

**The influence of conflicting medieval church and social discourses
on individual consciousness:
dissociation in the visions of Hadewijch of Brabant**

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Abstract

This article examines the influence of the conflicting discourses in the medieval church and its social context on the subconscious experiences of Hadewijch of Brabant, a 13th century Flemish visionary, mystical author, vernacular theologian and Beguine leader. Her 14 visions of becoming one with God are analysed for evidence of dissociative states. Her dissociative experiences are interpreted in the light of a contextual model of dissociation, according to which dissociation is an information-processing tool that fosters a sense of self-in-society in the face of conflicting discourses. Hadewijch's visions and dissociation, which she used to teach her fellow Beguines, reveal her growth towards an integrated God-consciousness and her inner psychological integration of consciousness and the unconscious. The contextual model of dissociation provides a useful conceptual framework and hermeneutical tool for evaluating the consciousness of a person in a remote historical-cultural epoch.

Introduction

Hadewijch of Brabant occupies a unique place in medieval church history. A Flemish visionary, mystical author, vernacular theologian and Beguine leader of the 13th century, she is one of the three most significant original Beguine mystics whose written works have survived until the

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present, the other two being Mechthild of Magdeburg (c.1217–1282) and Marguerite Porete (c.1250–1310) (McGinn 1998:199–265; Larrington 1995).

Hadewijch's exceptional contribution lies in the way in which she managed to live with and integrate different types of conflicting discourse: Latin intellectualised theology versus sensual mysticism; church life versus profane love poetry; traditional medieval gender roles versus new roles for religious women; male God-language versus female representations of the divine; and God's transcendence versus becoming one with God. Hadewijch developed a unique integration of these discourses while writing prolifically on the subject and teaching her fellow Beguines, and through it all managing to escape being burned at the stake.

This article examines the writings of Hadewijch, specifically her 14 visions of becoming one with God, and the evidence of dissociation in them (Vekeman 1980). The aim is to investigate the link between the conflicting theological, ecclesiastical and social discourses of her time and what will be shown to be her dissociated consciousness. When one thinks about civilisation as "out there" and the individual unconscious as "in here", and one is reminded of the interaction between the two, questions arise about when or why such interaction might take place and how it might work. More specifically, the question arises whether and, if so, to what extent and how Hadewijch's life, theological work and visions represented a solution to living with religio-socio-contextual conflict.

The present enquiry takes place in an interdisciplinary context where on the one hand theology, specifically church history, and on the other hand psychiatry and psychology, might meet. The focus is on the role of conflict as a potential motivating force and mediating influence in the interaction between a person's social and church context and her/his unconscious/subconscious experiences, with reference to one individual whose alternating conscious and subconscious mental processes provide a special window on the problem.

A number of interdisciplinary gaps underlie this case study. The relationship between a person's individual consciousness and her/his social context and the question of how one person is able to understand another person's consciousness have been topics of research in the fields of transpersonal anthropology, psycho-cultural anthropology and social psychology (Adolphs 2007; Bargh 2007; Throop & Laughlin 2007). Understanding or evaluating the consciousness of a person living in another cultural and historical epoch poses even more of a challenge.

At the level of individual consciousness, the concept of dissociation is currently used in the fields of psychiatry and psychology to refer to an unconscious intrapsychic process whereby some mental

processes or contents are segregated from the rest, and ideas or emotions are separated from one another (American Psychiatric Association 1994; World Health Organization 1992). When a person no longer experiences integration between memory, a sense of identity, and conscious awareness, that person is said to suffer from a dissociative disorder (American Psychiatric Association 1994; World Health Organization 1992). However, despite the apparent agreement among the disciplines on a definition, controversy exists with regard to the mechanism and role of dissociation (for example, whether dissociation is a psychological defence mechanism, a neurocognitive tool, or a symptom of mental illness), the role that the process of dissociation might play in creating a person's consciousness, and the multiplicity (or not) of normal consciousness (Beahrs 1982; Kihlstrom 2007; Simons et al 2007).

Considering the different perspectives held in the fields of psychiatry and psychology, and theology and religious studies on the nature and aetiology of mental illness and related aspects, it is not surprising that previous Hadewijch studies in the fields of theology, literature or poetry have neglected her mental state (De Paepe 1973, 1979, 1983; Hart 1980; Mommaers 1990, 2004; Van der Zeyde 1934, 1936; Van Mierlo 1948–1951, 1950; Vekeman 1980; and others). Furthermore, the human response to social conflict has been studied in the fields of psychology and political science, albeit at a social or behavioural level, rather than at an individual psychological level (Holmes & Murray 1996; Levine & Thompson 1996; Pruitt 1998; Rusbult & Van Lange 1996; Stainton Rogers 2003).

Methodologically, this is a document-based case study of a person in a remote historical epoch. The text of Hadewijch's visions constitutes the data, and the case study serves to gain knowledge about a social issue, that is, dissociation in Hadewijch's conflictual context (Fouché 2002; Strydom & Delpont 2002). Hadewijch's context is examined for sources of conflict and ambivalence. Her visions (Vekeman 1980) are then analysed thematically for evidence of dissociative states and for signs of progressive resolution of the dissociation through her visions. Her potential dissociative experiences are then interpreted in the light of a contemporary contextual psychiatric model of dissociation, and some bridges are built among the concepts. Elements of the method of portraiture are also used (Hoffmann Davis 2003). In reading Hadewijch's works, the original ground texts in Middle Dutch (De Paepe 1979; Van Mierlo 1950; Vekeman 1980) are complemented by translations in modern Dutch (Vekeman 1980) and English (Hart 1980).

Hadewijch's life and work

Hadewijch of Brabant was a visionary, mystical author and vernacular theologian who lived as a Beguine leader in the early 13th century (see the section below entitled “Hadewijch’s conflictual social context”) in what is now the northern part of Belgium.

Her date of birth is unknown and little is known about her personal background, except that she was a highly educated woman who chose not to enter into either of the two regular states available to women of her time, namely those of married lady of the castle and nun (Mommaers 2004).

Hadewijch’s work consists of 31 letters, most of which were written to junior Beguines (Mommaers 1990; Ortmanns-Cornet 1986; Van der Zeyde 1936; Van Mierlo 1948–1951), 45 poems in stanzas (De Paepe 1973, 1983; Rombauts & De Paepe 1961; Van Baest 1998), 16 poems in couplets (Ortmanns-Cornet 1988), 14 visions (more correctly, 11 visions presented in 14 sections) (Vekeman 1980), and a number of songs (Snellen 1907). Her entire oeuvre was probably written between 1221 and 1240 (Hart 1980).

