

## **Chapter 2: The sacred and what follows from it (58 p.).**

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## ***Chapter 2: The sacred and what follows from it***

### ***2.1. The sacred as the foundation of all existence***

There is not much to be said about the paranormal sanctity of a religion that sees itself primarily as rationalistic and nominalistic. The 'holy' hardly possesses any effective power there. It is completely different in a dynamically conceived religion. The previous chapter gave a number of samples in which

the voice of Yahweh was heard or in which a privileged witness was told a reality in striking dream images. For the religious man, the sacred, as the foundation of the world and of life, reveals itself in apocalyptic, in the experience of miraculous facts.

In order to do justice to this holiness, an empathic attitude is needed. Those who close themselves a priori off from these experiences or consider them to be impossible, do not do justice to what really 'exists'. When a voice is heard or when a strange dream is imposed, it is not nothing. In logic, the basic axiom is: "what is, is". This second 'is' is not a superfluous repetition, but emphasizes that one agrees with what exists. Among other things, the liar sins against this axiom. Of what 'is' he says that it 'is not', or of what 'is not' he says that it 'is'. Even he or she who reduces what "really shows itself", even if in a paranormal way, to "nothing", does not do justice to what really "is" and is therefore not honest. If one wants to grasp the religious man, one has to empathize with his situation, one has to walk a little in his shoes and share his preconceptions, only to arrive at a valued judgment afterwards. A judgement that has already been formed beforehand, without wanting to know the objective facts, can only be a prejudice. We will reflect on this in a moment (2.2.).

This deeper examination of possible axioms other than our own, makes us much more aware of our starting points. We then compare them with those of our fellow human beings, refine them if necessary, and see the wealth, possibly the poverty, of it. Let's also take a look at these 'assumptions' (2.3.).

Yahweh let himself be known through dreams, through His voice and His "inner word". With Moses, however, He spoke "face to face". This requires more than just the ability to perceive on the part of man. It brings us to a form of a paranormal experience, of 'mantic'. We wonder whether, in addition to the so many abuses that exist with regard to clairvoyance, there is also room for its proper use (2.4.).

The Bible tells us that God allows an uninterrupted series of inspirations to pass through the man at heart, through the conscious and unconscious part of our deeper personality, of our soul. These are referred to as the "inner word". They are like " a well of water springing up to eternal life" (*John 4:13/14*). Let us deal with these unconscious and subconscious layers in man (2.5.).

If doing justice to this holiness leads to wisdom, then a task follows: namely to pay attention to that holiness, and to strive for wisdom. This makes it clear that life should not be lived 'aimlessly' and 'without obligation', but that every human being has a whole evolution to go through. Here too we continue to think about this (2.6.).

And with this the 'the common thread' of our next chapter is finished. In the following we give some introductory remarks regarding an empathetic attitude, our presuppositions, clairvoyance, the unconscious and subconscious and finally we conclude with a number of reflections on our evolution.

## **2.2. An empathetic attitude**

### ***Hunter's axiomatic***

When you go hunting, you start from the premise that there is game at the place where you go hunting. The focus of his attention, his 'intentionality' as it is called, is such that he pays attention to 'all that is wild'. He owes his superiority over the non-hunter to this axiom. Like a detective, he sees much more quickly than the non-hunter, which signs in nature are related to or refer to animals. Because he assumes that there is wildlife, it is self-evident for him that he has to keep the silence so as not to chase away the animals. For example, he will have to go against the wind in order not to betray himself by his scent. If necessary, he will only be able to hunt certain species when darkness falls. If he doesn't, he will hardly find any wild. If the hunter wants to be successful, he will have to become a bit of a hunter. However, if you start from the premise that there is no game, you don't feel the need to share the axioms of the hunter, and you run the risk of not finding any wild at all. Anyone who copies the hunter and still doesn't find any wild, will of course have to adjust their axioms, in accordance with reality. Then, not before, he can say that you shouldn't hunt here, because there is little or no hunting to be done.

The famous polar explorer, scientist and diplomat Fridtjof Nansen (1861/1930), *Onder de Eskimo's*<sup>1</sup>, (Among the Eskimos), explains how Boas, an Eskimo, manages to catch a walrus after hours. These animals do not see very well, but are familiar with the behavior of their fellow species. Walrus lie resting on an ice floe for a while, after which they check again and again to see if they are not threatened. A grey mass that rests for a while, then raises its head and looks around, is considered a congener and is therefore harmless. Even if that mass gradually comes closer. He who as Eskimo

imitates this behavior, by resting and also occasionally sticking out his head, can approach the animal close enough to kill it with the spear.

The right assumptions lead to the survival of man in these harsh conditions. Which shows that they can - literally - be of vital importance here.

### ***The fellow man as “me one more time”***

Understanding one's fellow man also requires an empathetic attitude. The German philosopher W. Dilthey (1833/1911), in his *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*<sup>2</sup>, (Introduction to the Humanities), says that the data of natural science can be explained through experimentation and mathematics, but that the humanities such as philosophy, psychology, art and history do not sufficiently come into their own with just “a scientific explanation”. With regard to the humanities, he argues for an ‘understanding’, an empathetic and understandable method. This is based on a direct contact from person to person. ‘Verstehen’, ‘understanding’, is a resumption, a re-experiencing, but in such a way that one becomes involved in it oneself.

The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788/1860) has already pointed out that we can refer to our fellow man - in biblical terms “our fellow-creature” - in two profoundly different ways. For the cold, distant and all too critical person, the fellow-creature is “nicht-Ich”, “not me”, but for the understanding person, the same fellow-creature is a “Ich-noch-einmal”, a “me-one-more-time”. The same goes for the religious fellow man. J. Stalin (1878/1953) and his congener, or the Nazi who wanted to exterminate Judaism, saw in his fellow man “ nicht-Ich “.

If you walk in a busy shopping street, you often pay more attention to what is in the shop windows than to the people who walk there. When someone is suddenly hit by a car, where he remains injured on the street, a number of people around him are emotionally very intensely involved. One is concerned about the victim, one shares in his suffering, and wants to assist him in every possible way. The victim is viewed as “me-one-more-time” rather than “not me”.

Vladimir Soloviev (1853/1900), Russian Christian Orthodox philosopher, gives in his *La justification du bien*<sup>3</sup>, (The justification of goodness) a wonderful example of an empathetic attitude, which he himself derives from Isaac the Syrian: “A human heart that embraces all creation, men, birds, animals, demons and creatures of all kinds; when he thinks of

it, he is moved to tears, a great and poignant pity possesses him and his heart is tightened with intense suffering, and he cannot bear, hear or see any evil or sadness endured by a creature; Therefore, at every hour he prays and weeps even for the mute beings, for the enemies of truth and for those who harm him, so that God may keep them and forgive them; and even for the species of reptiles, he prays with great pity which raises his heart immeasurably high so that he assimilates it to God". Those who, to a certain extent, do not communicate the life of their fellow man, who do not open themselves up to what is nowadays called the "participating observation", they don't know what such an empathy can give them. This is no different for the experience of the sacred and the understanding of religious people.

### ***The love game***

It has already been mentioned that a scientific explanation is not always sufficient. For example, a child can grow up in the conviction that his parents love him and that they love each other. Those who do not have love in them will hardly understand anything about the game of love itself. On the outside, there are a number of movements that, viewed in isolation, hardly say anything about the inner feelings of the two partners. The fact that they are an expression of a love for one another, of a much more overwhelming and great feeling, which is the essential core, escapes "the cold scientific perception". Whoever is in love, who loves his or her partner so much, knows that the feeling one experiences in this respect rises far above what is scientifically shown.

### ***Porn... or religion?***

Let us illustrate the magnitude of a difference in axioms for the same fact. In India there are many believers who profess a form of Tantrism, an Eastern religion. In their temples one finds, among other things, statues in which the sexual organs of women are shown and worshipped. They also depict copulating couples, in which even 'positions' with animals are not shunned.

Many a Western European could say in an initial reaction that such images are banal pornography. And yet the people on the spot would be shocked by this particularly disdainful judgment. For them it is about the glorification of the sacred life force. And it is concentrated in the reproductive organs par excellence. For them, life and the creation of life are not only a biological matter, but also, and above all, have to do with the activation of energies from 'the other world'.

For example, many facades of houses in Bhutan are decorated with the image of the male genital organ. It is said that they contain life force, that they create life and that they bring happiness. The happiness of a person's life depends for them indeed on the amount of life force he possesses. The depiction and glorification of such scenes is therefore a highly religious, if not sacred, matter. The local believers would be particularly indignant if we Westerners, from our point of view, were to label these expressions of their religion as banal pornography. One must indeed share their religious presuppositions - not ours - if one is to understand what they mean by them. If we do not do this, we condemn ourselves to an erroneous interpretation. Depending on the preconceptions with which one approaches the images, as a rationalist tourist or as a local religious person, one talks about porn, or about... religion. The contrast can hardly be greater.

### ***The little witnesses***

We'll give you a biblical model. Genesis 24:2ff: Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, (...) I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, but you will go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac." (...). "Please place your hand under my thigh (...). So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter." So much for the sacred text.

Usually the text is puritanically translated as "under my hip", or, as here, "under my thigh", but in fact the testicles are meant. Testicles, sex, or, as many elderly people in Flanders say, "het gemacht", ("gemacht" means power, strength) are so sacred that they are inviolable and that they are applied as a kind of "guarantee of value" at solemn and decisive moments in life. Like here, when it comes to a future woman. "It is a pity that the Puritan translation conceals the true and sacred scope of all that is sexuality."

The indissolubility of the oath is related to the indissolubility of all that is sexuality. Pay close attention to the biblical text: Laying hands on the sexual organ is like swearing, not by the gods of the cosmos or by Satan, but by "the God of heaven and earth". In other words: in this text, everything that is sexual life, including the magical aspect - we will come back to this in detail - is not yet 'damned'.

G. Welter, *Les croyances primitives et leurs survivances*<sup>4</sup>, (Primitive beliefs and their survival), emphasizes that the testicles, in ancient Latin, are called 'testiculi', small witnesses. The word 'testis', in Latin, does indeed mean 'witness'. The testicles were so much witnesses that they were simply called "little witnesses".

### ***How to hang a dead man?***

Let's illustrate the scope of a difference in assumptions again with next-event. We read F. Bellotti, *Congo prodigieux*<sup>5</sup> (*Congo prodigious*). The story takes place in former Belgian Congo. A resident of Bakumu (Kasaï) comes before a Belgian judge after a murder. Calm and proud of his killing, he is brought before the court and says: "I was in a state of legitimate self-defence". The judge replied, "But according to witnesses, you started first. The accused argued, "But he had two lances with him. The same answer always returned. The judge ended this monotonous debate. In the opinion that he should make a fair judgment, he decided, through the interpreter and his Negro-African helpers, 'death by hanging'. The interpreter translates. All those present, the African judges and even the accused agree, clearly nodding their heads. At the end, however, the interpreter asks the judge: "All agree. Your verdict is just. But how shall we hang a dead man?". The judge did not understand. He postponed the verdict and hastily asked the governor for advice. He replied, "but that's obvious". Going to a Bakumu with two lances was to tell him, "I come to kill you in a double fight. So the accused was in his right. Release him". One can see the big difference between the local justice and the Belgian justice. Depending on the code used, and the axioms expressed in it, Bakuma is killed as a guilty party or acquitted as an innocent party.

### ***The ancient Greek religion***

Let's return to the empathetic attitude as it can manifest itself in religion. Th. Ziëlinisky, *La religion de la Grèce antique*<sup>6</sup>, (The religion of ancient Greece), wonders in this rare and unusually fascinating work where the essence of the Greek religion at the time of Homer (ca. -800) can be found. His answer is short and simple: 'everywhere'. But according to him this requires a far-reaching empathetic attitude. The introduction to his book emphasizes this: "A person who does not have a sense of art cannot understand the Greek sense of art. The same goes for the Greek religion. Those who do not have a sense of religion will not be able to understand the Greek religion. Religious sense is the magic wand that starts to vibrate when it comes to the pure gold of popular belief and that remains insensitive to lead or alloys.

Those who own such a magic wand, those who have a sense of religion, will save themselves and find their way through the maze of legends and ceremonies of Ancient Greece. Without a sense of religion, however, the greatest scholar will be lost in it”.

### ***Bantu philosophy***

That such an empathetic attitude is far from easy, concludes Father Placied Tempels among others, in his book *la Philosophie bantoue*<sup>7</sup> (Bantu Philosophy). Tempels spent thirteen years in Belgian Congo as a missionary. He wrote, “All of us, missionaries, judges, rulers, all those who are, or should be, leaders of the Bantu, had not penetrated the ‘soul’ of the black man, at least not as far as we would have liked it to. Not even the specialists. Now let this be a regrettable statement or a repentant confession of guilt. The fact is certain that we did not understand the worldview of Bantu and that as a result we were unable to present the blacks with digestible food for the soul or an understandable spiritual synthesis. Of all the peculiar customs, of which we do not understand the meaning or the reason, the Bantu say that they exist in order to obtain life force”. So much for Father Tempels.

In his 70-page book, the word ‘life force’ is mentioned 156 times, which shows that it is a basic concept. The whole cultural concept of the Bantus clearly exudes a dynamic view of life.

