example, in Job 4:17/18, we read, "Even in his 'servants' God puts no trust, and his 'angels' he catches in deviation." Psalm 82 (81), among others, confirms their mission, as well as their deviation. They act alongside God as 'judges' but in some cases act against God's decalogue, threatening God to destroy them. Thus seen, they belong, in the words of the prophet Daniel, 12:4 to "the many who will deviate here and there, while in the process iniquity and unscrupulousness will increase."

### *The harmony of opposites*

Father Henry continued. "Depending on their disposition of the moment, at times these non-Biblical gods and goddesses do good to the people who call upon them, at other times

they found evil. Then again, they undo the good they have founded, or destroy the evil they themselves have caused. They act without rules of conduct and are ambiguous and untrustworthy. It is the adherents of the many non-Biblical religions themselves who say this of their own gods. Worse, with a certain fatalism, these believers have always allowed this erratic behavior to be carried on as “the will of the gods. So these religions themselves affirm that their gods are “harmony of opposites. This capricious behavior is what Kristensen calls<sup>16</sup> “the harmony of opposites. He writes: “In deep humility, the great multitude has accepted this demonic reality. Enlightened writers like the Greek thinker Plutarchus (45/125) and his kindred spirits of all times have rejected this type of piety as an inferior religion.”

“The ancient Greek writers Homer and Hesiodos had already pointed out that muses proclaim both truth and falsehood: ‘all “infamy,” theft, adultery, mutual deceit ... they ascribed to their gods and goddesses.’ Even then, there were critical comments about the behavior of such gods. Basically, all non-Biblical higher beings are of precisely the same nature. But the myths sometimes hide it. Or a clergy, or black-magicians and witches who do not want to reveal the gruesome truth to the light of day. Or also people who are all too credulous and all too superficially enter, or do not enter, into the true nature of these fine material beings, who represent “the harmony of opposites. A number of religions have neither will nor ethics.’

“This is how S. Bramley, in his book ‘Macumba, Forces noires du Brésil’ to a mère-des-dieux, - a woman with a great deal of vitality so that she can exert a certain influence on the gods and spirits of this non-Biblical religion - “How do you explain that the god Exu is on the side of both good and evil?” to which she replies, “But my son, good and evil are human conventions. They are values created by man and disregarded by the gods. We ask the gods to work for good or evil. But the gods situate themselves completely above that. Our morality does not actually concern them.”

“It is as if through her answer we hear Friedrich Nietzsche (1844/1900), speaking. This German philosopher is known for his assertion, “Gott ist Tot, Wir haben Ihn getotet.” By this he means to say that the high light world is dead, that the supernatural world is henceforth without power, and that nihilism - the denial of any high value - is making its appearance in the world. In his “Jenseits von Gut und Böse,” Nietzsche likewise argues that there is no good or evil per se, but that such are merely creations of men, and therefore nothing more than mere human interpretations of reality.”

“One senses in all this the heavenly difference from the Biblical God .. First, Yahweh has no need for sacrifices at all, for He is the creator of all that exists. He is also the giver of all energy and therefore has no need for believers to offer Him sacrifices. In return He does ask of man an ethical life.”

“The apostle Paul speaks in this connection of ‘the elements of this world’ (*Gal 3:19; Col 2:15, 2:18*) which must be put first if we are to understand this world with its numerous shortcomings. Among these elements, as mentioned above, are the non-Biblical “gods” who

each control a part of reality, but in doing so are sometimes more blind, demonic or satanic in the face of all spiritual ideas and values. In the temptation of Jesus in the desert (*Matt. 4: 8v*), it is Satan who, as “prince of this world,” gives to Jesus all kingdoms on the condition that Jesus submits to him. Also *Luc. 4:5* and *John 18:36* state that all the kingdoms of the world are given into Satan’s hands. Jesus does not dispute Satan’s possession of this world, but says that the kingdom of God precisely is not of this world. Jesus with his suffering and death will indeed soon find out who is in control in this world.”

Fr. Henry continued: “I would like to clarify this with an example. M. Gillot, ‘*Les crimes de la pleine lune*’<sup>17</sup>, tells us how a lady, in a matter of inheritance, was cunningly wronged by her sister. A gypsy woman, befriended by the wronged lady, found this out and, with the help of her spirits, magically undid this injustice. The woman who then received her rightful share of the inheritance after all, however, thereby came under the influence of those gods and spirits of the gypsy who, in Kristensen’s words, are “harmony of opposites. The woman who then did inherit, after that financial “benefaction,” can gradually expect a series of miscalculations. The tragedy is that this grip remains even after death. Unless with Trinitarian prayers, prayers to the Holy Trinity, she can protect herself from the grip of those low gods.”

### ***The wishes of the top boss***

Father Henry is still speaking. “And that is precisely what can also go wrong with healings by a sangoma. Their spirits and gods, their lidlotis also work autonomously, outside the realm of God. So whoever appeals to them also has to deal with “the harmony of opposites” or “the elements of this world. That amounts to the same thing, both expressions refer to the same fact. And I have pointed out these dangers to the sangoma to whom I want to send you, and let us say, formed him Trinitarian in this. He can best continue to work with his ancestor souls, with his lidlotis and other spirits, but on one important condition. They may assist him only if they conform to the wishes of their supreme master, the Holy Trinity. If they do not, they aggravate their final judgment. And they know that. And since then, this sangoma begins his work with a Trinitarian prayer and works with an image of the icon of Rublov. You will notice that when you will see how he does it.”

“For I suggest you seek his advice. If you wish, I will arrange an appointment for you”. Sister Marie-Madeleine was only too happy to accept. Father Henry deemed it useful for her to bring a number of photographs of acquaintances, relatives, of fellow sisters and of her circle of friends. That could greatly facilitate the work of the sangoma. And such photos, Sister Marie-Madeleine could take care of that.

### *Bones and joints*

Sister Marie-Madeleine took off her shoes and entered the sangoma's hut. A small fire was burning on which fresh pine needles were gently smoldering and giving off a specific smell. The place was dark and cool. The earthen floor was covered with a thin reed mat. Her eyes had to get used to the darkness for a moment. Then she saw the sangoma sitting there. His black body radiated power. He greeted kindly and pulled out a large icon." I already know that," she thought, "it represents the Holy Trinity." Then he took a bag and shook its contents on the mat, next to the icon. Bones and joints of small animals fell out, along with some old coins and a few colored stones. Meanwhile, he hummed monotonously. That was apparently his prayer to the spirits. He was ready to begin.

I pulled out the pictures and handed them to him. He put them next to the icon. Then on the first picture he pointed to the first person with the index finger of the left hand, starting from the left. Then he took some of the objects he had placed on the mat, molded his palms into a bowl, shook everything and threw them on the mat. Alternately, he looked at the way these objects had fallen on the mat, and at the person he pointed to again. In a penetrating, lilting voice, he hummed some words that I did not understand. Finally, he put all the objects back together. Now it was the turn of the next person in the picture. He did the whole ritual over again. He did this with all the persons from the first photo.