Although she knew Latin and French, she wrote in Middle Dutch on the subject of, among other things, her explicit personal contact with God, in order to teach her fellow Beguines. In her writings, she developed a unique female love mysticism that focused on becoming one with God – a unique integration of courtly love poetry and Latin theology.

Hadewijch’s use of her visions to teach others about living in such a way as to become one with God distinguishes her from other visionaries, such as Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), a prophetic teacher and theologian, whose mostly waking visionary experiences of a living light, associated with protracted illness, seem to have inspired her writings; and Elizabeth of Schönau (1128–1165), a prophet, reformer and teacher, who wrote about being in rapture and experiencing ecstatic states during which she received heavenly messages to be proclaimed to the church rather than direct, transforming contact with God (McGinn 1994:333–337). Hadewijch’s visions, by contrast, involve explicit personal contact with God, entailing a transformation from her previous not-yet-full-grown state to being full-grown in God.

Much has been written about Hadewijch, mainly in the fields of theology and literature (Mommaers 2004). In the literary context Hadewijch is hailed as the pioneer poet of the Dutch language because of

her immaculate technique, into which an artist's experience of the world and of herself is woven, and her powerful imagination. She is also acclaimed for her musicality and the skilful rhythm of her writing – a captivating psychological kind of ebb-and-flow, a going-out-of and coming-back-into this world, a reassuring balance of transcendence and immanence, always returning to the here and now (Van Mierlo 1950:36–40).

The central theme in Hadewijch's work is love. She often appears to equate love (*minne*) with God, for instance, "God-is-love" (Van Baest 1998:10) and the love that God is (Newman 2003:169–181). In the words of Bowie (1990): "For Hadewijch, Love (*minne*) becomes her spouse, her Lady mistress, her God, her companion, a mistress who leads Hadewijch through bleak times, moments of isolation and despair, as well as giving her periods of rapture and delight."

Van Mierlo (1948–1951, vol. II) comments on Hadewijch's *minne* as referring to God-characteristics: divine love (*caritate*) (1948:63–64), the service of love (:65), living Christ (:71), virtues (:72) and love for others (:74). Reynaert (1981) analyses all the names by which Hadewijch refers to *minne*: *minne* is, inter alia, "light"/"clarity" (:55–90), "coals" (:91–97), "fire" (:99–133), "dew" (:135–142), "water"/"flood" (:143–159) and "hell" (:161–174). He concludes that *minne* for Hadewijch is a psychic-metaphysical power that is personified at times by, and that applies mostly but not exclusively to, and is directed mostly but not exclusively at divine love (Reynaert 1981:439–441).

In a more applied way, De Paepe (1983:29, 30, 38ff, 46) interprets Hadewijch's *minne* as meeting God in the world, a striving towards a sophisticated life (*een drang naar levensverfijning*) (:33–34), and simultaneously as a place, a way and an aim (*gelyktydig situatie, weg en doel*) (:43–45). Along similar lines, in the context of Hadewijch's stanzaic poems, Newman (2003) refers to a stormy relationship with love ("tension between faith and experience, or memory and desire" (:177)) and the threefold quest of love: to do battle for love, as love, and against love (:180).

From the variety of love references above, it is evident that oscillation and paradox are prominent themes in Hadewijch's work. Paradox is probably epitomised in Hadewijch's dilemma of satisfaction-frustration: that is, of the oscillation between God as fruition (*ghebruken*) and human as lack of fruition (*ghebreken*) (De Paepe 1973:9; McGinn 1994:346).

Moreover, De Paepe (1979), commenting on all of Hadewijch's works, refers to her paradoxical intertwinement of intellect and love (:xxiv) and God's transcendence and love that never really meet (:xxxvii). In the context of Hadewijch's stanzaic poems, De Paepe (1973)

interprets Hadewijch's *minne* as the experience of dichotomies such as joy and suffering, certainty and doubt, hope and despair (:8); as an unbridgeable ravine (:9); and as psychic tension/unravelling of self (*zelfontraadseling* (:10–11)). In the context of Hadewijch's letters, an introduction by Herwig Arts in Ortmanns-Cornet (1986) refers to the unavoidable tension between truth, freedom and love (:8), between pride, courage and freedom (:9), and between God's presence and absence (:10).

The oscillation and paradoxicality further manifest in a third theme that is relevant for this study, namely that of gender malleability and female representations of the divine (Newman 2003:172), as well as gender role reversal (Schillebeeck, in the introduction to Van Baest 1998:5). In this regard, Van Mierlo (1950:26) refers to Hadewijch's assuming the male voice of a knight, especially in her visions.

As will be shown below, these themes of love, oscillation and paradox, and gender malleability in Hadewijch's work appear to mirror the tensions and ambivalence in her 13th century social context, where new movements were arising with regard to conceptualising and relating to God and oneself, living a good life, and exploring new social structures and roles.

Hadewijch's conflictual social context

The conflict and ambivalence in Hadewijch's context spanned a number of different levels. In addition to political changes, urbanisation, commercialisation, educational progress and increased literacy, the society of her day witnessed a number of new religious developments.

Whereas theology in Western Europe throughout the millennium preceding Hadewijch's life tended towards an intellectualisation of faith, according to which reason and reason-based doctrine were the route to knowing God, a different mystical emphasis developed in the 12th and 13th centuries. The new mystical concern was a direct, primary, personal and sensual experience of God, as opposed to an intellectualised relationship with Him. Although visions had been a common aspect of the continuing revelation of God throughout the Middle Ages, the flood of visionary narratives that followed shortly after 1200 reflected this new form of mystical consciousness, or mystical knowing of the divine, among both men and women (McGinn 1994, 1998).

Another revolutionary religious movement in Hadewijch's time, the *vita apostolica*, represented a return from the prevalent monastic theology ("monastic" because it was located in monasteries and cloisters,

the church structures of those times) to the (non-institutionalised) way of life of the apostles, where religious persons lived as preachers and evangelists. This revolution was accompanied by a shift from the use of Latin to at least preaching in vernacular languages (McGinn 1998; Mommaers 2004).

