

NEW AGE vs. CHRISTIAN BELIEF

AN ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

It is doubtful whether any other phenomenon has affected modern society more, either directly or indirectly, than the New Age Movement (NAM) . Despite its name, the NAM is not a new phenomenon. Its roots can in fact be found in the origins of eastern mystic religions such as Hinduism and later western alternative organizations such as the Theosophical Society of Madame Blavatsky, which was formed in 1957, played an important part in its formation and direction. The NAM's different groups and concepts have been influencing society for many ages, but it received prominence only in the post-Cold War era, where a void was created by the fall of Communism.

Many definitions can be traced about the concept of a NAM. It is not one unified group and is in fact a stream of movements, smaller groups, philosophies and belief systems. Patrick Buchanan of the New York Post defined the

movement as follows : “ Common to many of the New Age adherents is a belief in reincarnation, in astrology, in the miraculous power of crystals and in trance chancellors, individuals with the psychic power to summons up voices from centuries ago. “ ¹

The NAM is often seen as a religious phenomenon. However, it has also infiltrated global and regional political, sociological , health and economical systems. Buzz-words such as “the brotherhood of man, holistic medicine, paradigm shift, global peace, a new world order “ etc. became cliches in New Age language. Most people are unaware of the intensity of New Age penetration in society. Yet central concepts of the movement have been portrayed for the last few decades in films, books, music and the media in general. The NAM has attracted much media and other attention during the last few years, especially after media advertisements of “the Christ is here” - placed by a faction of the NAM,

¹ *New York Post*

lead by Benjamin Creme. Strong response came from religious circles, which either embraced New Age ideas as important for the development of a peaceful and, on regional level, a democratic society, or condemned it outright as evil and part of the antichrist system. Much confusion followed this controversy and little post-graduate research has been done to examine the question of the content of the NAM and its relation to Christianity.

Graduate research on the topic seen from a sociological point of view was published, however, the author is not aware of any proper research been done from a historical/ theological point of view. This empirical study is one attempt to fill that void. It will also look at the validity of “corrections” made by previous research of some allegations lodged against the NAM.

In Christian circles comparisons are often done between certain scriptures relating to “the mark

of the beast”, “the man of perdition”, “the antichrist” etc., and the NAM. Common characteristics and *modi operandi* of both the NAM and Christian eschatological doctrine are often highlighted. Prior research has denounced this approach as archaic and mythical. This mainly quantitative study will endeavor to shed more light on this subject.

SUMMARY

The New Age Movement is attempting to fulfill a renewed human need for truth and meaning. It has a long developmental history. The purpose of this study is firstly to address the movement in its historical perspective. The quantitative approach is utilized to establish the ideal-type New Age believer. A framework of historical streams from different origins is established to find the roots of the movement and to give context to data concerning it. Core beliefs of the movement are further identified.

Ideal-type Christian eschatological doctrine is secondly identified. A qualitative measuring instrument is used for this purpose and incorporated into the quantitative findings.

From these data, a comparison is made between New Age and Christian belief. It is concluded that there are significant similarities between New Age doctrine and Biblical warnings of evil.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Definitions and clarification of key concepts

The New Age Movement (NAM) is exactly what its name indicates - a movement or stream incorporating some general values and beliefs, but also many core and minor, as well as front organizations. It involves a vast array of influences from Eastern philosophies, Alternative Western religions and humanist psychology and parapsychology. Little in-depth research has been done on the New Age Movement, and this study is one of the few current studies based mainly on literature research and research analysis done after questionnaires were forwarded to different groups. The aims of this investigation is firstly to identify the history and core concepts of the movement, to highlight certain organizations which form part of the New Age Movement, either directly or indirectly, and lastly to

compare the New Age beliefs and philosophy with that of Christianity.

Little attempt is made in this study to emphasize individuals and their context, instead the idea is to generate an explanatory theory which can be used as a comparative study with the well-established beliefs and concepts of Christianity, especially from its eschatological view. This research project therefore has a mainly quantitative approach rather than a qualitative or ideographic approach. The idea is to attempt to establish an ideal-type New Age philosophy, which can be compared with that of Christianity. McKinney² defined the heuristic model or ideal-type as a “purposive, planned selection, abstraction, combination, and (sometimes) accentuation of a set of criteria with empirical referents that serves as a basis for comparison of empirical cases.”

In this study one will often come across foreign or ambiguous concepts which need clarification.

The term New Age Movement has suffered many definitions, and we stated the definition given by journalist Patrick Buchanan of the New York Times. Christian scholars have defined the NAM as a philosophy, an unorganized movement or group, consisting of thousands of organizations with similar goals, beliefs and practices, out to prepare the way for a world leader who will supposedly usher in a new era of peace, brotherhood and unity. Donald Keys and Peter Caddy, founders of core NAM group Planetary Citizens, have identified the movement as one who must aid “world servers” everywhere to prepare the way for the “reappearance of Christ” These are but some possibilities regarding a definition. To give a proper definition though would be to pre-empt the findings of this project. The main unifying key idea that all New Agers seem to embrace however is the belief in a new dimension, a new era that has “dawned “ upon mankind in the words of the sixties pop-group “The Beatles”. Most if not all New Agers would

² J C McKinney: **Constructive typology and social theory**, pp. 3,25.

point out that the astrological age of Pisces, the fish, has ended and that the age of Aquarius, the water carrier, with the rainbow as symbol, has started. This calls for a “quantum leap” in thought and beliefs.

Another essential concept that needs definition or clarification is the term “religion”. Much has been said about the concept of religion. It is firstly one of made institutions or elements of society. It is always something that gives meaning to life and existence. The element of worship, normally through prayer or meditation, or a similar attribute is normally part of such definition. When such a group forms whose contributors share in similar expression and experience, one finds organized religion.³ One religious leader, Simon Seekoei of the United Christian Fellowship in South Africa, defined the term religion as a system of faith and worship.⁴

³ Oosthuizen *et.al.*: **Religion, intergroup relations and social change in South Africa**, p.9.

⁴ *Impetus*, July/Aug 1988.

Another author, Streng,⁵ has identified the following characteristics of religion :

1. The existence of techniques, expressions and symbols as *modi operandi* to change ones' own life from a purposeless existence to purposeful meaning. Streng clarifies religion as the belief in ultimate reality that changes one to its deepest level.
2. The existence of different religious levels, i.e. on a personal level, cultural level and ultimate level. On a personal level, an individual experiences religion subjectively and privately. On a cultural level , according to Streng, religion refers to such elements in society such as history, traditions and the like which influences the establishment of a traditional religious institution. De Gruchy ⁶ warned of course that "...the problem remains for us all to ensure that theology does not become captive to culture..." The ultimate religious level, according to Streng, refers to

⁵ F J Streng: **Understanding religious life**, p.2.

⁶ in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, March 1988

broad terminology such as truth, peace, joy and wisdom - characteristics to which most if not all people devote their lives.

3. The existence of a process instead of a static experience. Streng identifies religion as an on-going change in an individual' life or, on a cultural level, change in society in its thinking, values and dynamics.
4. The existence of inclusivity rather than exclusivity, which means the term accommodates monotheistic, polytheistic, as well as nontheistic groups.

If one applies Streng's definition, one can accept that the NAM qualifies as a religion.

1.2. Formulation of the problem

This quantitative study looks at the dynamic phenomenon of the New Age Movement. The research problem is this: many investigations by Christian authors have established that the NAM is anti-Christ, the system of the beast of the book

of Revelation in the Bible . One or two research scholars on the other hand have established that the former views are myths and not based on fact and that the NAM actually contributes to religious thought and experience as a healthy alternative with positive affects. One study found that transformation of thought, a “paradigm shift”, obtainable through meditation and study, is in fact necessary.⁷

The situation, then, is paradoxical : The NAM is evil, it is also healthy and necessary. The writing of this dissertation is an attempt to resolve this paradox. In our resolve we will have to make a few assumptions. Firstly, we will have to assume that because we have qualified the NAM as a religion it incorporates *inter alia* religious thinking. Because it is accepted that religion is at least part of the NAM, we must further assume that two contrasting but measurable forms of religious orientation exists. Allport ⁸ referred to this situation where an intrinsic and an extrinsic

⁷ Website www.farsight.org

⁸ L A Hjelle and D J Ziegler: **Personality Theories**, p.310.

orientation exist. The former orientation, he alleged, regards faith as an ultimate value in its own right. Allport indicated that a religious person with an intrinsic orientation takes “seriously the commandment of brotherhood that is found in all religions, and seeks a unification of being.”⁹ An religious person with an extrinsic orientation, on the other hand, regards faith not as a value in its own right, but rather as instrument to reach personal motives such as comfort, status, security etc.

We therefore also assume that the NAM accepts Allports’ allegations in that it believes in the brotherhood of man and it believes in the oneness of being. The traditional values of Christianity, which *inter alia* also involves concepts we must assume the NAM embraces, e.g. brotherhood, unity, peace and love, are furthermore assumed. *Prima facie* it thus seems as if Christianity and the NAM embrace the same or similar values, and

⁹ *American Psychologist*, 1966

should therefore be compatible. Interaction and even unity between the two are the logical conclusion. However, in practice it is common knowledge that, at least certain sections of the Christian community, the NAM is seen and accepted as evil which should be avoided. It is the task of this research project to establish the reasons for this animosity, and to establish whether this attitude is justifiable.

To reach our own conclusions one will have to compare the two systems - that of the New Agers and that of Christianity. Much has been said to identify Christianity, and this study will not ponder on definitions in his regard. On the other hand little is known about the content, extent and influence of the NAM. The latter calls for an in-depth investigation, which the author will attempt to do here.

Firstly one will be obliged to look at the historical roots of the movement. Because its

history involves the influence of many divergent streams and groups, these need to be examined to reach perception and comprehension. The core concepts of the NAM must also be explored to understand its philosophy and to decide whether a ideal-type belief can be identified. The organizations involved with the NAM will obviously display certain characteristics that can also be taken into account. Once this has been established, Christian thought on basic values and its views on eschatological events will be noted to enable the author to compare the philosophy of the latter with that of the NAM. The problem of apparent similarity yet paradoxical in essence, will thus be addressed.

1.3. Methodology of the study

This study follows a quantitative rather than qualitative approach, although some qualitative data has been collected. Former studies on the New Age Movement have followed the ideographic approach, centering its findings on

individuals, their respective experiences and the context of such experiences. Little research however has been done attempting to formulate an exemplary model of New Age beliefs that can scientifically be compared with another religious type. Since the NAM implies extreme subjectivity, a quantitative evaluation should be the more appropriate. The inclusion of a qualitative measuring instrument will add value to the main approach.

This study will focus on a more objective approach with the purpose of reaching this exemplary model. The beliefs and experiences of individuals, even within context, are not necessarily similar to that of all adherents to a particular movement or religion. A scientifically calculated random sample of the adherent population will have to be elected in order to come to objective findings. On the other hand, a quantitative study that focuses on a literature study, which assimilates relevant facts from many different sources, written by authors with

diverse viewpoints, where the study concentrates on primary and secondary sources, should give a more objective picture.

To facilitate the inclusion of qualitative data, the author compiled a survey. The survey was geared at Christians, to supplement written sources with the goal of reaching the ideal-type Christian viewpoint. The report following is based on this survey, in the form of a questionnaire which was completed by 45 persons indicating their religion as Christian of some sort. Additional five persons took part in the exercise that did not regard themselves as Christians: two Mormons, two Wicca, one Atheist and one calling himself simply a New Ager. Their responses were however not included in the final analysis, for the sake of relevancy.

Using this complimentary data, I am then seeking to find an answer to the simple research question: What are the perceptions of Christians regarding the NAM? Once their perceptions have

been established, it can be incorporated with quantitative findings relating to Christianity in this study.

As mentioned earlier, the method applied in this study involves itself firstly with the construction of an ideal-type. This was conceptually developed by Becker and defined by McKinney.¹⁰ The grounded theory approach of Glaser and Strauss¹¹ has also been adopted. Glaser and Strauss's theory is based on the conclusions reached based on data systematically explored and analyzed. These conclusions form a theory advanced by the researcher. Glaser and Strauss strongly encourage researchers to free themselves from any pre-conceived notions or ideas they might have had regarding their demarcated research topic. Of course, certain assumptions in one's study are inescapable, and certain assumptions have in fact already been made in the author's preceding discussions, especially when the term religion was used. An amount of

¹⁰ J C McKinney: *Op.cit.*

¹¹ B G Glaser and A L Strauss: **Discovery of grounded theory.**

theory underlying terms and phrases is already implied. For example, the acceptance of the New Agers' belief in the entering of a new dispensation implies a specific theoretical perspective on the movement. This theoretical perspective must however be open to correction as the researcher's study unfolds. Unless change in theory is accepted where necessary, there can be no comprehension and no scientific research. Once an explicit theory has emerged from the researcher's quantitative and qualitative collected and assimilated data, the phenomenon can be explained satisfactorily.

Of course, this does not imply that one must be free from an interpretative framework altogether. A framework is necessary to order facts and findings. Glaser and Strauss do though emphasize that preconceived notions could affect a study. New theories should be allowed to emerge naturally from assimilated data.

McKinney¹² stated that the constructed ideal-type represents a group of characteristics that are refined using the reducing diverse facts relevant to a phenomenon to a general level which is consistent. This theoretical building frame aims to arrange raw data into a normative system that can then be utilized for comparison and predictions. This is the ultimate aim through this methodology - to gain theoretical insights in the phenomenon of the NAM in its relation to the values and beliefs of Christianity to enable readers to compare the two and make informative choices and predictions. Although History does not involve itself with predictions, this becomes possible within the context of the ideal-type methodology.

1.4. Research objectives and hypotheses

Objectives with this study have already been highlighted, *i.e.*

¹² J C McKinney: *Op.cit*, p.5.

- the discovery of an ideal-type New Age philosophy through the discovery and assimilation of relevant facts
- the formulation of theory which will enable readers to compare this phenomenon with another and make informative predictions and choices
- the discovery of an ideal-type Christian view through the usage of a questionnaire and subsequent data analysis, together with the assimilation of relevant facts
- the comparison of New Age values and beliefs with that of Christianity, with the emphasis on the latter's eschatological views and theories

Once the above objectives have been met, the following hypotheses will be proved or disproved:

- the characteristics, *modi operandi* and similarities of the New Age Movement and that of Christian eschatological doctrine are so strong that it merits explanation
- there is a logical explanation of these similarities

CHAPTER 2: THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1. Goals of this chapter

Different authors have suggested different origins of the New Age Movement. Most Christian authors find the roots of the movement in the Garden of Eden where the serpent informed Eve that man could become “as gods”.¹³ Others found the origins in the so-called Illuminati,¹⁴ in Sumeria, Chaldea, Babylonia, Persia, India and Egypt, in Gnosticism, where man searches for salvation in the field of the timeless,¹⁵ or the Renaissance.¹⁶ Some authors simply refer to the movement as “a [occult] tradition that has been the companion of Christianity through the centuries”,¹⁷ where

¹³ D R Groothuis: **Confronting the New Age**, p.17 and in *The Discerner*, pp.4-8.

¹⁴ Video J Malan.

¹⁵ C A Raschke: **The interruption of eternity: modern Gnosticism and the origins of the new religious consciousness**, p. x.

¹⁶ T Roszak: **Unfinished animal: the Aquarian frontier and the evolution of consciousness**, p.9.

¹⁷ C J Melton and A A Kelly: **New Age Encyclopediae**, p.xxii.

others such as Webb¹⁸ sees its roots in man's "occult desire" for liberation from human conditions. Other scholars see the NAM as having progressed out of a great spiritual thirst that is currently found in modern society.

Apart from the above, the majority of scholars see the modern developing foundation of the movement in the 1960's/1970's in America with the surfacing of the hippie culture.

Most scholars will also agree that there are strong similarities between the concepts found in the NAM and in that of Hinduism, which indicates that the former's growth could originally have started in the birth of Hinduism.

The goals of this chapter is then to give a historical perspective without which the modern NAM cannot be understood. Out of all the

¹⁸ R Basil (ed.): **Not Necessarily the New Age**, p.54.

possibilities given regarding the roots of the movement, one must ultimately be correct. Furthermore, diverse groups from different spheres of the globe influenced the development of the movement. Not all New Agers will agree that all these groups had influenced the movement, neither will everybody agree on exactly which groups influenced the phenomenon. No emphasis must therefore be put on one particular group. The idea is to touch on similarities in thought, belief and experiences in ALL of these groups, whether they in fact contributed to the development of the NAM or not. An attempt is also made to distinguish between groups who beyond reasonable doubt influenced the movement, and other groups whose influence was possible minor.

Many New Agers claim direct connotation with ancient written sources that are not available for scrutiny. Others claim inspiration from “spirit guides” which, due to the nature of the claims, cannot be objectively evaluated, other than

looking at available sources' comments on such phenomena.

2.2. Influence of the Illuminati

It was already mentioned that some scholars find the roots of the New Age Movement in Inigo Lopez de Recalde , *alias* "Ignatius of Loyola's" Society of Jesus, also called the Alumbrados or the Illuminati. Ignatius de Loyola was incidentally also the founder of the Jesuit Order of priests within the Catholic Church. It is said that Ignatius communicated with the spirit world for guidance through meditation and that he practiced levitation.¹⁹

In 1776, according to some sources, the Illuminati's council of 13 members accepted a resolution to usher in a "new age" wherein the world's economy, international banking, military forces and religions would be united. This secret

¹⁹ E Paris: **Secret History of the Jesuits**, p.519.

decision was termed The Great Seal, and consisted of 13 points. Because the Seal had as one of its main goals the control of global finance, this symbol was imprinted on American one dollar bills. When one scrutinizes such bill one finds a pyramid, which was incorporated by the NAM is a symbol of mystical power, with 13 steps and the Latin inscription “Novus Ordo Seclorum” - a New World Order. The wording “annuit coeptus” above the pyramid can be interpreted as “ an agreement with that which was started”, while the date 1776 is inscribed at the bottom of the pyramid in roman letters: MCCCLXXVI The all-seeing eye, symbol of the “divine spark” in man according to the NAM and many Eastern religions, round off the picture at the top of the pyramid - indicating that the source of all mystical power is allegedly to be found within.²⁰ According to one source ²¹

²⁰ See the works of E Paris and Chiniquy in general.

²¹ E Paris: *Op.cit*, p.161.

Augustin Catholic Cardinal Bea, a senior Jesuit and member of the Illuminati under extreme oath and induction, oversaw the Catholic's Ecumenical Movement during the sixties.

The Illuminati has been equated by some to the modern Bilderbergers, a global society of political and financial leaders who have been meeting for the last few decades on an annual basis discussing world and financial affairs. Dave Hunt explicitly declares that the Catholic Church has been the initiators and organizers of this society, and equates them with the “woman riding the beast” of Rev 17: 7 in the Bible.²² United States ambassador to the Vatican Raymond Flynn has remarked : “The Vatican relationship with the United States is extraordinarily important... it is in the national interest of the United States of America to have strong relations with the Vatican.”²³ The same source said that geopolitical analysts are mentioning a ‘new alliance’ between “the world’s

²² D Hunt: **A Woman rides the beast.**

²³ *Inside the Vatican*, p.41.

chief military power, the U.S., and the world's chief spiritual leader, the pope.”.²⁴ Catholic Robert Muller, former UN Assistant Secretary-General and Chancellor for the University of Peace, has remarked that the world needs a “cosmic spirituality” where religious leaders will unite under the authority of the pope.²⁵

2.3. Eastern religions and philosophical influences

2.3.1. Hinduism and the different ages

Eastern philosophies played perhaps the biggest part in the development of the NAM. Ancient Tibetan Master Djwahl Khul stated that it is impossible to have spiritual progress unless one embraces Eastern meditation. It is common cause that the oldest philosophy and world religion is that of Hinduism. Of course Hinduism is a pantheistic religion where there is encountered not a single religion but a variety of popular,

²⁴ *Inside the Vatican*, p.41.

²⁵ *World Goodwill Newsletter*, pp.1,3.

metaphysical and symbolic expressions spread over an immense area of humanity. The three main gods are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. These gods descended to earth as divine masters. Rama and Krishna are seen as incarnations of Vishnu. ²⁶

The Hindu philosophy states that the universe is busy forming continuously. This allegedly occurs in major repetitive cyclic occurrences of creation, destruction and recreation or rebirth. The first occurrence of creation last 4320 million years and can be distinguished by four separate yet unified stages. These stages have different duration :

The *Krta Yuga* stage - the longest

The *Treta Yuga*

The *Dvapara Yuga*

The *Kali Yuga* - the shortest. ²⁷

²⁶ J S Kruger, G J R Lubbe and H C Steyn: **The human search for meaning: a multireligious introduction to the religions of mankind**, p.69.

²⁷ M Eliade: **The myth of the eternal cosmos and history**, p.112 *ff*.

According to Hindu belief each of these stages start with the incarnation of an *avatar*, an incarnation of the god Vishnu. The first stage, the , *Krta Yuga*, was the golden or best age of the four and lasted the longest. The last stage, the *Kali yuga*, is the current age of man and is the shortest. It is also called the Iron age or the age of darkness since it is the predecessor to the next cycle, that of destruction. Modern society is therefore gripped in escalating chaos, darkness and despair. The only hope is the distant new cycle of a golden age.

In another popular Eastern religion, Buddhism, a similar theme is seen. Buddhism was formed by Siddhartha Gautama, who was the first “Buddha” . This term means “the enlightened one” or “the awakened” . It also refers to the deepest reality in every person. In this religion the fifth Buddha, Maitreya (“the friendly one”) , is anticipated to bring about the final age of modern mankind. Other philosophies have similar myths, where all refer to the imminent return of a man-god who

will rule the earth during a final phase of current history.²⁸ In another Eastern religion, Zoroasterism, the forces of good and evil are constantly engaged in a spiritual battle which will eventually climax in an eschatological triumph of the forces of good, after which a Golden era of peace will again start.²⁹

Some scholars argue that the above concepts in the form of messianism, apocalypticism and millenarianism possibly filtered into Judaism during the Babylonian captivity of the Jewish people, where it was later transferred into the Christian and Islam religions. Bible scholars will of course point out that such concepts appear in literary sources that pre-date the Babylonian captivity.

It is also of some worth to point out that some Christian scholars have distinguished between

²⁸ M Eliade: **The myth of the eternal return of cosmos and history**, pp.115, 119.

²⁹ *Die Basuin*, December 1997, p.10.

three ages of mankind : the age of the Law (Father), which lasted from Adam to Jesus Christ, the Age of the Gospel (Son) , which lasted during the short period of Jesus' physical presence on earth , and the Age of the Spirit (Holy Spirit), which started with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples as described in Acts 2 in the Bible. This Trinity view of the ages first surfaced during the time of Joachim of Fiore (1145-1202).

All the above-mentioned views present man with an opportunity to escape from chaos and evil and to enter a “golden” age. This escape is possible, according to Indian traditions, by transcending the conscious. In Buddhist tradition it is possible through reaching the state of Nirvana, which is attained by meditation. In the Christian tradition this escape is through the experience of rebirth into the Kingdom of God, which did Jesus refer to as the experience of being “born again” in John 3 in the Bible.

The New Age Movement accepted the philosophy of a current chaotic life-stage, the possibility of release into a new golden age, and the tradition of meditation and transcending the conscious as methods of escaping the chaos and entering the new era. The NAM also incorporated in their philosophy the belief in Maitreya as a god-leader that will herald in this new age. In our chapter on core concepts of the NAM it will be explained that the movement refined the concept of pantheism by also rejecting a single personal God, and alternatively believing, similar to Hinduism, that everything is in fact god and in god.