Then he repeated this ritual for all on the second and on the third picture. Then he continued to stare ahead for a long time, closing his eyes and taking a deep breath. He perspired, as if a heavy burden weighed on him. Then he laid the three pictures side by side, looked at me penetratingly, waited a moment more, and with a confident movement of his hand he pointed to the picture of the sisters, Mother Superior. "No doubt" he said, "it's her. I already had a strong suspicion when you showed me the pictures. She can't have you and is bewitching you. She knew you were too critical and has put a curse on you, stealing your energy and disturbing your sleep". I see it happening, she is stepping out and disturbing your sleep. Her phantom appears like a crocodile".

I was perplexed. I was not at all familiar with such work. And that accuracy with which he found all that out amazed me. Fortunately, Father Henry had told me that it is not about the bones and joints, or anything else, per se. One might as well use a crystal ball, coffee grounds, maps, a pendulum or any infrastructure. These things are only a tool for concentration, they amplify what the unconscious and subconscious perceive, but what hardly, if at all, reaches our consciousness. It is an initial form of clairvoyance. An advanced clairvoyant no longer needs these aids at all.

But that was not all. "We will teach her that she must leave you alone," continued the sangoma. "We wish her no harm. She must only realize that she must stop bothering you. And the time will come when she will gradually begin to feel her weariness herself. Wait here," he commanded, "I will go to the hut next door where I have some work to do." After about an hour

he was back there. He was visibly tired. “And now just wait,” he said, “the work is done.” And there I sat, puzzled and full of questions about this unusual world I had entered. Yet I dared not ask them; I sensed a certain reticence in the sangoma. I thanked him at length for his services and asked him what was my fault. “Nothing” was the answer. “I am very happy that I was able to perform a return service for Father Henry, because without him and his protection I would not be alive for a long time.” What he meant by this I did not understand. But it was clear that Father Henry could, and did, a great deal more than I knew.

Moments later I was on my way to the convent, lost in thought about this curious turn of events. Should I now be happy about what I had found out, or should I have compassion for Mother Superior? When I arrived at the convent, everyone was already in bed. I too was in need of sleep, and after a short prayer I put myself to bed.

### *Anger or compassion*

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. “The next morning I did go to the refectory of the convent somewhat tense. There, there was general astonishment. Mother Superior was not there yet. That had never happened before. The other sisters wondered what was going on. One sister went to wake her up. A little later Mother Superior was there, but she still looked so tired. It looked like she had not slept all night and had been on self-examination. I thought about what the sangoma had said, and about “the work” he had done during that one hour in the other hut. Nor did I know what to feel for Mother Superior: anger, or compassion? But I couldn’t possibly tell the other sisters what was really going on.”

Mother Superior, courageous as ever, believed that her fatigue would gradually disappear once she returned to work with the children of her class. The other sisters promised her that they would all find a solution and that Mother Superior would be better off staying in bed. However, she did not want that. She definitely wanted to go to her class. After her day job she would, not now. As always, the children come first, she had said with great emphasis. The other sisters admired her for her great courage. Moments later, I stepped onto the playground, heading for my class.

“But suddenly I stood as if nailed to the ground, as if face to face with some demon. “That can’t be!” I stammered inwardly, “I’m dreaming. God, please don’t let this be true. Who put such a thing in his or her head? And why?” In utter amazement, Sister Marie-Madeleine stared at a craft that had apparently been put together on a small platform during her absence by the sisters and children there with wooden blocks. It represented a life-size crocodile.

### *An accident*

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. She wrote a letter to Father Henry.

Dear Father,

Another thank you for your help with the visit to the sangoma. Mother Superior slept very badly the night following my visit to the sangoma and looked particularly tired that morning. Nevertheless, she went to her classroom and gave her lessons there as scheduled.

I myself am now in a small hospital recovering from an accident at school. A girl from the highest class, in her own words, wanted to scare me, took a run and wanted to jump on my back. However, she landed on my left shoulder with a powerful blow. I felt and heard something snap and had severe pain in the left shoulder. An internal bruise formed. My shoulder then began to swell. The doctor diagnosed a fracture so surgery was necessary and I have to rest for several weeks.

The children of the school and the other sisters crafted a lifelike crocodile on the playground. I don't understand that and wonder how they came up with that thought.

Furthermore, Mother Superior felt that the sister who is now taking over my job is not sufficiently familiar with the reading method that relies on comparing words. Mother Superior has decided that the sister should just start all over again with the old reading method. I am sorry. I would have liked to provide the necessary explanation from my bed.

Other than that, I am doing quite well. I am well taken care of and after their day job I do get to visit some sisters daily. I look forward to talking with You. Surely I have a lot to say again ... and to ask.

For so much, I am extremely grateful to You.

Sister Marie-Madeleine

### *A visit*

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. "And yes, several days later the Father was at my bedside, with a bouquet of fragrant flowers. He inquired about medical progress and asked how I was feeling. Given the circumstances, quite well, I had replied. And after a little pause, the deeper conversations began."

"Dear Machteld," he began. It was the first time he had called me that and from him I could tolerate it quite well. It is the Flemish version of my name and it sounded so much more confidential. Still, he seemed very concerned. He continued. "What the sangoma informed you about Mother Superior confirmed what I had suspected for some time. My overwork - there are other people in need, with problems similar to yours - did not allow me to immediately concern

myself with what occurred at your school. I know that the sangoma is very capable and that he could protect you with his work at least temporarily.”

“I met him in the meantime, after your consultation that is, and he told me that the repercussions of ‘the work’ he had undertaken in that separate cabin had kept him in bed for three full days. It was that hard. Whoever wants to undo an injustice - apocalypticism is called such revealing of hidden evil - immediately receives a counter-reaction from the underworld. Those beings do not tolerate being opposed and losing their hold on anyone. If they do, an occult showdown takes place. And as in any battle, it is the strongest who wins. So it is good that whoever wants to fight them should check beforehand whether he or she will be able to handle the fight. You can, of course, prayerfully ask for the help of above. But such hard work is possible only if you live in an intimate friendship with God. And even then you can become quite ill from the backlash.”

“In short, Mother Superior is and remains in her deeper soul a very dangerous creature. I promised the sangoma that I was going to relieve him of your case and that I was going to take them over myself. I received your letter well and so went deeper into your difficulties. Easy it was not. All the next night I ‘wrestled’ with her picture, or rather, with the beings, the demons controlling her. Indeed, under the skin, that ‘faithful’ mother superior, is an all-out sucker, a real female vampire.”

“You may have already heard talk of reincarnation or reincarnation. I want to go into that subject with you in more detail later. Now just this: reincarnation for every good seer, for every psychic healer and for every magician is not just an assumption, it is simply a fact. They “see” of those they treat, that the cause of their present ailment, is rather easily located in a previous life. So feel free to assume from me that people have many lives. And now return to your problem with Mother Superior. “

“She engaged in intense cannibalism in a previous life, not only to devour the biological bodies of her victims, but above all, she targeted the particulate energy present in that blood. How she proceeded is too gruesome to recount here. So she was concerned with stealing the occult life force of a lot of people. Something the Bible calls a “vengeful sin,” a sin against the life force of the Holy Spirit. This is a sin that is not forgiven, even through the sacrament of confession, but must be expiated by the offender over many lifetimes. In the case of Mother Superior, however, after her death in that previous earthly existence, she still preserves, develops and strengthens that same ability. But, instead of taking in both coarse and fine flesh and blood of others, as she did the first time during that earthly life, she does it, henceforth, purely fine materially. One reaps what one sows.”

