

### **Traineeship at the Ministry of Development Aid – the natural power of long hair**

Everything went all right, i – or my mind at least – was interested in my study, my marks were fairly high, my perspective was very good now: i would certainly be a good scientist, or maybe end up near the heat of policy-making, i did a lot of sports, and just one year to go: do a traineeship and write my final essay. On top of all this i had managed to get a dream internship, at the Ministry of Developmental Aid. Two brief phone calls were enough to settle the job. I would help them with environmental matters concerning the Dutch development aid policy and projects in certain target countries. Everything went all right – including the fact that being so busy i, if at all, hardly noticed that ‘i’ or ‘something’ in me or my body was declining, including also the fact that i was not much aware that i missed being close to a girl. Every year i wrote a manuscript about ‘her’. That should do. I wouldn’t have known what to do with the awareness that perhaps i did miss being with a girl, making love [see note 11 – p. 242] to her in whatever way, and giving my love to her.

The mind didn’t and doesn’t have answers to this. ‘The girl’ was simply not there. Iris was gone. Liz was gone. Maja was gone. And Nathali was gone. They had checked me out and i had been found too light, too light for the lower spheres and simultaneously too Light in the higher realms of the human being, which made me too confrontational due to the purity i still obviously carried in me. The mind, in its poorness, its limitation, can only find solutions, no Truth. It doesn’t Understand Deeper Processes. Everything went all right, i was just declining, that was all. Just a little bit more and i could, proudly or not, join the army of dead society slaves.

When i opened the door of the office at the ministry for the first time, my boss who i hadn’t met yet, and who was just in the middle of a meeting with a female colleague of the department of Environment, thought i was wrong and asked me in a friendly way where i needed to be so he could help me find my way in the labyrinth of the ministry building. When i said: “I am the trainee, we have talked on the phone”, he fell back in his chair, completely shocked, confused.

“I... i... i expected someone else.”

It was as if he had never seen a man with long hair, at least not in his office. Nevertheless, we got along. I turned out not to be so bad after all, even though in that office business i could not show the quality that the mere fact of having long hair provided: having a better, closer relationship with nature, and thus better senses regarding picking up nature’s signals, as a military study of the American army research department showed:

To have more human meat that could be sacrificed for the Vietnam war, also Indians were recruited by the American army. Since Indians were known for their good skills and intuition in nature, they could use them well in the thick, unclear and dangerous bush in South East Asia where the enemy was stronger. They hoped and expected the Indians could sense where the enemies were. Only, once they were active in Vietnam, the results, the expected advantage of using Indians, did not come true. As a standard procedure in the US army the Indians, at their recruitment, had their long hair been cut off, just like anybody else. There was an army researcher who was so clever to link the loss of their nature qualities in Vietnam to the loss of their long hair – as far as i’m concerned, this was not much less genial than Einstein’s discoveries. After research on this subject showed a positive correlation, and

subsequently using long-haired Indians since then, the results in Vietnam significantly improved – for the US army that is.

The conclusion is that normal natural long hair keeps one connected to nature, keeps one more sensitive, preserves a nature-based knowledge and intuition, a sixth sense if you like. Cutting off one's hair is more than a societal fashion and handy trick through which one is not bothered by the long hair while doing one's job. In the course of time society has become increasingly distant from and even hostile to or adversative to nature. When persons carry too much 'nature' in them – and long hair is certainly one of the characteristics of this, as this example shows – society has more difficulty in fitting them into its own system and letting them produce for the economy as they should, as viewed from the economic productivity perspective that has an inherent difficulty with nature, with wildness, even with humanness. Cutting off long hair is good for an economy that needs meek slaves that cannot feel any more – or at least feel less than, on the grounds of their nature, is true and normal – but can perfectly (even though preferably not too independently) think and execute their, limited, relatively simple, task.