New Thought preacher Donald Curtis believes that the New Age Movement is the “mystical core of all true religions and idealistic philosophies. Greek, Oriental and Eastern philosophies, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Taoism, Judaism, and Christianity all have a golden mystical thread running through them. “ He continues that this “thread” is the teaching of or

belief in a new era that is coming, a era of peace and brotherhood.³⁰

2.3.2. Buddhism

Well-known New Age teacher David Spangler³¹ links the Eastern Buddhist religion with the New Age Movement in an essay on the life of Buddha and the *Bhagavad-Gita* wherein he proclaims that the New Age Movement is actually not new, but its beliefs are based on old philosophies, including that of Buddhism.

Important Western disciples of Buddhism are Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder, D Suzuki and A Watts. Suzuki of course does not identify Buddhism as a religion, but rather as a practical *modus operandi* of spiritual enlightenment, that denies all doctrine. It is said that true enlightenment comes through insight into one's own mind, which is equated with the mind of Buddha himself. The typical New Age philosophy

³⁰ D Curtis: **New age understanding**, foreword.

³¹ D Spangler: **Towards a planetary vision**, p.63.

of man being God and being one with God thus again surfaces. Enlightenment of the mind is identified as *Satori*. Another Buddhist author, Watts, write that the counter-culture of the sixties, i.e. the hippies with their “flower power”, together with the “beatniks” or “Beat generation” , i.e. Bohemian up-and-coming intellectual youth, created a great thirst among young people for the truth - and that many found it in Zen. He criticized Zen factions such as “Beat Zen” and “Square Zen” though because, he believed, it became a pretext for doing anything and accepting it as right, so confusing the existential level with the social level.³²

Roszak on the other hand believes that Zen played an important part in the development of a scientific believe system of nature and man which forms part of the foundation of the New Age Movement. He said that this time “... was the beginning of a youth culture that continues to be shot through with the spontaneous urge to

³² *This is it*, 1973, p.101.

counter the joyless, rapacious, and egomaniacal order of our technological society.”³³

The author Field ³⁴ puts the height of the Zen culture around 1965 but emphasizes that Buddhism was only one of many paths the youngsters were to discover.

Although Buddhism came to the West when its first Western follower was initiated in the USA in 1893, it only really mushroomed as alternative religion during the eighties when one such group, Chogyam Trungpa’s Vajrayana Buddhism, claimed around 20 000 followers.³⁵ Chogyam’s initiatives included meditation and retreat centers across the USA, and a Buddhist University, the Naropa Institute, was started in New York State.³⁶

³³ T Roszak: **The making of a counter culture**, p.137.

³⁴ R Fields: **How the swans came to the lake: a narrative history of Buddhism**, p.243.

³⁵ D W-H Fu and G E Spiegler (eds.): *Movements and issues in world*

2.4. Western religions and philosophical influences

2.4.1. Shamanism and the magi

Alternative Western traditions refer to alternative religious traditions to mainstream orthodox Christianity, and not necessarily to Christianity *per se*. Ellwood ³⁷ identifies two spiritual worldviews :

- a worldview which has as its foundation revelation within history communicated by prophetic messiahs

- a worldview which has as its foundation cosmic awe communicated by model personalities

The first would adequately describe orthodox Judaism, Christianity and Islam, while the latter view would describe traditions such as the shamanic perspective and the Eastern philosophies.

religions: a sourcebook and analysis of developments since 1945, 1987, p.227.
³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.227.

Ellwood ³⁸ regards the shaman and the magus of great importance in the history of the esoteric tradition. *Readers Digest* says of Shamanistic healing methods that “these alternate systems merit our attention” and that the shaman is to “mediate between the ordinary world and the world of the spirits”. ³⁹ Shamanic concepts introduced to New Age adherents include for example the principle that to acquire a guardian spirit one should preferably separate yourself in a solitary wilderness location.⁴⁰

This indirect but also direct influence of Shamanism is clear in many areas of Western culture.⁴¹ Dr. Robert Ellwood of the University of Southern California identifies “striking parallels” between modern cults and Shamanism.⁴² John Weldon identified repeated

³⁷ R S Ellwood: **Religious and spiritual groups in modern America**, p. xiv.

³⁸ R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.49.

³⁹ Guinness (ed.): **Family Guide to Natural Medicine: How to stay Healthy the Natural Way**, p.31.

⁴⁰ M Harner: **The Way of the Shaman: A Guide to Power and Healing**, p.81.

⁴¹ D Hunt: **Occult invasion: The subtle Seduction of the World and the Church**, p.570.

⁴² R S Ellwood: **Religious and spiritual groups in modern America**, p.12.

Shamanistic motifs with some 24 eastern gurus.⁴³

American institutes such as the National Institute of Mental health have awarded grants to finance training of shamans.⁴⁴

Anthropologists are increasingly turning to shamanism, and some strongly advocate the incorporation of Native-American values into contemporary educational systems.⁴⁵ Well-known shamans have become famous speakers or lecturers at universities or colleges.⁴⁶

Authors such as Lynn Andrews and Vicki Noble combine feminism and shamanism in her writings.⁴⁷

⁴³ J Weldon Ph.D. dissertation 1988.

⁴⁴ A Vivoldo and S Krippner: **Healing States: A Journey into the World of Spiritual Healing and Shamanism**, p.200.

⁴⁵ *Shaman's Drum* as quoted in J Ankerberg and J Weldon: **Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs**, p.536.

⁴⁶ *Shaman's Drum*, Winter 1985, p.40.

⁴⁷ *Shaman's Drum*, Spring 1986, p.20.

Ankerberg and Weldon have identified the following characteristics of the shaman, whom they term a religious leader :

- the shaman works in darkness
- the shaman works from a trance state in order to “control” the spirit world
- the shaman has out-of-body experiences where he visits different occult realms
- the shaman employs black or white magic, cursing or healing work
- the shaman claims his power to be from some form of spiritistic manipulations of energy
- it is essential for the shaman to contact one or many spirit guides or helpers
- shamans acknowledge that spirit possession supplies their magical powers
- shamans experience temporary symptoms of mental illness similar to psychosis and schizophrenia ⁴⁸

The Ojai Foundation⁴⁹ regards the shaman as the root of all global spiritual traditions. “This

⁴⁸ J Ankerberg and J Weldon: **Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs**, p.541.

ancient wisdom is still preserved and practiced by shamans...It is precisely this...which has been lost within our own Western culture, that we so urgently need at this time in order to correct the condition of extreme imbalance, disease, and destruction we find on the planet today.” Eliade⁵⁰ and others accept the esoteric tradition to refer to the religious-philosophical belief systems which underpin the techniques and practices found in the occult which in turn could be defined as supernatural, mystical or magical knowledge or power utilized for empirical results.⁵¹ Shamanism itself have been identified as the source of other practices and beliefs such as Lucumi, Santaria, Condumbe, Umbanada, Haitian Voodoo and others.⁵²

The difference between “esoteric” and “occult” is often explained in the distinction between meditation and magic. However, for the purpose of this study reference will be made to both

⁴⁹ Ojai Foundation Catalog, 1985.

⁵⁰ M Eliade: **Occultism, witchcraft, and cultural fashions: essays in comparative religions**, p.48.

⁵¹ *American Journal of Sociology*, pp.498 ff.

terms interactively as no distinction will be made between them. The male term “he” and female term “she” are also used interactively without discrimination, except where otherwise indicated.

The shaman is the traditional healer. The Institute of Noetic Sciences ⁵³ believes that it is the healers who bring back insight into human consciousness. “We are living through one of the most fundamental shifts in history- a change in the actual belief structure of Western industrial society...” The magus is the old shaman, modernized to suit an industrialized world. ⁵⁴

Ellwood identifies the following characteristics of the magus : He has an unusual birth, he displays peculiar talents and powers during his or her childhood, in his youth or as adult he often travels widely, especially to Asian countries or remote areas, he or she gives teachings on intricate and spiritual matters and speak about

⁵² *Shaman's Drum* as quoted in J Ankerberg and J Weldon: **Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs**, p.535.

⁵³ *Institute of Noetic Sciences Bulletin*, 1987.

⁵⁴ R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.49.

the forced within oneself, he always has a following of people attracted to his charisma, he ages slowly and lastly he is rather unpredictable. Michael Harner ⁵⁵ refers to shamans as what the West likes to refer to as “witch doctors” or “medicine men”. He emphasizes the remarkably similar *modi operandi* of these shamans the world over.

Shamanism has also influenced segments of the Christian church.⁵⁶ Morton Kelsey, Jungian analyst and Episcopal priest associated with the Charismatic movement, argues that Jesus and his disciples were either shamans or exercised the power of shamans. ⁵⁷ John Sanford agrees and says that Shamanism is a legitimate form of spiritual healing.⁵⁸ Baptist minister and theologian Doran McCarty is another Christian author who agrees with these sentiments. ⁵⁹

⁵⁵ M Harner: *Op.cit.*, p. xi.

⁵⁶ D Hunt: *Op.cit.* and *Shaman's Drum*, Spring 1986, p.47 and Fall 1985, pp.21,42.

⁵⁷ M T Kelsey: **The Christian and the Supernatural**, pp. 16-17, 69, 92-95.

⁵⁸ Steiner in *The Christian Community Journal*, p.48.

⁵⁹ D C McCarty: **The making of the New Shaman**, pp.5-6, 25-28.

Ellwood called the shaman “part fraud, part showman, part myth, and part extraordinary ecstatic”⁶⁰ People who one can say qualified for the status of magus were personalities such as Paracelsus, St Germain, Gurdjieff, Madame Blavatsky of the Theosophical Society, and the like. The magi usually dominate their followers with a strange charisma and *inter alia* for this reason are also revered by New Age followers.

2.4.2. Philosopher Pythagoras

The earliest traces of New Age thought in the Western tradition can be found in the writings of Pythagoras, Samoan philosopher and geometrician (approximately 500 BC) One section of the Theosophical Society, who was formed in 1957, called itself the Koran Institute of Theosophy, where they derived the name from the philosophies of Pythagoras, who was the founder of the Proton school of philosophy in Italy.

⁶⁰ R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.50.

Pythagoras had many followers, some who elaborated on his philosophies. One such other famous philosopher, Socrates, developed a philosophy which was so similar to that of Pythagoras, that the two became almost indistinguishable and it is believed that Socrates simply elaborated on Pythagoras's thoughts.

Modern New Agers who agree that Pythagoras is the earliest Western "New Ager" are, amongst others, Spangler ⁶¹ and MacLaine.⁶² Spangler put Pythagoras on the same platform as Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed and Plotinus as "great initiates"⁶³

2.4.3. Orphic religion

The Orphic religion was well established by 600 BC. Pythagoras was one teacher of Orphic thought, the main tenet which said that there was an earlier state where everything was perfect,

⁶¹ D Spangler: **Towards a planetary vision**, p.30.

⁶² S MacLaine: **Out on a limb**, pp.97, 105.

⁶³ D Spangler: *Op.cit.*, p.30.

which was now lost. This state could be revived through reincarnation and evolution. To escape from this imperfect state one had to enter and continue with a ritual of initiation and asceticism. The soul was accepted as being divine, where the body is simply housing such divinity. Everything in the universe was accepted as originating from the Divine, and eventually everything will return to the Divine. Indian developing philosophies at the time bore a striking resemblance to that of the Orphic religion.⁶⁴ The question of influence of the one on the other stays controversial however. Burnet is one scholar who advocates the influence of Greek thought on Indian and eastern beliefs.⁶⁵ One scholar theorizes that Buddhism in fact influenced both Pythagoras' thought and that of the Jewish Essenes, although it is doubted whether this could have happened as early as about 500 BC.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ J Burnet: **Early Greek Philosophy**, p.82.

⁶⁵ J Burnet: *Op.cit.*, p.18.

⁶⁶ J M Robertson: **A history of free thought: ancient and modern to the period of the French Revolution**, p.162.

Many of the beliefs held by the Orphic religion can be found in modern New Age thinking. The latter accepts the idea of everything having been created or formed out of the One, and that everything will return to the One. It also accepts the ideas of reincarnation and evolution. However, only some New Age groups accept the practices of initiation and the idea of asceticism. Many New Agers, such as Sir George Trevelyan, makes the comparison between Christianity which impacted the world in a dynamic way around the time of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth⁶⁷, and the NAM which will supposedly impact the world in a similar dynamic way. Not only is the comparison seen in the sense of dynamics, but also in the sense of the formation of a world religion. Such authors state that during the time of Jesus the worshipping of Olympian and Roman gods were in the decline and people started looking at other religious streams, especially those of Eastern or Egyptian descent. This lead to much spiritual cross-pollination and

⁶⁷ G Trevelyan: **A vision of the Aquarian Age: the emerging spiritual world view**, p.21.

cross-cultural interaction, which in turn lead to syncretism and eclecticism, which is a strong characteristics of the NAM..

2.4.4. Goddess religions

During the Hellenistic age the idea of a female god became prominent. She was referred to as Astarte, Ishtar, Cybele or Isis. One Christian school of thought links the Catholic Mary to goddess religion.⁶⁸

The foundation of these goddess religions was the idea that life was rooted in and connected to nature. Through autumn into winter vegetation would die, and during the spring and summer it would grow again - the cyclic theory of eras in time which is so typical of the NAM. Believers in these religions could gain immortality through the intervention of a mediator or saviour. In modern time goddess religion has revived in the West, where it is noticed that especially feminist adherents can be found. The Neo-pagan

⁶⁸ D Hunt: **A Woman Rides the Beast: the Roman Catholic Church of the Last Days**

(Witchcraft) movement and the NAM are typical examples of such groups.

2.4.5. Gnosticism

Gnosticism was another philosophy of the Hellenistic age. The Oxford dictionary ⁶⁹ defines Gnosticism as a philosophy incorporating a “special mystic knowledge” Scholars do not agree on the origins of Gnosticism. Some found its roots in Christian or Hellenistic philosophy, while others saw its origins in Babylonian, Egyptian or Iranian schools of thought. Some finds it roots in Kabbalism, who during the Hellenistic age was still an oral tradition which allegedly originated from God to Adam to Moses. Pagels postulates that its origins were indeed Christian,⁷⁰ while Jonas emphasized that Gnosticism was a produce of syncretism.

Perhaps because it was indeed the result of syncretism, different Gnostic schools differ

⁶⁹ **The Oxford Dictionary**, p.233.

⁷⁰ *The Other side of God : a polarity in world religions*, p. xviii.

widely in beliefs. The first two tenets hereunder are agreed upon by the majority, while the rest were accepted by minority groups. :

- dualism regarding the relationship between God and the universe - It is said that the material world to which man was linked, was not created by God but by the evil demiurge, leader of the Archons. The world was therefore intrinsically evil, while the spiritual world where God lives, was intrinsically good.
- the nature of salvation which was seen in the transcendent awareness of God's redemptive purpose - It is said that this awareness was created by the intuitive process of self-knowledge which eventually would lead to knowledge of God. Jonas for example stated that what liberates is the knowledge of who man was, what he became; where he was, whereinto he has been thrown; whereto he speeds; wherefrom he is redeemed; what birth is, and what rebirth.

- the nature of reality which is seen as an illusionary principle - This can be driven away by spiritual enlightenment.
- the effect of Jesus on mankind - They are not saved by Him as Christian thought would have it, but are instead guided through his teachings to higher spiritual comprehension and enlightenment.
- the following of Jesus - Jesus is not the divine God who saves mankind, but a model whose lifestyle and teachings can be imitated which will lead his disciples to the same level of mastery.⁷¹

Most New Age disciples reject the dualism philosophy, yet accept the nature of salvation as seen by the Gnostics. In fact, when one studies the modern NAM, it becomes clear that the importance of inner, intuitive and/or esoteric knowledge is one of its main concepts. The other concepts are also accepted by most New Agers.

⁷¹ C W King: **The Gnostics and their remains, ancient and mediaeval**, pp.373 *ff.*

History shows that all the Gnostic schools were rejected by Christendom. There is evidence that these schools practiced magic, exorcism, incantations and astrology.

During and after the Middle Ages Gnostic ideas resurfaced in groups such as the Freemasons and Rosicrucians.

2.4.6. The Hermetica

Many scholars maintain that Hermetic texts, which was written by Hermes Trismegistus (three times the great), was in fact an Egyptian sage. This was the general belief prior to 1614, but in this year proof was found that its roots are to be found in the second and third centuries after Christ. The Hermetica has influenced many later traditions, and Hermes is accepted in modern New Age thought as one of the “masters” together with Jesus, Buddha, Gandhi and others.

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⁷² F A Yates: **Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic tradition** and
E L Tuveson: **The avatars of the thrice great Hermes: an**

Hermetic scriptures include references to topics such as astrology, the occult, magic, astral travel and the like. In Hermetica thought there is a hierarchy of gods with one supreme being at its peak. Its philosophy also includes tenets of Neoplatonist and Kabalistic thought. The well-known idea “As above, so below”, often quoted by New Agers, is also a Hermetic saying.

2.4.7. Plotinus and the Neoplatonic tradition

Round about 200 AD at Alexandria in Egypt, (Plotinus 204-270 AD) developed an esoteric interpretation of Pythagoras’ teachings. One main principle in Plotinus’ teachings was the idea that all manifestations, whether spiritual or material, evolved from the One, and that it would eventually return thereto via mystical experience where the limitations of material matter was transcended. Another idea propagated by Plotinus was that of purification by magic. Some of Plotinus’s followers such as Iamblichus (250-325 AD), Porphyry (234- 305 AD) and Proclus

(410 - 485 AD) elaborated on this idea through the belief of theurgy - a system of ritual magic in the purification of the soul. The writings Dionysius the Areopagite was in fact influenced by Proclys with the result that its final product was an incorporation of a synthesis of Christian and Neoplatonic thought. It said *inter alia* that God is a “beyond being” i.e. not a personal Father (as in Christian beliefs), that there are three levels of reality : the level of God, that of angels and that of ecclesiastical beings. It also embraced the monistic idea of creation out of the One and the eventual return of creation to It. Steps to this return included purification and illumination, which leads to a union with the One.

Dionysius later became known as Pseudo Dionysius to distinguish him from the Dionysius of the Bible. While the former monistic idea is well-accepted by the NAM, the latter ideas are accepted by a limited number of New Agers.

Many New Agers accept however Plotinus and Neoplatonic thought in general as incorporating “wisdom” in the form of occult, theosophic and New Age thinking.⁷³

2.4.8. The Christian mystical tradition

Maximus the Confessor was an Eastern leader who assisted in the moulding of The Christian mystical tradition, while John Scotus Eurigena, the Rhineland mystics and John of the Cross lead the tradition in the West. Plotinus, Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius were all scholars who helped in forming this tradition within Christian circles. Obviously the Church censured many individuals who followed the above teachings.

Not all New Agers agree on the usefulness of Christian influence in New Age thought.

⁷³ D Spangler: *Op.cit.*, p.30, R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.31 and *The occult in America: new historical perspectives*, p. 137.

Elliot for example to referred religious figures such as Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Merton and Bede Griffith as being “dangerous”. Teilhard is attacked because of his teachings on evolution, while Merton and Griffith are ridiculed because of there intensive communication with Eastern religions. Al three of these scholars have emphasized the mystical ideas of experimental religion. Griffith supports the ideas of authors Fritjof Capra and Ken Wilber in their expectations of a new era that will replace current materialism.

In general most New Agers support the belief in the mystical experience of oneness with the One.

One Christian author often referred to in New Age writings is Meister Eckhart (1260- 1328), who primarily expounded on the idea of unity between man and God. The distinction between the creation and the creator is therefore erased. He emphasized the idea of finding God within

oneself, whereafter one will find Him everywhere. Some of Echart's teachings were regarded as heretical by the Church, yet he influenced later mystics such as Julian of Norwich, Nicholas of Cusa and John of the Cross. Author Fox stated these mystics as being part of creation-centered religion.

Another mystic who was influential in the Christian mystical tradition was Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) ⁷⁴

Scholars Ellwood and Roszak, a historian, listed Boehme as an influential mystic of an alternative tradition during the Renaissance.

Boehme himself was influenced by other mystics such as Eckhart and Tauler, as well as by the hermetic and theosophic literature of the Renaissance. ⁷⁵ According to Underhill ⁷⁶ Boehme believed *inter alia* in the monistic idea of all

⁷⁴ M Ferguson: **The Aquarian conspiracy: personal and social transformation in the 1980's**, p.46 and S MacLaine: *Op.cit.*, p.354.

⁷⁵ E Underhill: **The mystics of the church**, p.220.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.218.

things being of God and therefore part of God, and in the concept of heaven and hell being within oneself.

2.4. 9. Astrology

Astrologer Llewellyn George wrote in 1930 that it was time for the masses as a whole to take an interest in the subject. The roots of astrology can be traced to ancient Babylon, although it is possible that its origins lie even further back.⁷⁷

Astrology is part of the occult and therefore Alternative religious tradition. Astrology was based on the concept of Hemerology, where sky omens were read,, based on the presupposition that events on earth and the celestial bodies, such as the stars in the Milky way, are interlinked.

The Babylonian tradition was carried over to Egypt, where the idea of cosmological determinism continued. This again was

⁷⁷ L E Jerome: **Astrology disproved**, p. 15.

transferred to Greece, where it was firmly established.

The science of Astrology operates on different levels. It operates on the human level, where predictions are made regarding man's movements. Astrology is supposed to be a unique system of interpretation of the correlation of planetary action in human experience. When a person is born he is also said to be born under a specific star sign. The orbit, which is known as the Zodiac, is said to contain twelve signs. These signs are linked to periods of approximately one month each in every cycle of one year, as well as to periods of 2160 years each. The signs with the respective monthly periods are :

- Aries (Ram) 21 March to 19 April
- Taurus (Bull) 20 April to 20 May
- Gemini (Twins) 21 May to 20 June
- Cancer (Crab) 21 June to 22 July
- Leo (Lion) 23 July to 22 August
- Virgo (Virgin) 23 August to 22 September

- Libra (Scales) 23 September to 22 October
- Scorpio (Scorpion) 23 October to 21 November
- Sagittarius (Archer) 22 November to 21 December
- Capricorn (Goat) 22 December to 19 January
- Acquirius (Waterbearer) 20 January to 18 February
- Pisces (Fish) 19 February to 20 March

It is furthermore said that the sun is currently in the constellation of Pisces, and that we are about to enter the age of Acquirius. This concept is based on the idea that the solar system moves through these signs in a “precession of the Equinoxes” The fact is that the sun will only enter the constellation of Acquirius in about 300 years. Melton ⁷⁸ and Hall calculate the latter event only to happen approximately 600 years from now. O’Howell on the other hand emphasizes that it is not the literal entering of the sun that is important, but the fact that there is a change and a sequence of development.

⁷⁸ C J Melton and A A Kelly: *Op.cit.*, p.26

Not only human destiny, but also planetary destiny, is said to be controlled by the celestial bodies. George remarked that Astrology is taken from the records of astral phenomena and reduced to a science by watching the effects of planetary influence. He maintains that Astrology is both objective and subjective. It is the former because it deals with the outer expression of other worlds, it is the latter because it deals with the influence of life within the form.

Tropical astrology, a system developed in 100-180 AD by Claudius Ptolemy, claims that the sun and its planets also evolve around another central sun in orbit and that this process lasts about 26 000 years. New Ager generally agree that man is busy entering a new age. The sign of Pisces (the fish) is often associated with Christianity, while the rainbow (Aquarius or water bearer) is a prominent sign of New Ager.