“To camouflage this, but I point out that she is no longer aware of this, on the one hand she persists in this stealing of energy. Yet on the other hand, such a person lives very distinguished, ethically mortified, in the service of some preferably high ideal. This can be, for example, a Nazi or Islamic ideal. Think e.g. of some suicide commandos. But it could just as easily be an

ecclesiastical or religious ideal. Disastrously, you, the other sisters, but also and especially the children, are stuck with such an ‘exemplary’ mother superior.”

“She is indeed telling the full truth when she claims that her teaching assignment is a true vocation. But a vocation inspired and guided by the underworld. For the sake of her erroneous behavior at the time, something she herself chose very consciously and willingly, she has attracted to herself a whole host of unsavory beings - the similia similibus - so that, in turn, she is constantly robbed of her energy by them. It has become a vicious circle. And so she herself always lives in energy deprivation and has to steal, compulsively, the energy of her fellow beings. And as long as something in her deeper soul does not substantially change, does not turn for the better, let’s say as long as she does not “repent,” there is nothing to be done about it. By her own choice, which, by the way, she continually affirms in her deeper soul, she is so attached to evil that the chance of breaking free from that grip is actually nil. And so, in order to meet her energy needs, she primarily targets children. These possess a lot of particulate energy, necessary to further their lives, but they find it much more difficult to protect themselves from stealing it.”

“Your sensitivity makes you feel it more strongly, that it particularly exhausts you, and you get a pretty high fever from it every time. Your body also wants to warn you of that danger that way. Eventually, without protection, it leads to your death.”

“But think of it this way: your sensitivity warns you to protect yourself from such murderous vampirism. Normally you then remove yourself from such people and seek other work elsewhere. But stay here, I will continue to protect you, and by going through all that, occultly speaking, you gradually become much stronger. By the way, as a nun and a teacher, it is not so natural to leave everything here and start a new life elsewhere. There are some objections to that as well. The other sisters, the children, the parents and all those who come near her do not sense this or do not sense it so intensely. Although they too are robbed of their fine material energy. This does mean that their health and happiness in life can be damaged either fairly quickly or with the passage of time. But finding the right connection between the cause and the effect is far from easy. Incidentally, in a Western culture, there is no legal recourse against this. In traditional cultures, for the sake of the survival of the tribe or clan, one will either kill such people or send them out of the community. But given the many dangers of a savage and wild nature, the latter amounts to a delayed death. A few do not survive in the wilderness.”

### *No higher level?*

Father Henry is still speaking. “But the most important thing is yet to come, and you are going to understand that very well. A lot of people have a relentless admiration for such ‘driven’ persons as Mother Superior. Their ‘commitment’ and their ‘zeal’ and their seemingly high ideals, or in the case of Mother Superior, also her striking modesty. All this makes a very big



impression on those who do not see through it. Just think of some of the other sisters, of the children, of the parents or simply of the many other acquaintances who speak very highly of her. Just as sustained hatred, steals subtle life energy from the person one hates, so people who are conspicuously eager to be admired likewise steal the energy and happiness of life from their unsuspecting admirers. As I said, it is a non-conscious act, although sometimes they themselves do sense something of their terrible soul-depth. For example, a lady once asked me if she was a witch, because whenever she wished someone, the wronged person experienced a great deal of adversity or illness. It even happened that the wronged person died shortly afterwards and in a remarkable way.”

“The Bible speaks of an ‘aluka’ or ‘leech’ in this context. For example, Psalm 12 (11): 9 does mention the unconscious soul-deep in man and says that some people are “like a vermin sucking out the blood of other people.” Psalm 53 (52):5, puts it much more sharply, “Do they not realize it, the wicked? They eat out my people. That very thing is “the bread” they “eat. For God they do not call upon God. But look, with dismay they will be smitten, without realizing the cause of it.”

“With the latter, the Bible seems to confirm that ‘sucking out’ and ‘eating out’ is caused by a lack of contact with God .. God’s life force must then be sought elsewhere. Indeed, the non-believing person sees no need to seek the required life force from God in prayer. His or her presuppositions do not allow him or her to make a connection between Christian prayer and the acquisition of life force. What such a person lacks in fine material energy, he or she seeks and finds, usually unconsciously, in sucking up the life force of a fellow human being. This makes a “leech,” seen from the Bible, quite substandard. And the latter also leads to the fact that his or her fate in the other world, after death that is, will be far from favorable. And that is tragic. Generally speaking, few people go to a higher plane after death. Occultly, many end up on their deathbed where they started at birth, possibly not even that. Then you have, as Nietzsche puts it, “the eternal return of all things. But you already experienced that in your experience of your brother’s death. Unless such people react against this in an appropriate way : they can ask, for example, in a regular prayer to the Trinity for more life force. This in turn presupposes a good contact with God. And that too requires time and reflection. Ultimately, the idea is that you have learned the “earthly lessons,” so to speak, and do not need to reincarnate. “

“Some also believe that one should pray for the soul salvation of people who steal the blood soul of their neighbor. But such holds many dangers. The evil here might turn out to be stronger than your good intentions. The Bible, 1 Jn 5:16 says of this that there is a sin that leads to death, and that any exhortation to pray for such creatures does not apply here, that it does not apply. Notice that the term “death” here does not refer directly to physical death, but to the fact that such a person lacks all contact with God. This is how we understand the Biblical expression, “that the dead, bury the dead. In the first case, it refers to people who are biologically alive, but alienated from God and Biblically, dead. In the second case, it refers to a person alienated from God who, moreover, has died. One could say that such a person is then dead twice.”

“Your comment to Mother Superior, regarding her conspicuous modesty, must have triggered something in her about that understatement. Hence her excessive anger toward you. She cannot show it openly, but she does it in the darkness, in the depths of the night. During “the hour of hell,” her anger exits and forms a fine animal, lusting after your life force. You see through her, and she also knows that you are critical of her policies. That is also why she demands unconditional obedience from you in particular. But anyone who demands such a thing of you does not bring you closer to God and all the saints, but rather to Satan and his demons. Even if one is then a monk.”

### *The coherence of everything that exists*

Father Henry continued. “And that brings us back to the so-called ‘harmony of opposites’ that we talked about earlier, that bizarre aggregation of both good and evil inherent in the gods of the underworld. And these can be very inspiring to a number of people. However, the influence of these gods extends much further, given the profound interconnectedness of everything that exists. One can argue that such gods are psychologically disturbed, for they are, and that they infect the world with their disorder. The mineral plant-animal and human world and the subtle world of spirits and gods, they all hang together and influence each other. In other words, as Christianity loses field, the power of this “harmony of opposites” grows. Or in Paul’s words, “the elements of the world” gain strength. It seems then that everything in our world, that is, not only the people, but also the nature that surrounds us, becomes less ordered, indeed more savage and wild.”