A third revolutionary religious movement related to gender roles, where religious women (*mulieres religiosae*) concerned themselves in their inner life with attaining a loving union with Jesus Christ as the Son of God (McGinn 1998). This union was often described in sensual terms, even in erotic terms of physical union. This was clearly in contrast with Latin theology, in terms of which the human body, and especially the female body, was viewed as a symbol of sinfulness that had to be transcended in order to further one's striving towards the likeness of God. No longer did women think of themselves as second-rate human beings or fallen "Eves" who could attain salvation only through a life of subjugation and service to their husbands: now women could approach God in their own right (McGinn 1998).

This gender revolution also manifested in the outward organisation of the lives of religious women, who ventured outside the cloisters (for example, outside the Cistercian, Premonstratensian, Vallombrosan, Carthusian, or Dominican orders) to explore alternative ways of religious life. Some lived as *reclusae/inclusae*/anchoresses, isolating themselves from society in order to devote all their time to solitary religious contemplation, deliberately dying to the world through voluntary enclosure in a small room or cell, in some cases temporarily, and in others for the rest of their lives (McGinn 1998).

One of these new forms of religious life was the Beguine movement, which originated in Lotharingia in the present-day Belgium, and spread to northern France, Holland and Germany. Although both men and women became Beguines, the women's movement was stronger and came to represent a new female self-consciousness. Groups of lay women who renounced the role of married lady of the castle, and who did not feel at home in the male-dominated Christian church, but who felt driven to live religious lives, chose to live together in religiously focused communities. They preached, did charitable works and contributed to the general upliftment of their communities, while falling outside the structures of the churches and the authority of the priests (McGinn 1998; Mommaers 2004). These informal religious, charitable communities of women were opposed to the legalism and isolationism of the patriarchal male-dominated church and convent life, and were persecuted as heretics, with a number of Beguines being burned at the stake. The Beguines were also criticised for their disregard for the

protection offered by marriage; this disregard was viewed as contributing to social disorder (Bowie 1990; Mommaers 2004).

Societal conflict during the 13th century also extended to the so-called profane revolution, where the French troubadours sang courtly love poetry to their ladies. Hadewijch was familiar with courtly love poetry and exposed to the societal ambivalence between the reverence for the ruling male God as the recipient of human love and the idealisation of the female figure as object of male desire. One of the features of Beguine mysticism was the fusion and integration of courtly love poetry with Christianity. Barbara Newman (2003) describes this two-way process as the simultaneous, progressive Christianisation of erotic love and the eroticisation of divine love. This integration was accompanied, *inter alia*, by a shift from the traditional monastic reaction to the Song of Songs in the Bible – with both men and women assuming a female persona in relation to the male Divine Lover – to adopting a male voice *vis-à-vis* a female object of desire (that is, Lady Love) (McGinn 1998:169; Newman 2003:139).

Thus, the medieval social context in which Hadewijch found herself can be considered something of a combustion point in the early medieval humanist renaissance in Europe, at the intersection of several conflicting societal discourses, where the troubadours represented the profane revolution, and the Beguines represented the new religious movement and a new female self-consciousness.

Let us turn now to the psychological phenomenon that is postulated to have been relevant in Hadewijch's life and work.

Contextual model of dissociation

The currently fashionable definition of dissociation referred to earlier, namely a state marked by a lack of integration between memory, a sense of identity, and conscious awareness (American Psychiatric Association 1994; World Health Organization 1992), is descriptive and cognitive in nature, and does not account for its aetiology or the possible mechanisms through which it might arise.

Although mystical trance states have often been linked to the psychological process of dissociation (Bhugra & Bhui 2007; West 1967), the utility of most of the existing Western psychological and psychiatric models of dissociation for evaluating such trance states has been limited either by their descriptive, non-explanatory nature, as in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) model (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), or by their exclusive focus on intrapsychic, non-communal processes.

For the purpose of the interpretation of Hadewijch's dissociative states, and given the focus of this article on the role of contextual conflict in her mystical visions, a contextual model of dissociation is used, which accounts for the interrelatedness of individuals with their social contexts (Krüger et al. 2007). Following the description of the model in this section, the next section will describe the evidence of dissociation in Hadewijch's visions; this dissociation will then be reinterpreted as an expression of and solution to the conflict that was so pervasive in her context.

In the preamble to the above-mentioned contextual model of dissociation, a team of five South African women psychiatrists and psychiatric registrars/residents found that a direct application of existing Western models of dissociation in their professional psychiatric context was problematic for a number of reasons. The team then set out to develop a model of dissociation that would overcome the limitations of these Western models and that would fit the pluralistic South African context. This new model was based on the following three Western models: the idea of everyday dissociation as processing of information and integration of mental contents (American Psychiatric Association 1994; West 1967); dissociation as a skewed information-processing reaction after traumatic events (Bremner et al. 1996; Hartman & Burgess 1993; Van der Kolk 1994); and dissociation as a skewed information-processing reaction due to intrapsychic conflict (Allen 1993; Gabbard 1994).

First, the Western model of everyday dissociation as processing of information and integration of mental contents was considered (American Psychiatric Association 1994; West 1967). According to this

model, two filters aid in information processing. The first comprises the brain's resources and the second the psychological resources for information processing. The first filter consists of an intact brain, chemical homeostasis, cognitive abilities, and intelligence. Its input is externally generated sensory information, that is, information derived through the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, as well as internally generated information such as proprioception, emotions, thoughts, and actions. The brain's resources contribute to creating the person's consciousness and laying down memory. The second filter – the dissociative filter – is a normal psychological tool that filters sensory, emotional and thought-related information so that only a manageable selection of information occupies the person's conscious awareness, just sufficient for the construction of a coherent sense of self, personal integrity, and personal identity.

Next considered was dissociation as a skewed information-processing reaction when a person is overwhelmed by information relating to traumatic events, such as natural disasters, interpersonal abuse, or any other trauma (Bremner et al. 1996; Hartman & Burgess 1993; Van der Kolk 1994). The person may experience a state of emotional shock and altered information processing. The brain's resources for information processing may be overwhelmed by the additional input of traumatic sensory experiences along with the usual sensory experiences, yet nevertheless attempt to process all the information. However, the dissociative defence mechanism may filter out the traumatic experiences, resulting in amnesia of the trauma, while memory of usual events remains unaffected.

Also considered was dissociation as a skewed information-processing reaction due to intrapsychic conflict (Allen 1993; Gabbard 1994). In terms of this model, a person's consciousness receives information from conflicting states of mind. For example, information relating to a person's desire not to be at work may be in conflict with information relating to the same person's need to be appreciated as a committed employee. The two sets of information cannot comfortably be held in consciousness at the same time without the person experiencing significant anxiety. Hence, at a given time, one of the sets of information may be filtered out of conscious awareness.