2.4.10. Witchcraft, paganism, and magic

Although many Neo-paganists dissociate themselves from the NAM, some proclaimed witches do in fact see themselves as part of the movement.⁷⁹ Selena Fox of the Church of Circle Wicca is one prominent witch who aligns herself and her followers to the NAM. Melton states that the different segments of the magical movement in the United States all see themselves as part of the NAM, even though they often differ on certain aspects. These groups include ritual magicians, voodooists, witches, pagans, and Druids. Even the modern Woman's Spirituality movement, where Ecofeminism is preached women are linked to the earth and to nature (with a goddess at the head) is very similar in nature to both paganism, witchcraft and the NAM.⁸⁰ There is furthermore so many similarities between Paganism and Wicca (witchcraft) itself, that they are almost

⁷⁹ CJ Melton and AA Kelly: *New Age almanac*, p.340.

⁸⁰ C L Albanese: *Nature religion in America: from the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*, p.176.

indistinguishable. In the USA the neo-paganists are in number about the same as followers of the NAM. One main concept of modern Wicca is goddess worship where the goddess is seen as the mother of gods and the universe. The Christian father figure God and devil are both rejected. Wicca has in general a positive joyful approach to life, especially in a fertility and erotic sense.⁸¹ Many Wicca covens are open only to women, where it previously included men.

Medieval witchcraft, which is in a sense different from modern Wicca, is seen by anthropologists as equated with global sorcery, while historians generally equates it with Satanism. Modern Wicca worship the ancient gods under a godmother, called either Isis, Astarte, Ishtar, Kali, Diana, the Magna Mater etc. In addition, it practices occult phenomena such as white magic, astrology, herbology, divination, telepathy, and spirit readings.⁸² Russell is one author who

⁸¹ J G Melton: **Magic, witchcraft and paganism in America: a bibliography** and J Russell: **A history of witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans**, p.14.

⁸² C Russell: **Understanding the New Age**, pp.8, 161.

believes that medieval witchcraft survived through the ages to modern times and that Wicca is simply a continuation of the same.

Certain witches worship both the mother goddess as well as her husband, the horned male god. In Wicca the earth plays an important part and witches attempt to align themselves with the forces of nature such as wind, rain, fire and stone. This is done using incantations and following strict rituals where spirits are being summonsed.⁸³

Especially the latter practices are very similar to that of the NAM, which makes distinction between the modern NAM and paganism or Wicca difficult. Like witches many New Agers are openly hostile to Christians and many are members of non-Christian religions such as Buddhism, The Theosophical movement etc. Those that do consider themselves Christians are

⁸³ J Russell: *Op.cit.*, p.158.

normally members of what orthodox Christians would term sects such as Christian Science, the Liberal Catholic Church etc. As we will see later, many Christians in orthodox churches also follow New Age teachings and/or principles, mostly without realizing it. Those in the Christian arena believe that they have a “deeper revelation” or “Gnostic version” of traditional Christianity.⁸⁴

Magic and sorcery as one characteristic of paganism and witchcraft deserves closer attention. It is not easy to trace the roots of magic since it was found centuries BC in different cultures. Primal tribes have a long unwritten history of magic and sorcery, while Egypt and Babylon has a more established record of magic practices.

One finds magic intertwined with the Hermetica, Gnosticism, Neoplatonism and the Kabbalah. Thorndike sees magic as inclusive of all occult practices, superstitions, myths and folklore. He

⁸⁴ J G Melton: **Magic, witchcraft and paganism in America: a bibliography**, p.6.

states that it cannot be seen as a separate science, but it more of a doctrine or belief system that is a way of looking at the universe.⁸⁵

Medieval times saw a distinction between two types of magic : higher magic and black magic.

Russell⁸⁶ states that the term “high magic” refers to a belief in the universe where every single part of it is interrelated and where every part affect one another directly or indirectly. Man, his creations, the planets, stars and the element of the earth are therefore united. These concepts have been united in a sophisticated, uniform doctrine. Black magic on the other hand refers to simple sorcery. Examples of medieval practitioners of high magic are Paracelsus the alchemist(1493-1541) and Agrippa (1486- 1535). Paracelsus are seen by many as the founder of modern science and medicine. He claimed that

⁸⁵ L Thorndike: **A history of magic and experimental science during the first thirteen centuries of our era**, p.4.

⁸⁶ C Russell: *Op.cit.*, pp.13.

high magic is the most secret of “all arts” and that it cannot be learned, it is a “gift of God”.

Spence ⁸⁷ defined black magic as the utilization of supernatural knowledge for evil purposes such as casting a spell of disaster on someone, where white magic is defined as supernatural knowledge for the purpose of doing good for example faith healing (or “fortune-telling”). Russell⁸⁸ compares magic with science and sees white magic as legitimate science and black magic as illegitimate science.

Many New Agers accept magic as practice and occult phenomena such as astrology, divination, numerology, palmistry etc. are often practiced. One popular divination method is the Chinese *I Ching* which assist with decision making or predictions of the future (“fortune telling”)

In modern times occult practices such as Transcendental Meditation (TM), levitation,

⁸⁷ L Spence: **The encyclopedia of the occult**, p.68.

⁸⁸ J Russell: *Op.cit.*, p.68

astrology, numerology etc are often defined as parapsychology, thus insinuating that such practices involve forces beyond man's soul and mind, the latter which is expounded in Psychology.

This phenomenon of parapsychology deserves however further attention separated from the Alternative Western tradition.

2.4.11. New Age Judaism

The Kaballah is esoteric teachings of Judaism and Jewish mysticism. This forms the basis of modern New Age Judaism, popular in Western countries such as the USA. Modern spokespersons for this movement include rabbis such as Joseph H Gelberman, Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and Shlomo Carlebach. Not only Jewish groups incorporate New Age Judaism into their teachings, but also interfaith groups. New Age

Judaism is influenced however not only by the Kaballah, but also by Oriental philosophy.⁸⁹

The mystical dimension of Judaism, especially its characteristics obtained since the Middle Ages, forms the basis of Kaballah. Mystical revelation of esotericism, theosophy and mysticism was allegedly given to Adam in the garden of Eden, and was subsequently orally transmitted to Abraham, Moses and others until was eventually put down in writing (called the “Zohar”) in the thirteenth century. Speculations have it that this transcription was done by rabbi Moses de Leon.

According to the Kaballah the creation of the universe happened through a set of proceedings from the Godhead, called “En Soph” - a being without limitations or limits. The first of ten “sephirot” that proceeded from the “En Soph” was the manifestation desire. The following “sephirot” were all contained within the first. It

⁸⁹ CJ Melton and AA Kelly: **New Age Encyclopedia**, pp.186, 242-245, 404-406.

is interesting to note that the Kaballah sees these proceedings all as feminine, which indirect ties in with the idea of goddess religion. The last nine “sephirot” are divided into three triangles that allegedly represent the Tree of Life, the inner workings of humans and in fact of all reality. An era is envisaged where all humans and reality will return to the God figure, and where everything will be restored to its original (perfect) condition, even Satan.⁹⁰

Another dimension of Kaballah, also practiced in New Age Judaism, is that of “practical” or “white” magic, which is only allowed in the utmost emergencies⁹¹ Practical Kaballah usually entails uttering the esoteric names of God and the angelic beings. This application is said to affect both the physical and spiritual worlds.

⁹⁰ L Spence: **The encyclopedia of the occult**, p.241.

⁹¹ G G Scholem: **Kabbalah**, p.182

Modern New Agers see the current age as one of awakening and rebirth where a reaction against materialism and the modern mind-set can be hastened through the application of esoteric wisdom as *inter alia* set out in the Kaballah and followed by New Age Judaism.

2.4.12. Rosicrucians

The “Fama”, an anonymous manifesto, was published in Cassel, Germany in 1614. It referred to the life of one “Father C.R.C” or “Christian Rosenkreutz”, the alleged founder of the Order of the Holy Cross. The following year a second publication saw the light, wherein the Order’s goals were explained. These included ending political and sectarian conflict, and opposing the papacy and Islam. Men of goodwill were invited to join the organization to assist in the improving of mankind’s conditions, and to promote a reformation in the world of science and technology. This reformation on technological level would occur hand in hand with a religious

reformation. The “brotherhood” who were initiated into the mysteries of the Grand Orient are the men responsible for these transformations into an age of perfection. Today two contemporary Rosicrucian groups exist : the Rosicrucian Fellowship, founded in 1907 by Carl Louis van Grasshoff, *alias* Max Heindel; and The Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC), founded in 1915 by H Spencer Lewis⁹² The former organization incorporates many Theosophical teachings of Madame Blavatsky, such as cosmic evolution, reincarnation, a spiritual hierarchy and karma. The latter organization teaches occult doctrine and techniques, as well as the Theosophical concept of the Great White Brotherhood.

Much speculation exists about the authenticity and authorship of the Order and the *Fama*. From the manifesto it becomes obvious however that the author/s have been influenced by Neoplatonism, the Hermetica and the Kaballah.

⁹² J G Melton: **Biographical dictionary of American cult and sect leaders**, p.157.

Paracelsus' ideas regarding alchemy, astrology, higher magic and occult forces are also prominent in this publication. It furthermore accepts the philosophy of microcosm, where it is alleged that man contains all the qualities contained in the universe as a whole, and the concept of basic spirits. In the manifesto reference is made to alleged magical writings which have been available to all but only comprehended by a few. The supposed brotherhood also allegedly understood the principles of magic, could alter elements in the process of alchemy and produced the elixir of life.⁹³ writes that the Rosicrucians' most striking aspect is its insistence on a coming Enlightenment. This ties directly in with the NAM's emphasize on the coming of a new era. "The world...is to receive new illumination in which the advances in knowledge made in the preceding age of the Renaissance will be immensely expanded" It is said to be both an inward and outward illumination.

⁹³ F A Yates: **The Rosicrucian enlightenment**, p.277.

2.4.13. Freemasons

The roots of Freemasonry are found in the stone mason's guilds during the Middle Ages that were formed to protect the secrets of the building trade. During the seventeenth century the lodges were in decline and those still in force agreed to have members admitted outside the building trade. Thus the so-called speculative lodges were formed who eventually controlled all the lodges. These lodges kept the secret rituals and knowledge of the old order, adding more ethical and philosophical teachings. During the month of June 1717 the English Grand Lodge was admitted, and soon spread to the rest of Europe and the United States. It admitted only males and due to the benefits offered to elected members, grew quickly in numbers. In the USA at least 33 of its presidents, at least 50 out of 56 signatories of the Declaration of Independence and not less than 50 out of 55 members of the Constitutional Convention were known to be freemasons.⁹⁴ In

⁹⁴ W Harman: **Global mind change: the promise of the last years of the twentieth century**, p.162.

England the Grand Master of the freemasons has always been one of royal blood.⁹⁵

There is a direct connection between the Rosicrucians and Freemasons. During the nineteenth century one had to be a freemason in order to qualify for membership to the Rosicrucian order in England. ⁹⁶ stated that the Freemasons' greatest contribution to the development of the NAM is the many structures, rituals and initiation systems that were taken over by the more recent movement. In the nineteenth century, any freemason who was seriously interested in the occult either established new or joined existing lodges of organizations such as the Theosophical Society. ⁹⁷ Spence suggested ⁹⁸ that the lower ranks of freemasons in general do not understand the deep mysticism of the order. This could in part be due to the organizations' practice of continuous revelation and secrecy. Only at the 31st level, for

⁹⁵ F L Pick and G N Knight: **The pocket history of Freemasonry**, p.74.

⁹⁶ R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.62.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.62.

⁹⁸ L Spence: *Op.cit.*, p.175.

example, is the master of the universe revealed to be Lucifer. According to Malan ⁹⁹ the freemasons is one of the most active organizations busy with preparations for the coming of a universal Christ. He identifies world leaders who have been actively involved in plans for a new world order, such as the deceased Yitzhak Rabin, who was a high-profile freemason. Barry Segal ¹⁰⁰ suggested that the Masons have in their Holy Lodge in Jerusalem an altar with three holy books on it: The Torah, The New Testament of the Bible and the Koran, with a compass and right-angled ruler on top of it – indicating a fusion of the three main Western religious traditions.

2.4.14. Hypnotism

The origins of modern Hypnotism can be traced to an Austrian physician, F Mesmer (1733-1805) who became famous for his development of the science of Hypnotism. He published a treatise in 1766 where he interpreted the influence of

⁹⁹ *Die Basuin*, August 1997, p.18.

¹⁰⁰ quoted in *Die Basuin*, August 1996, pp.18,19.

celestial bodies on human bodies, allegedly through an invisible universal fluid that connects all matter. His theory was similar to the idea of animal magnetism that was explained by Paracelsus during the sixteenth century. Paracelsus postulated that a fluid or power existed which allegedly radiates from all things, whether on earth or not. Because all things are connected in this way they must all influence one another. This invisible fluid or link thus penetrates all of reality, and unites it in one common phenomenon.¹⁰¹ Mesmer continued to postulate that disease and sickness was a result of the hindrance of the free flow of this fluid, and he developed methods of restoring this flow, one of which was the hypnotic trance, which in turn had a strong influence on the development of Spiritualism. To date more than twelve theories have been developed to explain how hypnotism works, but there is still little consensus in the academic literature on the subject, other than agreement that some state of

¹⁰¹ F A Mesmer: **Mesmerism: a translation of the original scientific and medical writings of Franz A Mesmer**, p.99.

trance is entered into.¹⁰² What seems clear is that there is a strong link between hypnotism, Spiritism and channeling. Said one channeler: “A trance is state of consciousness that allows you to connect with a guide.”¹⁰³

These beliefs of course strongly corresponds with the general New Age notions that all things are interrelated and connected, and that all things in fact are part of the One.

2.4.15. Swedenborg

A mystic who is often seen as the father of modern occultism is Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), a Swedish scientist and mystic.¹⁰⁴ While in his late fifties Swedenborg had some mystical experiences that made him turn his back on a scientific career. He started an exploration of mysticism and developed several doctrines, and

¹⁰² J Ankerberg and J Weldon: **Encyclopedia of New Age beliefs**, p.331.

¹⁰³ S Roman and D Packer: **Opening to Channel: How to connect with Your Guide**, p.25.

¹⁰⁴ B F Campbell: **Ancient wisdom revived: a history of the Theosophical movement**, p.13.

inter alia postulated that all physical matter in the material world have parallels in the spiritual world. The origins of everything, he claimed, was in the higher spiritual sphere, the latter that controlled and directed the material or lower world.

Swedenborg cited many out-of body travels to other realms, where he alleged he had contact and conversations with other angelic or spiritual beings, as well as with deceased souls such as Plato and Calvin. This contention of course insinuates the continued existence of the human spirit, a notion that was confirmed in the philosophies of Pythagoras, Gnosticism and Kaballah. This idea, as well as that of interrelatedness, which is similar to Neoplatonic and Paracelsian philosophies, corresponds clearly with modern New Age thinking. Interaction with spirit beings continue in the NAM under the term “channeling”.

Swedenborg furthermore claimed to have had contact with extra-terrestrials, and that he had been on other planets in the universe. This corresponds to the NAM's acceptance of UFO's. He also forwarded the idea of ancient scriptures, which he termed the "Lost Word", allegedly received in Asia. This corresponds to the New Age belief in the lost "Arcane" documents that was also received in Asia. Although Swedenborg studied occult practices in detail, he continued claiming to be Christian, and even found a church, the Church of the New Jerusalem, which still exists in different parts of the world today. He claimed that eventually every human being would become part of this church, if only in a spiritual sense. Similar to other Christian sects he made predictions regarding the return of Christ, and claimed that it had happened in the spiritual world in 1757. These predictions of Christ's return also corresponds to New Age beliefs, since many New Agers, of which Benjamin Craeme is a prominent example, accept the return of a world leader, a Maitreya or Christ

who will again rule this earth. Swedenborg's principles also had a strong influence on Spiritualism.

2.4.16. Spiritualism

Spiritualism has its roots in the United States in 1848 and had a strong influence on the Alternative Mystical tradition. New traditions that challenged orthodox Christianity came from this movement and new movements such as the Theosophical Society, developed out of it. Many of the American founding fathers set new examples for religious tolerance in a new land and voiced their contempt for narrowness.¹⁰⁵ Resistance groups developed during the nineteenth century, especially in rebellion against Puritanism and Calvinistic Christianity, and did not necessarily incorporate occult traditions at this stage. The Unitarians, Universalists and Transcendentalists were the

¹⁰⁵ *Understanding the new religions*, 1978, p.10.

leaders in this new grouping, which strongly influenced the developing Spiritualist movement. Unitarians concentrated on the latent positive power within man that needs exploration and development, Universalists accepted universal salvation and rejected the Calvinist notions of predestination and eternal damnation. During the 1830's the groupings reached a peak and the Transcendentalists for example started incorporating Eastern religious ideas into its philosophy and was in fact the first western religion to do so.¹⁰⁶

Ellwood¹⁰⁷ states that the fact that Spiritualism grew so fast during this time indicates that the world was ready for such changes. It is estimated that between one and 11 million people adhered to Spiritualism during the 1850's.¹⁰⁸ Although not all Spiritualists emphasized the same ideas, the one main notion that was preached and emphasized was that spirits communicated with

¹⁰⁶ J G Melton: **Encyclopedic handbook of cults in America**, p.108.

¹⁰⁷ R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.71.

¹⁰⁸ R L Moore: **In search of white crows: spiritualism, parapsychology, and American culture**, p.14.

man, from there the movement's emphasis on the practice of seances. Overall most Spiritualists however rejected the general philosophy of the supernatural and proclaimed their belief in natural law. The progressive revelation of knowledge was of crucial importance to them and attempted to prove by scientific rather than supernatural means that life existed after death, that contact with such life was possible etc. However, by postulating that spirits were a higher form of matter they actually contradicted themselves. Positive knowledge of man was paradoxical to intuitive knowledge and this could not be satisfactorily explained by them.¹⁰⁹

The occult had a strong influence on the movement, and can be observed in Spiritualists' emphasis on the holding of seances, where contact is allegedly made with the dead, the materialization of spirit beings, the moving around of objects, levitation etc. In theory Spiritualists dissociated themselves though from

¹⁰⁹ R L Moore: **In search of white crows: spiritualism, parapsychology, and American culture**, p.19.

the occult and leaned more towards Christian traditions such as prayer, scripture readings and church meetings. Spiritualists actually emphasized the movements' openness and its lack of esoteric rituals or formulas.¹¹⁰

Other tenets of Spiritual beliefs that evolved into the NAM were the rejection of vicarious atonement, humans' sinfulness and eternal judgment, and the acceptance of divine inheritance, spiritual evolution through many lives (reincarnation), self-improvement and universal salvation. Spiritualism also accepted the influencing of Eastern religions, similar to the NAM.

By the time of establishment of the Theosophical Society in 1875 the Spiritualist movement was in decline., partly due to the exposure of many frauds and hoaxes, especially during seances, and followers of traditional Spiritualism basically either turned to

¹¹⁰ R L Moore: **In search of white crows: spiritualism, parapsychology, and American culture**, p.23.

Theosophy or joined William James' American Society for Psychical Research, who concentrated on the scientific investigation of Spiritualism.

In the NAM Spiritualism has seen a major revival, where one its main influences was the communication between humans and spirit beings, now called "channeling"

2.4.17. The Theosophical Society

The theosophical society is a very important forerunner of the NAM. It was founded in 1875 by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) and Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907). Madame Helena Blavatsky was of Russian decent, and traveled to many destinations for 25 years after she separated from her husband. It has been alleged that she was *inter alia* in Tibet where she supposedly was initiated, in Europe with an

opera singer¹¹¹ in different European countries performing in a Turkish circus and in Egypt performing as snake charmer.¹¹² Her companion Henry Olcott again was a lawyer and journalist of American decent. Blavatsky and Olcott allegedly met at a Spiritualist seance and their common interest in the occult lead to their founding the Theosophical Society. Olcott became president while Blavatsky became secretary. According to the society there goals were to collect and dissect knowledge of laws which rule the universe.¹¹³ Blavatsky quickly rose to become the spiritual leader of the society and made it her task to communicate “Ancient Wisdom” with mankind.

In 1876 the Theosophical Society was busy dying down, when Olcott claimed having been visited by an Indian man with turban and all who inspired him to visit India. Blavatsky also testified of many similar apparitions. The couple

¹¹¹ R S Ellwood: *Op.cit.*, p.108 and B F Campbell: *Op.cit.*, p.5.

¹¹² M Leonard: **Madame Blavatsky: medium, mystic and magician**, pp.34-35.

¹¹³ B F Campbell: *Op.cit.*, p.28.

moved to India where they revived the Theosophical movement. Within five years they had formed more than 100 branches which confirm its popularity in the region.

Blavatsky authored a two volume book, *Isis Unveiled - Science* and *Isis Unveiled - Theology*, two years after she co-founded the movement, wherein she elaborates on the principles of Mesmerism, Numerology, Pythagoreanism, Neoplatonism, Zoroastrianism and Hinduism, amongst others. Her works clearly emphasized and highlighted her interest in the occult. She postulated in her writings that all knowledge can be traced back to an “Ancient Wisdom” which was the original source of all other subsequent religions and philosophies. She maintained that this will become evident as soon as mankind understands the superiority of this religion. She furthermore advocated an emanationist cosmology, where man and matter emanated from the original spiritual realm. It now has to move through a process of evolution back to this

source. She also claimed that traditional Christianity has deviated from its roots and that an esoteric Christianity needs to be propagated to man. She also stated that during the ages certain people evolved to a highly developed state as Masters of this Ancient Wisdom. Their destiny was to guide mankind in their evolutionary process. In 1888, Blavatsky published another two-volume book, *The secret doctrine - Cosmogenesis* and *The secret doctrine - Anthropogenesis*, which became a best seller. The first volume dealt with the alleged formation of the universe, while the second dealt with the evolutionary process of the earth and of man. Blavatsky reiterated in her second book that the Ancient Wisdom is the root of all religions and belief systems and that the latter has evolved out of it. In Volume one she advocated three basic principles¹¹⁴:

¹¹⁴ H P Blavatsky: **Isis unveiled: a master key to the mysteries of ancient and modern science and technology**, Vol. I, pp.79-83.

- the existence of one absolute Reality, which has eternal, infinite, omnipresent, boundless and immutable characteristics
- the law of cyclic existence, where the universe constantly manifest, disappear and reappear in different forms
- the existence of the law of karma and basic identity of all souls with the Over-soul, where it is their mission to evolve through there process of incarnation.

Blavatsky claimed she communicated and received instructions from different spirit entities, amongst them Koot Hoomi, Morya, John King and an unidentified Egyptian. These entities were, according to Blavatsky, highly evolved Masters of Wisdom, also called the Elder Brothers, Mahatmas, the Great White Brotherhood and Masters of Compassion.

According to the author Campbell¹¹⁵ the Theosophical Society's doctrines can be

¹¹⁵ B F Campbell: *Op.cit.*, pp.62ff.

summarized in four categories and it has the following history :

- **Evolution** reflects the society's beliefs in one absolute Reality that surfaces as a specific manifestation in the evolutionary process. This is defined as involution and evolution, and compared to a Day Brahma and Night Brahma. Each evolutionary era is supposed to last just over 4 billion years. Many solar systems make up one universe, and many universes make up the one Reality, all who are in a constant process of evolution. Each planet is supposed to be controlled by a so-called Planetary Logos (Word), while each solar system is supposed to be controlled by a Solar Logos.
- **Divinity of man** is said to have evolved from the Solar Logos where man will eventually return to this Logos. Man supposedly has two natures, a lower nature with four elements : the body itself,
- the life element, the astral body and the seat of animal desire, while the upper nature has three elements: mind, soul and spirit. The upper nature

controls and uses the lower nature as a vehicle of expression.