“The few who intuitively sense this ambiguity in such unsavory people, and even dare to suggest it to others very cautiously, reason it away afterwards and all too easily. Applied to Mother Superior one hears: “Oh well, that’s just the way she is, you know her. But look, she does so much good...”. And there is indeed no one who can deny that. But that is only one side of reality. In Afrikaans: it is only ‘die eartjies van die seekoei’. The other side, for you and for those who are sensitive, makes itself felt in all intensity. And that side you cannot possibly reason away. Moreover, those who share the mentality of these ‘leeches’ in one way or another, at least to a lesser degree, acquire a similar aura. This infects. This is all the more true if you also want to be molded by such a person and you look up to him or her with admiration.

Now think back to the wooden crocodile that the sisters and children had pieced together during your visit to the sangoma. You wondered how they had come up with that thought. Well, you could say that Mother Superior, given her position both in the convent and in the little school, and given her authoritarian attitude, demands obedience. She ultimately wants the last word in important things, even if she slyly disguises it with so-called democratic policies. She is, shall we say, “omnipresent” in the convent and the school. But so is her rather heavy and dark aura. It hangs, for those who can feel or see it, literally throughout the school and the convent. Both form one whole. Everything is bathed in one big dark aura. But that means that

the subtle thought form “crocodile” is also constantly present there. Thoughts are forces, as you experienced when you recited that text in the little church during my anniversary celebration. And if the thought form ‘crocodile’ is strong enough in the school and the monastery, there is someone who, driven from the subconscious, suddenly catches it, expresses it and says: “Let’s craft a wooden crocodile.”

And a majority agreed. For their subconscious had noticed and cherished this thought in the meantime. One was prepared. Again, a quantitative multiplication of a thought leads to a qualitative leap: the thought of the animal is apprehended, finely materially formed, articulated, affirmed and finally grossly materially executed. Conclusion: the wooden sculpture is mother superior once more. In a way, the sculpture makes Mother Superior present. It reinforces her presence once more. When children climb the wooden structure, sit on it and play around it, they are closer to her, and therefore more easily robbed of their energy.

After all this you may also understand why Mother Superior in her deeper soul does not really like order, cannot really like order. Not even from a method that stimulates mental ordering, like your comparative reading method. People like her simply sin against the rules they themselves impose on others. Something in their soul compels them to do so. The spirits that inspire them demand it. In a way, you can say that such people are latently possessed. They simply cannot act otherwise. And that possession colors their aura very dark, sometimes even toward the brown-black.”

Sister Marie-Madeleine, in her sickbed, had been listening almost breathlessly the entire time. Father Henry could explain so clearly those connections between apparently unconnected facts and events. Now it was also clear to her why before her “mind’s eye” Mother Superior’s office always colored inky black. Marie-Madeleine avoided that place as much as possible. If she did go there, she never lasted long. Even at meetings and discussions where she had no choice but to sit near Mother Superior, Marie-Madeleine felt her energy draining from her body. Almost always she then became quite unwell. She usually developed a high fever a few hours later, as high as 39.5°. She was then exhausted and unable to handle her normal clerical duties for several days. Most of the other sisters never took it seriously. They couldn’t help it, because they didn’t suspect what was really going on.

Father Henry took a minute-long break. Both of them drank something more. Even then they remained silent for quite some time. Indeed, a lot of time was also needed to process all this a bit. Sister Marie-Madeleine changed her position in her bed. She had been listening so intently that she had paid no attention to the pain in her shoulder. And now that she had lain in the same position for so long, that shoulder felt very stiff.

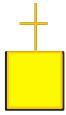
### *An adapted prayer*

Father Henry took several deep breaths. "Machteld, there's another topic I definitely need to bring up with you," he said. There was a certain concern in his gaze. "It's about the child who jumped on your shoulder. I've had to wait until now to answer that. But first, let's say an adapted prayer, because 'things' are evolving quickly and thoroughly.

Father Henry had written the prayer again on a sheet of paper and gave it to Sister Marie-Madeleine. "The basic text is Luke 18: 18-27 where it talks about the rich young man" he clarified. And both said the prayer together and demurely.

*I think of you Jesus, crucified but risen as Lord over living and dead.*

"In passing, but you already knew that, 'living' here means 'God friends' and 'dead' alienated from God," Fr. Henry further clarified.



*Father, Son, Holy Spirit, sometimes we have the fearful question as an impression the crowd around Jesus' statement, "Who then can be saved?" The rich young man said he had already fulfilled the commandments. "Then you are left with one thing," Jesus continued, "sell all you have and distribute it to the poor, then come back and follow me." When the man heard this he became deeply grieved and went away.*

*Jesus said that for the rich the kingdom of heaven was very difficult to access. "Just as a camel can get through the eye of a needle."*

*Answering the frightening question of the crowd, you, Jesus said, "What is impossible with men is possible thanks to God." The same problems. we submit to you in this sense.*

And Father Henry continued, "If one looks through the rich young man in his sex after the above prayer, one 'sees' that in a previous life he ritually killed another human being as a Satan follower in order to have earthly happiness henceforth. As may be known, it is mainly the sexual organs that are carriers of fine material life force. After all, they transmit that so mysterious life. You can also see that the idea of reincarnation reappears here. And that clarifies a lot. We'll come back to it in a moment. You know that Jesus accuses the Pharisees, most of them at least, of being whitewashed tombs, with a conscious exterior and a thoroughly different unconscious and subconscious interior. This inside is unconsciously repressed, and at times even consciously suppressed. Yet it strikes at the basic personality of the rich young man. He, like Mother Superior, suffers from a prideful and vain form of 'perfection,' something that is a typical Pharisaic concern."

“Well, repeat in your mind the prayer, or at least the last part: ‘Jesus, you have said: what is impossible with men, it is with God.’ To be sure, unite with Jesus who looks right through external behavior and “see” what shows up when that girl surprises you and jumps on your shoulder. You notice a kind of prey animal, lion-like. And within ourselves we have the wry impression that our life force is taken away from us, that we are ‘empty’. She is a “dead” in the above sense. She has a great lack of fine material life energy, just like the rich young man. She does try to hide that emptiness in her external behavior, but confronted with you, her behavior suddenly, instead of being conscious, becomes un- and subconscious, and she does you great harm, especially in your aura. She drains you completely. Fortunately you possess the prayers, and make time for this daily, if not from then on your life’s happiness would be cracked in her favor. For she drained you by that predatory leap and in such a way that attention goes to the shoulder fracture, while the hidden or ‘occult’ side - the word is aptly correct - is obscured.”

“As for the use of the prayer I delivered to you, just this: it exposes the satanic core of someone insofar as it would harm you. True, immediately after the prayer, like a flash of lightning, this core breaks down in many directions, but otherwise that becomes that child’s business and you need not concern yourself further with it. Unless something would intrude that would cause you ‘trouble.’ You understand that.”

The Padre took another long pause. Sister Marie-Madeleine continued to look at him silently. It seemed to her that religion was gradually beginning to take on a very different and deeper meaning for her. Nay, such things she had never heard told in her training. It was unusually fascinating, but it still took some getting used to.