However, these Western models did not fit a number of the team's clinical encounters with dissociation in the South African context. First, all refer to intrapsychic phenomena in a single individual which are taken to explain certain mental symptoms, whereas in South Africa, mental symptoms are often found to be due to social problems such as problems in the relationships between family members and neighbours, problems with the ancestors, and witchcraft. Second, some concepts

relating to dissociation, such as individual identity alteration, just do not seem to fit the local context, where an individual's state of mind is considered to be, ideally, in fluctuating harmony with her/his community's state of wellbeing.

The team then engaged in an auto-ethnographic discourse to examine the concept of dissociation in terms of their own collective background, life and world views, perspectives on mental illness and spirituality, and appreciation of healing in their professional context (Ellis & Bocher 2000). They used this discourse in building on the above Western models, expanding them until they fitted their own context.

It was proposed that the discourse on dissociation be shifted from an individual level to a social level, where the roles of intrapsychic, interpersonal, social, cultural, spiritual, and environmental contexts in the development of dissociation could be acknowledged explicitly. All of these contexts were included in an expanded model of dissociation, according to which various types and sets of information contributed by the various contexts in which a person moves about constitute an individual's consciousness. There is some interaction between the individual's consciousness and the various contexts, as a result of which information is added to consciousness from each context in which the person operates.

For example, an individual's external physical environment contributes to consciousness sets of sensory information relating to events that occur. The person's intrapsychic make-up adds awareness of internally generated emotions, thoughts and actions. Interpersonal relationships represent another context that contributes to consciousness information relating to these relationships, some of which may be traumatic in nature. The next context is the person's socio-cultural milieu, which may contribute conflicting sets of information pertaining to conflicting socio-cultural values. The spiritual dimension represents yet another context that may contribute information about joyous experiences or incompatible belief systems. The person's dissociative filter then selects from all the contributed information those sets of information that will be retained in consciousness at a given time; the person's sense of self is constructed from all the information that remains in conscious awareness.

With specific reference to conflicting socio-cultural values, an individual can ordinarily move about in more than one conflicting "world" at the same time. For example, a person may simultaneously move about in a world that values the endeavours of a professional (such as her work context), as well as in a world that disapproves of such endeavours (such as her church context). The person's brain resources then process the information from the experiences that relate to both

“world A” and “world B”. In such a situation of gender role conflict, a woman cannot be a good wife and/or mother and a good professional at the same time, since these categories are considered mutually exclusive by the patriarchal society in which she operates. Hence, the woman would develop different personae or masks for different situations – an “identity A”/“persona A” for living in and dealing with “world A”, and an “identity B”/“persona B” for living in and dealing with “world B”. In order to ease the conflict between the two personae, the dissociative filter would then segregate the two conflicting sets of information and process the information differently, depending on the circumstances. While “persona A” is active, information relating to “persona B” is filtered out of conscious awareness, and vice versa. However, the price that is paid for this is a fragmented sense of self.

It should also be borne in mind that trauma or conflict may occur on a communal level. Hence, the idea of conflict was expanded from representing an intrapsychic phenomenon to conflict as a social contextual phenomenon. Since the dissociative process occurs in a similar way in a community of individuals, it can be said to occur on a collective level. In such a case, shared individual intrapsychic dissociation would become collective dissociation. The community’s dissociative filters may then segregate these conflicting sets of information, creating a double consciousness and resulting in a fragmented collective identity, which would manifest differently depending on the circumstances.

This contextual model of dissociation thus includes a person’s interpersonal, socio-cultural, and spiritual contexts, in addition to the intrapsychic context. Dissociation is considered pivotal in the process of the normal construction of an individual sense of self and communal identities in the face of conflicting sets of information from various contexts. According to this model, dissociation can help an individual or a community to survive in a world of conflicting messages, where the conflict is often interpersonal or cultural or societal in nature, rather than intrapsychic.

Dissociation is therefore considered a normal information-processing tool that operates to maintain normal consciousness and thus, in the social context, balanced, coherent selves-in-society, that is, individuals connected to one another.

If an individual experiences a good balance between the contributions from the various contexts to her/his conscious awareness, the sense of self that emerges is a balanced, coherent self-in-society, that is, an individual connected to other people. Similarly, if a community experiences a good balance between the contributions from the various contexts to the community’s collective conscious awareness, there is

harmony in the community. On the other hand, traumatic events or situations of conflicting values (within one person or between people) represent challenges to individual or collective information processing, and may precipitate dissociation.

To return to Hadewijch: if one considers the pervasive conflict and ambivalence in her medieval social context, one wonders whether Hadewijch might perhaps have been prone to experiencing dissociative states.

Evidence of dissociation in Hadewijch's visions

In the context of the above-mentioned societal sources of conflict and ambivalence, Hadewijch writes about her visions and waking states as successive, contiguous, and mutually exclusive mental states. She repeatedly mentions what would be labelled today as dissociative states that accompanied religious rituals or overwhelming emotion, for example, grief, despair, fear, longing, or desirous love for God (Hart 1980).

For example, she speaks of being “taken up in the spirit” (Hart 1980, V.10, p 287, l.1) and “entrancement of spirit” (Hart 1980, V.14, p 304, l.39), which suggests possession trance, a subtype of dissociative disorder (American Psychiatric Association 1994). Hadewijch appears to have experienced such states both frequently and intermittently; in some instances these states lasted half an hour (Hart 1980, V.10, p 288, l.21) and in others days at a time (Hart 1980, V.14, p 304, ll. 38–40 to p 305, ll. 1–2).

One of the typical features of dissociative states is that the person feels as if she/he is observing her/his body from the outside (Bernstein & Putnam 1986; Krüger & Mace 2002; Ross et al. 1989; Steinberg et al. 1994; Vanderlinden et al. 1993). In this regard, Hadewijch writes, “I fell out of the spirit” (Hart 1980, V.6, p 279, l.27) and “I returned into myself” (Hart 1980, V.3, p 272, l.23), indicating the end of those specific states.