We also quote the Cameroonian philosopher Martin Nkafu: “What place does God take for the African? God is not questioned. The question is not whether God is present, but what He does. Faith is a necessity. There is no way around that. The real question is how to get in touch with God. You won’t meet an African who painfully wonders if God does exist. That God exists is a truth that we cannot deny. I can’t discuss it. In Africa there are no books about whether or not God exists. God is obvious to us. Atheism or religious indifference does not exist in Africa.”

The question is not whether God is present, but what He does. This is clearly a dynamic view of religion. Western discussions are usually not about what God does, but about arguments for or against His existence.

To illustrate this religious attitude, we give the translation of the old African national anthem “Nkosi sikelele Afrika”, written in Xosa, with the omission of the repetitions. The reader can compare its content and its religious character with his own national anthem.

“Bless, Lord God, bless Africa. Let his fame reach into heaven. Hear us in our prayers. Lord bless us. Lord bless Your children. Come Holy Spirit. God, we ask You, protect our people. Intercept and end all battle. Protect us, protect Africa. Bless, Lord God, bless Africa.”

### ***Half a century with the Eskimos***

P. Freuchen, *Mijn leven onder de Eskimo's*<sup>8</sup> (My life among the Eskimos), also states that a real empathizing experience is not an easy task. Freuchen shared life with the Inuit, as they call themselves. He married an Eskimo woman and had two children with her. He concluded, “Although I myself have lived in the midst of the Eskimos for more than half a century, I do not believe that I have fully understood them. Gradually, I began to realize that there were many things that I had misjudged at first. And after spending about ten to fifteen years with the Eskimos, I finally realized that I still knew almost nothing about them. Their souls knew depths in which it was almost impossible for a white man to penetrate”.

P. Duchaussois, *In de ijsvelden van den poolcirkel*<sup>9</sup>, (In the ice fields of the Arctic Circle), shows a completely different sound with regard to the life of the Indians and Eskimos in the far north. As a missionary - his book dates from 1927 - he writes: “Describing the different customs of their magic would take us too far. It suffices to say that that they often result in enmity and vengeance, and are often the instrument of despicable harassment. The goal is to destroy this kingdom of Satan and to replace the kingdom of Jesus“. So much for this quote.

Such a distant attitude towards another culture raises many questions. For this missionary, the Eskimos seem to be a “not-me” rather than a “me-one-more-time”. How can we understand these fellow human beings? How can we build on - accept, purify and elevate - what their culture and religion already offers? How do we empathize with their presuppositions and habits, when the predetermined goal is to “destroy this realm of Satan”?

What arguments does the author have to call this other culture “this realm of Satan”? And what a treasure trove of ethnological data would have left us with the detailed description “of the different uses of their magic”? This lack of empathy, for example, is in sharp contrast with the commitment of Jozef De Veuster (1840/1889), better known as Father Damien, according to opinion polls our ‘greatest’ Belgian. He took care of the fate of the leprosy patients in Molokai. He shared their lives, their worries and ... their illness.

He died when he was 49 years old. His self-sacrifice still fascinates many people all over the world. He was canonized by the church in Rome in 2009.

### ***The local religion as a lie?***

H. Kluin, *Het geestesleven der natuervolken*<sup>10</sup>, (The spiritual life of the natural peoples), also mentions the contemptuous attitude of some ‘missionaries’ towards the Toraja, a tribe on Celebes (Sulawesi, in Indonesia). He writes: “It was the same every time missionaries wanted to prove the nullity of the pagan gods and spirits. We summoned all the Toraja-gods and challenged them to punish us for the preaching of the living God, but the Toraja-people then told us that their gods didn’t dare hurt us, but they wanted to do it to them. These gods had nothing to do with us. The truth of the Gospel must convince the native man by the divine power of truth itself. Then he learns to know his own religion as a lie. “

For these missionaries it was clear that the local religion contained no “truth” and therefore could not represent a valid stage in their religious development. We will also see that serious objections can be raised against such a distant attitude. As can be seen later in this book, it is not very wise, even from a magical standpoint, to challenge the Toraja-gods to punish them, the missionaries.

The archbishop of Milan, Achile Ratti (1857/1939), later Pope Pius XI, founded the ethnographic and ethnological museum in Rome in 1922. He knew religious studies and forbade missionaries from destroying idols. He also instructed the seminars to teach religious studies and to respect other religions and their customs. On the occasion of the Vatican Mission Exhibition in 1922, during the International Week of Religious Ethnology, he said with regard to the works of art of the pagan religions: “These are human documents, which must not be allowed to perish”. According to W. Schmidt, *Travaux faits et travaux à faire*<sup>11</sup>, (Work done and work to be done), many Catholics have not always shown such a broad view of other cultures and religions as Pope Pius XI did at the time.

### ***No Inquisition***

For the time being, we imagine ourselves in this religious world, and only afterwards are we considering what that can mean for us.

“Specifically: if I identify with the religious man, if I take into account his starting point in life, immerse myself in his inner thoughts and preconceptions, only then can I check whether his religion is logically

coherent and meaningful.” Only then can I understand what he does and why he does it.

Afterwards I can ask myself in what way our two preconceptions might differ from each other. This may complement or improve my own axioms, which I hold dear about life and about religion. If necessary, I can point out logical errors to religious people. “But that’s not the same as immediately setting up a crusade or an inquisition because of it.” A judgement made as an outsider, without knowing the data, or without situating the data in their correct framework or context, can really only be a prejudice.

Once again: one lets what ‘is’, not be what it ‘is’. One then says of what ‘is’ that it ‘is not’. Such a working method has nothing to do with a logical and methodical approach, but degenerates into an ideology.

One then sets the own standards first and only sees from reality the own assumptions. In this way, one distorts reality until it meets the own presuppositions, instead of bringing one’s own axiomatic into line with what really ‘is’.

**“What is, is”.**

Logic and religion are much more closely intertwined than people usually think. As we have already said, logic is founded on the basic axiom: “what is, is”. The second use of ‘is’, is not a needless repetition of the first ‘is’, but confirms ‘what is’. One lets things come into their own. The liar does not do this at all and does so against his better judgment. Anyone who adapts reality to their own presuppositions also violates this basic axiom: one does not let what really ‘is’ be what it ‘is’. In the words of G.F. Hegel (1770/1831), the top figure of German Idealism, one then becomes ‘unreal’ and from an ethical point of view one is also not honest.

Let’s summarize what our empathetic attitude tells us. Anyone who wants to hunt wild, should empathize with the world of the hunter. Those who want to understand their fellow human beings will have to identify to a certain extent with their world of thought and feeling. This attitude goes much deeper than what a scientific explanation can teach us. This applies, for example, to the love we show our fellow human beings, but also to the sense of religious experience and the understanding of religious practices.

That it is not always easy, is mentioned by Ziëlinisky in regard to the Greek religion and by Father Tempels in regard to Bantu culture, among

others. Those who start from their own prejudices run the risk that they will not let things come into their own and will not let them be what they really are. This is a form of dishonesty and thinking that does not reach the reality of religious data. This, at least, is the vision of the man who tries to understand the field of religion, in a fair and serious way.”

### **2.3. Presuppositions**

#### **An ABC theory**

In our reflections on “what religion is not” (1.2.) we mentioned that Freud, Marx, Leuba, Nietzsche, Comte and their followers, explained religion starting from their own preconceptions. Their lack of an empathetic attitude left them no room to penetrate to the essence of religion, to the ‘holy’. In this sense, religious people will say that these materialistic thinkers are ‘unreal’.

A. Ellis and E. Sagarin, *Nymphomania, Nymphomania, A Study of the Oversexed Woman*<sup>12</sup> talk about nymphomania, a sexual deviation. In short, it boils down to this: If a woman gets into bed with a different man every night, she is ‘satisfied’. Yet she remains ‘unhappy’. The ABC theory tries to explain this phenomenon cognitively. The letter ‘A’ stands for the given, for example a disappointing course in personal and individual life, something that as ‘evil’ gives rise to suffering and pain.

The letter ‘B’ contains the personal-individual axioms or assumptions of someone who is confronted with the given A. These axioms are then expressed, for example, in sentences such as: “I’m never lucky in love anyway” or “Somehow I’ll survive that”. The letter ‘C’ stands for the final reaction to the negative A.

Therefore C shows us a way of behaving that reveals both the to be processed, evil and the individual axioms, you could call it ‘principles’ or ‘mentality’.”

The given ‘A’, for example, can be a serious illness. B’ are the assumptions of the person who is going through the disease. This can be something like: “I think that’s so terrible that I’ll never recover”, or “I see that as a serious difficulty with a lot of nasty consequences, but I’m definitely going to be able to cope with that”. “C’ is the result: the first type of thinking shows someone who is ‘marked’ by life. The second example shows someone who is able to cope with illness or setbacks. This way of looking at a situation might make it possible for someone to emerge from it, stronger and psychologically evolved.”

Schematically represented: “A is indicated by someone in terms of B so that C follows”. We see that Ellis and Sagarin are trying to figure out the cognitive process in order to find “in all that emotional” the “rational” and to activate it therapeutically. It is a task for psychologists to understand the axiomatic (B) and the cause (A) through these externally perceptible behaviors (C). The writers distinguish two main types in the interpretation of someone. The first is the rather healthy interpretation. Following a serious miscalculation (A) someone judges: “I’ll digest that” (B) and acts (C) as “someone with a lot of common sense”. Quiet and decided, and convinced to get over it.

There is also the rather neurotic interpretation. As a result of the same serious miscalculation (A) someone judges: “I will never get over that” (B) and gets upset, strained and possibly lets himself go (C). Unfortunately, our society has countless people with emotionally serious problems, people who do not always follow the healthy train of thought. It is in point B that they cherish untrue axioms. It was not what they experienced that decided, but the attitude with which they faced the fact.

One can see the difference, psychologically, between common sense and neurosis. According to these psychiatrists, it hides for the most part in the processing subject. It manifests itself in the discernible judgment.

### ***Small sentences***

Ellis and Sagarin speak of basic judgements that we call ‘small sentences’. They themselves give a sample of such condescending sentences:

1. One should, in all possible respects, have been able, adapted and above all succeeded in interpreting oneself as a “valuable human being”.
2. It is awful and disastrous when things do not go the way one would like them to.
3. Problems and disturbances of fellow human beings completely confuse you. This is unavoidable.
4. As soon as something comes across as dangerous, either in appearance or in reality, one has to be “terribly concerned” about it and constantly think: “It can turn out badly”.
5. There is always just one good, right and perfect solution to human problems. It is disastrous when this one perfect, ideal solution is not found.
6. It is easier to avoid certain life problems than to face them courageously.

7. Man's happiness depends on elements outside him or her. He or she has little or no power over that which leads to worries and concerns, hindrances and disappointments.

8. A person's past is decisive for his or her personal behavior. An event in that past that made a deep impression will continue to exert its influence in later life.

9. It is essential for an adult person that he or she enjoys the esteem and affection of practically every human being of some significance from their surroundings.

10. One must always depend on someone. One needs someone with a strong personality to relay on.

11. Some people are bad, cunning and mean. They should therefore be punished severely for this low level of harassment.

Sentences! Sentences that emerge from the deeper soul, from the unconscious or subconscious. It is established that these are many sentences that boil down to: "anything that is practically unfeasible". This unfeasibility lures unsuccessful attempts which, deep down in the soul, give the impression that one is "born for the misfortune and the failure".

### ***What one "tells oneself"***

Ellis and Sagarin see such negative judgments in the depths of the souls of socially destructive nymphomaniac women, among others, at work. We say "at work", because those phrases like "I'm a failure" or something like that - phrases like that are always short - are like powerful energies that have a destructive effect. Among other things, and above all, on the ability to judge. They occur regularly in the minds of many neurotic people and destroy 'positive thinking'. The latter, the positive thinking, means that with various life difficulties one can imagine a favorable outcome. It is exactly that which the neurotic man doesn't do and he deludes himself, as the authors put it.

One sees the fallacy in, among other things, the neurotic judgment. According to the ABC theory, each person lives most of the time with unconscious or semi-conscious "prejudices", these are judgements prior to the conscious judgement and the behavior that originates from it. Such errors of thought are easily made in 'existential' situations, in circumstances that concern us very personally and touch us in our soul. A serious miscalculation of something to which one has 'totally' committed oneself, easily provokes such a fallacy.

For example E. Kübler-Ross, *Lessen voor levenden*<sup>13</sup>, (Lessons for the Living), where the writer tells about her experiences with terminally ill patients. One can apply the ABC-scheme. Suddenly death seems near (A). The reaction (B) to this often follows an order that brings the ‘prejudices’ to the surface. This can consist successively in denial (“it’s not possible!”), anger (“who or what is doing this to me now?”), negotiation (“Lord, give me respite”) and depression (“I’m a bird for the cat”). Finally, in the best case (C) there is acceptance (“I’m dying like everyone else”). The visible and tangible behavior reflects those ‘sentences’, as Ellis and Sagarin say. These sentences are some kind of personal-intimate axioms that determine the healthy or neurotic judgment.

If one examines a number of theories in their psychological roots, one encounters these ‘sentences’. What kind of philosophy one chooses, depends on what kind of person one is, because a philosophical system is not a dead household item one can put on and take off, but something that lives in the depths of one’s soul: the assumptions that are represented in such ‘sentences’.

In the same way one can speak about religion in a completely analogous way. If we imagine the religious data by the letter ‘A’, the own assumptions, religious or nominalistic, with which one approaches the data, by the letter ‘B’, and the result, the reaction to it, faith or not, by the letter ‘C’, then we have applied the ABC-theory to religious appearances.