- **Reincarnation and karma** are supposedly the *modi operandi* utilized by man to reach emancipation of the soul. The higher nature evolves many times and through every evolutionary process man learns new lessons, which, if applied, assists him with good karma and the reaching of a wiser state of being. Karma is there as “law of retribution” to reward man or punishes man in a completely impartial way.
- **Life after death** is said to give man an opportunity for growth. Immediately after death man is said to continue living in his astral body, which leaves the physical body and can move around, but only as long as emotions generated by previous living in the physical body are exhausted. According to Blavatsky the average period of this stage is between 1000 and 1500 earthly years. Hereafter the astral body is discarded and the spirit-man evolves to a higher place of abode.

Blavatsky died in 1891 and one William Quan Judge, and American Theosophical leader, claimed leadership of the movement under a new name, the Theosophical Society in America. It established its main offices in Point Loma in California. At the same time the original group continued its existence in India, (now called the Adyar group) and during this time Annie Besant left India for an American tour where she recruited many new members for the Adyar group. The Judge group lost many members at this time and in 1907 Besant became the new president of the Theosophical Society.

Another controversial member of the Theosophical Society, Charles Leadbeater, marked a young Indian boy named Jiddu Krishnamurti, as an incarnation of an ancient master. Krishnamurti was said to be the last incarnation of the Great White Brotherhood for this time on earth- the Maitreya, World Teacher

or Christ. Leadbeater started a new organization called *The Order of the Star of the East* who had as goal the promotion of the boy and the emergence of the Christ. Leadbeater recruited many disciples and during the late 1920's had approximately 45 000 followers. In 1929 Krishnamurti, now older and wiser himself, denounced the claims that he was the Christ. The Theosophical Society lost about one third of its membership after this revelation, and Krishnamurti continued to become a lecturer and world figure in his own right, with a following probably surpassing that of the Theosophical movement.

In an effort to revive Blavatsky's teachings, the United Lodge of Theosophists lead a "back to Blavatsky" campaign. Besant of the Indian Theosophical group, together with Leadbeater and the Liberal Catholic Church, became forerunners in this campaign. Other branches of

the original Theosophical Society are the Anthroposophical Society, the Liberal Catholic Church, The Rosicrucian Fellowship, and the Arcane School of Alice Bailey.

2.4.18. The Arcane school of Alice Bailey

It is said that at least two-thirds of All New Agers would associate themselves with the teachings of Alice La Trobe Bailey.(1880- 1949) Bailey was married to Foster Bailey, an Episcopal priest who, together with his wife, held senior positions in the Theosophical Society. Alice's maiden name was Bateman, and claimed encounters with a specific turbaned entity who she later identified as Koot Hoomi, the same spirit that allegedly appeared to Blavatsky.¹¹⁶ As young woman she worked as missionary amongst British soldiers. In 1915 she became a member of the Theosophical Society, but both her husband and she eventually

¹¹⁶ J R Sinclair: **The Alice Bailey inheritance**, p.19 and B F Campbell: *Op.cit.*, p.150.

resigned. This was largely due to the teachings of Besant that clashed with traditional Theosophy.

At this time Bailey was also busy writing a book, allegedly under dictation of “the Tibetan”, an entity with the name of Djwhal Khul. During the following 30 years Alice Bailey published 19 books in cooperation with Khul, and five of her own.

In 1923 Bailey started the Arcane School, largely due to the followers her books attracted. This school was seen as a training centre for initiating disciples into the Ancient Wisdom, and she soon started correspondence courses as well. By approximately 1978 at least 200 000 people have been through her courses.¹¹⁷

Bailey’s writings concentrated on some theosophical beliefs, and developed some further.

¹¹⁷ BF Campbell: **Ancient wisdom revived: a history of the Theosophical movement**, p.152.

The Arcane School's philosophy had the following main beliefs :

- Seven rays of energy supposedly underlie all life
- So-called masters are in control of mankind's evolution and that of the earth
- A distinction was made between the soul and personality
- Controlling emotions needed an integration of personality and developing the mind
- Emotional control was vital as prerequisite for creating the right conditions for the reappearance of the Christ.
- The Great Invocation was the prayer needed to be repeated to create the best conditions of Christ's reappearance

The Great Invocation is a popular prayer chanted by New Agers and Bailey's disciples alike and was received by Bailey from Khul. The prayer contains the following wording :

*The Great Invocation**From the point of Light within the Mind of God**Let light stream forth into the minds of men**Let Light descend on earth**From the point of Love within the Heart of God**Let love stream forth into the hearts of men**May Christ return to earth**From the centre where the Will of God is known**Let purpose guide the wills of men**The purpose which the Masters know and serve**From the centre which we call the race of men**Let the Plan of Love and Light work out**And may it seal the door where evil dwells**Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan**on Earth.*

Other organizations followed who were affiliated with the Arcane School, for example World Goodwill and Triangles. The former was formed in 1932 that has as main goal the establishment of positive human relationships across the globe. They distribute literature and tracts to promote there goals, *inter alia* the Great Invocation. They also have study courses which individuals may take through correspondence. This organization is accredited with the United Nations in New York as Non-governmental organization.¹¹⁸ Triangles, the second related organization was founded in 1937 and has three people combined in cells who link up in thought and purpose daily with the goal of unifying their mental powers to create goodwill on earth - the prerequisite for the reappearance of Christ. Another important goal of the Arcane School and related organizations is economic unity a one-world money (cash less system) and religious unity.

¹¹⁸ Lucis Press s a: **Thirty years' work: the books of Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master**, p.32.

The legal and financial agent and publisher for both above organizations is the Lucis Trust, first called the Lucifer Trust, also established by Bailey. According to a triangular pattern allegedly coming from Khul, energy flows from the spiritual sphere of the earth to the New Group of World Servers, which consist of both human beings and spiritual entities or masters. This is done through many agencies, of which the Arcane School, Lucis publishing company and others are a few examples.¹¹⁹

2.4.19. The Anthroposophical Society.

Rudolf Steiner (1861- 1925) was another disciple of the Theosophical Society who broke away from the movement and formed his own. The Anthroposophical Society was founded in 1913 when Steiner rejected the teachings of Annie Besant regarding the Star of the East. Although Steiner's teachings was similar to those of the

¹¹⁹ Lucis Press s a: *Op.cit.*, p.33.

Theosophical Society, he emphasized the incorporation of esoteric Christianity. He also incorporated German idealism and the thinking of Goethe. Cosmic evolution, he said, governs cosmology and anthropology. He claimed man was busy descending into devolution, which was necessary because man had to free himself, *inter alia* from the two evil forces in the world, the fallen angels Lucifer and Ahriman. He claimed that Lucifer and Ahriman had to struggle with Christ whose sacrificial birth and death on the cross balanced their operations and incorporated the two into the evolutionary process. This process therefore was destined to ascend in line with Christ's will, even though man was first devolving. Steiner also emphasized the lower and higher natures of mankind, the ideas of reincarnation and karma, and places and states of life after death. Steiner was one of the first in the Western alternative tradition to incorporate the practice of meditation with goal self-examination and mental concentration.

Steiner was also the founder of the Waldorf educational systems. This system emphasizes the development of reading, writing and arithmetic, music, art, and drama and body movement. He developed a series of body movements called Eurhythmy in which the student is encouraged to translate spiritual energies into physical movements. Organic gardening is also taught where the rhythm of the earth and influences of planetary bodies are supposedly incorporated. The Waldorf system has shown much success in the training of dyslectic students.

2.4.20. The New Thought Movement

Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802- 1866) can be seen as the father of the New Thought movement, who taught an idealist philosophy where the power of the mind is very important. Out of this came the prosperity consciousness, which eventually also infiltrated some Charismatic

Christian churches. Quimby taught that man is capable of anything the mind can visualize and verbalize. He believed the mind is created of the same substance as the universe, and therefore has the same power as found in the universe. He proclaimed self-healing through mental adaptation. One of Quimby's patients, Mary Baker Eddy, later combined Quimby's teachings with traditional Christian values to form the Christian Science movement. Other important followers of the New Thought Movement were Ralph Waldo Trine, Horatio Dresser and Ernest Holmes.

Some churches were formed as divisions of the New Thought movement, among them the Church of Divine Science, Unity Church, the Church of Religious Science and the I AM Movement.

The author Melton highlights that at the turn of the century most western occult groups mentioned such as Swedenborgianism, Theosophy and New Thought, underwent many divisions

with the result that hundreds of new organizations, to many to include in our study, were established as one or other variation of its' mother organization.

Most of the central ideas and philosophies can be traced to one or more of these groups. Theosophy for example assisted in the revival of Astrology. Blavatsky standardized the term "reincarnation", and Edgar Cayce, follower of Theosophy, made reincarnation acceptable to the "vast majority of the metaphysical community".¹²⁰ Spiritualism and Bailey's Arcane school made the practice of seances and mediumship famous and acceptable, which has been taken over in New Age circles through "channeling", where contact with hundreds if not thousands of spirits or entities are claimed.

¹²⁰ *Not necessarily the New Age*, 1988, p.41.

2.5. Psychology, Parapsychology and Paraphysics

The “father” of modern Psychology, Sigmund Freud studied the occult and remarked that he believed in “the real existence of psychic forces”.¹²¹ Another psychologist of fame, Carl Jung, remarked that he had experienced metaphysic phenomena.¹²² Psychologist Carl Rogers confirmed this: “All these accounts indicate a vast and mysterious universe- perhaps an inner reality, or perhaps a spirit world of which we are all unknowingly a part- seems to exist.”¹²³

The late channeler Jane Roberts’ “Seth” books exert a significant influence in New Age circles. Two of her best-sellers are *A course in Miracles*¹²⁴ and *The Nature of Personal reality : A Seth book*¹²⁵.

¹²¹ N Fodor: **Freud, Jung and Occultism**, pp.129,130.

¹²² C G Jung: **Modern men in search of a soul**, p.43.

¹²³ C R Rogers: **A Way of Being**, pp.99,102.

¹²⁴ J Roberts: **A Course in Miracles, Vol. 1-3 – Workbook for Students**

¹²⁵ J Roberts: **The Nature of Personal reality: A Seth book**

Psychologists have used these sources extensively for attitudinal therapy and *A course in miracles* has become one of the NAM's most popular books. It says *inter alia*: "This is a course in miracles...Each day should be devoted to miracles...Miracles rearrange perception...Until this has occurred, knowledge of the Divine Order is impossible...".¹²⁶ Psychologist Kenneth Wapnick authored his *Christian Psychology in A Course in Miracles*, and attempt to show relevance to Christian belief and practice.¹²⁷ Alleged Evangelical Christians have attested to its benefits in their lives.¹²⁸

The human potential movement, which advocates the belief that man has the ability to create or do anything he puts his mind to, developed from the Humanistic and Transpersonal schools of Psychology. Abraham Maslow is traditionally known as the father of the Humanistic Theory.

¹²⁶ J Roberts: **A Course in Miracles, Vol. 1 – Workbook for Students**, pp.1-13.

¹²⁷ J Ankerberg and J Weldon: **Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs**, p.4.

¹²⁸ *S C P Newsletter*, Vol. 7 no 2, 1981.

He advocated *inter alia* the human creative potential, describing it as a characteristic common to human nature.¹²⁹ New Age guru Spangler confirmed that Maslow's Humanistic Psychology is "nothing more than a restatement of the same things that the New Age movement is seeking to convey..."¹³⁰

This so-called Third Force Psychology, where Freud's psychoanalysis is regarded as the First Force and Burrhus Skinner's behaviorism as the Second Force, advocates a complete break from its predecessors, specifically in the area of man's potential and importance on earth. According to the author Coan man was elevated from an object, patient or research subject to an experiencing person.¹³¹

Basic tenets of Maslow's Third Force theory include :

¹²⁹ L A Hjelle and D J Ziegler: **Personality Theories**, p.367.

¹³⁰ D Spangler: **Towards a planetary vision**, p.58.

¹³¹ R W Coan: **Hero, artist, sage or saint?**, p.276.

- The importance of the individual as integrated whole, as unique and organized
- The irrelevance of prior animal research since man is different from animals
- The belief that man's inner nature is essentially good
- The belief that man has unlimited creative potential, where this potential can be lost through "encultarism"
- Emphasis was placed on man's mental health rather than on mental illnesses.¹³²

When studying Humanistic Psychology it becomes obvious that many of its psychologists studied Eastern mysticism and thought. Maslow, Fromm and Jung are some examples of influential psychologists who studied these philosophies and belief systems in depth. Another Developmental Psychologist, Richard Alpert, even spend some time in India and returned to Western society as the guru, Baba Ram Dass, where he spend much

¹³² L A Hjelle and D J Ziegler: *Op.cit.*, pp.366-368.

time attempting to synthesize eastern and western thought and beliefs.¹³³

While the human potential movement encouraged encounter group therapy during the sixties, it advocated a religious awakening during the seventies with stronger emphasis on the inner man and mystical or occult experiences.¹³⁴

The Third Force Psychology thus in a sense evolved to a Fourth Force Psychology, also called Parapsychology or transpersonal Psychology. Anthony Sutich, editor of the *Journal for Humanistic Psychology* as well as author of the *Journal for Transpersonal Psychology* defines Transpersonal Psychology as scientific study and implementation of individual “and species-wide meta needs, ultimate values, unitive consciousness, peak experience,...mystical experience,...self-actualization, essence, bliss, wonder, ultimate

¹³³ C S Hall and G Lindzey: **Theories of personality**, p.354.

¹³⁴ C W Taveson: **Humanistic Psychology: a synthesis**, p.230.

meaning, transcendence of the self. Spirit, oneness, cosmic awareness...”.¹³⁵

In certain Psychological theories the self is also conveyed as the higher self, which supposedly has a divine dimension.¹³⁶ Gordon-Tydd furthermore postulates that the aim of “spiritual psychosynthesis” is to assist the individual to grow towards the self-realization of the higher self, i.e. towards God. It is clear then that Third and Fourth Force Psychology touched on the religious experience and realm, which extends into the realm of the New Age Movement. Radical changes occurred not only in the Psychological arena, but also in that of Physics. Dynamic discoveries of physicists such as Albert Einstein, Max Plank, Niels Bohr, Louis De Broglie and others had an unexpected connection with mysticism and Eastern belief systems. Parallel statements made by these physicists and made by mystics have been

¹³⁵ C W Tateson: *Op.cit.* 13.

¹³⁶ M Gordon-Tydd: **From self-alienation towards self-realization by means of psychosynthesis techniques**, p.8.

highlighted by authors such as Capra¹³⁷ and Zukav.¹³⁸ This however does not mean that physicists in fact have proved mysticism. Many such physicists were however mystics themselves, which in turn would most likely have influenced their respective research hypotheses.

According to author Capra, the following prior accepted new parapsychic thinking changed scientific principles :

- the concept of absolute time and space
- the concept of solid particles which make up the existence of reality
- the concept of cause and affect in physical phenomena
- the concept of an objective description of nature

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Many authors accept that Einstein was the first physicist who with his theory of relativity revolutionized contemporary scientific belief.

¹³⁷ F Capra: **The Tao of physics**

¹³⁸ G Zukav: **The dancing Wu Li masters: an overview of the new physics**

¹³⁹ F Capra: *Op.cit.*, pp.63-64.

Einstein proved through empirical scientific experiments that all space and time measurements are relative. The ideas of absolute space or time therefore had to be done away with.¹⁴⁰ This theory of relativism also postulated and subsequently proved that space is not three, but four dimensional. Because time is not a separate thing, but inter-connected with space, a fourth level besides height, width and depth existed, i.e. so-termed “space-time”.¹⁴¹ This interconnection between time and space is compared to the belief of mystics who see reality as interconnected.

Another scientific principle which was proved by the above physicists is the fact that particles can move forward or backward in time in the same way as it can move left or right in space. This negated the idea of causation, since there can be no effect if cause is not fixed in time or space. Physicists have not advocated the idea of

¹⁴⁰ F Capra: *Op.cit.*, p.173.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.175.

timelessness, nor have they advocated that man, for example, can experience this by going into the past. Mystics however has taken this a step further by claiming that this is in fact possible. Swami Vivekananda has, for example, stated that “Time, space, and causation are like the glass through which the Absolute is seen...there is neither time, space, nor causation”.¹⁴²

The next radical scientific principle that affected contemporary thinking was the discovery that atoms are not solid entities but in fact, areas of space that includes even smaller particles - electrons, which circle in a pre-determined way around a nucleus. According to the theory of scientist Heisenberg, It is said that electrons manifest features of either particles or waves. This shows that this matter has no intrinsic properties dependent on its environment. The more accurately the position of the matter is decided on, for example, the less accurate will be

¹⁴² F Capra: *Op.cit.*, p.196.

possible measurement of its momentum. The actual act of measuring its velocity would therefore make it impossible to measure its momentum or movement. This in turn means that because both position and movement of the matter cannot be measured, scientific events cannot be predicted, only estimated. One must also consider of course that the very act of observing the matter will influence it.¹⁴³ “At the subatomic level” he wrote “ we cannot observe something without changing it”.

Niels Bohr is another scientist who held that particle and the wave pictures are complimentary in description.¹⁴⁴ This *inter alia* proves, it is said, that interaction exists between subject and object, which in turn means that what is observed is automatically linked with the thoughts of the observer.

¹⁴³ G Zukav: *Op.cit.*, p.54.

¹⁴⁴ F Capra: *Op.cit.*, p.164.

Because it has been observed that the very act of observation affects the item observed, it has further been suggested that Quantum mechanics leads to the distinct possibility that “our reality is what we choose to make it.”¹⁴⁵ This of course compliments the ideas of man’s creative potential in Third Force Psychology.

Another interesting relevant scientific theory is that of David Bohm, who *inter alia* proposed that there is a holistic underlying order which connects the whole of reality. He explains three realms of being or existence :

- the explicate order, i.e. the physical order of separate things or events in time and space
- the implicate order, i.e. the inter-connection of all things and events in unity; and
- the source, a realm beyond the other two, which is altogether unqualifiable or inexplicable.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ G Zukav: *Op.cit.*, 54.

¹⁴⁶ D Bohm: **Wholeness and the implicate order**, p.177.

New Age adherents would refer to Bohm's source as the higher self, or sometimes an impersonal god, while Christianity would accept this source as a personal God.

Bohm also postulated his holomovement theory, where two important elements, movement and wholeness, are supposedly interconnected. According to this theory each area of space or time, however big or small, contains the entire universe and that everything is interwoven with everything else. According To Bohm, fragmentary thinking is a wrong that needs to be corrected since it brings disorder and destruction.¹⁴⁷

Bohm's ideas and New Age thought is apparent in its similar belief in universal harmony, interconnection between matter, time and space and the like.

¹⁴⁷ D Bohm: *Op.cit.*, p.37.

All the ideas of certain physicists are not accepted by the scientific community at large. Many limitations and difficulties, also in observation and experimental methods have been highlighted, and critics have attacked parallels between physics and metaphysics as unproven, hypothetical, ambiguous and/or invalid. Capra admits this when he says that: “This view is not shared by the entire physics community...”.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ F Capra: **The turning point: science, society and the rising culture**, p.66.

CHAPTER 3: NEW AGE CORE BELIEFS : SPIRITUAL FORCES

3.1. Goals of this chapter

Because one of the major identifying characteristics of the New Age Movement is their inclusiveness, it is difficult to identify exactly what is agreed upon and what is not. Certain ideas are accepted by some groups who would identify with the New Age Movement, while others also identifying with the movement would reject the same. There it is important to remember that the Movement is impeded by the diversity of the different associations. Yet certain ideas or concepts are accepted by the majority of groups and can therefore be referred to as core concepts within the Movement. The idea then is to attempt to reach consensus on basic concepts or principles that the New Age Movement accept or stand for. Although many

New Agers loath the idea of categorization, at the very least it will aid scholars in identifying typical New Age behaviour or thought. This categorization is also imperative to enable one to test the hypotheses as stipulated in this work.

This chapter will deal with concepts regarding spiritual forces and related ideas, *i.e.* the belief in Pantheism and Panentheism; God, Jesus and the Christ, Spiritual messengers, Lucifer and Satan.

3.2. Pantheism and Panentheism

Most New Agers rejects the idea of a personal, caring God interested in the world at large or in his followers. This is a fundamental difference with a large part of the Christian Church's view. Where Theism is generally accepted by the latter (God is seen as being transcendent and immanent), Pantheism sees God as identifying with the world, not as Creator vs. Creation, but as part of the world. God is seen here not as

personal but as impersonal, an energy that permeates all of reality. Panentheism expounds this further when it says that all is in God and God is in all. God is thus seen as encompassing everything, yet not being contained within it.¹⁴⁹ This inclusiveness allows the NAM to facilitate and accommodate many thousands of groups with sometimes seemingly diverse objectives or even doctrine. Anderson described Pantheism as being seen as “Oneness of Reality”, where all pantheists agree that reality cannot be more than one.¹⁵⁰

Other authors such as David Griffin differ and say that in Panentheism God both is and is not identical with the world.

Clark and Geisler¹⁵¹ identify five separate styles of Pantheism : Permeational Pantheism, which is a Zen Buddhist form characterized by D.T.

¹⁴⁹ C Hartshorne: **The divine reality: a social conception of God**, p.89.

¹⁵⁰ J Anderson: **What are the main concepts and claims of the New Age Movement** (preliminary M.Ed. Thesis), p.11

¹⁵¹ D K Clark and N L Geisler: **Apologetics in the New Age: a Christian critique of pantheism**, pp.17-114.

Suzuki (1870-1966); Absolute Pantheism, which is a Hindu form utilizing the works of Shankarac (788 – c.820); Multilevel Pantheism, which is a modernized Hindu alternative, developed by Sarcepali Radhakrishnan (1888-1975); Emanational Pantheism, which is a Platonic form with Hindu influence, propounded by Plotinus (AD 205 – 270); and Modal Pantheism, which apparently is a Judaic form of pantheism, using the works of Benedict de Spinoza (1634-1677). In general, New Age adherents accept any of the one versions of the pantheistic or pantheistic view.

Theism is dualistic in the sense that God is seen as separate entity from this world. There are two separate entities – God on the one hand and the universe on the other. Pantheism on the other hand is monistic in that God is part of this world. Which in turn means that because God is divine, the whole world is divine. Panentheism has elements from both Theism and Pantheism.

Theism insists on man's freedom while holding that God is omniscient. Pantheism is deterministic in nature, which can be described as the opposite of individual freedom to choose, or being controlled by definable factors.¹⁵²

Pantheism maintains that God orders the world through persuasion that does not infringe on the freedom of choice that man has.¹⁵³

In Theism cosmic reality is always regarded as being real, while in Pantheism and Panentheism such reality is often seen as being illusory since only God is accepted as being real.

Certain New Agers, such as David Spangler and the Catholic priest Matthew Fox, have a panentheistic rather than a pantheistic view of God. Spangler writes that : "God is both transcendent and immanent, beyond us and all with which we are familiar and still within us and our everyday world...".¹⁵⁴ Fox writes that

¹⁵² L A Hjelle and D J Ziegler: *Op.cit.*, p.14.