On the feast of Saint John the Evangelist in the Christmas Octave, Hadewijch was “taken up in the spirit” (Hart 1980, V.10, p 287, l.1). After describing her vision of the bride in the city (Vision 10), she ends her account by saying:

14 *The influence of conflicting medieval church and social discourses ...*

The Voice embraced me with an unheard-of wonder, and I swooned in it, and my spirit failed me to see or hear more. And I lay in this fruition half an hour; but then the night was over, and I came back, piteously lamenting my exile, as I have done all this winter. For truly the whole winter long I have been occupied with this kind of thing. I lay there a long time and possessed Love, or revelations, or anything else in particular that Love gave me (Hart 1980, V.10, p 288, ll.19–25).

This account appears to describe an alternate state of mind – a dissociative state – in which Hadewijch’s usual perception was altered. Whereas she experienced a sense of wonder during the dissociative state, and an inability to see or hear as usual, she was in a distressed, lamenting frame of mind on her return to her usual state.

Hadewijch’s visions were accompanied by a sense of heightened awareness, as is often the case with trance states. In Vision 11, she describes this as follows:

And although I asked to know this, I nevertheless perceived the essence of all the things I saw. For all that is seen in the spirit when one is ravished by Love is understood, tasted, seen, and heard through and through (Hart 1980, V.11, p 289, ll.33–36).¹

Not only the form of Hadewijch’s visions, but also their content, ranging from a mountain, “Queen Reason” and an abyss, to the “Bride”, the “Six-winged countenance”, and others – all conforming to typical Christian symbolism (Hart, 1980) – reveal her dissociated consciousness, in the case of the early visions in particular.

Two visions have been chosen to illustrate Hadewijch’s progression from her earlier visions through to her later visions: from a dissociated stance to a more integrated way of being; these will be described below.

Vision 4: “Two kingdoms, two heavens”

In this vision (Hart 1980, V.4, pp 273–275), as Hadewijch sits waiting for Mass on the feast day of Saint James in May, at the time of the scriptural reading, a spirit from within her suddenly draws her senses inwards, so that she is taken completely into that spirit. She then has what she describes as a wonderful, symbolic vision.

She sees two kingdoms of heaven, alike in all respects. Then a burning angel arrives and beats his mighty wings seven times, to stop and silence everything and everybody, to prepare them for his voice. He

addresses them in the following order: the moon; the sun; all the stars, which cease their rotation; the dwellers in paradise, who awaken; the throne, which ceases its rotation; all the saints, living and dead, who appear; and all the heavens of each kingdom, which open in eternal glory.

In a voice of thunder or like a mighty trumpet, the angel requires all who have been stopped or who have appeared to bear witness to what he will show Hadewijch. Hadewijch is then immediately taken up in the wings of the angel, and in the midst of the one kingdom, which is the angel himself.

The angel then shows a full-grown (ideal) Hadewijch two kingdoms or heavens, one of which is said to belong to the angel and the other to the Hadewijch who is not yet full grown (the real Hadewijch, the Hadewijch who doubts that she could ever be one with God). The angel addresses the full-grown Hadewijch as “you”, and the not-yet-full-grown Hadewijch as “she” or “her”. (Since in the vision Hadewijch seems to be two people at the same time, the title given by Hart might be rewritten as “Two dissociated parts to Hadewijch”.)

The angel asks the ideal Hadewijch to choose the heaven that is the richest and the most powerful. The full-grown Hadewijch sees that the two heavens are similar in all respects, and equally powerful and glorious. All the witnesses say “Amen!” and resume their previous states.

The angel then explains that the two kingdoms represent his and Hadewijch’s two humanities before they attained full growth:

These heavens, which you behold, are wholly hers and mine; and these you saw as two kingdoms that were separated were our two humanities before they attained full growth. I was full-grown before; and nevertheless we remained equal. And I came into my kingdom yesterday, and you became full-grown afterwards; nevertheless we remained equal. And she shall become full-grown today and come tomorrow with you into her kingdom; and nevertheless shall remain equal with me (Hart 1980, V.4, p 274, ll.22–29).

The angel tells the full-grown Hadewijch what lies ahead for the not-yet-full-grown Hadewijch – an arduous and lengthy journey towards achieving full growth. The not-yet-full-grown Hadewijch (1) should exercise all the known virtues with violent zeal, (2) should be miserable and unstable while doing that, (3) should remain discouraged, doubtful, fearful, self-depreciating and uncertain, and (4) should tolerate the darkness of the realisation that she does not yet have the sweet nature

that comes from having a twofold appreciation (congruent knowledge and a rewarding experience) of herself:

the privation – which each of us feels from the other – of our sweet nature, and the knowledge and the perception of it that we have twofold in ourself while she, not full-grown, must do without him, whom she must love above all, and must consequently experience as all-darkness (Hart 1980, V.4, p 275, ll.11–15).²

At this stage of the vision, Hadewijch has not yet integrated her ideal with her shortcomings. This vision abounds with extremely negative emotional terms, including terms relating to anxiety, guilt and feeling inadequate: “miserable”, “unstable”, “discouragement”, “doubt”, “fear”, “torment”, “relapse in faults”, “despair” and “all-darkness”.

There appears to be tension between her current state and her ideal state, and an “earnest desire to be perfect” and not to fail in anything, associated with a “violent zeal”. Her personal standards appear to be very high, so that when she fails in being perfect, she suffers fear and torment and feels inadequate and guilty.

Then there is also the feeling of being “far removed”. She “sinks into the angel” who has a “voice of thunder” and experiences the “penetrating taste of sweet Love”. She also experiences a “feeling of belonging” as opposed to “being unknown to her friends and enemies”.

Her vision appears to serve the purpose of allowing her to escape her intolerable emotional state and, at the same time, it explains and justifies her suffering as being meaningful in the process of growth to being one with God. At this stage, the not-yet-full-grown Hadewijch appears to long for God, whereas the full-grown Hadewijch appears to have fruition of or be one with God. There is tension and oscillation between the two extremes, accompanied by intolerable negative emotion.

Her vision allows her a glimpse of what it might be like to be full grown, fully integrated in herself and one with God, without having to suffer the intolerable emotional states that she experienced when not full grown.

Vision 14: “New power to live Christ”

In her last vision, Hadewijch sees the throne of the Creator (Hart 1980, V.14, pp 302–305). She immediately explains it as “the loftiness of the life of union to which I was chosen” (Hart 1980, V.14, p 302, ll.23–24). In the midst of the new throne stood a seat, where the Creator sat. His countenance at that moment was invisible to all who had never lived

human and divine love in one single being. However, Hadewijch actually sees God's countenance. She is able to do so because by this time she has grown sufficiently to be able to "taste man and God in one knowledge" (:305, l.11), in other words, she is able to live human and divine love in a single being. Along with this newfound integration comes a feeling of equanimity, a sense that she is able to endure anything (:304, l.5).