Strangely enough, the ground-breaking research didn't, besides its use for the army, have much effect in society. I don't think the big public had been informed about it, due to the reasons mentioned above. There was no shock-effect, and people just submissively kept cutting their hair off – even though it was, coincidentally, just in the period, the sixties and seventies, in which more men and women let their hair grow for reasons that were in the end related: allowing more nature, less fake civilization. Let's face it, in the case that people had been well informed about the shocking result of the research, most people, unbelievable as it almost is, still preferred to have short hair, 'simply' because they prefer 'culture' above nature – except when it comes to sex. Conquering nature is more appealing than being part of it. Also, people are so incurably afraid of acting differently from what the majority does, even if this goes at the expense of their own nature. When fashion returns to wearing wigs, that's what they'll do: wear a wig.

My – short-haired – boss was high-up in the normal hierarchy of a ministry. His place in the picking order was, together with seven other specialists, right under junior minister. He was, despite his short hair, responsible for the environmental side of the development aid projects of Holland, at that time a new main point for attention which had only recently been added to the other, older, regular bench marks.

During the breaks, i preferred to be in the company of the female secretaries above, what happened a few times accidentally, sitting in between the staff male suits, who were talking quite abstractly about this and that, and in whose presence i felt completely out of place, as i had felt never before. It was, indeed, as if they were so far from nature that it was not easy to detect much humanness in them, even though, of course, as always, some had gone further in this Heart-killing unfaithfulness to Themselves than others. The secretaries were not my type either, but at least i could not avoid catching them being human again and again, and in general i felt more relaxed in their company than with the hard-boiled suits.

Once, when during work i read that every year ten thousand people in developing countries died – not to mention the many more people who had become seriously ill – from the use of chemicals in agriculture, chemicals that were forbidden to be used in Western countries due to proven toxicity – but that Western chemical companies were very willing to

sell to the Third World as the developing countries were called. With this information i ran into my boss' office and showed him the shocking figures. To me figures were not figures. The Heart couldn't truly separate letters from reality. Reading the figures, naturally allowing contact with what i read, i saw before me all these scattered bodies dying or dead already after, probably, suffering severe pain. And goddamned, it still continued. Inside, i could really become angry from such madness – even though it conflicted with my clumsy decision not to become angry any more, not to express it as such. I had run to my boss' office with a speed as if i maybe could still save a few lives when i was fast enough. My boss was somewhat shocked about my shock, but tried to appease me anyway.

“Calm down, Maarten,” he said. “Relax. I know all that.”

Again i was shocked, now by his reaction. He even used both his hands – outstretched going up and down – to temper me. As if i was the problem and not the people being killed because of Western company greed and indifference. He explained me that if at all we would and could do something about it, it would be a long journey in subtle diplomatic negotiations. It was no good to get excited about such things.

“But people are dying there...”

I didn't or didn't want to understand why we couldn't share our honest feelings or indignation about serious matters such as this one. Why, for heaven's sake, should big companies be protected by governments instead of being shown and forced to take human responsibility. What did we have governments for then, if it was not protect the weak against the greed of the powerful. Were these ten thousand victims just 'bad luck' or an unfortunate conjunction of circumstances? Was the world so cynical? Why not support the poor farmers, why support those who could take care of themselves anyway, who had millions and millions if not billions in their account credited with red letters of blood. The deadened hands of my boss didn't succeed in tempering me, my honest bodily response to this great injustice that can still make me angry. It felt to me that my boss was afraid of 'body', of any form of spontaneous uncontrollable reaction and had to render the danger harmless as soon as possible. This didn't mean, by the way, that he wasn't doing a good job, as far as his mandate went. And, in principle, even when the Heart is not allowed in its wildness, even when It is grossly overshadowed by the mind, It can still be a far and unfamiliar inspiration in the background. In fact, i felt my boss was a good man.

Nonetheless, and not only due to this incident in my boss' office but in general, i became quite frustrated in people's attitude at the ministry. I had almost already made a switch from becoming a scientist to working in the field of policy – simply because that seemed to be the place where things were happening, where a difference could be made, where i could exert an influence. But now i was disillusioned here too. I had assumed that at least the people who worked at the ministry of Development Aid were driven by something similar that drove me, a feeling of wanting to do something good in and for the world, to improve things, to fight against injustice. But it appeared that 'improving things' was at best, or at least in the first place, the accidental (though fortunate) content of their job. If their job happened to be part of 'making things worse' they would have done that.