¹⁵³ C Hartshorne: *Op.cit.*, p.142.

¹⁵⁴ D Spangler: **Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred**, p.41.

the dualistic theism that puts God “out there” has destroyed both God and man’s soul. He continues by saying that “Panentheism is desperately needed...today...It is a way of seeing the world sacramentally”.¹⁵⁵

Alice Bailey predicted that the New Age Movement would change mankind’s perception of God to the extent that it would become increasingly aware of the divine factor of all forms. She predicted that it would be expressing divinity through human beings since the Christ is in supposedly in man. She predicted further that his belief as Master Jesus will alter world affairs and mankind’s entire attitude to life.

Goldsmith¹⁵⁶ writes that man is the same encorporeality as God because they are not two, but one. Panentheism is thus the belief system

¹⁵⁵ M Fox: **Original Blessing: a primer in creation spirituality**, p.90.

¹⁵⁶ J S Goldsmith: **Beyond words and thoughts: from the metaphysical consciousness to the mystical**, p.143.

most accepted by New Agers. A literature study confirms this is the case also in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A.

3.3 God – his nature and attributes

While in the Jewish Kabbalah as well as in Buddhism God is referred to as the Void, and yogis refer to Him as *sunyata*, all New Age believers agree that the nature of God is beyond description and beyond human discernment or comprehension. According to Juriaanse¹⁵⁷ God is “...all encompassing and...absolutely unfathomable...[He is] in every atom and form...”

Although New Agers find the nature of God undefinable or incomprehensible, they do attribute similar characteristics to God as Christians, *e.g.* grace, energy, guidance, love,

¹⁵⁷ A Juriaanse: **Bridges**, pp.171, 172.

friendship and benevolence. Pantheists and NAM generally agree that the “Highest Reality” cannot be dependent. Everything else depends on God, God depends on nothing. God is unlimited.¹⁵⁸ When New Agers talk about the creation of God, it is not meant in the Judeo-Christian traditional sense. They rather view creation as a necessary event, part of natural evolution, in God’s very nature.¹⁵⁹ NAM belief generally accept creation out of God (*ex Deo*) rather than the Christian belief of creation out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). Since God is in everything in Pantheistic belief, there is no real distinction between creator and creation.

¹⁵⁸ J Anderson: *Op.cit.*, pp.12,13.

¹⁵⁹ W Hasker: **Metaphysics Constructing a World View**, pp.105-118.

3.4. Jesus and the Christ

Where traditional Christianity believes in salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus, New Agers mainly regard Jesus simply as model of human destiny, one of the ascended masters on the same or similar level as other masters such as Buddha or Mohammed. In *A course in miracles*¹⁶⁰ Jesus as bloodstained Lamb is explained not as sacrifice for the sins of this world, but simply as portraying His innocence. “The lion and lamb lying down together symbolize strength and innocence and are not in conflict, but naturally we live in peace.”¹⁶¹ This passage shows how New Ager authors often use Biblical images in explanations. In Christian thought the lion and lamb lying together refer of course to the period of the Millennium, where Christ is said to reign and rule during thousand years of peaceful co-existence.

¹⁶⁰ J Roberts: *A Course in Miracles, Vol. I – Workbook for Students*, p.32.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.33.

It is interesting to note that in the same “Miracles” writings, it is accepted that humans can communicate through “the Comforter with the Absolute”, which does attribute the role of mediator to Jesus.¹⁶²

Most New Agers distinguish between Jesus and the Christ as two separate entities, where they merged only for a short while during the time of Jesus as person on earth. “The Christ” is in Theosophical thought a title and has, for the last 4000 years, been Lord Maitreya. Most of the description of the nature of the Christ is in fact found in Theosophical writings. Juriaanse writes that one finds in the spiritual hierarchy the following order: ¹⁶³

- The solar Logos
- Sanat Kumara (The lord of this world)
- The three lords of activity (The lord of will and purpose; The lord of love and wisdom; The lord of civilization)

¹⁶² J Roberts: **A Course in Miracles, Vol. I – Workbook for Students**, p.215.

¹⁶³ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, p.192.

The lord of love and wisdom is associated with the Christ or world teacher, who is regarded as the *Bodhisattva* or *Maitreya* in the East. He is supposedly assisted by senior master Koot Hoomi. Juriaanse explains his teachings as follows : “...the Christ-principle is present within all humans...everyone who is truly inspired by the divine spirit are children of God, despite the religious tradition to which they belong; the task of the World teacher is to unite all nations and races into a single, loving and serving humanity, this united humanity will be held together by One World religion”.¹⁶⁴

In The New Age prayer for world peace it is *inter alia* said : “May Christ return to earth.” Prof. J Malan¹⁶⁵ quotes *Sundial House* who explained this cry as a call for the Avatar, the world leader, one who is more than the Christ of the Christians – he is also known in the East as Lord Matreya, the Bodhisattva and the Imam Mahdi. The

¹⁶⁴ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, pp.212,213.

¹⁶⁵ *Die Basuin*, February 1995, p.5.

interaction between the Christ and Jesus is further explained in the *Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ*.¹⁶⁶ It is said that between the ages of 12 and 30 Jesus traveled to India, Nepal, Tibet, Egypt and Greece. In India he allegedly studied the Hindu holy script - the Veda, while he studied Buddhist literature in Nepal and the Himalayas. In the East he was regarded as reincarnation of Buddha, and was therefore given the title of *Issa* (son of God). In an Egyptian temple in Heliopolis (city of the sun), he received the title of *Christ* before he returned to Palestine to start his ministry.

3.5. The Christ's appearance

Most New Age followers accept the imminent appearance of "the Christ". This is interpreted as either in a literal, historical, or inner, esoteric sense. Around 25 April 1982 New Age spokesperson Benjamin Crème announced in

¹⁶⁶ L W Doweling: **The Aquarian gospel of Jesus the Christ: the philosophic and practical basis of the religion of the Aquarian Age of the world**

news media around the globe: “The Christ is now here”. He explained that it is the messiah of the Jews, The returning Christ of the Christians, the Imam Madhi of the Moslems, the fifth Buddha of the Buddhists and Krishna of the Hindus all in one person. His imminent appearance on global television screens was pronounced.¹⁶⁷ Crème announced that he was the elected prophet who had to announce the Christ’s coming. He called the Christ Lord Maitreya who, he said, was alive and well living in London from where he would make his presence known to mankind via the media. He continued to say that once Maitreya appeared, all war and hunger would come to an end and that religions would be reunited. Because integration and syncretism are New Age goals, entities such as the World Conference on Religion and Peace, and the Ecumenical Interfaith Movement strive to have this vision fulfilled. Crème had previously predicted that the

¹⁶⁷ *Rand Daily Mail*, 24 April 1982.

Christ would declare Himself by the Spring 1982
 “as we enter the age of aquarius.”¹⁶⁸

Alice Bailey stated that, strictly speaking, Christ cannot return since he has never left the earth. He has always been around, watching over the spiritual destiny of man.¹⁶⁹ Juriaanse¹⁷⁰ writes that the presence, but also the love and light of Christ that are radiated to humanity will be experienced by more and more as enlightenment continues.

It is generally accepted in New Age circles that the Christ is an ascended master, and that his reappearance will be the fulfillment of the expectations of Christians who expect the return of Jesus Christ to earth, the Jews who are waiting for their Messiah, the Hindus who expect Krishna, the Buddha who expect the fifth Buddha, and Islam who expect the Imam Madi.

¹⁶⁸ quoted in M S Relfe: **The New Money System**, p.223.

¹⁶⁹ A A Bailey: **The reappearance of the Christ**, p.45.

¹⁷⁰ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, p.215.

New Agers in the 1920's first prophesied this reappearance of the Christ, supposedly by the Tibetan who channeled through Alice Bailey. During the 1940's preparation for his coming was prophesied by Bailey: "...the agony of the [second World] war, and the distress of the entire human family, lead the Christ, in the year 1945, to come to a great decision – a decision which found expression in two most important statements. He announced to the assembled spiritual Hierarchy and to all His servants and disciples on earth, that He had decided to emerge again into physical contact with humanity, *if* they would bring about the initial stages of establishing right human relationships; secondly, He gave to the world – for the use of the 'man in the street' – one of the oldest prayers ever known, but one which hitherto had not been permitted to be used except for the most exalted spiritual Beings".¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ A A Bailey: **The reappearance of the Christ**, pp.30,31.

The author Juriaanse states that the return of the Christ is delayed by forces such as hate, greed, selfishness, and greedy desire.¹⁷² Other New Agers blame the orthodox or fundamental Christian Church as causing the delay.

Juriaanse also said that the Christ's return will be preceded by the externalization of the hierarchy, utilizing two processes, that of reincarnation and overshadowing of individuals. Ultimately, he states, his return will be characterized by universal peace, goodwill and better human relations. Humanity will be united under the leadership of the Christ and the members of the hierarchy. Much that is regarded as redundant and outlived, he says, will have to be removed.

Although most New Agers see the Christ's return as a historical fact, some see it only in an inner, esoteric sense – a reawakening of mankind

¹⁷² A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, p.214.

into a “higher consciousness” or “soul awareness”. David Spangler wrote that the “birth of the Christ is occurring...all about us now... in the heart of humanity”.¹⁷³ Pursel writes that the “Second Coming is a personal revelation of the Christ Consciousness within”.¹⁷⁴ Another New Age author who confirms this alternative view is Matthew Fox who says that Christ will return as “wisdom awakened”. He claims that the “Cosmic Christ *is* the “pattern that connects” and connecting is what all wisdom is about”.¹⁷⁵

3.6. Spiritual messengers

New Agers generally accept that spiritual messengers, also called angels, differ from so-called masters or mahatmas in that the former have never been in human form on earth, while the latter allegedly have. Both angels and masters are however believed to be on a similar plane

¹⁷³ D Spangler: **Towards a planetary vision**, pp.127, 140.

¹⁷⁴ J Pursel : **The sacred journey: you and your Higher Self**, p.57.

¹⁷⁵ M Fox: **The coming of the Cosmic Christ**, p.240.

from where they assist mankind in their evolutionary process. These angelic messengers allegedly include apparitions, fairies, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the archangel Michael, the angel Raphael and many others. Western television shows such as *Touched by an angel* became one of the most popular shows.¹⁷⁶ Popular magazines like *Newsweek* has confirmed these visitations to man.¹⁷⁷

According to Alice Bailey the spiritual hierarchy's current agency of service is the human mind, although it can also express itself through thought currents and ideas, and by implication, through dreams.¹⁷⁸

Certain New Age disciples furthermore distinguish between a planetary Logos or God and a solar Logos or God. Christians incidentally also refer to Jesus as Logos, which is the Greek for "Word". One well-known Biblical scripture in

¹⁷⁶ D Hunt: **Occult Invasion: The subtle Seduction of the World and the Church**, pp.385, 388.

¹⁷⁷ *Newsweek*, 27 December 1993.

¹⁷⁸ AA Bailey: **The externalization of the Hierarchy**, p.526.

this regard is John 1:1 that states: “In the beginning was the Word [Logos] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” New Age adherents believe however that there are many such gods, one within another, in a hierarchical structure.¹⁷⁹ According to Juriaanse¹⁸⁰ the planetary Logos, in the form of Sanat Kumara, entered his “physical vehicle, our planet”, about eighteen and a half million years ago, from which time he has never assumed a physical body, but stayed in the etheric level...Sanat Kumara, it is believed, is currently being aided by six kumaras, who sit together in a Central Council in Shamballa.¹⁸¹

Many “workshops” are being held in Western and Eastern countries that incorporate Shamanistic principles, with the emphasis usually on teaching people how to contact their spiritual messengers or helpers.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹ B Crème: **The reappearance of the Christ and the masters of wisdom**, p.116.

¹⁸⁰ A Juriaanse: **Op.cit.**, p.174.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.176.

¹⁸² Advertised in every edition of *Shaman's Drum*, *Odyssey* and other New Age publications.

Besides the planetary and solar gods, other accepted spiritual beings are extra-terrestrials, which are mostly accepted by New Agers as being benevolent, wanting to assist mankind in his evolutionary process.

3.7. Lucifer

Unlike orthodox Christianity, which equates Lucifer with Satan as fallen angel, New Agers generally distinguish between the illusionary Satan and Lucifer. It is interesting to note that this notion of the fallen one also exists in ancient Sanskrit scriptures, the Zoroastrian religion and in pre-conquest Mexico.¹⁸³

According to Spangler Lucifer and the Christ are the same energies. They are operating in opposite directions though, where Lucifer allegedly aids in the creation of light through various experiences, while the Christ aids in the

¹⁸³ M Cramer: **The devil within**, p.152.

releasing of such light into the world. Lucifer then creates light, Christ releases it. This equation of “evil” with good is also evident in the Jewish New Age Kaballah where the name of the Evil one are the same four letters of the name of God (“JHWE”) , just spelled backwards.¹⁸⁴

Certain New Age authors introduced a “Luciferian initiation” where adherents are introduced to Lucifer who aids in the creation of light in their lives. The name “Lucifer” itself means lightbearer and it has been said that Lucifer works in each adherent towards wholeness, peace and freedom. David Spangler refers to this Luciferic initiation as a particular doorway through which the individual must pass if he is to come fully into the presence of Lucifer’s light and wholeness. Spangler also promised a Hitler-life extermination of all those who refuse to go through this initiation.

¹⁸⁴ L Spence: **The encyclopedia of the occult**, p.186.

Although some authors have seen this initiation simply as accepting wholly “without guilt, without shame, without fear, without anxiety” our experiences on earth, others have qualified it as an actual event – that of receiving Lucifer’s mark on our human bodies.¹⁸⁵

3.8. Satan and evil

Similar to Eastern mysticism evil is regarded by most New Agers as a myth, an illusion. This includes any perceived evil. Suffering, it is said in Taoism, Christian Science, *A course in miracles* and other sources, can usually be eliminated by having a paradigm shift, *i.e.* by changing one’s perception. In *A course in miracles*, for example, it is said that pain is a wrong perception, it is evident of self-deception, not based on fact.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ T Marrs: **Dark secrets of the New Age**, p.74 and C Cumbey: **Hidden dangers of the rainbow**, p.140.

¹⁸⁶ J Roberts: **A Course in Miracles, Vol. II – Workbook for Students**, p.351.

The generally accepted idea is that the Self need not be affected by physical or mental suffering since it is in essence an illusion. The New Age author Weinberg states that pain can live alongside utopia, since the only characteristic that divorce it from each other is attitude.

This tendency in thought continues in the common belief that it will also not be wrong to kill someone or something, since nothing is ever destroyed – everything lives eternally.¹⁸⁷ This seems to contradict the New Age belief that life is sacrosanct – such policy that becomes evident in their general emphasis on human and animal rights for example. Since everything, according to New Age belief, is in reality an illusion, though, this seeming contradiction becomes plausible.

Because evil is seen as an illusion, so is sin and Satan. The entity that claimed to have channeled

¹⁸⁷ S L Weinberg (ed.) : **Ramtha**, p.126.

through *A course in miracles* stated: “You have created in your mythology the being you call “devil”. You have even imagined a God at war with this being....Of course, a real devil does not exist”.¹⁸⁸

This could be referred to as the “illusionary” view. The devil or Satan is not seen as an opposite negative force to the good God-force, but only to evil or “wrongly adjusted” forces in the world. If evil, sin or Satan had to exist, claims New Age spokesperson Benjamin Crème, then such forces had to be part of God since everything is God. The latter view could be referred to as the “inclusive” view. Ultimately, Creme cautions, it is man’s responsibility to overcome these evil forces and to “adjust”. One sees here how the atheist and Satanist alike can be incorporated into New Age thinking. If you do believe in a personal Satan, it is because he is part of God. If you do not believe in God at all,

¹⁸⁸ Walsch: *Conversations with God: An uncommon Dialogue*, pp.14, 85.

you are also right because everything is an illusion after all.

One finds an (arguable) contradiction then between those who say that sin, evil and Satan are illusionary, and those who say that evil forces need to be overcome. Studying New Age literature it becomes apparent that those in fact referring to evil forces actually refer to attitudes. This indicates that the “illusionary” view seems stronger than the “inclusive”, although the two views in itself are not incompatible.

CHAPTER 4 : NEW AGE CORE BELIEFS : SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT

4.1. Goals of this chapter

Perhaps the only sure concept accepted by all New Agers is the imminent transformation or enlightenment of both man and society into a Golden or Perfect Age, although detail of this goal and its sources differ from one group to another. One idea that is shared by most New Agers is the imminent apocalypse and following Millennium. Since this work will continue to compare New Age thought with Biblical views, it is interesting to note here that this is also an important concept accepted as true by most Biblical scholars in the a-millennial camp. Again, Christians differ mainly on the sequence of and sometimes detail of the occurrences preceding the apocalypse. In the chapter on Christian doctrine, these occurrences will be expounded further. Another idea shared by most New Agers is a current developing paradigm shift

in Western worldview, leaning towards ancient Eastern views. Many regard the New Age Movement only as a way towards personal and social development, a tool toward sociological change.

Sources of New Age belief differ widely, and both Hinduism, Buddhism, as well as the alternative Western traditions which were examined (among others), are accepted by different New Age groups as sources of enlightenment and esoteric wisdom. Most New Age adherents for example accept the evolutionary cycles of Astrology as primary source, while others find wisdom in prophets such as Nostradamus, Edgar Cayce or Alice Bailey. Some New Agers find resource in gurus or mahatmas such as Baba Ram Dass and Koot Hoomi. Many sociologists on the other hand have the pragmatic view that society is transforming itself, mainly due to the chaotic post-Cold War circumstances currently prevailing.

It is the goal of this chapter then to identify and expand on concepts regarding man's spiritual enlightenment and related issues that could be regarded as essential to the majority if not all of the New Age adherents.

Baptist minister James Anderson identifies five components of what he terms :”the logic flow-chart for New Age thinking”: Monism, Pantheism, Spiritual technologies, Experience and Intuition, Evil and personal Evolutionary transformation.¹⁸⁹

As part of the spiritual transformation process this study will examine concepts which are accepted as those which affect such enlightenment *e.g.* brotherhood, peace, holism, as well as man and the earth's place in the universe.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ J Anderson: *Op.cit.*, p.1.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.1.

4.1. A New era of peace and brotherhood

The idea of a new era or age comes from the Astrological theory of the solar system moving through each of the 12 Zodiac signs. Where the earth has been in the sign of the Pisces (fish), it is claimed that it is now moving into the sign of the Aquarius (water bearer) – from there the New Agers emphasis on the rainbow as symbol of the bridge between the “soul” and the “oversoul”. According to observational Astronomy, the sun is in fact currently in the constellation of Pisces, but, because it takes 2160 years to move through one of the Zodiac signs, the constellation of Aquarius will only be entered in approximately 300 years from now.¹⁹¹ Other esoterist authors calculate the “Age of Aquarius” to be six hundred years in the future. Alice O’Howell however points out that the exact transfer into the new constellation is not so important, rather the sequence of development.

¹⁹¹ C J Melton and A A Kelly: **New Age encyclopedia**, p.26.

When studying New Age literature and sources it becomes apparent that most New Agers subscribe to the notion of the “brotherhood of man” in a new or golden era. On South-African television for example the e SA Broadcasting Corporation is using the slogan *We are One*, while another channel uses the slogan *Come alive with us* with New Age driver points radiating cosmic energy in the background. This idea also forms the foundation of New Agers goal of global political unity. The personal transformation of mankind, it is believed, will lead to a social transformation of peaceful interaction. Global social problems will be transcended and a new age will emerge.¹⁹² predicts that in this era most religions will fall away as the current religious generation pass away, and as the New Age religion gains followers. Enomiya-Lasalle¹⁹³ highlighted the recent unification process that emerged between Christianity and Buddhism as one example of development of the new movement. Malan states

¹⁹² B Crème: **The reappearance of the Christ and the masters of wisdom**, p.89.

¹⁹³ H Enomiya-Lassalle: **Living in the new consciousness**, p.123.

that even the World Council of Churches WCC) refer to Hindus and Buddhists as *anonymous Christians*.¹⁹⁴ Malan maintains that the WCC has had a shift in mission – away from church unity towards an international order. Evidence that their emphasis has shifted to a universal brotherhood has been accumulated by Malan.¹⁹⁵ Examples are closed WCC meetings attended by Christians, Hindus and Buddhists and Atheists during their 1975 Nairobi Conference, WCC recognition of traditional Red Indian belief during their 1983 Vancouver Conference in Canada, and statements made by the WCC during their 1991 Conference in Canberra, Australia that Interfaith actions should be encouraged and missions discouraged.

David Spangler¹⁹⁶ refers to New Age activity as creative in order to build a better (peaceful) civilization. He remarked that at its heart, it is a rebirth of man's sense of the sacred.

¹⁹⁴ *Die Basuin*, April 1996, p.14.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.14.

¹⁹⁶ D Spangler: **Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred**, p.13.

explain the process through which modern man is going. The authors conclude that because of an interaction between social and economic forces in current society and man's consciousness, humans have gone through a process of secularization of consciousness. This identity crisis clearly highlights the problem of modern society as one of meaning. Brotherhood and peace become core concepts of such meaning.

4.2. Holism

Holism can be defined as the opposite of elementalism. The holistic assumption is that individuals and society are such that behaviour can be explained only by studying persons and societies as totalities.¹⁹⁷ The universe is thus seen by most New Agers as being one with God, and in fact being the bodily manifestation of God. Gina Cerminara¹⁹⁸ wrote that the universe as manifested is altogether an expression of the "Creative Energy" in the universe. Many New

¹⁹⁷ L A Hjelle and D J Ziegler: *Op.cit.*, p.15.

¹⁹⁸ G Cerminara: **Insights for the Age of Aquarius**, p.227.

Agers believe that all forms, whether an electron or sun, are simply temporary manifestations of eternal powers, where the world is the Real which was made form.

Because New Age adherents generally do not see this world made up by simple physical elements, it is accepted by most that the universe is in fact made up by energy. This energy is supposedly in a constant state of vibration, *i.e.* continuous movement. Juriaanse¹⁹⁹ writes that this energy becomes form through the process of involution, but this is only temporary – it evolves back again into energy where from it can return to its Source. Juriaanse describes the Source as the “Primordial Energy, the Will of the Almighty” whose energy passes through a series of celestial bodies. By the time this energy reaches our solar system it has already been moderated to a large extent.

In certain esoteric traditions, it is accepted that although energy originates from the one Source,

it has differentiated into many lessor streams from where it reached earth. These lessor streams supposedly all have their own attributes, which often differ from those of other streams. It is also accepted that every atom is clothed in an ethic aura. These atoms can combine in any groups to manifest as human beings or plants, the latter which by definition must then also have auras around it. These networks of atoms are interrelated and interchange its energies, which brings and unites the whole universe into a whole. Juriaanse writes that everything that happens to any part of the universe at any one time, is reflected by a corresponding nature somewhere else in the universe ²⁰⁰. He maintains that every thought or action of man, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, was triggered by some prior activity of cosmic vibration.²⁰¹ This law of cause and effect is reflected in the New Age principle of karma.

¹⁹⁹ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, pp.28, 29.

²⁰⁰ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, p.34.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.34.