Father Henry continued. “I think it is best to give our patient some rest now. You know, I will stop there for today, but if you wish we will continue the conversation next time. I will inform Mother Superior at that time.” Yes, Marie-Madeleine wanted that. And so she thanked the Father for his visit and all the explanations. She changed her position again and before the Father was even out the door, she had covered herself up, ready for a refreshing rest. He greeted her with a smile and gently closed the door of the room.”

### ***The weeks go by.***

Sister Marie-Madeleine recounts. “I have since returned to the convent. Mother Superior is doing her work in the highest class, but something in her has changed. She is more subdued than before, and also gives the impression of being tired more quickly. I too have cautiously started to work in my little class and am doing my job as best I can. My left shoulder is still in a sling though, and with careless movements I still feel a stabbing pain. Fortunately, I do notice that it is gradually improving. Father Henry is extremely busy elsewhere, I am told, but this afternoon we were both able to make time, and we can continue our previous conversation in the garden of the monastery. “

And early in the afternoon, Father Henry was already at the convent. Politely, he inquired of Mother Superior about her state of health. Then he told her that Sister Marie-Madeleine had asked him if she could confess to him. And that, of course, was a private matter, not requiring Mother Superior's presence at all. A little later, the Father and Sister Marie-Madeleine had taken seats in the garden. Mother Superior had another sister bring a carafe of water and two glasses. Because yes, under the tropical sun, even in the shade, that is really not a luxury.

### *So much anger*

Father Henry suggested starting with a prayer. After all, these were heavy things he wanted to bring up again. As usual, he had written the prayer on a sheet of paper and gave it to Marie-Madeleine. They read together.

*Holy Virgin Mary, never before did we hear that someone who appealed to Your intervention was not heard. Once again we appeal to You. Immediately we do so also to Mary Magdalene, who, according to the Gospel of John (19:25), stood beside You under Jesus' cross. That same Gospel teaches us (20:16) that after Jesus was risen, she was the first to recognize Him as the risen Lord. To both of You we now appeal. Guide us so that we carry out the will of the Heavenly Father, only that will and wholly that will. In so doing, be entitled to both of our heartfelt gratitude.*

Then Father Henry started talking about her accident and the child who had jumped on her shoulder. "There is the usual explanation, the girl wanted to scare you," he began in a hushed tone. "One might interpret that as proof of affection, she likes you. But that is precisely the deception. Something in her soul depths 'knows' that she has no God contact and needs to seek her fine material energy elsewhere. For example, walking in nature provides energy, or still, listening to quiet music, eating healthy food, pursuing a harmonious life, being with friends, and, of course, regular prayer. But the latter requires a good God contact. If you don't have that at all, nor desire it at all, praying is obviously pointless. As mentioned, that girl does not have that and is Biblically a dead person. However, she knows that you do have a contact with God, through your regular prayer. Therefore, your aura, your particulate aura, is much lighter than hers. And she just wants to steal that subtle energy from you. That is much easier than doing anything for it yourself. That pretty much sums up our previous conversation."

"The question now arises as to how a child can already carry so much anger within him. Let's listen to what Father Trilles has to say about that. He was a missionary in West Africa from 1892, where, among other things, he stayed with the jungle pygmies as the first white man. There he got to know the Fang, a people from Gabon, including the "ngil," the black-magician. This, as a 'sorcier,' sorcerer or black-magician, is clearly distinguished from the

‘féticheur,’ the ‘sacred’ man, literally the ‘fetish man,’ who here is a white-magician and is deeply honored by the people, while the ngil evokes deep contempt.”

“In his fascinating work *Chez les Fang*<sup>18</sup> he gives an account of the inauguration of such ‘ngil.’ Every ngil has the right and duty to choose and form his successor. He takes a ten-year-old boy and treats him as his adopted son. From then on he forms his apprentice magician. He teaches him the first secrets, and, among other things, teaches him to speak in the ngil’s grave voice. The child accompanies the magician on all his journeys and serves him as a noble boy. He goes before the magician, through mountain and valley, in village or jungle, ringing the bell. Such children constantly have bad examples before their eyes, live in the midst of the most hideous moral depravity, and in a short time are depraved to the marrow.”

“For they have ‘seen everything’ and know themselves at home in all the abysses into which human perversion descends. They are prepared for all crimes. Often such children ended up at the Catholic mission. Drawn along by a companion, enticed by the magic of the unknown. They stayed there - sometimes until baptism - deceiving their superiors with a hypocrisy active from the depths of their souls. Always they have left the mission even worse than they arrived there.”

Trilles concludes, “La formation chrétienne n’a sur eux aucune emprise,” “Christian formation has no influence on them at all.” Which indicates that ngil formation penetrates much deeper into the soul, into the unconscious and subconscious layers, than Christian formation does, for example. Christianity as a higher religion, here clearly touches its limits, set to it by the lower religion. For Fr. Trilles the story of this initiation shows how deep in the primordial layer of so many people - here by name Christians - paganism is wall-to-wall. It is as if his proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the sacraments to the converts just go over it without effect, almost like water over a duck. So tough seems in man that pagan primal layer. As Freud clearly recognized, the unconscious and subconscious wanting and acting is much stronger than its conscious form. Well, when such a child reincarnates, it retains, and works out, that sunken anger. And that already explains much of the behavior of the girl who jumped on your shoulder. But so that assumes that reincarnation is a fact. Go a little deeper into that theme.”

### *Is he Elias?*

The Father took a deep breath and continued. “To a lot of people, the belief in reincarnation or reincarnation may seem absurd. Yet it is commonplace in a great many cultures and occult movements. The Bible mentions them indirectly, including in John 9:6 where the healing of the blind man is discussed. The Jews ask Christ: “Rabbi, who has sinned? Him or his parents? So that he was born blind?” If this text is representative of the mentality of the time, it shows that the Jews at least believed in an existence that precedes the present life, and, moreover, can have repercussions in the present one. Jesus replied that the man was

born blind so that the works of God would be revealed in him. Followers of the doctrine of reincarnation conclude from this evasive answer of Jesus that he does not really reject the reincarnation doctrine. He had ample opportunity to do so. Possibly He did not want to bring up the topic publicly. “

“Also with regard to John the Baptist the Jews wonder if he is Elias is. Reading John, 1:19, “The Jews had sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to John the Baptist, asking, “Who are you?” Bluntly he came out in front of them: “I am not the Messiah.” “Who then? Are you Elias?” they asked. “Neither am I,” he replied. In other words, the Jews ask him if he is a rebirth of a prophet who died long ago.”

In Mark 6:14 we read: King Herod heard about Jesus, for His name had become known, and they said, “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. Therefore those powers are at work in Him.” But others said, “It is Elias“, and still others, “It is a prophet like other prophets.” When Herod heard this, he said, “This John, whom I have had beheaded, has been raised from the dead.”

And Mat 16:14 records that Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do men say that the Son of Man is?” whereupon they said, “Some say, John the Baptist; others, Elias; still others, Jeremias or one of the prophets.” But these too had already passed away.

Again the Father paused for a moment and looked at Sister Marie-Madeleine questioningly, as if to satisfy himself that she understood. She sensed the reason for the pause and nodded affirmatively. The Father continued.

