

Psychose, Mysticisme en Religie

In de aanloop naar het atelier van 23/3/2019 ben ik gaan grasduinen in een aantal teksten en heb ik er één en ander uit gedestilleerd: vooraf een aantal tekstfragmenten met de Jungiaanse focus, nadien de bredere visie van W. James in "The Varieties of Religious Experience"; tenslotte de postmoderne visie.

1/ Jung

Jung was er getuige van hoe de spirituele crisis van zijn vader, die vertrouwde op het geloof en doctrinaire stellingen zonder persoonlijke ervaring, de man tenslotte ten gronde richtte. Jung focust dan ook uitsluitend en exclusief op het persoonlijk beleven van het numineuze en het mystieke.

Voor Jung zijn mystici "people who have a particularly vivid experience of the processes of the collective unconscious. Mystical experience is experience of archetypes." (CW 18/218) Er bestaat voor hem geen onderscheid tussen archetypische vormen en mystieke vormen. (CW 18/219)

Religie blijft voor hem een centraal gegeven: "I do not however hold myself responsible for the fact that man has, always and everywhere, spontaneously developed a religious function." (CW 4/781) De religieuze functie en het religieus bewustzijn is voor Jung een heel natuurlijk ontwikkelingsproces, zich tonend in een diversiteit van religieuze en culturele expressies, dikwijls in conflicterende vormen. (Dourley 2010, p. 31)

Twee voorbeelden van archetypisch-mystieke vormen:

a. De Heilige Drievuldigheid

Voor Jung is dit een archetypisch beeld, maar vervormd en gedogmatiseerd door de Kerk. Het echte beeld wordt ervaren door de mystici: "If you study the phenomenology of mystical experience you will come across some very interesting things. For instance, you all know that our Christian Heaven is a masculine heaven and that the feminine element is only tolerated. The Mother of God is not divine, she is only the arch-saint. She intercedes for us at the throne of God but she is not part of the Deity. She does not belong to the Trinity. Now some Christian mystics have a different experience. For instance we have a Swiss mystic, Niklaus von der Flüe. He experienced a God and a Goddess." (CW 18/220)

Jung noemt nog andere voorbeelden: Guillaume de Digulleville en Dante. Hij besluit: "This is a vision outside the Trinity idea, a mystical experience of an archetypal nature which includes the feminine principle. The Trinity is a dogmatic image based on an archetype of an exclusively masculine nature." (CW 18/221)

b. Adam Kadmon

"For my observations I learned that the modern unconscious has a tendency to produce a psychological condition which we find, for instance, in medieval mysticism. You find certain things in Meister Eckhart; you find many things in Gnosticism, this is a sort of esoteric

Christianity. You find the idea of Adam Kadmon in everyman. Christ is the second Adam, which is also, in exotic religions, the idea of the Atman or the complete man, the all-round man of Plato, symbolized by a circle or a drawing with circular motifs.... It is an absolute consistent development of the idea of Christ within." (CW 18/638)

Die exclusieve benadering en nadruk op de persoonlijke beleving kwam Jung op twee verwijten te staan: psychologisme en morbied mysticisme: "... anyone who dares to establish a connection between the psyche and the idea of God is immediately accused of psychlogism or suspected of morbid mysticism." (CW 11/482)

Het verwijt van psychologisme gaat uit van diegene die een bepaalde religie aanhangen en verdedigen als de enige echte, en de andere religies tot een secundaire status herleiden; hun godsdienst is supernatuurlijk, en zij zijn geprivilegieerd als de enige bezitters van de ware God. Hierover ging de discussie tussen Jung en Buber, en tussen Jung en V.White; voor hen zou de psyche hoogstens een doorgeefluik kunnen zijn voor een transcendente God, maar nooit de bron.