Bohm²⁰² writes that philosophy and religion in the East, especially in India, have a view of interrelatedness and wholeness rather than fragmentation, which the East sees as a Western deviation. Capra²⁰³ in turn refers to the Eastern mystical tradition where thought processes are stilled through the process of meditation wherein simply unity of the universe is experienced. “Father” of the New Age Movement in Great Britain, George Trevelyan, writes that the spiritual world view is one of wholeness, it incorporates the unity of all that is life, that everything is alive, the masterpiece of some Intelligence.²⁰⁴ David Spangler confirms this idea of interrelatedness and interdependence. According to his view evolution is an emergence of more complex patterns and synthesis of relationships.²⁰⁵

²⁰² D Bohm: **Wholeness and the implicate order**, pp.19, 20.

²⁰³ F Capra: **The Tao of physics**, p.134.

²⁰⁴ G Trevelyan: *Op.cit.*, p.7.

²⁰⁵ D Spangler: **Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred**, p.42.

4.3. Personal and social transformation

The necessity for personal transformation through the process of evolution of consciousness to the “higher self” was already discussed. One might want to add here the New Age belief that one is “reborn” into a new world through this awakening. This same term is used by Christians to explain being spiritually born into the Kingdom of God. Clark and Geisler²⁰⁶ identify six common ideas about New Age belief regarding being reborn. Anderson refers to these as Spiritual technologies.²⁰⁷

- Salvation is knowledge (note the Gnostic overtone)
- Ignorance is the source of evil, sickness and problems in general
- Enlightenment come through man’s direct efforts
- A Mystical ascent or evolution, either by self-direction or through the guidance of spiritual entities or forces

²⁰⁶ D K Clark and N L Geisler: *Op.cit.*, pp.124, 125.

²⁰⁷ J Anderson: *Op.cit.*, p.1.

- A sense of assurance, peace and contact with the inner self (seen as God), mainly through meditation
- Pluralism of beliefs by freely allowing personal experiences without question.

Another term often used by New Agers is that of experiencing a “paradigm shift” or an advanced stage of “spiritual consciousness”.²⁰⁸ Roman Catholic priest and New Age master Hugo Enomiya-Lasalle²⁰⁹ writes that man becomes a mystic with the new consciousness. He is transformed into a “higher step” than that of man of the “mental structure”. Alice Bailey writes in the same trend when she expounds on her fifteen rules for magic and soul-control. The one possible route of man is destructive, and only calls for progress in matter. The other route however is constructive, and calls for soulish progress. This theme is recurring throughout her *A Treatise on White Magic*.²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ L W Doweling: *Op.cit.*, pp.10, 11.

²⁰⁹ H Enomiya-Lasalle: *Op.cit.*, p.133.

²¹⁰ Alice A. Bailey: **A Treatise on White Magic**.

According to Enomiya-Lasalle ²¹¹ evolution from animal to man was the first step in human development, where this personal transformation, leading to a social transformation, is the second major developmental step for man.

New Age social transformation is obtained *inter alia* by outwardly aggressive groups penetrating society. One of these is the political *Green Party*, active in every Western nation across the globe with an emphasis on ecology, feminism and disarmament. The Committees of Correspondence is an international clearing-house. Another is *Greenpeace USA*, an environmental group with the goal to promote "planetary consciousness" or paradigm shift in humanity's mind. *Planetary Citizens* with one its leaders well-known New Age leader Donald Keys has similar goals. Another such group is *The Unity-in-Diversity Counsel*, a network of more than 100 New Age groups. Elliot Miller commented that where Eastern Mysticism tends to be reclusive, this

²¹¹ H. Enomiya-Lassalle: *Op.cit.*, p. 133.

Counsel represents the goal of the NAM, i.e. to penetrate society. The employment of Shamanistic methods as forms of personal transformation or enlightenment was highlighted by authors such as eminent scientist John Lilly, famous for his research with dolphins.²¹²

4.4. Earth and its place in the universe

As seen earlier, it is generally agreed amongst New Agers that the earth evolves during different astrological sectors, and it is currently busy moving into the sphere of influence of the Aquarian sector. Some also refer to the earth as living organism. This is called the “Gaia hypothesis” and was first explained by James Lovelock.²¹³ Other authors who agree with this

²¹² J Lilly: **The Scientist: A Novel Autobiography**, and A Vivoldo and S A Krippner: *Op.cit.*, pp.198 – 201.

²¹³ J Lovelock: **Gaia: a new look at life on Earth** and **The ages of Gaia: a biography of our living Earth**

hypothesis are Peter Russell²¹⁴ in his writing *The awakening Earth: our next evolutionary leap*, while a Christian theologian, Hugh Montefiore also subscribes to this notion in his *The probability of God*²¹⁵ as well as in his *Reclaiming the high ground” a Christian response to secularism*.²¹⁶ The Isthmus Institute, based at Dallas, Texas, often held conferences discussing the spiritual dimensions of ecology and the Gaia hypothesis.²¹⁷

Christian groups have also accepted the Gaia hypothesis. Richard Austin, speaking at the EarthCare '96 Conference, stated that; “Christ is fully God and fully Earth...”²¹⁸ Professor Larry Rasmussen of the Union Theological Seminary²¹⁹ called for what he termed a “biospiritual faith” where man is accepted as being part of the natural evolutionary order or things. He has allegedly no claim on God’s love or on special

²¹⁴ P Russell: **The awakening Earth: our next evolutionary leap**,

²¹⁵ H Montefiore: **The probability of God**, pp.44-46.

²¹⁶ H Montefiore: **Reclaiming the high ground: A Christian response to secularism**, p.55.

²¹⁷ *Dallas morning news*, 26 September 1992.

²¹⁸ *Calvary Contender*, 15 June 1996.

²¹⁹ *The Oregonian*, 10 April 1993.

resources. The organization *Joint Appeal* emphasized that caring for the earth will in future be part of the religious process.²²⁰ Richard Foster with his bestseller *Celebration of Discipline* was one of the introducers of this hypothesis to Christianity. Pope John Paul II said that :”Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish...Nowhere is this more clear than in the current environmental crisis...It has the potential *to unify and renew religious life.*”²²¹

The Gaia hypothesis has in fact stimulated the formulation of certain projects and organization. One such project, *The Gaia Mind Project*, held a so-called simultaneous global meditation and prayer. The idea was at the exact moment of an “archetypically appropriate planetary alignment” to have millions around the globe to unite in

²²⁰ *The morning new tribune*, 24 May 1992.

²²¹ *Parade*, 1 March 1992

meditation and prayer and so “advance the evolution of consciousness” and “initiate a shift in our understanding of our relationship with Gaia...”²²²

According to Russell²²³ it is accepted that the earth is a self-regulating system sustaining itself, while it is continually adjusting its chemical, biological and physical processes. This is done to preserve best conditions for life and “its continued evolution”. Lovelock again maintains that all animals and plants are part of a single living entity, capable of manipulating the earth’s atmosphere.²²⁴

Most New Agers condemn environmental pollution as interference with the earth’s preservation of life, although Lovelock differs from other authors in that he does not find such pollution excessive. In general however New Age authors find a link between preservation of the

²²² M Ferguson’s *Brian/ Mind* newsletter

²²³ P Russell: *Op.cit.*, p.12.

²²⁴ quoted in D Spangler: **Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred**, p.44.

earth and its qualities and man's responsibility. This responsibility is normally seen in esoteric terms. Said Thomas Berry, Adjunct Associate Professor Emeritus, Fordham University : "The Earth is mandating that the human community assume a responsibility never assigned to any previous generation. We are being asked to learn an entirely new mode of conduct and discipline. This is preeminently a religious and spiritual task."²²⁵ Authors critical of the New Age Movement have termed this "ecotheology". Professor Victor Ferkiss of Georgetown University stated that ecological concern "starts with the premise that the Universe *is* God."

Russell in his book *The awakening Earth* speculates that the evolutionary process which the earth is allegedly in, is increasing in complexity with time. He also maintains that the "global nervous system" is currently passing

²²⁵ *Earth and Spirit: The Spiritual Dimension of the Environmental Crisis* (conference brochure)

through a quick phase of development and appears to spin out of control.²²⁶

Russell also refers to the growth and development people are experiencing inwardly which he maintains is the force of evolution manifesting within man's consciousness.²²⁷ Although authors such as Lovelock disagree, most²²⁸ accept the man-centered approach in the scheme of things, where humans can aid the process of evolution through responsibility, not only for his own spiritual enlightenment, but also for that of the earth, nature, and matter itself. For this reason most New Agers agree with the important notion of human rights.

The Earth is often seen in New Age writings as having energy points that concentrate specific types of transformative energy. One author who talks about points being connected by "ley lines"

²²⁶ P.Russell: **The awakening Earth: our next evolutionary leap.**

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.143.

²²⁸ D Spangler: **Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred**, p.57.

is Lorna St. Aubyn.²²⁹ She remarked how, according to esoteric teaching, super beings visited the earth many ages ago to lay out a grid as source of regeneration for both the earth and humanity. For this reason many New Agers believe in cosmic energy of driver points and peace poles, allegedly designed as a pentagram (an ancient Wicca design), with Heathrow airport (apparently the site of an ancient cult) in London as the central focus point.

Some authors such as Matthew Fox²³⁰ often refer to the planet earth as “mother”. This appeals especially to feminists and Christians.²³¹ The earth is busy dying, he maintains, due to man’s destruction of topsoil, water and earth pollution, deforestation and nuclear accidents and fall-out. The pro-environmentalist group *Green Peace* also subscribes to this notion and one therefore finds that many of its followers are also New Age believers. The deterioration of the earth, Fox and

²²⁹ L St. Aubyn: **The New Age in a nutshell**, p.6.

²³⁰ M Fox: **The coming of the Cosmic Christ**, p.13.

²³¹ D Hunt: **Occult Invasion: The subtle Seduction of the World and the Church**, p.197.

others maintain, can only be halted through the recovery of the mystical consciousness.²³² Similar concepts have been expounded by the Neo-pagan movement, Indian tribes in the USA and in African traditional religion.

What happens *on* earth is often seen as being of lower reality level. Although not all New Agers agree, it is generally accepted that things on earth are at a lower level than the ultimate, and that the search for truth and attainment of higher consciousness are cardinal for reaching higher levels.²³³

3.5. Man and his place in the universe

It has already been discussed how New Agers generally put man at the centre of things and how they regard human rights in high esteem. This is because most new Agers accept that at the core of every person lies a spark of divinity. Swami

²³² M Fox: **The coming of the Cosmic Christ**, p.36.

²³³ J Anderson: *Op.cit.*, p.14.

Shankarananda wrote:²³⁴ “The mind...is like a wall that has two doors ...’negative mind’...[and]...’positive mind’ ...When we enter there we get very close to the God within ourselves.” So man is divine and forms part of God. Unlike traditional Christianity that teaches that man is born with sin, New Age thought says the opposite. Man is born into this world as reincarnation of an entity in a previous world. He is part of God and therefore sacred, divine. In *The Gospel of Thomas* it is said that God’s kingdom is inside of man and that men are children of the living father. Said Swami Muktananda : “Kneel to your own self. Honour and worship your own being. God dwells within you as You!”²³⁵

The idea of the human soul as part of the Divine Energy is also found in the influential Edgar Cayce readings.

²³⁴ quoted in *The Whole Person*, Vol. 3 no. 6.

²³⁵ quoted in D R Groothuis: **Unmasking the New Age**, p.21.

Cerminara²³⁶ compares man in relation to God with a sunbeam to the sun or a water droplet to the ocean, part of it yet in a sense separate.

Shirley MacLaine's one channeled entity, Johan, allegedly told her "You are god. You know you are Divine, But you must continually remember your Divinity and, not important, act accordingly" ²³⁷

To act accordingly could be interpreted differently by different authors and New Age adherents. David Spangler interprets it as to act in a complimentary way so as to have a living experience of God that transcends man. If this is not done, he warned, the "god within" becomes an idol, shaped in the image of human personality.²³⁸ Joseph Campbell²³⁹ echoed this caution when he writes that there are two ways of thinking "I am god". If one thinks you are God in your physical and temporary form, *i.e.* in your

²³⁶ G Cerminara: *Op.cit.*, p.227.

²³⁷ S MacLaine: *Op.cit.*, p.209.

²³⁸ D Spangler: **Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred**, p.156.

²³⁹ J Campbell: **The power of myth**, p.211.

ego, you are mad. If you however experience it in your “deepest being”, then you are one with the “nondual transcendent”. New Ager Paul Romer described man’s purpose as a need to create its own centre within. The “pure and innocent love” must be consciously rebirthed and reworded to escape parental patterns of the past. Man finds his own direction by centering himself and so taking responsibility for his own choices and decisions.²⁴⁰ When faced with the question “Who is there for me?” , it is said that the answer should be “I am there for me”.²⁴¹

Another characteristic that is given to mankind by New Age writers is that he or she is co-creator with God. Fox²⁴² writes that “The Kingdom/queendom of God is among us; and it is a kingdom not just of words but of power. The New Creation will be God’s work and our work. We will truly be co-creators in this process of transformation.” Spangler²⁴³ confirms this idea

²⁴⁰ *Odyssey*, August/ September 1990, p.3.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.3.

²⁴² M Fox: **Original Blessing: a primer in creation spirituality**, p.256.

²⁴³ D Spangler: **Towards a planetary vision**, p.151.

when he maintains that man must cause change – man must co-operate with the Divine. This is his purpose on earth.

According to Juriaanse man is the manifestation of “the spiritual Monad, a single spark of the One Spirit”. Juriaanse incidentally identifies man as threefold :

- The personality – this includes three parts :
 The physical body/ the dense physical body and
 the vital etheric body
 The astral, emotional body
 The mental body
- The soul – which acts as link between
 matter and spirit

- The spirit – this includes three parts :

The spiritual will

The Christ principle

The Higher Mind.²⁴⁴

All three of the above, personality, soul and spirit is said to be the Monad, or Pure Spirit.

Other New Age authors use different terminology for the various planes or sections of man, although most use the basic outline of the three parts. Some identify eight rather than seven planes.²⁴⁵

Spangler suggests that New Age views regarding the subject of man's nature, purpose and attributes can be summarized by three key concepts : silence, service and synthesis. He maintains that silence is the source of creativity through which man can draw love, intelligence and wisdom, while service is true service when it

²⁴⁴ A. Juriaanse : *Op.cit.*, p.73.

²⁴⁵ Alice A. Bailey: **A treatise on the Seven Rays**, p.18 and I Crawford: **A guide to the mysteries: an ageless wisdom digest for the New Age**, pp. 55ff.

meets the needs of others. Synthesis, he states, is the ability to work harmoniously with others in the holistic process of evolution and transformation. It is interesting to note that Spangler's analysis coincides with the Catholic clergy's vow of silence and service.

4.6. Transforming the young

In New Age thought generally, personal transformation should start young, New Agers believe. John Dunphy said:²⁴⁶ “ I am convinced that the battle for mankind's future must be waged and won in the public classrooms by teachers who correctly perceive their role as the proselytizers of a new faith...The classroom must become an arena of conflict between the old and the new – the rotting corpses of Christianity, together with its adjacent evils and misery and the new faith...”

²⁴⁶ K. O'Brien: *Innocence Corrupted*, p.69.

Alice Bailey ²⁴⁷ states that New Age training in the young is more than just memory training. In fact, it is a life-long process where the acquisition of facts are subject to the expansion of consciousness. Children should be brought up as world-citizens since only one race exists, *i.e.* the human race. Differences between cultures, races and creeds should be broken down and old tradition and teachings of guilt and sin should be abolished. Instead of concentrating on the past New Age learners should look to the future. ²⁴⁸

New Ager William McLoughlin remarked that it will take a generation or more for an awakening to take place, “it must grow with the young; it must escape...the old ways”²⁴⁹ Alice Bailey concurred and highlighted the year 2000 as the Jubilee Year of the New Age when the New Order would emerge.

²⁴⁷ Alice A. Bailey: **Education in the New Age**, pp.3,4.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.77.

²⁴⁹ K. O'Brien: *Op.cit.*, p.69.

Marylin Ferguson believes this transformation can be obtained in the classroom through the following techniques: centering exercises, meditation, relaxation, fantasy plays, tuning in, imagination, identifying special experiences, breathing, yoga, movement and biofeedback.²⁵⁰

Educator Beverly Galyean's "Confluent Education" is but one example of a school curriculum specifically developed to promote New Age thought and personal transformation in children.²⁵¹ It teaches *inter alia* man's perfection and divinity, and concentrates on the technique of guided imagery.

Values clarification in the classroom was pioneered by Louis E. Raths and Sidney B. Simon where the goal is "to involve students in practical experiences, making them aware of their own feelings, their own ideas, their own beliefs, so that the choices and decisions they make are conscious and deliberate, based on their

²⁵⁰ Paulk: **Satan Unmasked**, pp.96, 97.

²⁵¹ *A H P Perspective*, December 1985, p.18.

own value systems.”²⁵² Most New Age educators agree that children should be exposed to global perspectives as early as possible, and no later than at puberty.²⁵³ An important school guide was written by Deborah Rozman : *Meditating With Children: The Art of Concentration and Centering*. Its subtitle is : “A workbook on New Age Educational Methods using Meditation”. Mark Satin’s “New Age Political Platform” advocates the repealing of all compulsory education laws, and supports the use of “humanistic” or “transpersonal” methods of teaching”.²⁵⁴ Authors such as Dr James Dobson, Johanna Michaelson, Texe Marrs and Dr Walter Martin have all commented on the deterioration in the American educational system since the introduction of New Age pedagogical methods and thinking.²⁵⁵ Martin describes psychic healing, shamanism, witchcraft, visualization, spirit readings, guided imagery, yoga, meditation and other New Age methods that are being used in

²⁵² M Satin: **New Age politics: the healing of self and society**, p.98.

²⁵³ S MacLaine: *Op.cit.*, p.45.

²⁵⁴ D R Groothuis: **Unmasking the New Age**, p. 124.

²⁵⁵ W Martin: *Op.cit.*, pp.57- 64.

the American classroom.²⁵⁶ Alice Bailey's *Education in the New Age* (guided by Djwahl Khul) is an important New Age work on NAM belief regarding pedagogics and emphasizes the transformation and evolution of the child.²⁵⁷

Music is another *modus operandi* utilized for spiritual enlightenment in children and teenagers. In the rock group *Iron Maiden*'s album 'The Seventh Son of a Seventh Son', to mention one example, the entrance of the New Age Christ into the world is promoted.²⁵⁸ Rock groups who have directly or indirectly advocated the coming of a New Age or interest in the occult are numerous but some are highlighted : Chris de Burgh (referring to Satan/ the Devil winning the battle against the Lord Jesus); Led Zeppelin (depicting nude children and child sacrifice); Jethro Tull (man's creative powers and divinity); Blue Oyster Cult (promoting Satanism); Moody Blues

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.62-63.

²⁵⁷ Alice A. Bailey: **Education in the New Age**, p.9.

²⁵⁸ *Talk magazine*, p.47.

(promoting Hinduism and the fatality of life); Iron Maiden (channeling and Satanism); and Peter Tosh (promoting Lucifer).²⁵⁹ The influence of a variety of Shamanistic forms and images in rock music but also in contemporary art, literature and other music was highlighted by veteran spiritual counterfeits researcher Brooks Alexander²⁶⁰. O'Brien²⁶¹ also identifies many comic books and several popular toys that are marketed to promote the NAM or the occult : Barbie, Katy Keene, and Sindy (promoting man's perfection); Smurfs, Gummie Bears, Care Bears, My little pony, Masters of the universe, She-Ra, Rainbow rite, Teenage Mutant hero turtles, Thundercats, Dungeons and dragons etc. (all promoting occultic powers, magic, mythical gods, Eastern religions or other New Age principles)

²⁵⁹ K O'Brien: *Op.cit.*, pp.58, 59.

²⁶⁰ *S C P Journal*, Winter 1984, p.28.

²⁶¹ K O'Brien: *Op.cit.*, pp.11-18, 22-32.

O ‘Brien quoted Texe Marrs as saying that powerful forces are at work around humanity today, and that man cannot avoid these forces.²⁶²

Bailey believes that in the “New Age” there will only be three major sciences taught to children : The science of the anthakarana (which is the study of light – building the bridge between the soul and spiritual triad); the science of Meditation (which is the occult method of bridging the above gap); and the Science of Service (where there will be a natural subordination of the lower to the higher).²⁶³

²⁶² Karen O’Brien: *Op.cit.*

²⁶³ Alice. A. Bailey: **Education in the New Age**, pp.95-97.

CHAPTER 5 : CORE NEW AGE BELIEFS : HEALING AND WISDOM

5.1. Goals of this chapter

Together with transformation the topic of healing is an important one in New Age circles. This relates to healing of the mind as well as healing of the body. Thousands of sources and methods exist under the umbrella term “alternative healing”, “alternative medicine” or “holistic health sciences”.

Ankerberg and Weldon in their excellent encyclopedia identified no less than 546 categories of mystical and supernaturalistic methods of healing, from *Absent healing* to *Zulu sangoma bones*; also described by Jack Raso in *Alternative Healthcare: A Comprehensive Guide* (1994); *Mystical Diets: Paranormal, Spiritual, and Occult Nutrition Practices* (1995) and his

Nutrition newsletter.²⁶⁴ The goal of this chapter is to identify some of these practices, to establish the reason why it forms part of core New Age belief, and to address the issue of wisdom.

5.2. Holistic sciences

The *New England Journal of Medicine* estimates that one third of Americans are involved in holistic treatment in any given year. It has been said that Americans spend 30 billion dollars annually on these practices.²⁶⁵ Conventional medical practitioners and medical school lecturers have been warming to the idea of esoteric healing methods and sources. Said Dr Sarah Sallon, Head of the Natural Medicine Research Unit in the Hadassah Medical Center, Hebrew University, Jerusalem : “Disciplines like yoga and Tai-chi are more than exercise regimes: They’re mind-body empowerment techniques that have developed over thousands of years.”²⁶⁶ Dr

²⁶⁴ J. Ankerberg and J. Weldon: **Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs**, pp. 612-621.

²⁶⁵ *Time*, 24 June 1996.

²⁶⁶ quoted in *Ibid*.

Wallace Sampson of Stanford University commented that: "...more and more medical schools are adding courses on holistic and alternative medicine with tittles like 'Caring for the Soul' ”²⁶⁷ Disciplines such as Acupuncture, Aromatherapy, Avant Art, Bio-active frequency therapy, Callenetics, Chakra healing, Chiropractic techniques, Esoteric healing, Flotation therapy, Holographic repatterning, Homeotherapy, Indian massage, Iridology, Kinesiology, Multi-dimensional therapy, Neuro-linguistic programming, Past-life regression therapy, Reflexology, Reiki, Shiatsu massage, Thai massage and Yoga are but some of the techniques utilized by New Age practitioners in attempts to heal mind and body. One simply has to look through the New Age Movement's chief magazine in South Africa, *Odyssey*, to become aware of these disciplines. Even music is said to have a spiritual dimension that can be applied in a creative and healing way.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁷ *Time*, 24 June 1996, p.59.

²⁶⁸ *Odyssey*, August/ September 1990, p.34.

The University of Massachusetts' Medical Centre, directed by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, has added Zen concepts to their program of stress reduction.²⁶⁹ Literature studies show at least 400 American universities who currently offer some level of alternative medicinal training. Ankerberg and Weldon also categorize holistic sciences according to "Of significant value" (such as diet, exercise and sensible living), "Of limited or possible value" (such as scientific biofeedback or massage), "Scientifically disproven methods" (such as Reflexology or behavioral Kinesiology), and "Occult, Mystical practices". An overwhelming percentage of the listed methods fall under the latter category.²⁷⁰

It must be said however that some of the above disciplines prefer not to be classified as New Age, although the philosophy behind all of these could be regarded as New Age in principle.