“You can deny reincarnation because it cannot be rigorously proven scientifically. But can you then conclude from that that it does not exist? Or should you then rather say that science cannot pronounce on it. If science relies on the data of the ordinary senses, then it can only make meaningful statements about sense-perceptible data. But then its field is not all of reality, but only that part which can be sensually experienced in some way. About the other part it can make no statements.”

“Those who limit reality to the sense-perceivable simply do not find anything that exceeds this sense-perceivable. For example, a child may be convinced that his or her parents love him or her, and that they love each other. But how to really prove such a thing? Likewise, you can reason away the miracles of Jesus, or his descent into hell, his resurrection, his ascension, the power of prayer and all clairvoyance and magic.... But then nothing remains of the dynamism that is in every true religion. You are then left with only an empty shell, with possibly some psychological, sociological and folkloric elements.”



### *And the mission?*

Still speaking is Father Henry. “J. Sterley,<sup>19</sup> puts it this way, “Our presuppositions surround us like a shield behind which we perceive only what we can explain with our ‘vernunft,’ with our modern, Western reason.” Sterley spent five years investigating a section of New Guinea for plants as well as witchcraft. His conclusion: “Meanwhile I know that ‘our reality’ is a limited area and that we have no awareness of what happens outside our limitations.” This statement, by the way, typifies his entire book. He laments that the Catholic missionaries and Lutheran missionaries in the Simbu-valley do not give credence to these magical practices, that they protect the murderers and refuse to assist the victims. Reason: after all, witchcraft does not exist, it is “superstition. A kind of nostalgia hangs over the whole book.”

“A similar complaint is heard from Richard Katz<sup>20</sup>. He says that the missionaries among the Kung, a tribe in Indonesia, are making persistent efforts to eradicate the superstition and magical practices of the Kung: the Kung are forest people, savages, who must be civilized. Once again, unknown religious behavior here is considered totally un-Christian and pagan and therefore worthless. The powers inherent in the spiritual approach to the Kung are completely ignored.”

“Father Placied Temples also writes along these lines<sup>21</sup>. Temples spent thirteen years in the Belgian Congo as a missionary. He notes : “All of us, missionaries, judges, rulers, all those who are, or should be, leaders of the Bantu, we had not penetrated the ‘soul’ of the black, at least not as far as we would have liked. Not even the specialists. Now let this be a regretful observation or a contrite admission of guilt. The fact is certain that we did not understand the Bantu worldview and were therefore unable to present to the blacks digestible soul food or an intelligible spiritual synthesis. Of all the peculiar customs, of which we understand neither sense nor reason, the Bantu say that they exist to obtain life force.”

“A very different sound is heard from Pope Pius XI. He founded the ethnographic and ethnological museum in Rome in 1922. He knew religious studies and also instructed seminaries to teach them and to respect other religions and their customs. “They are human documents, which should not be allowed to decay,” he stated. “

“When the missionaries came into those not yet Christianized regions, what happened? They eliminated that pagan religion as much as possible, but they did not replace the problem solutions of those pagan shrines and of that magic. The result is that those peoples have accepted Christianity as a very distinguished, a very high-minded religion, but for their practical problems they continue to build on that old tradition from before their Christianization. If your child is sick, if you have cancer, if your husband doesn’t find work, if your cattle die, if your crops fail, that’s not what the church is for. And that is the power of those religions, they are much closer to the practical problems of those people. “

“Hence that is so particularly tough and the clergy after hundreds of years still can’t get that out. Those non-Biblical religions do have a grip on that. And that’s also the power of New

Age<sup>22</sup>, which is located exactly in that domain. The church could combat that by being active in that field itself. To the extent that rationalism gains ground, and church catechesis loses its focus on the paranormal and dynamism, to that same extent you see New Age rising.”

“When our psychologists and psychiatrists want to treat non-Europeans, they feel that their psychology and psychiatry hardly works anymore. Those other cultures prefer to go to their sangomas, their fetishists, their marabouts, medicine men and white wizards... These are all people who can sense the subtle energies and use them healingly. In the West, with some exaggeration, people easily give pills and injections as solutions to problems. With these one may solve biological problems - if one solves them - but if the difficulty is in the deeper, subtle soul, nothing is done about it. The mainly intellectual training of the ordinary cleric, for example, contrasts sharply with the training of the healers and healeresses of those other cultures, where psychic gifts are required or developed. “

Father Henry took a longer break. He was in need of another drink. And Sister Madeleine could also use one.

### *A Witches' Sabbath*

After drinking a few fresh sips, he continued. “Machteld, you told me that you had read Father Trilles’ story about Ngema, the sorcerer. He wanted to step out and travel to some sort of witches’ Sabbath. Remember his answer when Trilles asked to whom he would travel: ‘Well, the master I say anyway, the one who can.’

“You may have heard of the Spanish painter Francisco Goya. Toward the end of his life, he became very depressed. The unusual style of his later paintings made people speak of Goya’s ‘black paintings.’ These are a number of works, painted in dark colors, depicting grim themes. For example, one of his paintings from 1797 is titled, “The Witches’ Sabbath. This work depicts the devil as a goat on his throne, amid a group of witches offering him his food: young children, because of their life force.”

“More than one Trinitarian seer will tell you - anonymously and silently - that Ngema exits to there, to that underworld. Afterwards, once awakened again he says to Trilles, “There were many of us and we had a good time.” You can imagine what a black magician, who has more than one murder on his conscience, means when he says he had a good time.”

“Well, a number of people tell similar stories about their night dreams, however, without realizing the scope of what they are saying. In their sleep they step out and are drawn with their fine material body into that hell sphere. When they wake up again they usually know nothing about it or have only a vague memory of an evil dream which they do not take too seriously. Thus already during their lifetime they visit the place where they will stay for a longer or shorter time after death. Only the bondage of their particulate body to their biological, physical body

during their life on earth prevents this during the day. But once deceased, once they are detached from their physical body, they automatically go to that place to which they have already been attracted - subtly - during their lifetime. Goya, in his imagination - not his imagination - must have seen such scenes, otherwise he could not have painted them in such detail. Continuing the thread of night dreams. The question arises as to why it is that some people are drawn to such a hellscape. That, too, is not always clear.”

“In Homer’s *Odyssey*<sup>23</sup>, we also find a hellish journey described. After the preparatory work, Odysseus enters the underworld in search of the shadow of the seer Teiresias. However, for the latter to see true things, he needs life force. Odysseus thereupon sacrifices a lamb. Whereupon Teiresias asks if he may drink of its blood. What is meant, of course, is not the biological blood, but the particulate power that emanates from it. This is granted to him, allowing him to communicate “true things” to Odysseus. Teiresias can only then answer Odysseus’ question. Teiresias confirms to Odysseus that his wife, Penelope, has remained faithful to him throughout his years of wandering at sea. Something that will later prove to be true. From all this, it should be clear that Odysseus was mantically gifted. In that time and cultural context, that was a requirement for a king. It allowed him to better protect his people from the many dangers that threatened them.”