Het tweede verwijt van morbied mysticisme komt uit de hoek van diegene die de cognitieve menselijke capaciteit reduceren tot een samenspel van rede en zintuigen. (J.P. Dourley 2010 208) "The development of Western philosophy during the last two centuries has succeeded in isolating the mind in its own sphere and is severing it from its primordial oneness with the universe." (CW 11, p. 476-477)

In de kern van de mystiek ligt de ervaring van het numineuze: "the approach to the numinous is the real therapy" (Letters vol.1/377): de gevoeligheid voor het numineuze is een belangrijk gegeven in de specifiek Jungiaanse benadering van therapeutische transformatie. (Dourley 2010, p. 233)

De dynamiek van de mystiek omschrijft Jung als het verlangen en de terugkeer naar de moeder: de nostalgie naar de bron. Dit psychisch incest is de trip die de mysticus en de held onderneemt naar de moederschoot: die beweging herhaalt zich in een mensenleven herhaalde malen en is te benoemen als het individuatieproces. (CW7 169-170) Maar de mysticus gaat verder dan dit individuatieproces, eigenlijk voorbij het archetype naar het apofatisch moment: een opgaan in de Godheid waarin al het onderscheid tussen God en mens wegvalt in een moment van een alles consumerend niets (JP Dourley 2010, p. 29): Mechtild von Maagdenburg, Hadewijch, Marguerite Porete, Eckhart beleven dit apofatisch moment.

Die mystieke ervaring vreet het beeld aan van een God als de objectieve Andere: dit dualisme verdwijnt in het moment van identiteit van God en ziel: "adoble meltdown" van God en ziel in elkaar.

Door het oplossen van de metafysische God bevrijdde de mysticus zich van de machtsstructuur van de Kerk: de sacramentele en orthodoxe machine, de enige vertegenwoordiger van de transcendente God verliest haar functie en betekenis. (Dourley 2010, p. 65) "The creative mystic was ever a cross for the Church, but it is to him that we owe what is best in humanity." (CW 14/531)

Jung vermeldt eveneens Huxley:"mystics are channels through which a little knowledge of reality filters down into our human univers of ignorance and illusion...a totally unmystical world would be a world totally blind and insane." (CW14/531 noot)

Een zijsprongetje naar de religie:

“Historically, the establishment of ritual was the first step in the shift from spirituality to institutional religion. Every spiritual movement becomes a religion once it establishes fixed rituals. For, with the establishment of the ritual come prescriptions for how it should be performed, whereupon attention becomes focused on following the prescriptions, on making sure that the ritual is performed in the right manner, while the spiritual experience itself recedes further and further into the background. The spiritual practice becomes increasingly rigid precisely because the ritual has to be performed in the same way each time by each performer in order for it to be a ritual and not just an isolated one-time spiritual experience. Ritual then makes form more important than content, and this is the death knell for spirituality.....ritual as such is the very antithesis of spirituality although it is the essence of religion.” (L. Corbett 2007, p. 56-57)

“Cicero thought that the word ‘religion’ derived from the latin ‘relegere’, suggesting that which one goes over and over again in reading or in thought. Jung adopted this usage because it fit with his own view of what religion should be: careful attention.” (CW8/427. Letters 2 p. 272)

Few subsequent Latin scholars agreed with Cicero. The Catholic Encyclopedia points out that the practice of religion dates back to long before humans could read, so it is unlikely that the word was derived from anything to do with reading.

Cicero’s derivation was influenced by religion as it was practised ritually by the Romans of the first century B.C.E.. It calls to mind the reading of entrails and the careful performance of the rituals.

Another possibility is that the word “religion” derives from the Latin “religare”, meaning to bind together, a derivation that recalls the Sanskrit word yoga, meaning to unite or join, thus what connects us to the divine.” (L. Corbett 2007, p. 253 noot 28)

2/ W. James, The Varieties of Religion Experience (p. 294-332)

Een mystieke toestand omschrijft W. James met vier kenmerken:

- Ineffability
- noetic quality
- transiency
- passivity

De mystieke toestand is eerder een ‘feeling state’ dan een ‘state of intellect’; niemand kan zo’n gevoel uitleggen aan iemand die dat gevoel niet heeft gekend: men moet zelf verliefd geweest zijn om de toestand van een verliefde aan te voelen.

Die toestand brengt een zekere kennis met zich mee, onbereikbaar voor het discursieve intellect: illuminaties en revelaties vol betekenis.

Een mystieke toestand kan niet lang volgehouden worden; zelden een half uur, twee uur lijkt de limiet.

Een mysticus ervaart de toestand als een gegrepen zijn door een hogere macht, waarin zijn eigen wil van geen tel is, maar waardoor zijn inwendig leven ingrijpend kan veranderd worden.