### **“Four methods of living up to a conviction”.**

The prejudices of one’s own, some authority or a personal preference, sometimes mean that the assumptions from which one starts do not lead to the perception of the given reality itself and that our axioms become unrealistic. Let’s immerse ourselves in the work of Ch. S. Peirce (1839/1914) American scientist and philosopher, *The Fixation of Belief*<sup>14</sup>. In it, he outlines four methods to make a conviction come true.

#### **1. Method of willfulness (‘Tenacity’).**

On a task, either a given or a requested one, the stubborn man reacts exclusively with his own solution. For example, economic problems, with neglect of other solutions, are only solved by free trade. Thus G. Galilei (1564/1642), Italian physicist and defender of N. Copernicus’ heliocentric system, ‘solves’ the problem of tides and astrology by simply refusing any research on the subject: “It can’t be true”. *Ch. Alain, L’effet lunaire*<sup>15</sup>, (The

Lunar Effect), notes that a biographer accuses Galilei that such a method “is as bad as superstition”.

Peirce mentions as an example someone who was an ardent supporter of free trade. In order to preserve and protect his opinion, he only read free trade oriented texts.

Or taken from life: “Admit that you are a stubborn person”, someone blames someone else. “What do you rely on to claim such a thing?” asks the latter. “I don’t have to rely on anything. You’ve always been a stubborn person,” it sounds. There is no reliance at all on data. What should be seen as truth is reduced to the beloved, individual idea that is axiomatically - and apparently very idiosyncratically, yes stubbornly - put first. Every enlightening conversation becomes simply impossible. It seems like a form of projection: the characteristic property of the individual is projected onto the other human being.

But it also contains a kind of tragic irony. It is reminiscent of the Ukrainian author Nikolai Gogol (1809/1852). He described people’s daily lives and their sometimes horrifying faults and sins. Their behavior sometimes seemed more caricatured to him. Gogol watched with humor, irony and even sarcasm, laughing at the fact that a caricature makes one laugh, but also weeping, because such behavior does not bear witness to what a person should actually be. High reality is painfully distorted into a low caricature. Gogol spoke of “*het tragische lachen*<sup>16</sup>”, (the tragic laughter).

## **2. Method of straightforwardness (‘Authority’)**

The only way to respond to an enquiry is through a solution imposed by one authority or another. According to Peirce, some ecclesiastical or political systems maintain an ‘orthodoxy’, a faith in law, in this way.

The ‘authority’ can also be embodied in one person. One can speak with authority about an area that one thoroughly controls. The authority with which one is heard then flows automatically from the expertise one possesses. This legitimate form of authority is not a problem. Otherwise, things will become different for people who do not have expertise and who want to give themselves authority on their own. According to Th. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality*<sup>17</sup>, man all too easily overvalues himself. In a number of cases he is characterized by simplistic and indiscriminate black and white judgments. His prejudices cloud his judgment. The personality of

the authoritarian man is disturbed in many cases. Overvaluing oneself usually goes hand in hand with contempt for one's fellow man.

The other is with Schopenhauer a "nicht-ich" (2.2.), possibly a madman, a bad person or a ridiculous person. The authoritarian man sees the other only as an object and does not enter into personal contact with him. The 'scientist' who destroys every religious belief and oppresses it with power, is also authoritarian. But just as authoritarian is the 'believer' who takes down every scientific or personal investigation - as 'dangerous' - and, if necessary, strengthens it with means of power. The Inquisition, now so regretted by the Roman Church, was a form of authoritarianism. There is not a single worldview that is not susceptible to disturbed appreciation, discrimination and the use of power; on the contrary. Biblically, that is 'this world'. This haughty attitude is probably also 'the' sin par excellence.

We do not confuse 'orthodox' with 'sincere'. Sincerity is a subjective quality by which we show what we have in ourselves, what we really are; we sincerely and honestly manifest what we think inside.

### **3. Preferred method ('A Priori')**

It is claimed that free discussion is celebrated, but it is kept to what is "a priori", what is "preferably" true. This, however, is done without a check on reality outside the closed sphere of the discussion. However, in contrast to both these forms of opinion, the other opinion is accepted. Thus, according to Peirce, the nominalist-minded man only accepts those philosophical constructions that are in the taste of nominalist reason.

### **4. 'Scientific' method ('Reality')**

A problem is solved by confronting it with reality. What is real for Peirce? That which remains completely independent of our consciousness in a sustainable way, and cannot be influenced by our consciousness either. In this way he shows himself to be a supporter of Plato's theory of ideas (see further 5.1.2.) and of medieval scholasticism. He calls his method pragmatic, result-oriented. Whoever tests the same reality, will always have to come to the same understanding or forma (see 5.1.2.). That is why Peirce mentions as the main characteristic of scientificity the "external permanency", external durability, regardless of our opinion.

In so-called 'phenomenology', the data are used to their full advantage, regardless of any prejudice or any preconceived theory. For Peirce, this method is therefore recommended as a first step to make an inventory of the

data and to investigate them. Phenomenology wants to represent what shows itself, correctly and only as far as it shows itself. Without any prejudice, without any theory, without subjective considerations. Only the data itself counts. What 'is' must be able to come into its own. After the fact has been understood correctly, one can draw up theories about it, discuss them and test these theories against the data. In the end, "in the long run", the objective reality is revealed.

***"The mirror man".***

As Peirce put it, his obstinacy ("I stick to it through thick and thin"), straightforwardness ("we've always learned it that way") and preference ("I'd like to discuss it, but I'll stick to my individual opinion") are sometimes pretty much at work in scientific circles. One can join Peirce here and mention that in a number of religious circles or in the life of the average man, this is actually no different. These three unreal attitudes remain until the fourth attitude, the realistic research, finally refutes the other three attitudes.

In the latter method, the opinion (and the associated assumptions) does not depend on "one's own sentence" or "what others predict" or "one's own preference", but on the given reality itself, on what really "is". To say it with Parmenides of Elea, founder of the Eleatic school, (in southern Italy, - 540/...): "they think according to reality itself". In other words: the assumptions are adapted to reality itself. Not the other way around. In this way they are constantly adjusted until they correspond as closely as possible to "all that is". The person who works in this way is sometimes called "the mirror man". He reflects the data in a correct and pure way. Speaking from the ABC theory we could say that his B functions in such a way that his C becomes a correct representation of A.

Given the very human tendency to honor the first three methods, this fourth method is difficult. Many people interpret it as stubborn, straightforward, or preferable. Without objectively grasping the meaning of what has been given. They project their own and subjective interpretation onto things. In the latter case, there is no question of a 'sense', a sense of meaning, what is an objective event, but of sense-frames, in which subjective assumptions distort reality. Not everyone refers to reality in an "objective scientific way".

So far, this is a very short sketch of the four methods for solving a problem.

### ***Strange fact***

Peirce does not dwell on the fact that every human being, if he does not pay attention, shows each of the four opinion formations. In this respect, we are all equal. We hold opinions in such a way that we neglect any other point of view, if we do not exclude them stubbornly - tenacity. We share beliefs with others who we believe to have authority, and so we are “straightforward” - authority - with others. By the way: as St. Augustine (354/430), the great Father of the Church of Patriarchy, the early Christian philosophy, remarked, we have never tested the lion’s share of our beliefs ourselves, but we still ‘believe’ in them. We hold theses because they appeal to us: some preference - a priori - is the real ‘reason’. We hold opinions that we establish on our spontaneous experiences, on our own methodical assessments - reality. This foursome can be found among famous scientists as well as among simple people.

### ***A fierce resistance.***

In this context we listen to D. Servan-Schreiber, French doctor and psychiatrist, director of the medical department at the University of Pittsburg, U.S.A. His story illustrates in a rather tragic way the power of an idiosyncratic axiomatic in the medical world. In his book *Guérir le stress, l’anxiété et la dépression sans médicaments ni psycho-analyse*<sup>18</sup> (Healing stress, anxiety and depression without medication or psychoanalysis), he writes: “When great breakthroughs were made before a theory could explain them, they systematically encountered violent resistance from institutions. Especially if the treatment was “natural” or seemed “too simple”. The most illustrious case is the story of the Hungarian doctor Dr. Philippe Semmelweis. Semmelweis has demonstrated the importance of asepsis (the absence of microbes) during childbirth, twenty years before Pasteur’s work. At that time, in the obstetrics clinic where the young Semmelweis had been appointed assistant professor, more than one in three women died of puerperal fever in the days following delivery. The poorest women in Vienna, the only ones to use such clinics, were only forced to go there because they knew all too well the risks they faced. Semmelweis had the extraordinary intuition to propose the following experiment: all the doctors in the clinic, who often performed bare-handed dissections immediately before delivering a baby, should wash their hands with **warm** water before touching their patients’ genitals. He had the greatest difficulty in imposing this idea: it happened before the discovery of germs, and there was no logical reason why something invisible and odorless could be passed on through hands. However, the results of his experiment were extraordinary: in one month, mortality dropped from one in

three to one in twenty patients! The main consequence of Semmelweis' experience was... his dismissal!

His colleagues, who found washing their hands with warm water tedious, organized a mutiny and got him fired. As no plausible explanation was known at the time for such results, Semmelweis was ridiculed despite his brilliant demonstration. He died nearly losing his mind only a few years before the discoveries of Pasteur and Lister, which at last made it possible to understand scientifically what he had discovered empirically.

### ***Acupuncture, a first confrontation: no anesthesia***

Servan-Schreiber also describes his first confrontation with acupuncture during his studies in Dharamsala, India: "My first encounter was a failed one. That was in the 1980s. One of my teachers at the time was returning from People's China. (...). He had filmed a surgical operation in a Beijing hospital in super-8. With two hundred of my comrades in a crowded amphitheater, I watched, in amazement, a woman, whose belly was wide open, talk quietly with the surgeon who was removing a melon-sized cyst from her bowels. For any anesthesia, she had a few very fine needles planted on the surface of her skin. Of course, we had never observed anything like this before. However, as soon as the film was finished and the light returned, we all hastened to forget what we had just seen." (...) It was "too far away and too esoteric", he wrote.

### ***Acupuncture, a second confrontation: a subtle energy***

He continues: In Dharamsala, I was talking to a practitioner about how he approached depression and anxiety. "You, Westerners, have an upside-down vision of emotional problems," he told me. "You are always surprised to find that what you call depression or anxiety, and stress, have physical symptoms. You talk about fatigue, weight loss or gain, irregular heartbeats, as if they were physical manifestations of a mental problem. For us, it is rather the opposite: sadness, loss of self-esteem, a sense of guilt, lack of pleasure are the mental manifestations of a physical problem. For us, there is no difference between the two. Emotional and physical symptoms are simply two aspects of an underlying imbalance in the flow of energy, Qi." (pronounce "chi"). Now he had lost me. It has always been rooted in the Cartesian tradition, which makes a very clear distinction between "mental" and "physical". I was not yet ready to talk about "Qi" or to imagine an underlying regulatory "energy" that would affect both the physical and mental. Especially if we couldn't measure it. But my interlocutor went on to say, "There are three ways to influence Qi: meditation, which regenerates it,

nutrition and herbal remedies and, most directly, acupuncture. We often treat what you call depression with acupuncture. It works very well as long as the patients follow the treatment long enough.” But I was already not listening to it anymore: only with one ear. He talked to me about meditation, herbs and needles: we were no longer on the same wavelength. In addition, as soon as he mentioned the duration of the treatment, I immediately thought that it should be a “placebo” effect, i.e. the reaction of patients to treatments that are ineffective in themselves, but which work because they are treated regularly, with kindness, and the appearance of convincing technicality - just like acupuncture needles. It was my second missed appointment. But he had left a trace in my memory.

***Acupuncture, a third confrontation: no antidepressants.***

The third was held in Pittsburgh shortly after. One Saturday afternoon, I met a patient on the street whom I had only seen once at the hospital consultation. She had a fairly severe depression but had refused the antidepressants I had offered her. As we had had a good contact, I asked her how she was feeling, if she was getting better. She looked at me with a smile, not knowing if she could talk to me frankly or not, and then she finally told me that she had chosen to see an acupuncturist who had straightened her out in a few sessions over four weeks and that she was now in great shape. If I had not had my conversation with the Tibetan doctor in Dharamsala, I would certainly have blamed this “healing” on a placebo effect. In depression, the placebo effect is so strong that it takes about three clinical studies comparing an antidepressant to a placebo for one of the three to show superiority of the drug. But Dharamsala’s conversation immediately came to mind and - a little offended, I must admit, that another treatment than the one I had mastered was more useful - I decided to find out what we knew about this strange practice. What I had to learn still leaves me confused by the extent of its consequences on the nature of the body and the brain.

More generally, the writer wonders what all his laboriously acquired medical-scientific knowledge serves if he is not or not as well able to help people with it as, for example, the acupuncturist is able to do. Furthermore, he regrets the attitude of many academically trained colleagues who pay too little attention to many traditional and sound healing methods.