In this vision, Hadewijch spends less time describing the vision, and more time explaining it to her fellow Beguines. She remarks that she was closer to God than they were, and that this caused her pain:

And because I loved you so greatly, and neither could nor can forget you in any hour; and because I felt this death and your nonfulfilment in Love so closely with you, in stormy desire of God – that I was closer to God than you, pained me the more. And it was yet more painful to me because you were a child and on the human level (Hart 1980, V.14, p 303, ll.15–20).

Hadewijch again describes to her fellow Beguines what these (dissociative) states are like:

Once I lay for three days and the same number of nights in entrancement of spirit at the Countenance of our Beloved; and this has often lasted for that length of time; and also for the same length of time entirely out of the spirit, lost here to myself and to all persons, in fruition of him: to know how in fruition he embraces himself (Hart 1980, V.14, p 304, ll.38–40 to p 305, ll.1–2).

Hadewijch also reflects on how she has escaped persecution and execution, and expresses surprise that the hostility in her environment is not more severe:

Alas! When I think of what God wills for me, ... it is a wonder how I remain alive, unless because of the great Love who can do all things. But it is certainly a great marvel to me when I think that ... they let me live so long, and that they offer me protection or respect or favor, and that they do not afflict me with ever-new torments (Hart 1980, V.14, p 302, ll.26–34).

Indeed, Hadewijch has a point here, because she was one of a select handful of so-called heretics of those times who were not burned for their beliefs. Could it have been because she seemed to have a certain naivety about her? Did the church leaders perhaps see little threat in her

continually being occupied in trances, and thus not perceive her as someone who posed a threat to their power?

One can almost picture her, minding her own business, engaged in her writing, spending days at a time in bed in a trance, spending time in conversation with her fellow Beguines in between, a true mystic – hardly an outspoken social activist who might feature on the agenda of church leaders’ meetings.

One might go further and picture her as potentially psychotic, isolating herself, becoming unkempt during those times that she spent in bed “in fruition”, sometimes having food brought to her, being completely out of touch with reality, hallucinating and seeing thrones and huge disks flying around an abyss, seeing herself exalted as a divine being, singled out and almost rewarded for all her suffering in her miserable circumstances on this earth.

But are her writings those of a psychotic person? In addition to the accounts of her visions, Hadewijch also wrote 31 letters, 61 poems and some songs, all of which are critically acclaimed by excellent scholars as being of high literary quality. Her work is coherent and technically well written.

More specifically, in her visions she demonstrates strategic development through the first to the fourteenth visions, suggesting that she wrote these accounts as didactic fragments (Hart 1980). Whereas the earlier visions concern a gradual introduction to the things a believer might expect to see and hear in heaven (trees with leaves of gold, thrones, angels, a queen richly attired, a voice of thunder, etc.), the later visions become more focused on the personal relationship between Hadewijch and God, and their oneness.

This development of her integrated “God-human” concept is probably what sets her apart from most of the other mystics of her time, who maintained themselves as separate from God. Hadewijch clearly describes her concept of God, and how she becomes as God:

To be out of the spirit and to be in him – this surpasses all that one can have from him and all that he himself can accomplish; and then one is not less than he himself is ... to which I was chosen in order that I might taste Man and God in one knowledge, what no man could do unless he were as God, and wholly such as he was who is our Love.

He who sat on the new throne, which was I myself, had the imposing appearance of the fearful, wonderful Countenance, and there spoke to me a Voice of loud thunder, with a noise like stormdrifts, which would silence everything so that it alone could be heard. The Voice said to me: “O strongest of all

warriors! You have conquered everything and opened the closed totality, which never was opened by creatures who did not know, with painfully won and distressed Love, how I am God and Man! O heroine, since you are so heroic, and since you never yield, you are called the greatest heroine! It is right, therefore, that you should know me perfectly (Hart 1980, V.14, p 305, ll.2–24).

Furthermore, for Hadewijch the blurring of the boundary between God and man seems to be complemented by a blurring of the distinction between consciousness and the unconscious. Unlike many contemporary patients who, when they recover from an alternate state of consciousness, are unable to remember what happened or what they saw and heard during the alternate state, Hadewijch appears to have had sufficient access to those states of mind to be able not only to describe them in detail, but also to interpret them meaningfully for the sake of her fellow Beguines. She seems to have been able to pass fluidly from her conscious state of mind to her dissociated states of mind.

Her use of a love mysticism, and even terminology relating to physical love as a way of expressing closeness to God, illustrates that she can be regarded as a proponent of the profane revolution that occurred in those times. Whereas previously the relationship between humans and God had received the bulk of academic and literary attention, in the profane revolution love between humans emerged as a valid concern; human love and its descriptors then found their way into and enriched mystical endeavours.

Moreover, Hadewijch's audacity in recording her own (female, bodily) experiences as useful in teaching others about becoming like God appears to reflect the growing new female self-consciousness. Prior to that time, the human body, and specifically the female body, with its more evident biological rhythms, had become a symbol of sin and all that is corrupt. However, according to the new female self-consciousness, women had independent worth as human beings and, like men, were created in the likeness of God. Hadewijch may therefore be regarded as a medieval torchbearer for recent developments in feminist theology (Christ 1997; Grey 2001; Schüssler Fiorenza 1994; and others) and even for the specific line of body theology (Bynum 1995).

Although the above two examples of Hadewijch's visions do not do justice to the scope of Hadewijch's dissociation, they serve to illustrate the close link between her dissociative experiences and her visions, with respect to both their form and their content. It is as if her visions represented not only a way of leaving or escaping an intolerable

reality, but also a new context in which to continue grappling with the conflictual issues of that intolerable reality.

Hadewijch's dissociation as a way of managing contextual conflict

If the contextual model discussed earlier is applied to Hadewijch's visions, the question of the extent to which Hadewijch's life, work and visions represent an expression of, and a solution to, living with contextual dichotomies and ideological conflict arises.

In terms of an expression of contextual conflict, could it be possible that her pattern of dissociation mirrored societal ambivalence regarding some of the new forms of religious life, such as the Beguine movement? The Beguines were considered by the church authorities to be heretics, yet most, if not all Beguines, including Hadewijch herself, actually upheld the basic theological doctrines, and valued nothing more highly than the Christian faith and life as ways of getting closer to God.