De mystieke ervaring kent gradaties: een reeks 'dreamy states' en de religieus mystieke ervaring *sensu strictu*:

- a. de meest rudimentaire:
"the simplest rudiment of mystic experience seems to be that deepened sense of the significance of a maxim or formula which occasionally sweeps over one. "I've heard it all my life, we exclaim, but I never realized its full meaning until now".
- b. a more pronounced step forward on the mystical ladder is found in an extremely frequent phenomenon, that sudden feeling, namely, of having "been there before" as if at some indefinite past time, in just this place with just these people we were already saying just these things.
- c. somewhat deeper plunges into mystical conscience are met with in yet other dreamy states: the feeling of being surrounded with truths I cannot grasp.
- d. een meer extreme transectoestand waarin contact met een hoger puur absoluut abstract Zelf: Maya.
- e. the consciousness produced by intoxicants and anaesthetics, especially by alcohol: its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature. It is in fact the great exciter of the Yes-function in man: drunkenness expands, unites. It brings its votary from the chill periphery of things to the radiant core. It makes him for the moment one with truth. Not through mere perversity do men run after it. To the poor and the unlettered it stands in the place of symphony concerts and literature; and it is part of the deeper mystery and tragedy of life that whiffs and gleams of something that we immediately recognize as excellent should be vouchsafed to so many of us only in the fleeting earlier phases of what in its totality is so degrading a poison. The drunken consciousness is one bit of the mystic consciousness, and our total opinion of it must find its place in our opinion of that larger whole.

N₂O (distikstofmonoxide - lachgas) - ether: vanuit zijn eigen experimenten met lachgas komt W. James tot de volgende conclusie dat ons normaal werkend rationeel bewustzijn maar één speciaal type bewustzijn is, dat daarrond, gescheiden door een dunne wand, totaal andere potentiële vormen van bewustzijn liggen: het zijn discontinue velden die een gebied openen waarvan we geen landkaart bezitten.

- f. de puur religieus mystieke beleving:
hier brengt James een hele reeks voorbeelden uit alle religies; christenen, moslims, hindoes, boeddhisten enz..... en besluit:
 - . mystical states, when well developed, usually are, and have the right to be, absolutely authoritative over the individuals to whom they come.
 - . no authority emanates from them which should make it a duty for those, who stand out of them, to accept their revelations uncritically.

. they break down the authority of the non-mystical or rationalistic consciousness, based upon the understanding and the senses alone. They show it to be only one kind of consciousness. They open out the possibility of other orders of truth, in which, so far as anything in us vitally responds to them, we may freely continue to have faith: a great subliminal or transmarginal region of which science is beginning to admit the existence, but of which so little is really known.

- g. religious mysticism is only one half of mysticism. The other half has no accumulated traditions except those which the textbooks on insanity supply. Open any of these and you will find abundant cases in which mystical ideas are cited as characteristic symptoms of enfeebled or deluded states of mind. In delusional insanity, paranoia, as they sometimes call it, we may have a diabolical mysticism, a sort of religious mysticism turned upside down.

Al vóór 1902 gaat W. James het onbewuste - the most important step forward since I have been a student in 1886 - op zijn manier omschrijven: we cannot avoid the conclusion that in religion we have a department of human nature with unusually close relations to the marginal or subliminal region. If the word 'subliminal' is offensive to any of you, as smelling too much of psychical research or other aberrations, call it by any other name you please, to distinguish it from the level of full sunlit consciousness. Call this latter the A-region of personality, if you care to, and call the other the B-region. The B-region then is obviously the larger part of us, for it is the abode of everything that is latent and the reservoir of everything that passes unrecorded or unobserved. It contains, for example, such things as all our momentarily inactive memories, and it harbors the springs of all our obscurely motivated passions, impulses, likes, dislikes, and prejudices, hypotheses, fancies, superstitions, persuasions, convictions, and in general all our non-rational operations, come from it. It is the source of our dreams, and apparently they may return to it. In it arise whatever mystical experiences we may have, and our automatisms, sensory or motor; our life in hypnotic and 'hypnoid' conditions, if we are subjects to such conditions; our delusions, fixed ideas, and hysterical accidents, if we are hysteric subjects; our supra-normal cognitions, if such there be, and if we are telepathic subjects. It is also the fountain-head of much that feeds our religion. In persons deep in the religious life, - and this is my conclusion - the door into this region seems unusually wide open; at any rate experiences making their entrance through that door have had empathic influence in shaping religious history.

The only thing religious experience unequivocally testifies to, is that we can experience union with something larger than ourselves and in that union find our greatest peace. The religious phenomenon, studied as an inner fact, and apart from ecclesiastical or theological complications, has shown itself to consist everywhere, and at all its stages, in the consciousness which individuals have of an intercourse between themselves and higher powers with which they feel themselves to be related.