***“I didn’t want to see the facts.”***

T. Hayden, *L’enfant qui ne parlait pas*<sup>19</sup>, (The child who didn’t speak), gives a remarkable testimony of the way in which her own assumptions initially prevented her from grasping a given truthfulness. She is a child

psychologist of great fame. She takes care of Jade, a child with a lot of emotional problems. Gradually Jade tells Hayden her horrible secrets. Jade talks about Tashee, a child who, as a child's sacrifice, died horribly and of which she, Jade, was a witness. In an after-school conversation, Jade said, "Ellie took a knife. She plunged it into Tashee's throat. The blood spurted out. It wasn't running like when you cut yourself, but more like a running tap, and Ellie picked it up in a cup." Hayden wondered if one could believe Jade? Did they actually kill a child and drink the blood? How could Jade know the taste of blood?" Others than Hayden put Satanism, with pedophilia and child sacrifice, first. The author herself says: "I believe in "evil" but not in "an entity" (note: here Satan is worshipped by Satanists). Oh! After all, I know too little about it". Result: Hayden predominantly sticks to what the "established" psychologists and psychiatrists believe. A certain openness of mind - she says - is needed to 'believe' in satanic practices. "If Hugh (note: an acquaintance who knew occultism) hadn't discovered that specialized bookstore, I wouldn't even have thought of Satanism when Jade spoke to me about the cat (note: who was also 'sacrificed') and the blood. This was partly due to my ignorance of the matter. There was also a dose of blindness in me. I was used to interpreting all behavior in terms of psychology or psychiatry, excluding any other interpretation. Furthermore, there was - no doubt - a certain refusal in me. I did not want to see. I was young and my career was vulnerable. It seemed dangerous to me to jeopardize my name as a specialist. (Note: she didn't want to "ridicule" herself in her circles by investigating alternative, occult hypotheses as well.) "Taking Jade's stories seriously inevitably led to the introduction of ritual abuses with torture by a group. All the more so: in the last ten years (1981/1991), a considerable number of children have told scenes that are surprisingly similar, often one discovers the corpses of children". Rarely has anyone in the scientific world been as acknowledging honest as Hayden

Those who want to know more about such bloody children's sacrifices can read D. Cellura, *Les cultes de l'enfer*<sup>20</sup>, (The cults of hell) for example. This book shows that such sacrifices also occur in our time, yes, even more so. It gives a lot of information about these terrible practices and leaves little to the imagination. Animal mutilations and human sacrifices are apparently more than media inventions or horror literature.

### ***An anthropological misconception***

Let's give another example of a 'scientific' observation that illustrates the lack of an empathetic attitude. Franz Boas (1858/1942) was a professor at Columbia University. With his book *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911)) he

stated that sexual maturation with its puberty crisis - as the West knows it - is not a biological necessity, but that it is determined culturally. It is not nature that counts, but nurture. According to Boas, it can be different in another society. By now people know that both nature and nurture have an influence on human development. In 1925 he sent a student, Margaret Mead (1901/1978), to Samoa to study the course of adolescence. Boas expected Mead to confirm his thesis.

Mead, who enjoyed a free upbringing as a child, was only twenty-four years old when she set foot in Pago Pago, the capital. She stayed on Samoa for nine months, stayed with an American family, and did not know the native language. She interviewed about sixty Samoan girls about the relationship between “parents and children”, “boys and girls” and about the local education system. She decided that there was no adolescence crisis in Samoa because the education there was very different from an education as it is known in the West. She said that people had “no deep ties to just one person. Real, genuine value for both the parents and the sexual partner was, in her opinion, a rarity. The relationships between partners, if any, were ‘free’ and the ‘free love’ was widely accepted. Mead described life there as “a light and enjoyable dance”. The girls slept with such a large number of boys that “deep involvement” with just one boy was rare. Mead believed that the emphasis was on virtuosity in erotic techniques. According to her, there was no aggression, no competition and no urge to perform.

Her conclusion: “Samoa is a place where no one is under pressure to get the best result out of life”. Her report appeared in book form: *The coming of age in Samoa*<sup>21</sup>. The book was overwhelmingly well received. This confirmed Boas’ preconceptions: back to nature and to free love. It was our Western culture itself that caused the puberty crisis by its own nature. Moral taboos suddenly seemed superfluous. The British philosopher and mathematician, Bertrand Russell (1872/1970) and controversial advocate of free love, also received Mead’s work with great enthusiasm.

### ***The Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth***

Derek Freeman (1916/2001), New Zealand’s anthropologist, published his *Margaret Mead and Samoa*<sup>22</sup> (*The Making and the Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*) in 1983. The subtitle betrays the thesis, or rather the contradiction. For The New York Times, among others, Freeman formulated it as follows: “Mead’s theorems are accepted by the intellectual-artistic vanguard. All textbooks and encyclopedias reflect this. These theorems are untrue. The reality on Samoa is completely different.” Freeman lived in

Western Samoa and got to know the language of the inhabitants thoroughly. He even took part in the sessions of a group of chiefs. He says that the “free love” Mead was talking about is non-existent. Virginity, for example, is a high value in the indigenous mentality. Competition, also in the erotic field, is as varied as in a Western culture. Yes, the urge to attack is very strong. Murder is common and Samoa is a prominent figure in the percentage of rapes. Mead described it from her prejudices, from her “free upbringing” and from the expectations of her profession and her environment. For example, she neglected the police reports in her time, which she could have consulted thoroughly. She paid no attention to “archaic civility”. The answer given by the local population is not so much the objective truth, but the answers that are most to the liking of the Western interlocutor. In other words, the Samoan girls with whom Mead spoke wanted to “look good”.

Conclusion: the assumptions with which she carried out her research meant that she had no factual contact with the data. As a result, she did not get to know the reality of Samoa and saw her prejudices confirmed. Mead still published a lot about her free vision. She died an honored cultural anthropologist. Freeman published his book five years after her death.

For many years after the publication of Freeman’s book, a professional continued to teach Mead’s vision at a Flemish university. When a student drew his attention to Freeman’s book, the professor replied: “I know that, but what Mead has to tell is so important that I have to deal with her vision”. One might wonder how honest and scientific such an answer is.

***Our reality is limited.***

J. Sterley, a specialist in ethno-medicine and author of the book *Kumo, Hexer und hexen in Neu-Guinea*<sup>23</sup>, (Kumo, witches in New Guinea), puts it this way: “Our preconceptions surround us like a shield behind which we only perceive what we can explain with our ‘vernunft’, with our modern, Western reason”. In other words, our axioms, our assumptions about what is ‘real’ for us, limit our perception to what these axioms, these assumptions, can handle. The rest falls outside of it. In other words, there is nothing as misleading as prejudice, because then one is all too easily inclined to adapt the facts to it, whereas the opposite should be the case: adapting the opinion to the facts. But then it is no longer a ‘prejudice’, but a well-founded ‘judgment’. For five years Sterley investigated a part of New Guinea on plants and on witchcraft practices. 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 typifies his entire book.

### ***A witty remark.***

That scientific research is not always based on external sustainability, but also has to deal with idiosyncratic, orthodox, and preferred opinions, is evident, for example, from the witty remark in the foreword to the book *Varieties of religious experience*<sup>24</sup>, written by the renowned religious psychologist and writer W. James (1842 /1910). He says: “Every new teaching goes through three phases. 1. One attacks the new doctrine by dismissing it as absurd. 2. Then one accepts it as true, but without much scope. 3. Finally, its true meaning is recognized and its opponents claim to have discovered it”. Although it is a witty remark, there is a basis of truth in it. Anyone who looks into the lives of famous scientists will soon be amazed at the far-reaching lack of understanding that they have experienced and often still experience during their scientific work (see, among other things, 4.1.).

Let us summarize this section about our assumptions. The axioms with which we try to approach reality are often intertwined with a number of sometimes powerful prejudices, hidden deep inside our minds. Ellis and Sagarin schematized a course in our lives into a kind of ABC-theory. And Peirce described four methods to make a conviction come true. Completed in the ABC-scheme, there are four forms that can be placed in ‘B’. Our assumptions can indeed lead us astray into an idiosyncratic, straightforward or preferred approach. Then they lack the factual data, what really ‘is’. Such prejudices dare to lead a very persistent life. This is illustrated by the history of Dr Semmelweis and the resistance Servan-Schreiber himself encountered when taking acupuncture seriously. The testimonies of Hayden, Freeman and Sterley also confirm the power of our assumptions. They can be a difficult obstacle to overcome in observing reality. Their influence is therefore clear and far-reaching.

As a preliminary definition of religion, according to the book of Wisdom 6, we stated: “So that you may know wisdom and avoid mistakes”. A first step could be to become aware of our hidden prejudices. They prevent or obscure clear and strict logical thinking.

### ***2.4. Clairvoyance***

Getting to know the sacred requires an empathetic attitude and realistic preconceptions. Many religious experiences have to do with a certain degree of mantic experience. We would like to discuss this further here.

### **Conscience**

In the chapter on the religious man the clairvoyance of Jesus was mentioned (1.4.4.). Prophets also heard a voice and had paranormal dreams, in which Yahweh made his message known through an angel. In his time Moses (*Numbers 11:29*) was already sighing : “If only everyone could be a prophet (note: a seer at that high level)”. Understand: if everyone could hear the voice of God, then they could go off on their own religious experiences and then one was convinced of its real value.

Jesus, too, says that he constantly hears the inner voice of His Father and that he always follows this. According to connoisseurs, this voice is, in the case of ordinary people first of all, the voice of conscience.

Everyone possesses this. This ‘guidance’ can be strengthened and take the form of an advice, which, as some say, is clearly audible inwardly. You can follow this, you can ignore them and you can systematically suppress them. The philosopher Socrates claimed to have an inner voice that never urged him to do anything, but warned him of danger. For example, an immoral person experiences the voice of conscience, but ignores or suppresses it. He will anxiously ensure that his evil deeds do not come to light, which shows that he knows very well that he is making mistakes. In this way, the liar knows the truth, but does not want to have known it. The dynamistic vision of religion takes these impressions seriously. A nominalist or rationalist vision of religion has a lot of difficulty with anything that appears somewhat paranormal. Experience has shown that there are indeed many abuses in this area and that there is considerable abuse of overly gullible people. Let’s go deeper into this mantic ability.

### **Religious clairvoyance**

An extremely nominalist viewpoint is that all clairvoyance should be referred to the realm of fables. That is an unproven premise. In addition to the many chaff, there’s certainly some wheat. We want to talk about the latter. Let us remember that Jesus remained exceptionally humble with regard to His clairvoyance and that He repeatedly forbade people to say who He really was. This is in stark contrast to the behavior of many of our contemporaries, gifted or not, who claim too prominently to have such gifts at their disposal.

G. Van der Zeeuw, *Helderziendheid in Ruimte en tijd*<sup>25</sup>, (Clairvoyance through Space and Time), says that the number of true clairvoyants in a

country can sometimes be counted on one hand. Let's keep, in the whole of this book, this alarmingly small number in mind.

Max Heindel (1865/1919), the founder of the Rosicrucian Fellowship, a secret society, writes in his book *De cosmogonie der rozekruisers*<sup>26</sup> (The Cosmogony of Rosicrucians) "No properly developed seer will ever exercise this ability for money or equivalent rewards; nor will he use it to satisfy curiosity, but only to help humanity.

L. Bernard d'Ignis, *Traité pratique du désenvoûtement et du contre-envoûtement*<sup>27</sup> (Practical treatise on neutralizing a spell and casting a counter-spell) says about this: At the beginning of the XXth century, Jules Boucher wrote in his *Manuel de magie pratique* (Practical magic manual): "Magic has always been a domain that was heavily exploited by the quacks. In Paris, for one valid seer, there are ten who are only exploiters". To which d'Ignis reacts that the present is still like this. What's more, we're in a worse situation because the media - television, radio, press, - are exacerbating the situation. It seems that the real occultists are becoming rarer. The elderly cannot find young people to pass on "the tradition". The practical 'knowing', the true and conscientious occult knowledge, is lost".

J.F. Chandu, *Praktisch pendelboekje*<sup>28</sup>, (Practical pendulum booklet), states that as many as 9 out of 10 people can practice the pendulum, which is also a paranormal way of gathering information.

For R. Mlaker, *Geistiges pendeln*<sup>29</sup>, (The spiritual use of the pendulum), this ratio is only one in a thousand. It is clear that both writers have different standards. Mlaker notes: "Man's ability to use the pendulum is linked to his spiritual development and is a gift from God. The higher the spiritual level of a person, the higher the degree of ability to use the pendulum. A forced development is not possible. Just as the Bible associates serious clairvoyance with God, so too does Mlaker, as one of the few, seem to situate the ability to use the pendulum within a biblical framework.

G.Weigl, *Die entsleierte Aura*<sup>30</sup>: (The unveiled Aura), he speaks of the moral and spiritual level desirable and necessary to 'see' and to be able to bear this clairvoyance; "We have found seers from the earliest times, but not all of them have been at the same spiritual level. What used to be called 'seeing hell' usually means only seeing an astral and not seeing spiritual connections in the world of light.

The Bible itself gives us a wonderful example of this vision, whether or not based on Yahweh's inspiring life force. And we want to mention that below.

### ***A lying spirit***

We summarize *1Kon 22: 20/2*. On a certain day, the king of Judah came, joining Israel in a war against the king of Aram. However, as was very common then, and still today, but reluctantly withdrawn from the publicity, they first consult the seers, here the prophets. These can be divided in this biblical story into only one, the prophet Micaiah, who has a friendship with God, and all the others, about four hundred, who have not and who can only "see" when they enter a trance.