“Also Dante Alighieri, (1265/1321) the great Italian poet describes in his *Divina commedia*<sup>24</sup> ‘ his ‘divine comedy’ (1307/1321) after an exit, “in a hundred songs” his visit to the underworld, afterwards to a mountain of purification and finally to a kind of paradise.”

### ***Jesus’ descent into hell***

“And, of course, we do not forget the impressive exit of Jesus himself, into the underworld, where he delivered people ‘of good will’ from that satanic grip in which they had been trapped since the Fall.”

“Such an out-of-body or ‘descent into hell’ emphasizes the fact that Jesus, or the seer or visionary with his or her ‘spirit’ by means of a minimal out-of-body experience, literally, descends below the ground and this into the sphere of the spirits to be summoned or contacted. That out-of-body experience includes both the thought, the imagination and the fine material body of the one who is out-of-body. The Bible speaks of the “sheol,” a Hebrew term referring to the depths of the earth. Therein the souls of the dead descend and lead a poor and energyless shadowy existence. In that state they are like zombies.”

“This ‘literally descending under the ground’ implies, for example, that a seer indeed sees such an exited body ‘sinking’ into the earth. But Jesus’ redemption after His death on the cross, His descent into hell, went much further. He descended into the realm of the dead with His fine body, but it was united with His divine person. Scripture calls this place “hell,” the “Sheol” or “Hades. Jesus went there as Savior to proclaim His glad tidings to the dead. He did not go to

“hell” to free the damned, nor did He go to break down the hell of damnation. He went to literally free the righteous who resided there from the satanic grip in which they had been since the Fall, and - curiously - there, in that sheol, were also, among others, the great prophets of the Old Testament.”

“The Bible, 1 Samuel 28: 3/25 records the history of the witch of Endor. King Saul had driven the necromancers and soothsayers out of the land. However, when he wanted to go to war against the more powerful army of the Philistines, terror struck him. He wanted, incognito, against his own ordinance, to consult a fortune teller himself to know what his chances of victory were. So he requested the “witch” to summon the prophet Samuel, who had already died. The woman initially refused to do so because the king had forbidden it. King Saul said she had nothing to fear. So she did as he asked. Then, however, she discovered Saul’s true nature and screamed, “but you are Saul himself.” The king insisted. Then the woman said, “I see an ‘elohim’ rising from the earth, he is cloaked in a cloak.” This is a characteristic of a divine person, as Genesis 3:5 and Psalm 8:6 mention. At that, Saul knew it was the prophet Samuel who had died. The Bible goes on to mention that Saul indeed loses the battle and perishes along with his sons.”

“Notice that the death summoner belongs to a mantically particularly gifted type. She ‘sees through’ the true identity of the king and is even able to subject a deceased prophet to her summoning power. She is an “elohim,” a being of great spirit power. Where Samuel ascends from the underworld, Jesus will descend into it after his death. It is an ancient experience that the ghosts of the dead, with sufficient “spirit,” or life force, can communicate truth and foretell the future. And this in unity with Yahweh or also even without Him. But summoning phantoms also means disturbing their tranquility. This practice is already strongly discouraged in the Old Testament. This Bible text predates Jesus’ birth, and thus also his descent into hell. We note that back then, even a prophet was in the grip of the underworld. Jesus’ descent and salvation must therefore have been a turning point, an impressive paranormal and one-time cosmic event.”

Sister Marie-Madeleine had listened to Father Henry’s words with full attention. She had never heard it explained that way before. She had only an all too vague idea of Jesus’ salvation, perhaps like most people, she believed. Still, it took some time to process it all again. So a break and a glass of water was more than welcome.

### *The Night’s Dream*

But apparently Father Henry wasn’t done talking yet. He seemed to want to add very important things. With some hesitation, he began.

“Machteld, perhaps you have heard of Plato, the most important of the Ancient Greek thinkers. His name has already come up in comparative reading, and in his theory of ideas.

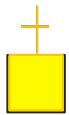
Well, he says that a lot of people in full day still live in the night dream. Which means that they are inspired by the underworld not only in their night dreams, but also during the day. Well, with my experience I can confirm what Plato says about this. I also see that. Mother Superior, some sisters of the convent here, and otherwise a lot of people, they live almost constantly, that is, both during the day and at night, inspired from the night dream.”

“Most people do not realize that they are so victimized by heavy illusions. But sometimes they allow themselves to be caught by e.g. overly spontaneous expressions. Or they catch themselves, at least if they think about it afterwards. But actually that is particularly tragic. Many reincarnate and continue to reincarnate, again and again, but, as I said, their lives often end on the same level as they began.”

Father Henry was silent. It was as if he needed to let the full weight of what he had just said sink in, and wanted it to sink in with Marie-Madeleine. But apparently also, and again, with himself. It seemed as if all the previous conversations with Marie-Madeleine had been just one long preparation for these latest revelations. At last he had been able to put these so important thoughts into words.

Dear Machteld, may I give you one last prayer? he asked. She nodded. He handed her a text he had written on a sheet of paper. Both read together :

*Luke 17:26.-"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the son of man: they ate and drank, they married until the day that the flood came and destroyed all, while Noah entered the ark. °*



*Jesus, you clearly foresee that, except for some, the people at the time of your return at the end of time will live as thoughtlessly as they did at the time of Noë, - not realizing that you are returning. - Please open our eyes so that we too will not be surprised. Have thanks for that great mercy.*

Sister Marie-Madeleine realized only too well that the full scope of all that Father Henry had told her was not for everyone. If you do want to communicate it to some, it requires a scanning in advance, very carefully and step by step, to verify that your listeners have understood all the links of your story. And especially, whether they appreciate the importance of Father Henry’s last step. Something that is actually highly rare. It should be able to lead to deeper insights, certainly not confusion.

Not that everyone would simply believe everything the Father brings up, that takes time, a lot of time, and even more reflection. But that one can accept it as a serious testimony, and this from a fellow human being who says not only to take into account “die eartjies van die seekoei,” but that one tries to have an eye for the whole animal, that one wants to contemplate that information in oneself and for oneself, in all silence and wisdom, far from all sensation. And that is so impressive anyway.

By now, the sun had moved farther into the horizon. The visit was drawing to a close. Sister Marie-Madeleine thanked Father Henry at length. The farewell was cordial. How happy she was with all those explanations. She sensed that she would need a great deal of time to think it all through. Religion, especially in this paranormal field, seemed much more complicated to her than she had ever thought possible.

*The years went by.*

Marie-Madeleine had always kept her diary meticulously. Each time, she had carefully jotted down the guiding thoughts of the conversations she had with Father Henry. So much more she could entrust to her diary, for so much more had occurred in the little school. Her mind was sharpened for what occurred again and again. She saw through it. But they were not nice things. In fact, they kept on being variations on the same theme: stealing the energy of the other sisters and especially of the children. And also the other sisters remained as blinded to this. Worse, some of them rejoiced that they had such an exemplary mother superior. They interpreted the rather tragic events as a benefit and a blessing. Surely these were not nice things to keep in a diary, Marie-Madeleine mused.