Assuming that living with such conflict might have been associated with personal discomfort, Hadewijch's dissociative states might have helped her to manage conflicting ideas selectively, by restricting her consciousness to certain topics at a time. For example, whereas during her waking states she tended to be preoccupied and tormented by the conflictual relationships in her socio-religious setting, when in one of her trance states she was not conscious of the social problems that caused her so much grief and lamenting (Hart 1980).

In addition to its personal utility, her dissociation might have had an interpersonal usefulness. One wonders whether this pattern of dissociation might not have saved Hadewijch from execution at the stake by allowing her, through "being taken up in the spirit", to withdraw from potential situations of direct conflict or confrontation with the church authorities, yet still to expound her ideas by recording and commenting on her visions, and to express herself in teaching her fellow Beguines, allowing her to maintain a sense of self-in-society.

In her theological work, her pattern of dissociation appears to have represented an integrative solution to apparently incompatible ideas such as "God" and "human". Through the earlier oscillation between longing for versus attaining fruition or union with God, and her alternating dissociative states, Hadewijch actually developed an integrated God-consciousness. She was then able to tolerate the opposing

ideas, the paradoxical theological elements and the conflicting feelings, and to integrate these in her God-experience (Mommaers 1990:240; Van der Zeyde 1934:193).

This integrated God-consciousness did not come into being suddenly; instead, it grew slowly, through a longing to be one with God (Rombauts & De Paepe 1961:17–19). Hadewijch's visions of explicit contact with God involved a gradual transformation from being not-yet-full-grown to being full-grown in God. Van Mierlo (1950:15) speaks of the growth of the soul in being equal to the God-man, as well as becoming one with God through the God-man (:28–29, 31).

Becoming one with God can also be considered a to-and-fro process. Marieke van Baest (1998:15) calls it the “equivalence and mutuality of the partnership of a human being with God”. De Paepe (1979:xxiii) considers *minne* as a bridge across the ravine between God and humans. Rombauts & De Paepe (1961:17) refer to a dialectical relationship between God and soul.

Eventually, through growing in love, Hadewijch reached the stage of a love union with God (De Paepe 1979:xx), of *minne* as meeting God on earth (De Paepe 1983:29, 30, 38ff., 46). She realised that she had become one with God, as well as remaining fully human at the same time (Van Mierlo 1950). Becoming one with God did not mean that her human nature had to be disavowed. Instead, for Hadewijch, being fully human was essential to becoming one with God (Mommaers, 1990:235).

In considering the apparent theological difficulty in becoming one with God, and the variable terminology used by the Hadewijch scholars referred to in the preceding paragraphs, it is to be noted that Reynaert (1981:441), in his book on Hadewijch's imagery, comments that Hadewijch's God concept is not so much a person, but rather an energy, a space, a living process of simultaneous explosion and implosion – an integration.

The gradual nature of Hadewijch's growth towards integration with God and her use of it as normative to junior Beguines appear to suggest that her dissociation might have been an expression of ordinary human psychological development in a social context of dissociatedness. It may then be concluded that she eventually reached a stage of mature psychological development.

The fact that Hadewijch's dissociation was intimately entwined with her accounts of her visions and her God concept may merely reflect her regular occupation as theologian and mystical author. If she had been, for example, a visual artist, it is conceivable that one might have interpreted the expression of her dissociatedness in her paintings.

It is important to note that Hadewijch moved freely between alternate states of consciousness, and had sufficient conscious access to

her dissociative states for her to be able to present her view from within those states. She knew what she was experiencing and was able to describe it, for instance in sharing her self-consciousness with her fellow Beguines (De Paepe 1979:xxx, xxxix). Hence she was able to integrate her consciousness and her unconscious in her written works.

The purpose of this study was not to evaluate Hadewijch for mental illness. In fact, the concept of mental illness did not exist in Hadewijch's time, when events and human concerns were interpreted predominantly in religious terms. If Hadewijch's visions and her dissociation were to be evaluated from a modern-day psychiatric perspective, however, she may well have been diagnosed as mentally ill.

However, when her visionary experiences are reinterpreted here using the contextual model discussed earlier, this concept of dissociation provides new meaning for her visions and her self-consciousness, and makes possible a new interpretation of her mental state. Then it is not a pathological picture that emerges. Hadewijch's general functioning was not impaired. On the contrary, she functioned well. She was an acclaimed Flemish poet and a strategic teacher who cared for and guided her fellow Beguines with compassion (De Paepe 1979; Mommaers 2004; Rombauts & De Paepe 1961). Hadewijch's visions and dissociative experiences reveal her growth towards, and her teaching on, an integrated God-experience, despite pernicious socio-cultural-spiritual dichotomies. Gradually, her visions demonstrate a development towards being one with God while being fully human at the same time, towards a capacity to work as a human being while resting in God. She was a pioneer theologian, who reflected self-consciously on her own consciousness, and who used her own dissociative experiences as a vehicle for developing a coherent theory of integrated God-consciousness, where divine and human aspects, as well as contrasting feelings, coincide.

Conclusions

It was shown above that contextual conflict might have contributed to Hadewijch's dissociation and informed her visions, so that her visions and the dissociation in them mirrored the ambivalence and conflict in her context. Hadewijch's medieval context thus appears to have played a role in shaping her consciousness through the process of dissociation. Although this study is limited by the exclusive focus on dissociation, specifically conflictual dissociation, and by the problem of being unable

to assess Hadewijch in person, her dissociative experiences appear to have specific personal, interpersonal, socio-cultural and spiritual meaning when interpreted in the light of the contextual model of dissociation.

Furthermore, Hadewijch appears to have dealt creatively with her dissociated consciousness and actually achieved integration. Her visions and dissociative experiences reveal her growth towards, and her teaching on, an integrated God-experience, despite pernicious socio-cultural-spiritual dichotomies. Her theological synthesis seems to reflect not only her inner psychological integration of the outer, contextual conflict, but also her inner psychological integration of consciousness and the unconscious. Instead of a portrait of a medieval, psychiatrically disordered patient, the picture is that of a successful poet, theologian, leader and teacher, who reflected self-consciously on her own consciousness and used her dissociative experiences to develop a theory of integrated God-consciousness.

So where does this leave us? If a medieval visionary's severe dissociation can be reinterpreted as adaptive and creative, using a contextual model of dissociation, what are the possible implications for us today?

This case study across the centuries has illustrated how historical studies, as well as interdisciplinary dialogue (in this case, between psychiatry and theology or church history), might be useful in the development or refinement of psychiatric concepts such as dissociation.