The four hundred predict the king of Israel's victory. Micaiah, however, does not. He reacts in two stages. First, he mocks the king of Israel and says: "Start the battle and you will certainly triumph". The king immediately understood the boasting and demanded the real truth. Then Micaiah became serious: "I saw the whole of Israel scattered over the mountains like sheep without a shepherd and Yahweh said: "They have no Lord, let them quietly return home". I saw Yahweh on His throne. He asked, "Who wants to persuade the prince of Israel to go up to Rama to die there?" Then a spirit came forward. He stood before Yahweh and said, "I want to persuade him. I am going to become a liar in the mouths of all his prophets. Then Yahweh said, "Go and you will succeed." Well, now Yahweh has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all your prophets, because Yahweh has decided your destruction". Thus the words of the prophet Micaiah to the king who asked for the truth and got it straight. Micaiah gets a slap in the face from the king. The monarch calls out: "How could the Spirit of Yahweh have left me to speak to you?" Micaiah: "This is exactly what you will find on the day that you will hide and flee. Go, and you will see". Micaiah was imprisoned. He repeats: "If you return unharmed, then Yahweh did not speak through me". Israel takes up the fight, and indeed loses it. The king does not survive. He was hit by an arrow in his chariot and died. His chariot was stained with blood.

### ***The life force present in blood***

The Bible mentions the ending: "The king's chariot was washed with a lot of water. The dogs licked up his blood and the prostitutes bathed in it". For those who know magic, but this is not the case with many Bible experts, this last sentence becomes particularly meaningful. The fact that prostitutes bathe in royal blood indicates that they perceive this as a magical blood ritual. In a sacred (not in a desacralized) cultural context, the life force of a

sovereign is much stronger than that of non-aristocratic people. By bathing in the blood, the prostitutes take in the life force present in that blood. Here we already refer to the celebration of the Eucharist, in which the life force of Jesus is shared without any blood spill. We will return to this theme of “blood as the bearer of life force” in more detail (8.2.3.).

According to this biblical story, in Israel at the time, of the four hundred ‘seers’, there was only one who, according to the outcome of the story, had the right intuition and ‘saw’ realistically. Although the ‘lying spirit’ acted with the permission of God, it turns out that such inspiring beings also dare to act in their own way. In the Old Testament, *Job 4:18*, we read: “Even in his servants he puts no trust, and he catches his angels on deviations.

According to the Bible, not every inspiring spirit comes from the high world of light, on the contrary.

*1John 4:1* warns us against this distinction of spirits: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. “

In this bible story, there was only one visionary in friendship with God out of four hundred ecstatic, trance-like and intoxicating visionaries.

One may wonder how this balance is today.

If one examines this actual world, it will also be far from favorable in our days. Among hundreds of people who practice the pendulum, card readers and other “clairvoyants”, there is often only one who lives in friendship with God.

This is still the case: seers in friendship with God, tell us that an ongoing prayer to God is a necessity, so as not to be wrongly inspired from moment to moment by some misleading ‘lying spirits’.

### ***A divine spirit***

In relation to such inspiring beings, we read *Acts 16:16/23*: One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, “These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.” She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it

came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely.

If this pericope corresponds to reality, then spirits, not situated in time and space, see hidden or occult realities faster and better than ordinary people. In this way they almost immediately understand the true nature of the apostles' message and the deeper vocation of Paul. It is worth noting that the owners of the clairvoyant woman saw their hopes for income dashed. Once the spirit has been expelled from the woman, in other words, once she is no longer "possessed," she has lost her clairvoyance. This teaches us a great deal about the level, or rather the lack of it, of her seer's gift. The spirit "did so for many days", He manipulated her free will so that she would no longer be herself, she did not do this work freely and Paul wanted to undo it.

### ***Deuteronomy***

The Bible, *Deuteronomy: 18:9 ff.* states the following with respect to such mantic practices: "When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead. For whoever does these things is abhorrent to the Lord; it is because of such abhorrent practices that the Lord your God is driving them out before you."

Opponents of the paranormal see this as a clear condemnation of it and want to ban all mantic and magic from religion. Proponents, on the other hand, argue that this condemnation only applies to "the atrocities of those peoples", namely those people who contact beings who do not appeal to Yahweh's inspirational life force. They don't see what kind of evil lies in trying to solve people's life problems with high divine energies. This vision is reinforced by *Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sira) 34:5*. "Divinations and omens and dreams are unreal, and like a woman in labor, the mind has fantasies. Unless they are sent by intervention from the Most High, pay no attention to them".

It is clear that, for a nominalist person, any form of mantic or magic is based on deception. To put it in Sterley's words: "Our preconceptions surround us like a shield behind which we only perceive what we can explain with our modern, Western reason". We will come back to this in more detail.

Let's summarize. Clairvoyance can manifest itself through a dream, a voice, images or intuitions. In principle, every human being possesses a form of mantle as "the conscience" that "speaks". The high religious vision "face to face" with God or through his messengers is rather a great rarity. A God friendly seer is reluctant to show any publicity because it puts a radical burden on his seership. Without a solid contact with the Biblical God, a reliable clairvoyance becomes an extremely difficult affair and opens the door to 'lying spirits' of all kinds, who only communicate what is convenient to them. Many mediums are inspired by spirits that do not come from God's high light world, and that do not always inform their medium in complete freedom and free will. The Bible repeatedly warns against this "distinction between the spirits".

### **2.5. The unconscious and subconscious**

The Bible speaks of "the heart and in the kidneys" as the seat of the unconscious and subconscious of man. Apparently, religion is not only something of the conscious in us, but it also and above all influences the depths of man's soul. Let's go into that.

#### ***The tip of the iceberg***

A. De Groot, *Elementair begrip van de psychologie*<sup>31</sup>, (Elementary Concept of Psychology), writes: "It is assumed that our behavior, apart from what we consciously know, feel and want, is to a large extent determined by our unknown factors. Depth psychologists assume a deeper motivation, i.e. that they assume that our behavior is also guided by 'deeper' motives, which we ourselves do not know. These unconscious motives can be of many kinds: unconscious wishes, ambitions, inner conflicts, fantasies or prejudices."

The American philosopher and psychologist William James (1842/1910) regretted that man lives very superficially and the Russian philosopher A. Spir (1837/1890) wrote that we control the nature around us, but that we are the slaves of the depths of our souls. Many Greek philosophers, including Socrates, emphasized in their time the "Gnothi seauton", the "know yourself". The opinion that man has a very limited self-knowledge is apparently based on a very old tradition.

The religious historian M. Eliade, *Méphistophélès et l'androgyné*, (Mephistopheles and androgynous), says that the discovery of archaic and exotic cultures and the discovery of the unconscious and subconscious in deep psychology forces traditional humanism in the West to undergo a thorough review. He writes: "It is not impossible that our epoch will go down in history as the first to rediscover the various religious experiences abolished by Christianity when it triumphed (note: in its nominalist, not dynamistic vision)".

In the Anglo-Saxon countries (North America, England), it is believed that man is predominantly aware of what he or she does or does not do. The Occident (Europe, Asia), however, tells a different tale. There they emphasize that there are a lot of unconscious and also subconscious factors at work that make that we do not always act freely. The encouragement, will and striving of man seem like an iceberg, of which only the top that exaggerates is the conscious life. Most of it remains hidden and is influenced by the unconscious and subconscious.

Traditionally, what is unconscious is said to have never been conscious. In this way, the functioning of many vital bodily functions also belongs to the subconscious. From what is subconscious, it is said that it was once conscious, but that it was forgotten afterwards. However, this distinction is not always easy to maintain. For example, a yogi can slow down the heartbeat by means of a concentration of thoughts, which shows that he knows how to deal with so-called 'unconscious' factors very consciously. And through a number of techniques also subconscious data can be brought back into consciousness. The boundary between what is unconscious and what is subconscious, does not always appear to be strictly defined, certainly not in the field of mantic and magic.

### ***Psychoanalysis***

The oldest and most important deep psychological school is the psychoanalysis created by S. Freud (1856/1939). He was a well-known Viennese psychiatrist of Jewish descent, and again brought the unconscious in man to the attention of the public. He became the founder of psychoanalysis. His principles are accepted by a number of people, while others are fiercely controversial. For him, too, a dream is the "royal way" to the unconscious. In his work *Inleiding tot de psychoanalyse*<sup>32</sup> (Introduction to psychoanalysis), we read: "The first of the unwelcome assumptions of psychoanalysis is that the psychological events as such are unconscious and

that only a few actions and fragments of the entire soul's life are conscious". According to Freud, most actions in life take place without conscious rational justification.

He gives a typical and outspoken example of this about a girl who became paralyzed in her legs just before her wedding . She was forced into marriage against her will and something deep in her did not want to 'go to the altar'. This reluctance turned out to be the unconscious cause of her paralysis. When that was clear, the marriage was cancelled and shortly afterwards the paralysis disappeared. Apparently in the depths of the soul the unconscious deductive reasoning was made: "She who cannot go to the altar, cannot marry either. So if I can't go, I can't marry either." Clearly rational, but apparently on an unconscious level.

J. Grant, *Meer dan één leven*<sup>33</sup>, (Many lifetimes), also mentions a similar case. A woman had become paralyzed on both legs in a fairly short time. This turned out to be of psychological origin. Under hypnosis she declared that she suddenly realized the meaning of her paralysis. It was the only way she could avoid a forced marriage. When she realized this also after her hypnosis, her paralysis disappeared after a few days.

In such unconscious and subconscious processes, resemblance and coherence play a role that should not be underestimated. For example, a mother, whose blond son died, will have an intuitive sympathy for blond boys. A very loving young man will cherish every object of his beloved, almost as if it were the beloved herself. In the latter case, it is not a question of what resembles the loved one, but of what is associated with her, what is related to her.

### ***Accidental and non-accidental slippages***

We should also mention here the so-called accidental slips of the tongue, which spontaneously emerge from our deeper psychology, but not without reason. For example: A lady said to a psychiatrist who asked her too much information about too intimate events, in Dutch: " 'Ontkleedt' u zo iedere patiënt?" (Do you Undress each patient like this ) instead of " 'Ontleedt' u zo iedere patiënt" (Do you analyze each patient like this).

One more: After dinner, a gentleman's plate has already been cleared. He doesn't know what to do with his apple peeling and asks a lovely lady next to him, in Dutch: " Mag ik mijn billetjes op uw schortje leggen" ("Can I put my buttocks on your apron?") instead of "Mag ik mijn schilletjes op uw bordje

leggen” ( “Can I put my peel on your (plate)?” Such a slip of the tongue conceals the man’s desires towards this lady.

Sometimes one can also ‘catch’ oneself or others in an overly spontaneous statement that escapes the censorship of conscious thinking and gives up a lot of the deeper soul life. And this is often to the astonishment of those who put it into words afterwards. We illustrate.

A theatre group wanted to portray the theme of “evil” in various situations. The leitmotiv was always an everyday, rather pleasant and peaceful situation, of which “evil” suddenly took over and the play took a very aggressive, yes evil turn. For example, a particular scene first showed a couple in love in front of the altar, ready to receive the wedding blessing and to give each other an ‘I do ‘. Until suddenly “evil” disturbed this lovely scene. The exalted organ music was drowned out by a strong and loud “sympathy for the devil”, while many devils also came to disturb the wedding ritual. The bride in love turned into an evil witch who showed more of her protruding breasts than before and with a raised skirt went to the devils and made it clear what she wanted from them. She further convinced them that she was particularly evil and demanded access to hell. After all, she had poisoned many of her relatives in order to obtain money and power. After the play most of the spectators applauded. Some of them deliberately did not do this and looked around with some anxiety.

At the next group meeting, someone suggested writing a play in which “good” could be highlighted in different situations, now that evil had already been discussed as a theme. The spontaneous reaction of the actors and the board was unanimous, strong and clear: “No, we’re not like that.” The common man will probably not dwell on this statement but sensitive people and seers will talk about the particularly tragic situation of the deep soul - the so-called “occult status” - of those who react in this way.

Also a slip of the tongue such as “da ersch(w)eint Er”; instead of, “da erscheint Er”, “there he appears” tells us a lot more, namely: here comes someone who behaves like “ein Schwein”, like “a pig”. Through such slips of the tongue, Freud saw the unconscious at work.

We refer to the polygraph or lie detector, for example, for accidental slips of the tongue. Those who consciously make verbal mistakes, and thus ‘lie’, can show physiological changes, and this in the rhythm of breathing and blood pressure. This is brought to light by the lie detector - but not without

contradiction. These symptoms can then indicate that a deliberate falsehood is being said.

### ***Plato's depth psychology***

G.J. de Vries, *Plato's beeld van de mens*<sup>34</sup> (Plato's image of man) says that for Plato the soul of man consists of three distinct parts. First there is the big monster, then the smaller lion and finally the small man. The big monster has as 'values' the uncontrolled sexual life and the excessive eating and drinking. The smaller lion is focused on honor, possession, power and the urge to be valid. The little man cultivates as a value everything that is really valuable: the higher ideas and an intellectual-ethical formation. This elevation in man, is called 'small' by Plato. It is unique to the little man and must try to stand up to the big monster and the smaller lion.

Plato did not have too many illusions about the people, as he had come to know them in Athens and Sicily. For him, man is mainly characterized by the smaller lion. The autocrat or tyrant is predominantly controlled by his great monster who strives for power, influence and possession and who 'tyrannizes' him. Because of this, he is not free. Tyrannical people want to assert themselves and know hardly any limits in this respect. The Flemish lawyer and politician H. Schiltz<sup>35</sup> (1927/2006) put it this way: "Give people absolute freedom with impunity and they become animals". We say that it certainly does not apply to 'all' people, but to 'not all', to a number of them. Father Damien, who took the lead on Molokai, realized the highest expectations that the "little man" can realize in a life. We have therefore crowned him the greatest Belgian with good reason.