She watched with sorrow as some of her fellow sisters, without realizing it, devised occasions to make this stealing of the children's energy, even easier for Mother Superior. And whenever Fr. Henry asked with growing concern, Marie-Madeleine would tell in great detail how life in the little school and in the convent continued. Thus Mother Superior was still celebrated at length on one anniversary of her profession, another time on an anniversary as headmistress, and finally on the celebration of her farewell in that position.

Marie-Madeleine remembered Father Henry's sad comment at this last event all too well : "Mother Superior is a 'porte-poisse' or mischief-maker who particularly sucks the children dry. Typical of the damned who manage to reincarnate to make their suffering more bearable. Fortunately, whenever you tried to undo that energy belief with the children and the other sisters, you identified yourself with God the Father. If not, you would have had severe, very severe consequences to endure".

Also, Marie-Madeleine always carried with her some prayer that Father Henry delivered to her, as protection. He repeatedly urged: "Machteld, carry it on you, preferably as much as possible, because the aura of Mother Superior, even if she is resigned, remains dangerous. The sudden surges of fever you so often experience in her presence are the signs of it."

"And as for some of the other Sisters," Father Henry continued, "all their lives they do not see what there is to see, they do not hear what there is to hear, they do not feel what there is to feel, they think apart from reality, and they are victims of heavy illusions. But to make them understand this is an almost impossible task. And actually, most of them are quite sweet and pleasant people."

“Herein lies a true tragedy, because, as already mentioned, not only is part of their life force stolen, with all the difficulties inherent in this, but also their transition, just after death, is thereby severely complicated. However, most people are hardly or not at all familiar with post-mortem situations, nor do they have any interest in them.”

“If you could still draw their attention to their somewhat fraught condition, you are actually doing them a great service. You are then alerting them to a problem that they would otherwise face anyway in their transition, but totally unprepared. Now they can prepare for it a lot better. And if they do, they will also shorten their stay in purgatory. However, keep in mind that they will not accept such a warning at all. You will disturb their peace of mind and they might become very angry with you. “

“And from their point of view this is quite understandable. Their perhaps overly materialistic conceptions of life do not allow them to assume the bitter seriousness involved in religion. For them, the conception of religion as an experienceable reality is like a thunderclap. In this respect, they are just like children of their rather superficial zeitgeist, who may see religious life as a pastime for somewhat dreamy and overly devout, possibly life-altering, or worse, somewhat naive people. Moreover, depending on the nature of their deeper soul, their reaction could be proportionate. Then, in prayer, it would be best but to prepare yourself very well for a solid occult backlash.” Thus concluded Fr. Henry.

Some years later, shortly before his death, Father Henry confided to her, “Dear Machteld, if I had not protected you all these years, you would have died several times.” “And I know all too well what he means by this” she thought.

Marie-Madeleine had so much to think about anyway. She wondered what she would do with all that information. She could keep all those unique insights Father Henry had imparted to her to herself. But then, she felt, a number of other sisters would never get to know that much-needed information, and a lot of fascinating things might be lost forever. You certainly don’t meet people like him every day. Marie-Madeleine felt so powerless in all this anyway. “Time will tell,” she concluded and closed her diary.

### ***Final word***

Time passed. Decades later, on a well-defined and very special day, she took it in her hands again. “Today I must definitely close the story,” she thought. She leafed through it. The diary was almost full. Only the last two pages were empty. So many of her experiences with Father Henry came back to her mind. What an eventful time that was, she remembered. On those last pages she titled: “Epilogue. And she wrote.

“Many years ago, as a child, I was on vacation by the sea. My parents had rented a cottage there. One fine day, a few houses away, there was suddenly a lot of commotion. Some time

before, a man had killed his wife there, and now the police proceeded to reconstitute it.”

“It was a beautiful summer day with the sun high in the sky, and yet, it seemed to me that far above that steel-blue sky, as far as I could even see, everything was frighteningly dark. I wondered anxiously how it could be that that sunny world still remained shrouded in darkness. I didn’t understand anything at the time. Only decades later did it become clear to me. The holistic view of reality states that the equal, attracts the equal, the known “*Similia similibus*,” so here the murder, the “evil. And that in the whole of the cosmos attracts a lot of evil.”

And now, today, is that well-defined and very special day on which I want to close my diary. Mother Superior is being honored. It is her honor, in front of the whole village community, parents, sisters, children and many friends, to receive a high distinction from the local government. And this for her years of dedication and her so many merits, both for her convent and for her school.

And today too is a beautiful summer day with the sun high in the sky. Yet, just as I saw it in my long-forgotten childhood, I also see now that, in infinity, far above that steel-blue sky of our little village, everything is turning ... inky black again.

Sister Marie-Madeleine mused for a while longer. She accepted evil as something to be suffered in this world, as a sacrifice, but she knew that with the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, this evil would eventually lose all its power. She thought of John’s Gospel, 16:11 and 16:33, where Jesus says that Satan, the prince of this world, was finally overcome and judged.

Her last meeting with Father Henry, shortly before his imminent death, came back to her mind. At parting, he then looked from the doorway of his small home, across the undulating land of Esawtini, at the horizon and the late evening red, was silent for a moment, then turned his gaze to Marie-Madeleine and said in his characteristic smile and quiet voice, “Dear Machteld, the sun is setting beautifully, and it is certain that we will see each other again.”

“For so many years you have been the sun in my life,” she reflected, “and it is so good to know that it never sets.” Although she could no longer meet him here, yet she did not feel orphaned at all. So often she experienced his presence deep within her. Yes, he did appear to her more often in her dreams. She was so infinitely grateful for all that he had been for her, and for what he would always remain : an exceptional witness and a safe signpost to that high, luminous world.

She thought of Letter of the Corinthians; of the love that never perishes, that endures all things, believes all things and hopes all things. Then again the words of the Sermon on the Mount came to her mind. Marie-Madeleine rejoiced at Heavenly Father’s concern for every person, for every sparrow and for all that lives. She felt a childlike joy at the words of St. Francis’ sun song and a deep joy for God’s love that pardons. Finally, she recalled what Soloviev wrote about the heart of loving man, moved to tears with all-encompassing tenderness at the suffering of all creation.



Then she closed her diary and put it in the bookcase. She felt, indeed she was quite sure, that someday someone would find it here and read it. Later then, when both she and Mother Superior would no longer be in this world. Then, she thought, for those who want to ponder it in all silence and wisdom, in themselves and for themselves and far from all sensation, it will certainly become a unique and penetrating testimony from faraway Swaziland.

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<sup>18</sup> Trilles P., Chez les Fang (Quinze années de séjour au Congo français), DDB, Lille, 1912, 190-196.

<sup>19</sup> Sterley J., Kumo, Hexer und hexen in Neu - Guinea, Munich, 1987, 183.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Katz, Num, heilen in ecstasy, Ansata-verlag, Schweiz, 1985 p. 268.

<sup>21</sup> Temples P., Bantu - philosophy, De Sikkel, Antwerp, 1946, 10.

<sup>22</sup> See on this website the course 1.4.1 and 10.4.2. : Introduction to new Age

<sup>23</sup> Aafjes B., Homer's' Odyssey, Amsterdam, Meulenhof, 1983, 113.

<sup>24</sup> Dante A., Divina commedia, see <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8800>