Moreover, in clinical psychiatry and the mental health context, we might do well to acknowledge meaning-giving contextual influences on an individual's consciousness, and to be sensitive to conflictual ideas in patients' social and religious contexts that could lead to dissociative symptoms. Perhaps these findings may suggest a slight shift, where the presence of dissociative symptoms is not, as such, necessarily taken as a sign of mental illness, and where their possible meaning could be explored.³ An interpretation of a person's dissociative symptoms as an indication of wider social or religious contextual problems, not merely as an individual problem, may also suggest support for psychiatric and psychological therapeutic approaches that focus beyond the individual or intrapsychic realm, on a concern that is more social psychiatric in nature.

Moving away slightly from the traditional psychiatric context, narrative-healing approaches may perhaps be especially well suited to helping people who struggle to make sense of their experiences of themselves in the world around them. In particular people who have been in conflict with institutions or with the expectations of their

societies may benefit from narrative support to help re-position themselves in relation to the conflicting discourses surrounding them.

In a less sympathetic context: a great deal of controversy surrounds dissociation in the field of forensic psychiatry and psychology. The above findings could be considered for their potential implications in the legal context for court proceedings in, for example, murder cases where claims of dissociative amnesia, “emotional storm” or non-pathological automatism are used in the defence of the accused. The relevant issues include questions about whether the defendant had been able to control her/his actions at the time of the alleged offence and whether she/he can be held accountable for actions perpetrated during a dissociated state, as the person’s self-control, judgement, or moral agency might have been paralysed or absent at that time.

Hadewijch is an example of an individual who, despite prominent dissociative trance states, retained insight, moral judgement and self-control. Her dissociation did not result in legally problematic outcomes and she did not violate the rights of other people, despite being persecuted to a certain extent for her beliefs. It remains to be explored more generally whether the presence as such of dissociative trance states should be taken necessarily to indicate a lack of culpability in criminal situations or legal proceedings. Perhaps the content of what a person does during their trance states might be a better indicator of *mens rea* than whether or not she/he experienced a trance state.

In the fields of theology and religious studies, Hadewijch’s contributions include her pioneer role in softening the traditional dichotomies, bridging the divide between the human and the divine, and offering instruction in a pathway for human psycho-spiritual development. Notwithstanding many recent related theological developments, for example, with regard to female imagery of God (Christ 1997; Grey 2001; Schüssler Fiorenza 1994) and body theology (Bynum 1995), Hadewijch stands out for her integrated God concept, where humans develop to become God. As was shown above, Hadewijch’s individual consciousness and dissociative states, along with her conflictual social context, all played important roles in her visions and theology. If this is considered in the light of a general orientation to mysticism, an overview of how human consciousness has changed over various epochs in human history and an explanation of how the changes in collective human consciousness relate to the broader socio-cultural context (Krüger 2006:136–145), further research possibilities emerge. For example, a focus on the relationship between a person’s individual consciousness and her/his socio-religious context in the development of her/his God concept might contribute to a study of religious consciousness.⁴

One might also consider the role of mysticism as an activity – whether mysticism might be an expression of grappling with social issues, as an avenue for protest against, for example, socio-religious power gradients. Although Hadewijch took issue with the social structures and the prevailing masculine theology of her time, she did not go to war, retaliate, or act out in a confrontational way. Neither did she escape the situation by becoming a recluse. Her way of dealing with the problem was to process it in terms of her mystical endeavours, to grapple with the issues in the context of her own environment and relationships. The complexity of the problems is reflected in the complexity of her writings. Considered in this way, perhaps mysticism should not be considered reductionistically as an escape from this world. Hadewijch did not escape; she worked constructively to achieve solutions to her problems, while remaining anchored in her environment.

In conclusion, it is suggested that dissociative mental states might be expressions of a process of ordinary human psychological development in a conflictual social context. The process of dissociation might flexibly shape an individual's consciousness in situations of contextual conflict, saying at least as much, if not more, about the context than about the individual.

Furthermore, the contextual model of dissociation has provided a useful conceptual framework and hermeneutical tool for evaluating another person's consciousness in a remote historical and cultural epoch. Through its application across centuries, the model has gained validity.

Over and above the idea that human consciousness has changed considerably since the Middle Ages, this trans-epochal study contributes to building a bridge between contemporary consciousness and the medieval consciousness of Hadewijch's time. In an anthropological or cultural sense, Hadewijch's attempts at living with contextual conflict are again relevant in the cultural melting pot of multicultural South Africa and other similar settings, especially regarding gender relations, religious-secular conflict and inter-religious conflict. With regard to the human response to contextual conflict, at least, perhaps our consciousness nowadays might not be so very different from those days, in that we might use similar psychological processes to try and make sense of our world in order to live meaningful lives.

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The influence of conflicting medieval church and social discourses ... 31

Endnotes

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- 1 Vekeman's modern Dutch translation puts it: "*Toen verzocht ik met aandrang om uitleg, ofschoon ik van alles wat ik zag het wezen peilde. Want al wat men schouwt met de geest die weggerukt is in de Liefde, dat doorgrondt men, dat proeft men door en door, daarvan blijft niets verborgen, daarvan verstaat men het geluid helemaal.*" (Vekeman, 1980, V. 11, p. 130, ll. 11–16.). Hadewijch's own words emphasised the thoroughness of such knowledge by using repetition: "*Jc sach nochtan die dinghen welc si waren van allen dat ic sach, want al dat men siet metten gheeste die met minnen es op ghenomen, dat dore kint men, dat dore smaect men, dat dore siet men, dat dore hoert men.*" (Vekeman, 1980, p. 131, XI: 52–58.).
 - 2 In the modern Dutch: "*... de ervaring van het gemis van onze tedere natuur, die wij wederzijds helemaal van elkaar ondervinden, evenals van de instemmende kennis en de behaaglijke ervaring die wij in onszelf tweevoudig van haar hebben, terwijl zij, onvolgroeide, ontberen moet wat zij bovenal liefheeft en daar niets dan duisternis aan overhoudt*" (Vekeman 1980, V.4, p.70, ll.20–25).
 - 3 In this regard, consider also the possible distinction between ordinary dissociation and pathological dissociation (Waller et al., 1996).
 - 4 See also Edinger, E F, Cordic, D D & Yates, C 1996. *The new God-image: A study of Jung's key letters concerning the evolution of the western God-image*. Wilmette, Ill.: Chiron.