The latter was something that many ministries, under the inspiring guidance of the ministry of Economic Affairs, were actually doing, as i realized after reading many governmental reports, policy documents, books, reports of meetings between delegations of

different departments and also essays by non-governmental organizations. It was just their job, what they did from nine to five, also at the ministry of development aid. There was no drive. No spirit. No sense of (in)justice. No Heart that manifested as such. Not much would change in a good way by these bureaucratic institutions – and, resigned, the workers in the departments seemed to accept this. Not wanting to totally degrade the good intentions and deeds of them, but, in a way, the institutions seemed to be part of the problem instead of a solution, given the acceptance by all the players in the concerning field of greed and selfishness at the expense of others and nature as a whole, institutionalized in laws, rules, treaties, as exploitation was. Economic greed seemed the new God for people who, in the contemporary epoch, had no religion or had lost it, or only practiced it on Sunday, when they didn't have to work.

If one studied the policy reports, sooner or later you always ended up at the point of this new God: economic interests. If people in the Third World got ill from economic greed of the West(ern companies) by use of pesticides for instance, then, on the grounds of economic logic, a possible solution would be to raise or find money somewhere and build a hospital. The holy economy should in no way be obstructed. It was blasphemy to say and stay firm to the poor petty egos of the companies that, no, they have played enough with their toys, with poison, with figures, with people's health and lives. The egos might not like daddy any more. It was people's task to suffer – for the economy – the economy itself should stay free from suffering. Trade, investments, capital should be free, whereas people were supposed to be the slaves that were given other names, like farmers, consumers, targets or whatever – an ideology utterly repelling to me. How, for god's sake, is it possible that, in more recent times, a company like Monsanto is allowed to squeeze out, suffocate, make unhappy and indirectly kill so very many people, because of profits, fucking profits, fucking markets, fucking economy, fucking capitalism, fucking selfishness under the cover of ideology. Only the deadness of Heart of politicians and their voters can tolerate this. Capitalism is a lethal, unrecognized disease of the Heart.

Being a trainee, with a salary of fifty guilders a month (21 euros), i made the longest days at the ministry. Yet, i felt ashamed that i got this money while i could do so little for the people in the Third World. I could only work very hard and long.

Again, like with sociology, there were no girls to be found in the huge ministry of Foreign Affairs to which my ministry belonged. Not one. It was worse, in fact. One guy, a high-up like my boss, started chatting with me in a greasy slimy way. He asked me how and where i lived. How did i deal with the issue of eating? Oh, did i cook for myself? Well, if i cooked anyway, it wouldn't be a bad idea that i would cook for him too, hahaha. I could live with him in his delightful house, big enough for me to move in. No problem, if i felt like. No rent to pay any more. A win-win situation, wasn't it? "Just think about it, eh?"

I found it a weird 'conversation'. I was still too naïve, not to immediately understand he was a homosexual. Having grown up with my parents i had learned that people just meant what they say, that there are no double bottoms. But i kept thinking about the situation afterwards. Something was not right and repulsed me. Of course, i rejected him when a few days later he asked me what i had decided and i gave my answer that i preferred to live alone, and also by avoiding him since then, which was not always possible.

When a second colleague of my boss, also one of the eight higher-ups, also tried to come closer to me, although endearingly awkwardly – he put a hand on my shoulder which was totally out of place – a little bell started ringing in me finally, even though something in me still didn't want to wholly acknowledge that what i felt was true. That was number two. Still five higher-ups to go. But fortunately the others left me alone. It seemed the two gays had never met someone like me in their domain of the ministry, such a prince-like boy, i mean. Both, in their own way, admired something in me, as i felt. Especially the second guy, the old one, couldn't do anything any more when he saw me. It was as if he looked at God or Jesus. Through other eyes than usual they saw something in me that they, unfortunately, related to sexuality and having to get closer in this respect. The world seemed quite fucked up because of this stupid sexuality that veiled, overpowered or even destroyed *something deeper* that could be Met without this distortion. It's not that i found sexuality itself stupid, but rather the fact that, on earth, it ruled over love.