The big monster and the smaller lion are more easily active during our sleep. Then our spirit, our little man, has fallen asleep. He no longer fully controls the immoral desires of the monster and the lion during the night's sleep. They can then indulge themselves. This will become clear to us in the chapter dealing with the so-called off-body experiments (6), and on the basis of the story of D. Fortune and her revenge demon (7.4.1.). In off-body experiences, the soul detaches itself and leaves the biological body. In this case the great monster satisfies his lusts and dares in this twilight state everything, released, he is no longer ashamed and no longer knows any inhibitions. The story of Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* will also illustrate this (10.4.) Therefore Plato advises to cherish 'good' ideas before falling asleep, to avoid all anger or resentment and to bring the lower lusts to the right measure. When you fall asleep angry, you prepare yourself for similar dreams. And as will be discussed later, a number of them can have a far-

reaching reality value. Plato seems to warn us against an overly strong outburst of anger, as some psychologists or psychotherapists dare to recommend. We will discuss this further in this book when the moral taboos of the religions are discussed (10.4.).

‘Plato, with his three-way division, seems to be founding a form of in-depth psychology that, in terms of feelings of value, is certainly broader than, for example, the Freudian one. As we know, Freud emphasized the sexual, the erotic, and the aggressive, the ‘thanatos’ all too strongly in man. He also saw in man a trinity. However, no monster, lion or small man, but an ‘Ich’, an ‘Es’ and a ‘Ueber-ich’. In English: the ‘id’, the ‘ego’, and the ‘superego’. According to Freud, the ‘Ich’, the ‘id’ or the independent principle in man, is dominated from within by the ‘Es’ or the ‘ego’, and the ‘Ueber-Ich’, the ‘superego’. The ‘Es’ stands for the genealogical inheritance in which drift life is situated. The ‘Ueber-Ich’ represents the socio-cultural norms, values and ideals which, according to Freud, constitute the ‘conscience’. They have been imposed from the outside by the established society that suppresses freedom and prohibits the survival of sex and the urge to kill. That’s what the conflict is all about. The ‘Ich’ has to deal with the disagreement between the ‘Es’ and ‘Ueber-ich’. In this way man constantly stands between two choices: the lower and the higher in him. For Freud, the suppression of the ‘Es’ can be the beginning of a neurosis or a psychosis.

We see clear differences in these two triplications of Plato and Freud. For the Viennese psychiatrist, there are no higher values at all, no high ideas in themselves. Freud thinks strongly materialistically. The norms to which a person has to adhere, are imposed socially and culturally and actually have a repressive effect on drift life. In Freud we find no reference whatsoever to that which transcends mankind. His ‘Ueber-Ich’ or ‘unconscious conscience’ is not the pure conscience that originates from our ‘mind’, from the ‘little man’ in us. His conception of the so-called conscience regularly shows demonic characteristics. Man is mainly influenced and programmed by lower passions. According to Freud, social norms somewhat inhibit this.

### ***The “family unconscious”***

L. Szondi (1893/1986), a Hungarian psychoanalytical psychiatrist and author of *Schicksalsanalyse*<sup>36</sup>, (Fate Analysis), has spent his entire life immersing himself in the “fate” of mankind. In 1916, during the war, he was shot in the back as a soldier in the trenches. The bullet was stuck in his backpack in a book and had saved his life. The title of this book was *Traumdeutung* (dream interpretation) by S. Freud. This remarkable incident

made Szondi think. He studied hundreds of family histories, including those of the Russian writer F. Dostoyevsky (1821/1881). Szondi's main proposition is: the fate of a few is largely determined by the pedigree, i.e. the ancestors. He speaks of a "family-conscious" who give a mysterious purpose to the depths of the soul. Ailments and the course of life of ancestors easily pass on to their own descendants. Profession, marriage, and friendships are determined by it. For Szondi, it is clear: life is much more than just a blind coincidence. The unconscious plays an important role in all this.

Also P. Van Eersel, *J'ai mal à mes ancêtres*<sup>37</sup>, (I am 'homesick' for my ancestors), states that ailments of ancestors can have an effect on offspring. In her book, she gives an extensive account of this subject to seven specialists.

J. Herbert, *La religion d'Okinawa*<sup>38</sup> (The religion of Okinawa,), lets us feel what ancestor worship can be. Okinawa (Ryu-kyu) consists of 73 islands and islets between China and Japan, of which several dozen are inhabited. The local religion is apparently very old there because there are only women known as sacred intermediaries, who are called 'noro' or 'tsukasa'. As healers they work together with doctors and supplement them. Herbert says of them: "They discover who the ancestor is who makes the offspring suffer and teach the sick how to bring peace to the ancestor. This is very common today (note: in 1975) with men or women who were killed during the war. The same goes for seafarers or fishermen who drowned. I have been cited for the case of a woman who had a sore throat. Well, she had a brother who was killed during the war. She finally discovered where he was buried. That is what she addressed to the local noro, who intervened. The woman was cured because her deceased brother was being treated". By way of speech, one could say: "She suffered from her brother".

### ***The world of dreams***

We remain in the world of the unconscious and illustrate its power. Trygve Braatoy, *Uit de praktijk van een psychiater*<sup>39</sup>, (From the practice of a psychiatrist), tells the story of a married woman who thought she behaved very distant towards her husband. She had a very peculiar dream, which she entrusts to her psychiatrist. Braatoy wrote, "G. (her husband) and I are in a boat. He has a giant nail in his hand. I have to lie on the bottom of the boat and try to pull the nail in a small ring. I beg G. to stop, but he wants to go on. The nail pierces my flesh and also the boat. I am wounded. I am bleeding. The flowers that we wore on our heads fall into the water. The flowers turn

into horrible women's faces. G. notices that we are sinking, but fortunately I have a large amount of putty with me to repair the boat."

The sexual symbolism of this dream is so clear that even the most dogged of Freud's opponents cannot deny it. But there is more. The wife said that the consummation of the marriage during the first wedding night caused problems and that the husband then had the audacity to notice that her predecessors were doing better. She still remembers all these peculiarities but did not see the connection between her detachment from her husband and his rough attitude at the time. When the psychiatrist makes this clear to her, she understands it and she immediately feels relieved and the fear she had felt for her husband until then, suddenly disappeared.

This dream illustrates a very applied 'mythology', expressed in a complex and as yet archaic style. He gives us an example of spontaneous, almost magical poetry. The start is very conventional: the wedding boat. Then follows the sexual symbolism, the nail and the ring. Furthermore, there is the ruin of the marriage from the beginning: the sinking of the boat. Very poetically, the misfortune takes on the form of the flowers that fall. The joy and happiness sink away in the water. And the husband's 'predecessors' get their place too. The flowers turn into terrible women's faces. The woman is the first to notice the disaster. The putty says something about the artificial situation of both spouses.

This dream clearly shows us the visual capacity of man. In images, the only language known to the unconscious, the dream wants to bring to its consciousness the sad situation of the woman's marriage. This dream does indeed imply reality, but its meaning cannot simply be traced to the assumptions and scope of hard science.

Braatoy is also interested in subconscious associations. He writes: "But if, for example, a child experiences every day that his father, when he comes home from his office, swears while eating his soup, it can happen that later in his life the child no longer likes the soup, without even knowing the real cause".

### ***The placebo effect***

The Latin term "placebo" means "I please". Emile Coué (1857/1926), a pharmacist, became acquainted with the way in which he put the power of suggestion into practice. He published *Zelfbeheersing door bewuste autosuggestie*<sup>40</sup>. (Self-control by conscious autosuggestion). He once had a

sick man in his shop who begged him for a medicine that could not be sold without a doctor's prescription. The man insisted to such a degree that Coué would sell him a bottle of distilled water and tell him extensively how effective this medicine was. A week later the man came to thank him. He was cured. Doctors know this phenomenon very well. Coué studied that experience in applied psychology. However, such a suggestion does not explain everything. The effect of the placebo method depends on who prescribes the medicine, it differs between doctors. Even with the same doctor, it works one time and the next time it doesn't. The process lacks rationalist reasoning and is therefore irrational and unpredictable. How the suggestion works is not so clear.

What is now called "positive thinking" within New-Age is a resumption of Coué's method. Let's also mention that the opposite, "negative thinking", exists. Everyone knows people who constantly complain about themselves. They always refer to their own failures or hard days. It is clear that by constantly cherishing negative thoughts, they keep a lot of ailments alive and make themselves sick by means of autosuggestion. We refer to the sentences in the ABC-theory (2.3.). Freud once wrote a work titled "Die flucht in die Krankheit", (The flight into the disease). It's possible that negative thinking can show itself in that way.

We also mention Sandra Blakeslee, *Guérir grâce aux Placebos*<sup>41</sup> (Healing with Placebos). We think about the placebo effect in such detail because it illustrates the power of the 'spirit', of the 'mental life' in a particularly clear way. Blakeslee mentions. We are in 1957. M. Wright had been described by the doctors in Long Beach (California) as a heavy cancer sufferer. With tumors the size of an orange, he had a few days to live. But he learns that scientists had discovered 'krebiozen', a very powerful drug, against cancer. He begged him to administer it. Dr. Philip West, his doctor, eventually gave in. One Friday afternoon, he received the desired injection. The following Monday, a stunned doctor found his patient. He was healthy and out of bed, laughing with the nurses. The tumors had vanished into thin air. Two months later, M. Wright reads medical texts that claimed that it was a quack remedy. His cancer reappeared a little later. "Don't believe what you've read in the newspapers", says West, who then administered a dose of what he called "a new, twice as strong and improved version of the drug". It was, in fact, water. The tumors disappeared again. Mr. Wright radiated health for two months. When he later read a final report stating that krebiozen was "worth nothing," he died two days later. So much for Blakeslee.

How can such facts be indicated? Some Doctors who know the history of Mr. Wright reject them as “one of those bizarre stories that scientific medicine can’t explain”. After all, the very idea that a patient’s belief can make an ill-fated disease disappear is ‘bizarre’. However, some scientists are beginning to take the power of the placebo effect seriously and are discovering the biological mechanisms that cause the quasi-miraculous effects of the placebo.

Studies consistently confirm the importance of “these lies that heal”, as Anne Harrington, Harvard University’s historian of sciences, puts it. Like real medicines, they can cause secondary effects such as itching, diarrhea, disgust.... They can also alter heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, erection and skin quality. Such facts can be neglected or investigated. Only this last interpretation is the real scientific one.

### ***A measurable neurobiological and physiological change***

In the documentary of BBC 2, *The Power of Placebo*<sup>42</sup>, scientists discuss the use of placebos. For example, fake surgeries were carried out on broken vertebrae to relieve back pain. Patients who under local anesthesia underwent this sham operation were given positive suggestions about the successful outcome of this surgical procedure. The conclusion was that the fake treatment was as effective as an actual operation. The question immediately arises as to whether something actually happens in the body and, if so, what it is.

It is known that there is less oxygen in the air at high altitude. That’s why mountaineers can use extra oxygen in bottles. This oxygen ensures that a specific neurotransmitter, NPG2, is produced in the brain, so that with less pain, more muscle work can be done. A hiker near the Matterhorn, who had muscle aches if he didn’t have extra oxygen, was given a bottle that, without his knowledge, contained no oxygen at all. Afterwards it turned out that he had completed the entire mountain trip without any muscle aches. Can this result be explained purely psychologically as a form of imagination? Or is there more going on? In order to get more clarity about this, a brain scan was taken from this man. This showed that his brain, without that extra oxygen, would also have produced the same neurotransmitter. The man’s expectation had caused a measurable neurobiological and physiological change. This clearly points in the direction of a bond between body and mind. However, the researchers point out the limitations of the use of placebos. For example, it is said that they do not cure a broken leg or reduce a tumor. However,

Wright's experience, which we have mentioned above, suggests the opposite. He did cure his cancer and his tumors were gone.

Because they remain "lies" that lead to healing, and people don't like to cheat on patients, it was decided at Harvard University to set up an experiment in which the patients were told the truth beforehand. "Look, we're not going to give you your trusted pills for a few weeks now, but a placebo, and we want to know how you're going to react to it. Even then it turned out that those who took a placebo were better off than those who didn't use a fake pill. If this experiment was stopped after three weeks, the old symptoms of the patients would reappear. A patient told her that she was hopelessly looking for her placebo, but that no one was allowed to sell it to her anymore. The experiment, which had been approved by the US government, was over. After all, fake pills are not an officially recognized drug and should therefore no longer be prescribed.

The researchers added that placebos are more effective when the doctor has a good and empathetic attitude towards his or her patients and when he or she radiates great confidence. Non-western cultures will immediately associate such a charisma with a kind of subtle, beneficent radiance emanating from the healer and capable of accelerating healing to a significant degree. Of course, the patient can mobilize positive thoughts and thus energies that help to heal. If we continue to think about this, we can see in all of this an indication that many alternative healing methods may well have a real value that goes far beyond the boundaries of hard medical science.

Max Heindel (1865/1919) writes in his book *De cosmogonie der rozekruisers*<sup>43</sup> (The Cosmogony of Rosicrucian's) that suggestion has an effect on the higher, thinner bodies, something that has an effect on the biologic body. He says that successful doctors make use of suggestion as a means of supporting medicine. The more a doctor can give his or her patient faith and hope, the sooner the disease will disappear. We will go deeper into the vision of many philosophical and religious movements that claim that man possesses a number of subtle bodies in addition to his biological body (9.2.2.).