²⁶⁹ *Time*, 24 June 1996, p.65.

²⁷⁰ J Ankerberg and Weldon: *Op.cit.*, pp.611, 612.

The father of Chiropractic techniques, Daniel Palmer, who started the practice in the USA in 1895, received much of his theory from writings regarding Spiritism and the esoteric sciences. In his book *The Chiropractor's Adjuster* he refers to the spirit innate which is absent in the deceased and present in the living. The life source of this spirit innate, he said, flows through the nervous system of man. All diseases are, according to Palmer, the result of deranged nerves. Palmer's son, B.J. Palmer, also leaned heavily on Eastern philosophies as sources of healing and wisdom, and stated that "The higher power attested to by the world's religions resides within, not without...Everything that man could ask or pray for, he has within." ²⁷¹

Acupuncture developed out of Taoism, an Eastern religion with a pantheistic religious view. The *Yin* (passive, female *Chi* energy), and the *Yang* (active, male *Chi* energy) together form cosmic energy which is found everywhere. When

²⁷¹ Die Basuin, April 1994, pp.3,4.

there is an imbalance between the yin and the yang, a person becomes ill, it is alleged. Needles are used during acupuncture to allow the flow of energy. These needles are entered into the human body in acupuncture points that are not directly related to possible pain or discomfort.²⁷² Orthodox medical science has not yet found sufficient evidence to categorize Acupuncture as an accepted medical practice, although some general practitioners might of late refer patients to it or similar holistic sciences.

The father of Homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843) was strongly influenced in his theory by a spiritist, Paracelsus (1493-1541). Hahnemann was also a practicing freemason and mesmerist.²⁷³ Paracelsus taught that there was an invisible spirit in minerals or herbs. This spiritual force was the fifth element to air, water, fire and earth. Paracelsus believed that a wise Alchemist could withdraw such *Chi* energy. This corresponds with general New Age belief of

²⁷² *Die Bausin*, April 1994, pp.9, 10.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp.16, 17.

pantheism.²⁷⁴ In the *Cape Times*²⁷⁵ an article *Small-town churchmen: Homeopathy 'not of God'* carried the story of East London homeopath Mrs. Ann Botha who remarked that Homeopathy's aim was to keep mind, body and spirit healthy and said: "the ultimate aim in life was to become one with their Creator."

Yoga is another popular holistic medicinal practice. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi of Transcendental Meditation was definitely the person who had the greatest influence in making Yoga as practice acceptable in Western culture. The practice of Yoga is supposed to bring unity with the Hindu god Brahman. This holistic practice rests on a collection of methods including asceticism, meditation, physical exercises, and breathing techniques. It has been said that in Yoga these techniques must be utilized to bring man back to the god of his

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.14, 15.

²⁷⁵ *Cape Times*, 16 September 1991.

origins. The philosophy of Yoga is definitely pantheistic in nature.²⁷⁶

5.3. Internal sources of wisdom and healing

Healing sources and sources of knowledge are the same in New Age belief, and can be categorized as either internal or external sources. Internal sources in the religious experience refer to mystical experiences, while external sources refer to such origins as prophetic insight through channeling, revelation and tradition.

Internally one allegedly finds the Source of wisdom and healing through the individual religious experience encountered in deep prayer and contemplation, according to catholic priest Enomiya-Lassalle.²⁷⁷ Prayer in hospitalized patients cured them seventy percent quicker, concluded a study undertaken by cardiologist Dr. Nicholas Fortuin at Johns Hopkins Hospital.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁶ *Die Basuin*, April 1994, pp.20, 21.

²⁷⁷ H Enomiya-Lassalle: *Op.cit.*, p.142.

²⁷⁸ Collen Smith in *Our Sunday Visitor*, 9 February 1997, p. 10.

The Christian magazine *Christianity Today* confirmed this finding when theologian J.I Packer wrote that; “Statistics suggest that any form of prayer by anybody, Christian or not, helps patients recover...Patients who have asked whatever God they pray to, to watch over and heal them...[they] relax inwardly in a way that, being natural, is actually therapeutic.”²⁷⁹ Harvard University’s Herbert Johnson added: “Decades of research show that if a patient truly believes a therapy is useful – even if it is a sugar pill or snake oil – that belief has the power to heal...It is a supremely potent belief.”²⁸⁰

Kruger again finds the source of healing and knowledge of the transcendent in silence and spiritual discipline.²⁸¹ He finds this approach “the way of knowing” which follows the path of absolute religion, where the two concepts of the subjective and the objective are interwoven and transcended. When the individual experiences no

²⁷⁹ *Christianity Today*, 6 January 1997, p.29.

²⁸⁰ *Time*, 24 June 1996, p.61.

²⁸¹ J S Kruger: **Study guides for Science of Religion SRB100-A**, pp.11ff.

more the “I”, but evolves to the great oneness “that lies beyond our differentiated thinking and feeling”, it is said, he realizes that the kingdom of God is “here and now, and nirvana is in samara”.²⁸²

Another internal source of wisdom is supposedly intuition, which works better as it combines more and more with the external wisdom source of experience. One definition of a New Ager even says : “People who treat intuition as a reliable source when making decisions.”²⁸³ William Kautz, and director of the Centre for Applied Intuition in San Fransisco (founded 1979), identifies intuition as internal source that originates from the superconscious mind.²⁸⁴

Clark and Geisler categorize seven themes in the mystical source called intuition :

²⁸² J S Kruger: *Op.cit.*, p.33.

²⁸³ J Clarke in *Summer Solstice*, 1989/ 1990, p.31.

²⁸⁴ R E Guiley: **Harpers Encyclopedia of Mystical and Paranormal Experiences**, p.286.

- abandonment of the senses/ rationality
- higher vs. lower level of knowledge
- higher knowledge by direct understanding of union with the divine
- its self-certifying nature – goodness, value or validity is rarely questioned
- inadequacy of logic, which is subordinate at best
- inadequacy of language – experience is really indescribable and unutterable ²⁸⁵

Perhaps the most important *modus operandi* as internal healing and transformation source is seen as meditation. Many emphasize the empowering of the self through this technique, while others emphasize the healing of the whole person. Empowerment of the self seems only to be the secondary goal of most New Agers. Daniel Goleman writes in this regard: "...meditation has

²⁸⁵ DK Clark and NL Geisler: *Op.cit.*, pp.121-124.

been for millennia the path for the person who seeks to go beyond the limiting goals of the everyday world. Ironically, meditation is now touted as the best way to fulfill those everyday goals and live out worldly visions”.²⁸⁶ The primary importance of healing the whole is emphasized more strongly in New Age literature. Juriaanse writes that : “[meditation] should gradually lead to co-ordination and alignment of the physical, emotional and mental vehicles with the soul, and to a subsequent rounding out and symmetrical development that will make the man of real use to the Master for serving humanity”.²⁸⁷ Authors such as James Roose-Evans has attempted to incorporate the use of transcendental meditation into the Christian church. He discusses a search for deeper spirituality and inner prayer, and it becomes obvious that his emphasis is on a search within, rather than finding God as a separate personal Being. This becomes evident in phrases such as: “In the darkness alone with God, letting the

²⁸⁶ D Goleman: **The varieties of the meditative experience**, p. xxiii.

²⁸⁷ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, p.360.

eternal silence flow deep within us” and “when we speak of God we are always speaking of ourselves...the Self that is within...” Roose-Evans also quotes Mother Theresa of Calcutta who remarked: “The essential thing is...what God says to us and through us. All our words will be useless unless they come from within...”²⁸⁸

Besides the importance of healing, the holistic notion of one-ness with the universe is furthermore found in such sources. Ken Wilber, New Age author, calls the experience of meditation illuminating and awesome and states that the meditator comes to feel one with all the worlds within the whole universe. He says that one’s sense of identity extends far beyond the limitations of his mind and body. Spangler²⁸⁹ confirms this aspect of the experience of meditation when he writes that it brings awareness that every moment of one’s life is lived in the presence of God which is in fact oneness. This of course allegedly stimulates

²⁸⁸ J Roose-Evans: **Inner Journey, Outer Journey.**

²⁸⁹ D Spangler: **Towards a planetary vision**, p. x.

healing in all forms since God is either seen as pure and complete, or in the process of healing him/herself. One advertiser of meditation in the *Odyssey* magazine describes its benefits as follows : “Meditation – a key to transformation. Become peaceful, powerful and serene. Build the bridge to your Higher Self and resonate with Light and Love. Increase your confidence, concentration, clarity, creativity, health and energy. Release the stress and struggle of everyday life and fulfill your full potential through this safe and simple way to joy, wholeness and freedom.”²⁹⁰

Notable similarities exist between the power of the shaman and that of many New Age energy/ healing/ wisdom concepts such as *chi*, *mana*, *kundalini* (used in Yoga), *kupuri* and *prana*.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ *Odyssey*, August/ September 1990, p.5.

²⁹¹ M Eliade: **Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy**, p.475.

5.4. External sources of healing and wisdom

External sources of wisdom and healing are supposedly found *inter alia* in dogma and tradition. *A Course in Miracles*²⁹² encourages the application of dogma and traditional belief systems, even if one would want to resist. Ultimately however it is generally accepted amongst New Agers that dogma is subordinate to individual experience, which is vital. Bailey writes that “Much of what we see around us today of unbelief and criticism, and the negation of our so-called truths, is based upon the fact that religion has been largely superseded by creed, and doctrine has taken the place of living experience.”²⁹³ Another New Age spokesperson, Marilyn Ferguson²⁹⁴ confirms this shift when she maintains that “...every organized religion has been based on the claims of direct experience of one or more persons, whose revelations are then

²⁹² J Roberts: *A Course in Miracles, Vol. 2 – Handbook for Students*, p.2.

²⁹³ A A Bailey: *From Bethlehem to Calvary: the initiation of Jesus*, p.5.

²⁹⁴ M Ferguson: *Op.cit.*, p.370.

handed down as articles of faith. Those who want direct knowledge, the mystics, have always been treated more or less as heretics, whether they were the medieval mystics within Christianity, the Suffus within the borders of Islam, or the Kabbalists within Judaism...Now the heretics are gaining ground, doctrine is losing its authority, and knowing is superceding belief.”

Another external source of healing and esoteric wisdom is so-called sacred scriptures. The Bible (different versions), the Bhagavad Gita, Theosophical teachings of Madame Blavatsky and Alice Bailey, the Koran and the Acquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ of Scottish pastor Doweling Levi are regarded as the most important esoteric writings. New Age authors such as Enomiya-Lasalle²⁹⁵ advocates reading the Bible and other holy books with attention while at the same time trying to see reality behind those

words. The result, he maintains, is a joy unspeakable, because of the grasping of direct truth. New Age author John Randolph Price believes that the Bible should not be interpreted literally in all parts, but it should be read “through the heart and interpreted through the spirit”.²⁹⁶ This seems to be the generally accepted belief throughout the New Age Movement.

Revelation through channeling and prophets is another external source of wisdom and esoteric knowledge. Channeling is defined by Jon Klimo²⁹⁷ as the communication of information to or through a physical human being from a source that is said to exist on some other dimension of reality than the physical as we know it, and that is not from the normal mind or self.

It is generally accepted amongst New Agers that knowledge so transmitted originates from discarnate entities, ascended masters or even

²⁹⁵ H Enomiya-Lassalle: *Op.cit.*, p.67.

²⁹⁶ J R Price: **With wings as eagles**, p.34.

²⁹⁷ J Klimo: **Channeling: Investigations on receiving information from paranormal sources**, p.2.

angels. Parapsychologist D. Scott Rogo distinguishes between the term channeling and that of mediumship. Where he sees the former as referring to the bringing of some form of intelligence which has the purpose of promoting spiritual teaching and philosophical discussion, mediumship is seen as the art of communicating with the dead to bring them into contact with their relatives.²⁹⁸ In principle however there is no difference between the two- in fact the term mediumship is busy dying out.

Lakota shaman Archie Fire Lame Deer remarked that a medicine man must have the power to communicate with the spirits and be able to speak the shaman's secret language. He called this language *ambloglaka* and said that ceremonial rattle and drum are pleasing to the spirits and invoke their help.²⁹⁹ This incidentally also confirms the role of the ceremonial musical instrument in New Age rituals. Hunt writes that

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.5, 6.

²⁹⁹ AFL Deer and R Erdoes: **Gift of Power: The Life and Teachings of a Lakota Medicine Man**, p.154.

the pulsating drums and rattles is vital in voodoo and most shamanism, and rock music is closely related to these. The involvement of many rock stars in the occult confirm this trend.³⁰⁰ Another medium of channeling is the Ouija board, which was used by well-known scholars and scientists such as psychology giant Carl Rogers.³⁰¹ Norman Vincent Peale is another famous Christian author who remarked in an article “When Loved Ones Leave Us” that he has had several entities channeling through him.³⁰²

Channeling, whether with aids like the Ouija board or not, is experienced pro-actively, *i.e.* while the subject is in a trance or situation of unconsciousness, parataxicly, where the subject is in a semi-trance yet aware of the content of the messages received, or syntaxicly, where the subject is sully aware of his environment and of the contents of the information.³⁰³

³⁰⁰ D Hunt: **Occult Invasion: The subtle Seduction of the World and the Church**, p.157.

³⁰¹ W K Kilpatrick: **The Emperor’s New Clothes**, p.177.

³⁰² *Plus: The Magazine of Positive Thinking*, March 1998, pp. 6-8.

³⁰³ J Klimo: *Op.cit.*, p.186.

The message of pantheism has been confirmed repeatedly by entities through the medium of channeling. In *A Course in miracles* for example, the entity Seth stated that “All is One and we are reincarnating, evolving, spiritual, immortal beings, all part of God but unaware of that great fact and on a journey of enlightenment to realize who we really are.”³⁰⁴ The “higher Self” of M. Lady Young, a New Hampshire publisher, confirmed this theme through her by emphasizing man’s oneness with everything, man’s evolutionary process and the impersonality of god. The entity also communicated that channeling spirits are multidimensional beings from amore spiritually evolved plane whose goal is to positively reinforce man’s development. This was said is obtained by man’s conscious awareness of its deep bond with Universal Energy.³⁰⁵

Klimo categorizes messages received through channeling as follows :

³⁰⁴ quoted in *Ibid.*, p.48.

³⁰⁵ M L Young: **Agartha: A Journey to the Stars**, p.31.

- information on the Ageless esoteric Wisdom
- guidance for individual living and other personal information
- different “proofs” from the sources
- descriptions of the realities experienced by the sources
- detail about the past or future
- subject matter for creative/ artistic expression
- scientific, medical or technological information³⁰⁶

Many New Age adherents also believe in the transferring of wisdom or knowledge on ways of healing from extra-terrestrial sources. New Age spokesperson Benjamin Crème is one adherent of this belief in “space brothers” and states that: “Since the war, they have played a major role in preserving this planet intact...The space people have placed around this planet a great ring of Light, which holds it intact and protects it from an overflow of force from the cosmic astral plane and negative cosmic evil...Their work is continuous and endless and we all owe them a

³⁰⁶ J Klimo: *Op.cit.*, pp.150- 167.

tremendous debt”.³⁰⁷ Soviet astronomer Mirzoyan was quoted in an article by authors Henry Gris and William Dick as saying : “We are on the threshold of a major breakthrough in interplanetary communication...It is no more a matter of wondering if there could be somebody out there, but how to establish the first interplanetary dialogue...We are working around the clock to sift data...”³⁰⁸ New Age sources generally state that contact with these extra-terrestrials is through an altered state of consciousness.³⁰⁹ Where politicians such as Jimmy Carter certainly accepted the strong possibility of the presence of extra-terrestrials, others such Syrian president Hafez Assad seemed to have believed that world peace and healing could *only* come from an extra-terrestrial source.³¹⁰ Critics such as Arthur C. Clarke maintained that one could no longer believe that UFO’s are simply interstellar spaceships. It is said that Ufologist J. Allen Hynek himself was

³⁰⁷ B Crème: *Op.cit.*, p.206.

³⁰⁸ *Serpent*, 1979, p.241.

³⁰⁹ R Masters and E L Houston: **Mind Games**, pp.70, 71.

³¹⁰ *Time*, 20 October 1986, pp.56, 57.

skeptical about extra-terrestrials who would travel great distances to do “stupid things” such as stop motor vehicles, collect soil samples or scare humans.³¹¹ Author Vallee, an agnostic, is convinced that the main purpose of UFO’s is to manipulate human consciousness for some or other ultimate deception. He links UFO’s to the occult, a theory confirmed by investigators such as Ray Palmer, John Keel and Salvatore Freixedo.³¹²

5.5. Causes of diseases

Causes of diseases are generally seen as negative attitudes, spiritual dis-ease and karma, the latter which is closely linked to the notion that humans choose their own diseases. Clark and Geisler³¹³ write that: “Sometimes people use pain to feel alive...Pain is a perception, not a reality”. The Maharishi Mahesh Yogi agrees when he remarks

³¹¹ J Vallee: **Revelations: Alien Contact and Human Deception**, p.290.

³¹² *Ibid.*, pp.204, 205.

³¹³ D K Clark and N L Geisler: *Op.cit.*, p.130.

that : “I don’t think Christ ever suffered or Christ could suffer...It’s a pity that Christ is talked of in terms of suffering.”³¹⁴ Swami Satyanada teaches that : “Man today is sick because he thinks he is sick. Sickness and disease have no place in the life of a man or woman who does not accept and tolerate the self-limiting thoughts which are the real seeds of our myriad [sic] ailments.”³¹⁵

*A course in miracles*³¹⁶ teaches that sickness is “not-right-mindedness” which is based on the idea that what is amiss on one plane can adversely affect another plane. Alice Bailey on the other hand, finds the ultimate cause of diseases, together with evil, in the history of planet earth, since “Deity itself is on the road towards perfection”.³¹⁷ Because the primary cause of disease lies beyond the physical realm, one can only treat secondary causes and symptoms,

³¹⁴ M M Yogi: **Meditations of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi**, pp.123, 124.

³¹⁵ quoted in *The Silver Arrow*, 1990, p.41.

³¹⁶ J Roberts: **A Course in Miracles, Vol. I – Workbook for Students**, p.19.

³¹⁷ A A Bailey: **A treatise on the Seven Rays, Vol. IV – Esoteric healing**, pp.10-11.

which are categorized as psychological causes, causes proceeding from group life and karmic causes. Methods of healing are then also categorized into medicine and surgery, the application of Psychology, and the activation of the soul.³¹⁸

New Agers do not reject orthodox medicine and surgery, but do generally believe that medical practitioners focus too narrowly on diseased organs instead of penetrating to the deeper cause of the disease itself. Within holistic medicine man is seen in his totality, being physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. These are all different dimensions that need to be addressed.

New Agers also believe in attitudinal changes as healing method, and many motivational seminars, books and also documentation on healing spell out this approach. One such popular work, *You can heal your life*, by Louise Hay, is a good

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.32.

example of this source. Hay says that: “We are each 100% responsible for all of our experiences...We must release the past and forgive everyone...We create every so-called ‘illness’ in our body”.³¹⁹ Hay also lists certain illnesses and probable causes, together with the new thought pattern that needs to emerge.

Examples are :

- Abdominal cramps. Probable cause = fear. New thought pattern = I trust the process of life. I am safe.
- Abscess. Probable cause = fermenting thoughts over hurts, slights and revenge. New thought pattern = I allow my thoughts to be free. The past is over. I am at peace.
- Accidents. Probable cause = inability to speak up for the self; rebellion against authority; belief in violence. New thought pattern = I release the pattern in me that created this. I am at peace. I am worthwhile. Etc.

Divination is another form of treatment of illnesses, where techniques such as Numerology,

³¹⁹ L L Hay: **You can heal your life**, p.5.

I Ching, Graphology, Crystal Ball readings, Tarot cards and the like are used in therapy.

Since New Agers believe in either pantheism or Panentheism, where everything is divine, and since the earth has a special meaning in New Age thought,³²⁰ crystals are accepted as special source of healing and transformation. Crystals and gemstones are praised for their alleged ability to “improve the quality of ...life, amplify your potential, facilitate spiritual awareness, and heal your body.”³²¹

³²⁰ advertised for its healing qualities in every *Odyssey* magazine.

³²¹ *Odyssey*, August/ September 1990, p.10.

CHAPTER 6 : NEW AGE CORE BELIEFS : GLOBAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND SYMBOLISM

6.1. Goals of this chapter

When studying New Age literature it becomes clear that New Age thought is not only centered on spiritual enlightenment. Such enlightenment and transformation should also work through in broader society. With an emphasis on the brotherhood of man it is therefore not strange that New Agers believe in international political and economical cooperation and the breaking down of national borders and other schisms. Groothuis remarks that cosmic consciousness B4ergconsciousness knows the world as one also – one interlocking, interpenetrating system. Therefore, the idea of strict national boundaries and divisions between nations and peoples must be transcended by the realization of unity and

interdependence.”³²² Events on earth, Satin, writes, “are,...*conspiring to inspire* us” to see and recognize this global interdependence.³²³ Lewis Mumford remarked in 1956 already that : “...a world government ...will unite nations and regions in transactions beyond their individual capacity.”³²⁴ Thompson refers to this paradigm shift as a transition from civilization to *planitization*.³²⁵

6.2. One world government

The *Millennium Alliance* has 30 main projects on their web-site, where such project have as goal internationally synchronized activities with strong New Age overtones and influence. Centering around year 2000 celebrations, are planned activities such as the *Electronic Millennium Project* (promoting multi-lingualism and multi-culturism), *LightShift 2000* (universal global meditations and prayers to the cosmic

³²² D R Groothuis: **Unmasking the New Age**, p.116.

³²³ M Satin: *Op.cit.*, p.149.

³²⁴ L Mumford: **The Transformation of Man**, p.142.

³²⁵ W I Thompson: **Darkness and Scattered Light**, p.13.

Christ), a *Millennium Eve Vigil* (another time of serious contemplation, meditation and visualization), *The Millennium Project 24: "A world in Harmony- on HDTV"* (a day of television broadcasting with the goal of spiritually uniting the world), *Projects 2000* (a project of the International Interreligious Initiative of the Council for a Parliament of World Religions), a *World Citizens' Assembly* (a pseudo-political initiative with representatives of world leaders in assembly) etc.³²⁶ Larson³²⁷ identifies *inter alia* the following political or pseudo-politic New Age organizations with similar views : The Arcane School (originally formed to continue the work of Alice Bailey); Astara, a "New Age Mystery School"; the Club of Rome, founded in 1968, who published a report *The Limits to Growth* wherein it advocates population control, with the possibility of elimination of some part of the world population; and the Findhorn Foundation of Scotland.

³²⁶ Website www.igc.org/millennium/events/intlsync.htm

³²⁷ B Larson: *Op.cit.*, pp.244- 245.