Psychology and religion are thus in perfect harmony up to this point, since both admit that there are forces seemingly outside of the conscious individual that bring redemption to his life. Nevertheless psychology, defining these forces as 'subconscious', and speaking of their effects as due to incubation, or cerebration, implies that they do not transcend the

individual's personality; and herein she diverges from Christian theology, which insists that they are direct supernatural operations of the Deity.

In een van zijn latere brieven geeft James nogmaals zijn visie op religie : "... I attach the mystical or religious consciousness to the possession of an extended subliminal self, with a thin partition through which messages make irruption. We are thus made convincingly aware of the presence of a sphere of life larger and more powerful than our usual consciousness, with which the latter is nevertheless continuous... religion in this way is absolutely indestructible. Philosophy and theology give their conceptual interpretation of this experiential life." (James 2002 xxxv).

3/ De Postmoderne Visie.

Hier draait alles rondom de vraag: wat komt eerst: de (mystieke) ervaring of de taal?

Voor het postmodernisme is er geen twijfel: er is geen ervaring vóór de taal.

Voor mij blijft dat niettemin een vraag die niet zo éénduidig te beantwoorden is en op het atelier toch wel enige aandacht verdient.

Modernity (XVI century) set out to see everything from the viewpoint of the individual human subject. The touchstone of truth was relocated within human subjectivity. Everything was to be reconstructed around the subject and described in terms of the way it looks to the individual to whom it presents itself.... the old objective framework of dogma is progressively ingested and absorbed into the religious life and experience of the individual...a proces of internalisation (Cupitt 1998, p. 12-13).

..in modernity experience is notably passive... the self has to be seen as the disengaged impartial accumulator of an incoming stream of clean data from outside, about which it theorizes....in medieval times in particular the dominant regime of truth had been very objective (Cupitt 1998, p. 15-16)... mystical experience therefore had to be passively received or 'infused' and also prelinguistic in order to be clean: and in addition needed to be available cross-culturally (Cupitt 1998, p. 34).. there is in all religious thought and experience a veridical core-intuition, clad in very variable human imagery (Cupitt 1998, p. 39).

James treats religious experience in an immanent way and as a function or capacity of human nature like 'aesthetic experience' or 'moral experience'...by thus naturalizing religious experience James hopes to make of it the starting-point for a new science of religion... religion experience was born about 1900 and died in about 1978... by the rising tide of postmodern culturalism... to put language before nature...there are no prelinguistic yet cognitively privileged events in the soul... (Cupitt 1998, p. 21-23)

According to an ancient and still very influential tradition our interior and subjective mental life is not dependent upon language... mind is the human being's native endowment whereas language (though needed, of course) is merely secondary and conventional ...our intellectual life as such is free-standing and logically independent of any particular language. (Cupitt 1998, p. 67)

The mind transcends language, religious experience goes beyond language, and mystical texts are obliged to torment language in order to try, at least, to make it say what cannot be said. (Cupitt 1998, p. 71)

According to the Modern view of mysticism, the mystics first had great and ineffable experiences, in states of consciousness that were prior to and outside language, then they subsequently tried to put into inadequate words what they had experienced (Cupitt 1998, p. 74).

...the order was slowly changed and we came to see language as preceding thought, and the common cultural world as preceding the emergence of individual subjective consciousness...postmodernism rejects that (Modern) theory: there is no such thing as 'experience' outside of and prior to language...

Language doesn't copy or convey experience; language determines or forms experience as such.. what we call mind is secondary. (Cupitt 1998, p. 74)

Samenvatting:

1/ tot de 14^{de} eeuw: the world was ready-made for us by God: the framework of dogma.... objective rationalism.

2/ modernity: a copy within subjectivity of the ready-made world outside.

3/ postmodernity: there are no absolutes, nothing is purely given – no pure self to make a pure gift to – a flux that makes and mends us.

Heeft het dogma van de taal het dogma van de Kerk vervangen?

Bovenstaande tekst kan u wellicht nogal fragmentarisch, rommelig en verwarrend overkomen, maar het is nu eenmaal een samenraapsel van samenvattende tekstfragmenten. Zij kunnen op het atelier uiteraard verder worden toegelicht en in hun kader geplaatst.

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Vriendelijke Groeten,

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