### ***A posthypnotic order***

People can "fool themselves". They 'rationalize'. They give a reason to justify their behavior rationally. But in some cases it is not the real, underlying reason. For example, let's mention what the literature calls the "posthypnotic command". Cohen, *Psychologie als Science-Fiction*<sup>44</sup>,

(Psychology as Science-Fiction), illustrates. During a hypnosis show, a woman is instructed, after her hypnosis, to thank those present at the end of the show for their attention. Hours later and seemingly long out of hypnosis and completely herself again, the woman suddenly carries out this order at the end of the evening. The hypnotist asks her why she does this. The answer is: "Somebody has to thank those present!" And she does this when she has no idea of the real reason. It is well known that you can tell a lot about hypnotized people, for example that distilled water tastes so bad that it can't be drunk.

### **Reincarnation.**

The English seer J. Grant (1907/1981), as a supporter of reincarnation or re-incorporation, pointed out in her book *Meer dan één leven*<sup>45</sup>, (Many lifetimes), that traumas suffered in a previous existence can have an effect in the present life. She tells the story of a man who was allergic to feathers. The event took place during the Second World War, when finding food was a daily problem. J. Grant gave a visitor a slaughtered turkey on a certain day. Normally this would be a very welcome gift. However, the man did not succeed in accepting the turkey. He felt a deadly fear come to him. Joan Grant concentrated and 'saw' the cause of this fear on another level of reality. The man, she says, had been badly wounded in a previous life on a battlefield. His friends could not have given him the "coup de grace" to put an end to his misery.

Still alive he got shredded to pieces by vultures, until he finally died. 'Something' in him had 'learned' that touching feathers is tantamount to dying. That same 'something' inside his soul, wanted to avoid a repetition of such a calamity. In his present incarnation the man had no conscious memory of this event, but his subconscious knew the lesson all too well: "if you want to live, stay away from feathers". When Joan Grant told him what she saw as the cause, the man got very upset, revived the whole thing again, but now very consciously and with all the painful emotions of that time. Afterwards he understood what caused the compulsion in him. And that disproved the chain of "cause and effect", as a result of which his allergy to feathers disappeared. Grant concludes her story by saying that the man, on his way back to London, couldn't help himself to open the packaged turkey on the train and caress the feathers.

If one takes reincarnation seriously, there is a logical connection between the event on the battlefield in a previous life, and the current allergy to

feathers. From a nominalist point of view, the theme of reincarnation is, of course, no more than a foolish fiction.

### ***Subliminal messages***

We'll stay with the unconscious and the subconscious. Let's consult J.P. Régimbal, *Le rock 'n roll, (viol de la conscience par les messages sublimineaux<sup>46</sup>)*, (Rock'n roll, (rape of consciousness by subliminal messages)). In the 1980s, there was a great deal to do about the so-called subliminal messages. These are messages, hidden in some pieces of music, that would not be perceived consciously, but unconsciously. It is remarkable that these messages are pronounced in reverse. They aren't noticed by listening consciously subconsciously. If one wants to be able to listen to these messages clearly, one has to play the music in reverse. Which is, for example, possible with an old tape recorder that still has loose coils. Among the bizarre sounds that can be heard then, one hears specific sentences. According to Régimbal, such messages can be found in a number of songs. For example in the fragment from the song 'Stairways to heaven' by Led Zeppelin (3rd strophe): "There is a feeling I get when I look to the West. And my spirit is crying for leaving. In my thoughts I have seen rings of smoke through the trees. And the voices of those who stand looking". This strophe contains the subliminal message: "I've got to live for Satan". In the album 'Killers' of the group 'Queen', in the song "Another one bites the dust", one hears 'reversed' sound: "Start to smoke marijuana". In the song 'Authem' by the group 'Rush', the message with reversed listening is: "Oh Satan.... you are the one who is shining... walls of Satan.... walls of sacrifice... I know you are the one I love".

Needless to say, this makes no sense from a nominalist point of view. The fact that people are influenced unconsciously and subconsciously in this way can seem very unbelievable to many of our contemporaries. After all, our culture is very fond of rationalist reason, of the social engineering and autonomy of one's own life. So that one can hardly understand that there can be such a thing as unconscious or subconscious influence in man. That, of course, is everyone's democratic right. The ultimate question is whether this corresponds to reality. From the occult vision it indeed becomes a completely different story. There it is said that "the children of darkness" are much more enterprising in that magical field than "the children of light". And if such subliminal messages are indeed effective, what is still possible in that occult, magical field?

A study conducted by the United Nations<sup>47</sup> concludes: “The cultural implications of subliminal indoctrination is a major threat to human rights throughout the world”.

### ***Ethnopsychiatry***

With regard to the unconscious and subconscious in man, we also refer to so-called ethnopsychiatry. Our Western rationalistic psychiatry, which works for us in the West (if it works!), can hardly or not at all be applied to other cultures. There it is much easier to resort to the traditional healers of one’s own culture, who try to help patients with traditional means, such as conjuring up ghosts and carrying out incantations. In many cases, this means that patients claim to be much better served by their healers than by (some of) our psychiatrists. The latter would all too easily want to eliminate the consequences of a problem, for example through pharmaceutical prescriptions for tranquilizers, without tackling the root cause of the problem.

At least, that is what, among others, Daryush Shaygan, *Le regard mutilé, Pays traditionnels face à la modernité*<sup>48</sup> (The mutilated gaze, Traditional countries facing modernity) claims.

A reader of the Swiss newspaper *Le Temps*, Thérèse Liechti, reacts with *Qu’est-ce que la maladie mentale?*<sup>49</sup> (What is mental illness?), to an article in her newspaper. She notes that psychiatry is very expensive. Despite unprecedented spending, the number of completely successful cures for individuals who “suffer from mental disorders” is unusually low. In 1952, the DSM (the American Bible for Psychiatry) counted 112 mental disorders. Today, it counts 374.

Tobie Nathan (1948/...), *Le sperme du diable*<sup>50</sup>, (The devil’s sperm), introduces his book as follows: “Let’s be clear: Western psychiatry has not been able to secure the health of the members of traditional societies, either in their country of origin or in the country to which they have emigrated. That is a fact. But the consequences, both scientific and economic, are considerable. As things stand, more than eighty percent of the world’s population resorts to traditional therapeutic techniques such as shamanism, exorcism, mantic and the ways of paranormal healing.”

### ***Vanity that dazzles***

Religion also has its unconscious and subconscious aspects. The Bible, *psalm 19 (18):12* is shy of unconsciously committing evil: “Who can discern

his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults.” The “Holy Trinity” is, according to Christianity, the name for the rather mysterious bond between “three people”. First of all, God the Father, the Creator of all that exists. Then, Jesus Christ, His “son”, and finally the Holy Spirit. These ‘three-in-one’ forms, still according to Christianity, an inexhaustible source of subtle power. The unconscious and subconscious tendencies in man can surpass the conscious. In John 8: 44 Christ says to the Pharisees: “ You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

Among other things, the Pharisees criticized the fact that Jesus cured a lame man on a Sabbath. For them, respecting the relevant laws, which forbid all work on that day, was more important than helping their fellow man out of his or her misery. Jesus tries to make it clear to them that, in their unbelief, they are not free. They do not realize that deep in their souls a hostile inner word resounds. Jesus continues (*Jean 8:26*): “He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.”

In other words, in the depths of the Pharisees’ souls, according to the Bible, an inspiring person - ‘a father’ - is at work, but not the Biblical God but Satan. And this while the Pharisees consciously believe they are serving God, they in fact, unconsciously or subconsciously, carry out Satan’s will. It is difficult to express a more profound criticism of consciousness. This lack of self-knowledge, the totally erroneous assessment of oneself, holds a whole tragedy in itself.

Paul Diel (1893/1972), an Austrian-French psychologist and psychotherapist, talks in his *Psychologie, psychanalyse et médecine*<sup>51</sup> (Psychology, psychoanalysis and medicine) about a form of vanity that is blinding. One is so full of oneself that one never questions one’s own assumptions and practices. One “knows better” and finds every reflection superfluous. This haughty attitude prevents further inner growth. One perseveres “in a petrified way” in an “anger” which usually remains unconscious. It remains remarkable that one consciously believes that one is doing good, while unconsciously or subconsciously one does not do so at all, yes, in depth one even achieves the opposite. We will discuss this apparent contradiction further.

According to the Bible, it can be interpreted as a kind of divine judgment that gradually permeates the depths of mankind. The Pharisees can apparently make a serious mistake in estimating what they call their 'occult status': knowing the ethical level of their deeper and fundamental 'I'. Consciously they think they are doing the right thing, but unconsciously and subconsciously they are doing the wrong thing. This clearly shows that real religion is not a surface phenomenon, but a deep phenomenon, hidden in the unconscious. In biblical terms: such a religion is situated not so much in the mind but "in heart and soul". Once again, this demonstrates the need to become aware of our 'hidden' assumptions. They too, especially, are sometimes more situated on a level that is not, or hardly, conscious.

Diel states that our self-knowledge has been misled by lies that we believe to be true. Especially our vanities disturb our self-observations. Vanity, in Latin 'vanitas', means 'emptiness' and 'complacency'. The biblical book *Ecclesiastes* and also *psalm 36 (35)* warn us about this vanity, about a bias. One has a prejudice about oneself, so that one thinks of what is not there, that it is there and vice versa. This being inadequate, being less than ideal, is something one doesn't want to realize". It is an exaggerated opinion about oneself, an opinion that overestimates one's own actual qualities. Thus understood vanity is the opposite of truth, especially with regard to oneself. To the extent that man, in his worthy spirit, is affected by vanity - and no one is completely free of it - he tends to interpret his vanity value judgments as indisputable truths. And, as a result, he wants to label the behavior that originates from it as infallibly correct. Diel says that in the first place it is not the sexual strivings - as Freud puts it - that disturb our self-knowledge, but our vanity. As said, Freud saw 'eros', sex, and 'thanatos', the urge to kill, at work in the depths of mankind. Our vanity means that we are so full of ourselves, that we don't critically examine our assumptions. We really don't have to, because "we're right anyway", or so we think. A possible bias is thus hardly or not at all revealed.

This duality, the fact that people in their deeper 'I' are sometimes opposed to their 'superficial I' can also be found elsewhere, for example in S. Seligman, *Die Zauberkraft des Auges und das Berufen*<sup>52</sup> (*The magic power of the eye and the calling*). This very solid work states that all cultures, from the very beginning, have clearly known that a person can be very good at being conscious and socio-cultural, while he, unconsciously, can carry the "evil eye" at heart. And unfortunately, it also radiates. Which means that, without knowing it, one can cause a lot of evil. As already mentioned, it may be clear from all this that religion is primarily a matter of the depths of our soul, less

of our conscious. It isn't the case that one is disbelieving today and believing tomorrow, or the other way around. No, religion does not only concern the mind, but also the will, the emotion and especially the unconscious and subconscious depths of the soul have to do with it. We will come back to this at length.

### ***Clairvoyance, as key to the unconscious and subconscious***

From what was said about the unconscious and subconscious, our inner life seems to be a swirling world. In this world hidden influences and forgotten events want to assert themselves in one way or another. In this way they can thoroughly influence our behavior. And this, strangely enough, usually without our conscious knowledge. It takes a long and difficult self-reflection, sometimes with expert help from outside, to gain some insight and understanding. It takes a lot of attention to get a firm grip on what might harm us and to turn it around for the better. An expert help can be sought through psychological or in-depth psychological channels. Or we can go a step further and seek the advice of a mantic gifted person. In all these areas we hope to find the necessary competence and integrity. However, experience shows that the reality in that area can be misleadingly different (2.4.) and that our hopes are more likely to remain a pious wish.

The term 'mantic' comes from the ancient Greek 'mantikè technè', the ability to act as a seer. An old Greek term that is very related to this is 'mnèmosunè', expanded consciousness. This is how one "sees" "everything that once was, now is, and will ever be". One sees in the past, present and future. Not only individual facts, but above all connections between many facts. One 'sees' what is related to a fact, one sees the chain of cause and effect. Translating the term 'mnèmosunè', as usually happens, through 'memory' is therefore largely erroneous. Homer and Hesiod, the oldest Greek literators, invoke such an expanded consciousness. Another ancient Greek term related to this, 'theoria', is to discuss something in such a way that one understands the reasons for it. The paleo-Pythagoreans, the Greek philosophers who preceded Pythagoras, put the 'theoria' at the center of their philosophy alongside Plato. Translating into our current term 'theory' is only partially correct. A soldier on guard, a spy for example, does 'theoria'. This means that he continues to 'follow' something, someone or whatever, in order to thoroughly know whether there is danger.

If one wants to get to know clairvoyance in a thorough sense, and wants to know the theory of it, then one has to keep an eye on what one 'sees', the expanded form of consciousness (mèmosunè) and the thorough degree of

perception (theoria). If not, one impoverishes a rich fact in such a way that only nonsense is left over.

***That, I can't believe!***

Let us illustrate the existence of mantic talent with a text by a solid seer who denounces the blindness of many representatives of the established sciences. Here's what Eliane Gauthier, *Voyants*<sup>53</sup> says: "In the realm of mankind, the most enlightened and cultivated minds seem to refuse the evidence on the grounds that "I don't believe it". Some scientists would never think of neglecting the accurate and objective observation of facts in the midst of their scientific work. And yet, with all that is "psychic", they mock. If they are confronted with it, they lose all accuracy and condemn a-priori (understand: axiomatically and without any research, from a prejudice) something with which they are not at all familiar. If they are told that, for example, an event predicted two years ago occurred, they will become deaf or have a firm conviction about quackery. If the pyres still existed, they would condemn those who possess the gift. They would, however, anxiously avoid any investigation into the existence of this gift." Eliane Gauthier possessed, without knowing it, the gift that happened to be revealed and confessed: "I did not believe in it, but out of curiosity I did not leave it at that".

She writes: "According to Freud, if the dream is the royal road to the unconscious, then clairvoyance in its own way can be a road that gives access to the invisible and powerful part of ourselves. That part dominates our lives, often without us realizing it. In our deepest soul there is someone who knows more about it than we do. Is that our guardian angel or is that the demon the ancient Greeks talked about? In any case, one has to keep the silence necessary to listen to that person," Gauthier stressed. In meditative techniques, man tries to calm his mind. In order to find out what thoughts, images or impressions spontaneously occur to him and what they are intended to explain to him. "Our unconscious wants to give us pieces and pieces of messages and it expresses itself in images and symbols" she writes. To this one can add the many sentences that our 'inner word' literally gives us and on which we already went into more detail when mentioning the ABC-theory. Let us remember that the letter A stood for the given data, B for our assumptions with which we approach the data and C for the final result: the given (A) as we see it (C) from our perspective (B). All people, with a sufficient introspection, experience it and all psychotherapists conclude it: if such sentences are negative, they can cause a lot of disaster. They watched how the inner sentences are sometimes pronounced: "I'm never lucky anyway" or "Everything always goes wrong for us". The so-called "positive thinking"

wants to make positively formulated sentences penetrate the depths of the mind. For example: “I am getting better every day in every respect”. Real seers experience the need for such an awareness on a daily basis. In this way, many of the signs, symbols and scenes that emerge can be associated with each other to form a meaningful whole.

Gauthier argues that the person who ‘sees’ does nothing other than inform the person who consults, what the latter actually knows himself, but without being aware that he or she knows it. She thinks that in all of us there is a hidden place in which “everything that once was, now is, and will ever be”, can at the same time become clear to those who have access to that place, namely the clairvoyants.

According to her, the psychic has the ability to achieve objective facts by capturing the client’s conscious and unconscious or subconscious motives. These often differ from what the consulting person thinks he or she knows on the basis of what he or she finds superficially evident. Thus the client’s unconscious and subconscious appears telepathically to the seer, who understands and possibly also expresses this. It may happen that the seer does not immediately see him- or herself ready in a situation and therefore asks the client to imagine the problem again in his or her mind. If the client calls up the images again, it seems as if the seer not only sees this, but also perceives and feels more than the client himself.

Gauthier observes that such a clear perception can take place directly and without any material object. Usually, however, an infrastructure - “un support” in French - is needed to achieve the altered state of consciousness. In this situation, the seer or seeress comes into contact with the unconscious of the person asking for a consultation. One chooses the method that one considers most appropriate for oneself. This has no influence whatsoever on the nature of what the seeing person perceives. They can be cards, coffee grounds or numbers as the numerologists use them, or the rustling of the leaves or whatever. Perhaps the term ‘catalyst’ is the best way to describe the right role for the chosen method. The catalyst helps to keep the thoughts focused and sets the mantic vision in motion.

### **Our demon or guardian angel?**

In the chapter on clairvoyance (2.2.4) we mentioned the term “religious vision”. This means that serious vision is associated with the Biblical God. “Deep in our soul there is someone who knows more about it than we do. Is that our guardian angel or is that the ‘daimon’ that ancient Greeks spoke

of?” Gauthier wonders. In such a serious matter as the mantic counselling of one’s fellow man, it is necessary to be appropriately influenced. One can ask oneself alongside Gauthier whether the best advice can be gathered from the demons in “the swirling world in which so many hidden factors and forgotten events want to assert themselves in one way or another” or from our “guardian angel”.

In order not to be misled, one can appeal to a biblical form of mantic. This means that as a seer, during mantic observation, one asks the leadership of the Holy Trinity, almost constantly through prayer. One wants to get the right voice, the right inspiration and the right images, and not those of some demonic being. That this is not a vain thought has already taught us the history of the lying spirit (2.4) and will become abundantly clear later in this text.

Malaker situates the use of the pendulum in a religious context, this of course applies to the whole domain of clairvoyance and mantic in general.

We refer for example to the Bible, *Daniel 2: 20/23*. Daniel lives as a prophet and seer among non-Biblical seers, soothsayers, wizards and magicians who work under the guidance of non-Biblical gods and goddesses. Faced with an extremely serious problem, the interpretation of the king’s dream, Daniel says of God: “It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him.” Daniel asks for insight in order to interpret the dream (the given) correctly (the requested) in such a way as to arrive at a correct insight (the solution). Mantic, practiced in a biblical, serious and conscientious way, wants to help people to imagine and realize their future in a positive way, and this as the Holy Trinity foresees it.

In the meantime, it may come as a surprise that we are already suggesting a connection between, on the one hand, the impulses that are “our own” and are known in our individual unconscious and subconscious souls and, on the other hand, what “is not ours” and what may be inspired by “demons” or “non-biblical gods and goddesses”. In a dynamically conceived religion where subtle energies and information find their way in an unconscious and subconscious way, the strict separation between what is strictly private and what is not, cannot always be clearly delineated. We are unconsciously and subconsciously influenced by others. That was already clear in the chapter on dynamism and will become even clearer when we talk about the suggestion. We will come back to such impressions and

inspirations in detail, for example when we discuss the equal that seeks the equal and the so-called “harmony of the opposites” in chapter 11.

We conclude that a lot of clues exist that confirm the influence of the unconscious and subconscious. And this not only in depth psychology, but also in spontaneous slips of the tongue or in the study of pedigrees. In the latter case, everything points to the effect of something like a “family-conscious”, in which, according to some, the ancestors, in addition to their role in the past, continue to have an active effect on their offspring in the present. The placebo effect and the posthypnotic command also clearly show that man does not always know the true reasons for his behavior and is rather seldom aware of the influences he undergoes. A whole new level is the adoption of the effect of the subliminal messages or of possible connections between past lives and the present. The fact that non-western cultures are more helped with their traditional medicine than with western psychiatry, points to the not to be underestimated influence that man undergoes from the depths of his soul and his culture.

The consciousness that is so highly valued in Western culture is probably not as firmly placed on its pedestal as many a nominalist would have wished. For many, the influence of the unconscious and subconscious may ultimately be of greater importance than that of the conscious. As evident by the criticism of Jesus on the all too vain behavior of the Pharisees. The mantic also pointed to this. With regard to our theme, religion, the existence of the hidden depths of our soul and the inspiring influences that our soul undergoes for good or for evil, will be discussed in detail.

## **2.6. Evolution**

### ***Extensive autonomy***

In the chapter on the “homo religiosus” the pairing “spirit / flesh” was mentioned (1.4.1.), related to the pairing “holy / profane”. Here the term “spirit” stands for “godly life force” and “flesh” for a life deprived of it. In this case, man is faced with choices over and over again. Does he sow in the flesh or in the spirit? His harvest will always reflect these choices. His evolution can be more straightforward, or essentially characterized by trial and error. God has indeed given man far-reaching autonomy.

Anyone who considers the actual evolution of mankind will see that, for example, violence is no stranger to it at all. As the prophet Isaiah put it in his time (*Is 24: 1/6*): “The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant” (note:

the ten commandments, see 1.4.1). If man exceeds certain limits and turns away from God, then God says (in *Genesis 6:3*) that he no longer invests his life force in a sinful man.

### ***Profane and sacred history***

O. Willmann (1839/1920), *Geschichte des Idealismus*<sup>54</sup>, (History of Idealism), sketches the essence of Christianity. He mentions the great moments of ‘consecrated history’ as they were called. There is sacred history that precedes the coming of Jesus and prepares for it, there is the entry of ‘salvation’ into time with the public life of Jesus, and there is the continuation of that same ‘salvation’ in eternity”. There is also a ‘historical’, a temporal, earthly or secular side.

Salvation history is first and foremost history of upbringing. God educates with a view to the future. But then it is clear that beyond the profane history we all know, there is also a sacred or consecrated history. Two forms of history and therefore also of evolution are intertwined: a visible and an invisible one. Both have points of contact. So when Yahweh speaks to the people through his prophets in concrete historical situations. “That’s how Yahweh speaks” is the explanation. That is how Yahweh makes history and leads it. Thus salvation history is created in a very strict sense. Yahweh creates the whole of reality, including man, and gives him far-reaching autonomy. By making wrong choices, man moves away from God and from His life force, to which God sends a helper: His son Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary. The Bible tells us that Jesus suffered, was crucified and was buried. Immediately after that He “descended into hell” and rose after three days. Later He ascended into heaven. After that God sends the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Finally, Jesus will return in glory at the end of time to judge the world. These are the great similarities of sacred history with the profane.

While a human being lives through profane evolution and simply lives his life, he also evolves in a sacred way. It can be constructive or degrading, depending on the ethical qualities he realizes or neglects in life. We have an insight into our profane way of life, but hardly, if at all, into our sacred evolution. That is why it is so strange that clairvoyants do have an insight into the sacred level of their client. It may seem like a contradiction, but when viewed in this way they know us better than we know ourselves. The reality of the “descent into hell” mentioned above will be discussed in detail in the chapter on religious intermediaries and shamans (6.3.). This universal or planetary history is explained in its baselines, in St. Augustine’s work *De civitate Dei* (The State of God).

### ***An individual sacred history***

Man makes a profane and a sacred history. His deeper soul is also subject to evolution. Usually, this evolution is well hidden from the ordinary man. But sometimes 'sacred experiences' can occur in someone's life. Often these are not recognized as such or their importance is only understood after an entire ripening process. For others, such experiences are so impressive, so overwhelming and profound that they are regarded as the highlights of life and even guide and direct the whole of the rest of life.

The Bible (*Mk 8:36/37*) also points out the exceptional importance of such a contact with this 'exalted', with everything that transcends this life: "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul? For what will a man give in exchange for his soul? Jesus emphasizes it: there is no equivalent for the soul, it cannot be exchanged for anything. This pursuit of the higher is apparently so important for religious people that there is nothing in this world that can compensate for it. The constant focus on this, the awareness that this higher one flows through the lower one and overpowers it, makes that difficulties are seen and lived through in a completely different and broader perspective.

Also for St. Augustine, the great church teacher of patriarchy, all history is sacred history somewhere. He even goes much further and says that human activities, yes, the whole life of a human being is almost useless, if that life is not integrated into sacred history. Such an assertion is nonetheless a cause for reflection...

Much more can be said about this theme of evolution, both individually and collectively. We will limit ourselves here to a few introductory concepts, but will return to them in more detail in chapter 5.

### ***The religious man 'sublimates'.***

William James (1842/1910), *The varieties of religious experience*<sup>55</sup>, elaborates on this and says that religious man, despite the many difficulties and concerns that life carries, has a feeling of happiness that transcends all this. It is directly related to a religious awareness. He says it this way: "For religion, serving "the highest" (the exalted, the holy, the divine) is never a yoke. Dull submission has left religion far behind. A readiness to accept any shading between joyful serenity and fervent joy replaced it. While the purely reasonable exhortation, typical of stoicism, for example, requires an effort on the part of the will, Christian behavior is the result of the inspiration of a

higher emotion (the sense of serving the exalted) that is present without any effort on the part of the will”.

James, of course, means the arrogant-stubbornly stoical effort of will. This “being happy in the absolute and the eternal” is nowhere to be found except in religion. This form of ‘happiness’ externally accepts evil as a form of sacrifice, but internally it knows that evil has been conquered forever. For James, it is as if the religious man, deep inside himself, experiences a different and elevated world from very close by. Almost constantly the biblical believer feels and knows that the misery of this world will never have the last word. It is certain for him: one cannot escape disappointment, not even the atheist, but the truly religious man ‘sublimates’ it through his contact with the sublime.

### ***The unconscious and subconscious: summarized***

Man’s far-reaching autonomy means that he is constantly faced with choices in life. Actual history teaches us that ethical choices are not always correct. This has its consequences. A wrong choice may be advantageous to man in this world, but it will affect his sacred status, so that he will rather take a step backwards in his evolution. Religiously, man is indeed an inhabitant of two worlds: this world and the world “on the other side”. Religions argue that the other side is much more important than this world. But that other reality remains rather hidden for the ordinary man. The religious man sees his whole life as an evolution towards the higher. He is strongly aware of the temporary and transient nature of the events on this side and feels strengthened in his faith. He is firmly convinced that the misery of this world does not have the last word.

### ***2.7. The sacred and what follows from it: summed up***

This whole chapter treated the sacred as the foundation of all existence. Understanding the religious man presupposes an empathetic attitude and assumptions that do not deny the sacred a priori. The religious data must indeed be accepted as a reality. This leads us to religious clairvoyance and mantic. Such an attitude can open our eyes to the sometimes swirling world of the depths of our own soul and the unconscious and subconscious tendencies: our “angels and demons”. The Biblically inspired clairvoyant who wants to bring revelation, ‘apocalypse’ and order into this, will try to secure himself to the Holy Trinity by means of an almost uninterrupted prayer and will want to ensure a correct interpretation. In this way, such paranormal gifted mediators can help people in their spiritual growth as a guide and companion. Indeed, man has both a profane and a sacred history, and he

even makes them. With the right choices, he does not live without obligation nor aimlessly, but betters his evolution. He does live in this world, but he always knows that he is closely linked to the sacred.

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