The secretive and highly guarded *Bilderberg Forum* with its focus on an international political order has already had 45 annual meetings. This forum for the superrich have over the decades included all the major financial and political leaders across the globe. During the forum of 1996 for example, then U.S. Secretary William Perry, former Secretary Henry Kissinger, American Chase Manhattan Bank Chairman David Rockefeller, and 120 other dignitaries met for three days north of Toronto, Canada, to discuss international strategies of economic and political cooperation and interaction. In the seventies the Bilderbergers organized the less secretive Trilateral Commission. According to Americans for Sane Policies, Swiss Intelligence infiltrated a secret meeting of international political, financial and media giants and then issued a list of topics discussed by the group. This clearly indicated a desire to establish a

world government. Specific topics discussed included the realignment of international boundaries, education of world youth, makeup of United Nations military forces, world population control, regulation of information, domination and distribution of agricultural products, management and care of the global environment, maintenance of a world court and legal system, a one-world constitution, manipulation of mass opinion, distribution of international taxation, review of media excesses, and the restraint of dissident views and perceptions.³²⁸

According to Prof. Malan of the University of the North in South Africa the United Nations, the American Council on Foreign Relations, the British Royal Institute of International Affairs, the European Club of Rome, the Freemasons and others have all been involved in feasibility studies regarding the implementation of a new world political order. This involves a blue print

³²⁸ *Christian Action for Israel*, 3rd quarter 1996, p.8.

for a global government which will have the task of providing solutions to global problems; promoting goodwill, harmony and cooperation between nations; enforcing an international Bill of Human rights (including protection of the rights of women, children, the aged and the disabled); initiating and supervising the formation of a one world economical system; protecting the earth and the environment (including combating pollution); establishing a world “peace” (military) force, and governing the world in a strict alliance with world religions.³²⁹

In *World Affairs*, newsletter of the *Council on Foreign Relations*, Philip Kerr wrote:³³⁰ “...there is going to be no peace or prosperity for mankind as long as [the earth] remains divided into 50 or 60 independent states until some kind of *international system* is created...The real problem today is that of the *world government*”.

³²⁹ *Die Basuin*, December 1996, p.17.

³³⁰ *World Affairs*, 15 December 1922.

To enable a one world government to control a one world economical system effectively, a cashless society is envisaged where control over cash is being phased out and international computerized financial control is being phased in. Many scholars such as H.G.Wells in his book *The Open conspiracy: Blue prints for a Worlds Revolution*, and educator George Counts believed that private capitalism should be replaced by some form of social economy. In the first *Humanist Manifesto*³³¹ co-editor John Dewey called for the integration of all religions and for a “socialized and cooperative economic order”. In Alice Bailey’s *The Externalization of the Hierarchy* she wrote that men and women should work together in service of a world brotherhood, forces of light should emancipate out of the solution of all existing culture and civilization, upon this a new world order should be build.³³²

In 1940 the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* published a document

³³¹ *Humanist Manifesto*, 1933.

³³² A A Bailey: **The externalization of the Hierarchy**

entitled *The New World Order* wherein Bailey's sentiments were echoed. In *Post War Worlds* (1942) P.E. Corbett pleaded that World Government with one legal system is the ultimate goal. An article in *The Tablet* stated:³³³ "New World Order needed for Peace: State Sovereignty Must Go..." American presidents themselves called for a one-world government. On 28 June 1945 Harry Truman said in a speech that a world republic should be just as acceptable to people as a republic of the United States. The *Senate Concurrent Resolution 66* of 9 February 1950 called upon the Charter of the United Nations to be replaced by a one world government constitution. Banker and *Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)* member J.P. Warburg insisted in 1950 that there will be world government. The only uncertainty, he maintained, was whether this would be achieved by force or consent. The CFR³³⁴ outlined the responsibilities of such new international order: peace, social and economical change. The Rockefeller Brother's Fund

³³³ *The Tablet*, March 1942.

³³⁴ CFR's *Study Number 7*, 25 November 1959.

sponsored a publication (1962), *The Mid-Century Challenge to U.S. Foreign Policy*, wherein it said that its task is the shaping of a new world order in all its facets: spiritual, economical, political, social. Governor Nelson Rockefeller in an article *Rockefeller Bids Free Lands Unite: Calls at Harvard for Drive to Build New World Order*³³⁵ stated that the United States should take the leadership in establishing a new world order. This sentiment was echoed in Rockefeller's *The Future of Federalism* (1962). Again he declared that as President, he would work toward the establishment of an international world order.³³⁶

Richard Nixon was another American leader interested in a one world government. In 1972 he mentioned during a state visit in China to the Chinese premier that every world leader should work towards this goal. In the second *Humanist Manifesto* it was said that mankind stands at the dawn of a new age, a world law and a world order. A *Declaration of Independence* signed by 144 American leaders (1975) declared that they

³³⁵ *New York Times*, February 1962.

³³⁶ *Associated Press*, 26 July 1968.

would work with others to establish a new world order, not allowing the narrow ideas of national sovereignty to stand in their way. Harry Kissinger specifically said to the United Nations in 1975 that all peoples and governments should fashion together a new world order. New Age spokesperson N.Cousins of the *Planetary Citizens for the World We Chose* declared that world government is coming, that it is inevitable, that nothing can stop it.³³⁷

During a speech to the United Nations on 7 December 1988 prior Soviet President Michael Gorbachev said that world progress is only possible through searching for universal human agreement as man moves forward to a new world government. Pres. George Bush in a speech entitled *Toward a New World Order* said to the American Congress that "...a new world order can emerge in which the nations of the world, east and west, north and south, can prosper and live in harmony...the new world is struggling to

³³⁷ quoted in *Human Events*, 1985.

be born” He echoed this sentiment in another speech before the United Nations on 1 October 1990 where he boasted in the collective strength of the world expressed by the UN, a historic movements toward a new world order, and the start of a journey into a new age. The following year Bush referred to “the illumination of a thousand points of light”, a phrase also used by Helena Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society. During the latter speech Bush referred to a “new world order” more than 200 times.³³⁸

In 1992 Henry Kissinger, in a speech at a *Bilderberger* meeting in Evian, France insinuated that individual rights will be relinquished in favour of a one world government. *Time* magazine also published an article about Kissinger’s book *How to Achieve the New World Order*.³³⁹ South African statesman Nelson Mandela said that the new world order must focus on democracy, peace and prosperity.³⁴⁰ In the same year, prior to the first democratic

³³⁸ *Eindtyd Bulletin*, April 1998.

³³⁹ *Time*, March 1994.

³⁴⁰ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 1994.

elections in South Africa, ex-South-African minister of parliament R.F. Botha stated that a new world order would follow the new democracy. In the *New Age Bulletin*³⁴¹ Roy Livesey quoted Michael Gorbachev where Gorbachev remarked that the threat of an environmental crisis will be the key to "unlock" the New World Order. Billionaire investor George Soros remarked that his foundations seek to support the "universal concept" instead of a "tribal concept", world citizenship instead of ethnic or national citizenship. "For each nationality to have its own state is neither practical nor acceptable."³⁴²

Author Arthur Schlesinger wrote that a new world order will only be achieved by paying for it "in blood...words and money".³⁴³ The following year the European Union was hailed as model for world union in the book *Bold New World: The Essential Road Map to the Twenty-First Century*,

³⁴¹ *New Age Bulletin*, December 1997.

³⁴² *Newsweek*, 12 July 1999, p.33.

³⁴³ *Foreign Affairs*, July/ August 1995.

by founder of the *Harvard Capital Group*, William Knoke.

Since 1995 a *State of the World Forum* has been held in San Francisco, USA, where well-known political, financial, spiritual and religious leaders and New Age spokespeople gather to discuss a One World Order and religion. Other organizations represented on this forum have been the *World Economic Forum*, the *Trilateral Commission*, the *Council on Foreign Relations*, *The Club of Rome*, the *Bilderbergers*, the *Politburo*, the *World Future Society* as well as the *Commission on Global Governance*. Interestingly no prominent Christians were present, although Buddhists, Hindus and other pantheist religions were well-represented.³⁴⁴ Another global organization, the *World Constitution and Parliament* endeavors to usher in a one world government. They compiled A *Constitution for the Federation of Earth*. Well-

³⁴⁴ *Eindtyd Bulletin*, May/June 1998, pp.5 – 7.

known theologian Bishop Desmond Tutu is one of South-Africa's representatives.³⁴⁵

6.3. One world economy

The concepts of a one world political system and one world economy and currency go hand in hand in many New Age literature sources. What transpires as motivation on an economic level is the need to eliminate fraudulent computerized transactions and fake currency. It is envisaged to establish one unique identification system for all global citizens. Banks have already experimented with voice-recognition, palm and fingerprint identification, and iris identification. These are already widely in use in credit and debit cards ("smart cards"). To eliminate the further loss or theft of cards it is however envisaged to implant a microchip under the human skin. The Sunday Star³⁴⁶ carried an article *Power under your skin* where the benefits of such implantation are described. A microchip one square millimeter has

³⁴⁵ quoted in *Ibid.*, p.11.

³⁴⁶ *Sunday Star*, 17 May 1992.

already been designed which can contain a person's identity or social security number, inland revenue reference number, medical and other insurance numbers, car registration numbers, bank account numbers and account data, general biographical data, the medical history of the bearer and much more. In the South African newspaper *Beeld*³⁴⁷ the control over individual freedom which already exists in society was highlighted. Retail shops monitor the individuals' buying habits, market research companies and direct selling companies distribute individuals' personal particulars to banks, retailers and book sellers, credit bureaus monitor economically active people's credit history and maintain a data basis on peoples' assets, marital status, payment frequency, bank accounts and other personal detail. It is estimated that in the USA alone there are more than 15 000 specialist lists on approximately 2 milliard consumers. Each consumer's name appears on at least 25 lists, with some appearing on 100 lists.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁷ *Beeld*, 21 May 1996.

³⁴⁸ *Die Basuin*., December 1996, p.20.

Many authors of financial books and articles believe that the a shattering depression will hit first world countries, which in turn will lead to governments attempting to stimulate the economy by inflating the currency. This will prove fertile ground for moving to a fully computerized economic system.³⁴⁹

New Age thought generally is that the individual's allegiance will be to humankind and the planet as a whole, rather than to such person's nation, country or race. A universalistic vision is mostly accepted among New Agers where there will be not only a one world government, but also a one world university, one world currency, a world language, a world parliament, a world flag, a world Council of Churches and a world fellowship of faiths. Values for such global community is summed up by Donald Keyes in caring and sharing.³⁵⁰

Prominent New Age spokesperson Benjamin

³⁴⁹ for example L Burkett: **The Coming Economic Earthquake**

³⁵⁰ D Keyes: **Earth at Omega: passage to planetization**, p.13.

Crème assessed that a “ world government will not be imposed on mankind, but will be the result of the manifested brotherhood.”³⁵¹ It is clear that he envisages either a natural transformation of thought amongst all on earth, or a removal of dissidents. He continues to state that :”The sharing and the co-operation of all mankind, the redistribution of the produce of the world, will result in world government. Any attempt to achieve or impose world government without the acceptance of sharing is doomed to failure.” ³⁵²

Incidentally, Crème also believes that all world religions will slowly withers away as the new religious alliance get a foothold in allegiance with a world governing body.³⁵³ It is said that since the Acquarian age will last for 2200 years, ample time exist for development of political and spiritual unity. Christianity and Buddhism for example, have experienced incredible unity over the last few decades, writes Enomiya-Lasalle.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ B Crème: *Op.cit.*, p.169.

³⁵² B Crème: *Op.cit.*, p.169.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.89.

³⁵⁴ H Enomiya-Lassalle: *Op.cit.*, p.123.

In conclusion, to New Agers spiritual enlightenment and change automatically means a paradigm shift in society. This inevitably leads to political and economic cooperation and unity. To most New Age adherents the golden age is here and now. This same idea of the kingdom of God present in the now is also found in the writings of Christian theologians such as Rudolf Bultmann and J A T Robinson. Here the message of Christ and his kingdom is interpreted existentially. A parallel can also be found in Gnostic writings.

6.4. Symbolism

Sources on the New Age Movement indicate that there is consensus that symbolism plays an important role. The rainbow for example, is said to symbolize the Astrological sign Aquarius (water carrier) or the bridge between the “soul” and the “oversoul” or cosmic energy.³⁵⁵ It is often

³⁵⁵ *Personality*, 25 September 1989, p.14.

used in New Age logos.³⁵⁶ Authors who are critical of the movement are quick to identify major symbols. Financial institutions seems keen to use New Age symbols and terms in their logos and product names. In South Africa exists the following examples : Volkskas Merchant Bank - pyramid and sun for logo, “Insight” as slogan; Trust Bank – rainbow as logo; Perm Bank – pyramid series of products.

The Ankh, which was used by ancient Egyptians to worship the sungod Ra, is believed to impart wisdom, peace, longevity and prosperity. The circle symbolizes man’s recycled spirit through the process of reincarnation. It is also used in mandalas and wheels as focus point for meditation and astral travel. Esoteric Christian groups such as the Church Universal and Triumphant have incorporated sun-worship in their rituals, and the sun is therefore regarded as an important symbol.

³⁵⁶ see for example the South African New Age magazine *Link-up*.

As mentioned earlier in the study, the American dollar note has some interesting New Age symbols. The third eye, hawk eye, eye of Horus or all-seeing eye is above a pyramid. This symbolizes oneness with self, or focus point of enlightenment. The pyramid supposedly acts as focus point for cosmic energy. The words *Annuity Coeptus* has allegedly been chosen by the Freemasons and it means “an agreement with that that has been started”. Then of course we find the words *Novus Ordo Seclorum* (new world order). The date 1776 appears in Roman script, indicating the alleged date a so-called “Council of 13”, which is an ancient version of the *Bilderberg Forum*, made a resolution to strive for a one world government through a 13 point plan.

The triangle is used in the logo of many New Age groups. It is supposed to balance a person’s spiritual energy and enhance spiritual enlightenment. The unicorn, which is said to portray several specific mystical qualities, is often seen in New Age literature. The Yin-Yang

sign, originating from the ancient Taoist religion, representing the male and female sections of *Chi* energy, is also popular among New Agers. The Taoist practice of *I Ching* also uses this symbol.³⁵⁷

The number 666 is of specific importance to many New Age writers. Alice Bailey hailed it as the “most holy number” in her writings. This same number is also utilized in the electronic banking system of barcodes. The three sixes are also sometimes used in the form of a triangle, for example as logo on certain versions of the Bible. Here it is referred to as the *triquetra* (an ancient symbol of the Trinity). New Ager Lorna Roberts again lead experiential shamanic journeys, through her religious affiliation called *Triquetra Journeys*.³⁵⁸

According to Associated Press the credit card companies Master Card, Visa, City Bank and

³⁵⁷ *New Age Terms and Symbols*, pp.107, 108.

³⁵⁸ Website www.triquetra.netgate.net

Chase Manhattan Bank have teamed up to produce a smart card with electronic chip in with embossed repeated *triquetra* symbols. The three sixes are sometimes found one inside another – for example in the logo of the South African New Age magazine *Odyssey*.

The number 666 is currently in use on all new credit cards in the USA. First Bowring Insurance brokers used the *triquetra* as logo. The central mainframe computers in large firms such as Sears, Penney and Montgomery Ward carry this number on all their transactions. The number also appeared on the sides of military tanks build for the secret service of then president Jimmy Carter. The Supermarket NCR computer Model 304 has the number 666 as formula. Since 1984 monthly statements of MasterCard have been carrying the number 666. It appears on all Australian bank cards. It is the World Bank's code number. Telco Credit Union of South Central Bell insist on this number, followed by the relevant personal social security number. In the USA certain employees of the Internal Revenue Service have this number

on their employee identification cards. This number is the official number of the department for state employees in the American Federal States Medical Fund. Computers manufactured by the firm Lear Siegler, has this number on it. Metrical rulers distributed in 1979 in the USA had the number 666 on it. Computer receipts in the USA normally have this number printed on it. A new Algebra handbook for American primary school scholars is called *666 Jellybeans*.³⁵⁹

Dr. Mary Relfe, successful businesswoman and author of “When your money fails” and “The New money system”, concluded that there is a consortium promoting the global use of the number 666. She alleges that this is the greatest conspiracy the world has ever seen.³⁶⁰ She stated further: “The [cashless] system is designed to remove all money from individuals; but, by so doing, will eliminate all personal freedom and privacy.”³⁶¹ Relfe specifically referred to individuals and corporations who have been

³⁵⁹ *Finesse*, May 1999, p.11.

³⁶⁰ M Relfe: *Op.cit.*, p. xxiv.

advocating the usage of this number. Prime minister Pierre Trudeau of Canada, who was renowned for his efforts in implementing a one-world government and to “redistribute the wealth of the world”, had the number 666 inscribed on his 1959 Mercedes Benz license plate.³⁶² A cartoon in The American Pentagon’s departmental Journal, first quarter 1980, depicted two athletes with runner number 451 handing over the runner’s torch to runner number 666.³⁶³ All tickets to papal audience for Sunday 11 February 1979 had the number 666 on it.³⁶⁴ The Jerusalem Post, 25 November 1980 carried a nationwide contest entitled : “Uncover Six Six Six and Win!”³⁶⁵ Author John Wicklein remarked that this “new technology makes possible a System in which (national or international) government could extract from the people all the information it needed to CONTROL THEIR

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

³⁶² M Relfe: *Op.cit.*, p. xiii.

³⁶³ M Relfe: *Op.cit.*, pp. xiv, xv.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. xvi, xvii.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xix.

LIVES, and transmit to the people only that information which could aid in that control.”³⁶⁶

Together with John. H. Shepherd Mary Relfe explains how the standard barcode Universal Product Code (UPC) now seen on most products in retail shops work. They explain that two uniform lines were being used to depict the number “6” in the Optical Character Recognition system used to create barcodes. The most common UPC has a “6” before, in the middle, and after the bars representing the actual product code. In other words, the three sixes simply act as unidentified framework for the design. Shepherd maintained that there are three sets of (bar marks) for the numerics 0 to 9, but with a grand total of only 25. Twenty-one different bars are being used. However, he concluded that only two primary UPC designs are being used in supermarkets. At times, they have extensions, hyphenations, or some other form of variations, but the code concealing a 666 will always be in

³⁶⁶ Wicklein: **Electronic Nightmare**, p.253.

both of the two primary configurations.³⁶⁷ Shepherd continues to give quite a technical explanation how it is all put together in bars and bits (binary units). Suffice to say that the number “6”, and especially three sixes, are rather appealing when it comes to computers.

When Apple Computer Inc. introduced their first 200 Apple I units they celebrated the “6” as “perfect computer number” by selling the units for \$666.66 each.³⁶⁸ Dr. Relfe also includes in her book statements made by eyewitnesses of USA Social Security cheques that went out with the words “Must have proper I.D. Check not valid without I.D.number. I.D. number on right hand or forehead” on the back.³⁶⁹ It becomes clear that the repetitive usage of the number 666 cannot be coincidence, but has to be part of a subtle orchestration by forces working for a one-world government and economy. The NAM clearly stands as main catalyst in this regard.

³⁶⁷ M Relfe: *Op.cit.*, pp.38, 49.

³⁶⁸ *Wall Street Journal*, 11 November 1981.

³⁶⁹ M Relfe: *Op.cit.*, p.80.

In conclusion : Symbols and certain terms are repetitively found in New Age literature. New Agers generally attach much value to it. Because symbolism come from the intellect, it is important to note that New Age sources generally attempt to find a balance between intellect and esoteric experience. The schools of Gnosticism, which contributed to the formation of the current New Age Movement, confirmed the importance of not denying the intellect. Said Juriaanse³⁷⁰ : “ True understanding should therefore be the product and wise blending of intellect, love and devotion. Both the mystic and the esotericist should follow the balanced path of wisdom. The mystic will eventually find that his devotion must be guided by the intellect, and this will lead him to the path of the esotericist. The latter will, however, also fail to achieve his goal without retaining or recovering his mystic sense”.

³⁷⁰ A Juriaanse: *Op.cit.*, p.236.

CHAPTER 7 : INFORMATION SOURCES

7.1. Goals of this chapter

Information abound on the New Age Movement. Different categories of literature can be identified which might not directly refer to the NAM, but which incorporate references to groups, techniques, methods or people associated with the movement.

The categories that are being identified in this study are : Pro-New Age authors who refer to the movement itself ; Pro-New Age authors who refer to issues related to the movement ; Neutral authors of New Age literature and Critics.

Including in the first category, Pro-New Age authors who refer to the movement itself, will be important authors who predate the modern version of the New Age Movement. Old manuscripts exist of authors who might have referred to “mysticism”, “esoteric sciences”,

“spiritual enlightenment”, “the divine Reality” and the like, without actually mentioning the entering of a new dispensation.

The second category include authors who support the ideals and vision of the New Age Movement, albeit indirectly. Authors of literature on alternative health remedies, for example, will be included here. It must be remembered that there is often overlapping between the first and second category, and in such a case the literature will be divided in the category which the author of this research study feels is most appropriate, although this is his subjective choice and not necessarily correct.

In the last category, critics of the New Age Movement and neutral authors, is included literature by scholars of religion, professionals such as scientists, sociologists and humanists. It will also include specific reference to Christian literature that either support or oppose the NAM.

The goals of this chapter is therefore to identify the different type of sources on New Age material, and to attempt to categorize the different sections of sources of material to gain some insight into the difficulty of the questions at hand, as well as to distinguish between subjective and objective sources, to enable this project to come to its own conclusions from an objective as possible point of view -well read and well-researched. Obviously not all the sources are mentioned here since the bibliography provides a comprehensive list. The object is simply to identify certain categories of important sources.

7.2. Sources by New Age authors

7.2.1. General sources compiled by New Age spokespeople

This first category refers to authors who support the NAM and its concepts, vision and *modi operandi*. Titles of books often describe the goal

of a particular work, and therefore the full title of the applicable works will be given here. Publishers are often pro-New Age themselves, and some New Age groups have even formed publishing companies. The publisher will therefore also be mentioned where relevant, although not all publishers mentioned will qualify for the latter distinction. The paragraphs following then include books or articles written by authors who regard themselves as New Agers, whether directly or indirectly. The most prominent authors who have been regarded by a wide group of students as New Age spokespeople are :

Alice BAILEY -*The unfinished autobiography*, 1951; *Initiation, human and solar*, 1980; *Letters on occult meditation*, 1922; *A treatise on cosmic fire*, 1970; *A treatise on white magic*, 1934; *From Bethlehem to Calvary: the initiation of Jesus*, 1961; *Discipleship in the New Age* Vol. I, 1955; Vol. II, 1955; *The problems of humanity*, 1947; *The reappearance of the Christ*, 1969; *The*

destiny of the nations, 1949; *Glamour :a world problem*, 1950; *Telepathy and the etheric vehicle*, 1950; *Education in the New Age*, 1971; *The externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1958; *A treatise on the Seven Rays* Vol. I - *Esoteric psychology I*, 1936; Vol. II- *Esoteric psychology II*, 1942; Vol. III- *Esoteric astrology*, 1965; Vol. IV- *Esoteric healing*, 1978, Vol. V- *the Rays and the initiations*, 1960; *The labors of Hercules*, 1974; and *Serving humanity: from the writings of Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul*. (Compiled by a student), 1977. All these books have been published by the Lucis Trust (previously called Lucifer Trust) ;

Helena Petrovna BLAVATSKY - *Isis unveiled: a master key to the mysteries of ancient and modern science and technology*, Vols. I and II, 1950; and *The secret doctrine: the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy*, Vols. I to V, 1952. The Theosophical University Press has published both these books.

Benjamin CREME - *The reappearance of the Christ and the masters of wisdom*, 1980. Published by Tara, Creme's organization; *Maitreya's mission*, 1986. Published by the Share International Foundation, and *Transmission: a meditation for the new age*, 1990. Also published by Tara.

Aart JURIAANSE – (Compiler) *Reference guide to the teachings of D K by Alice A Bailey; Of life and other worlds*, 1974 and *Bridges*, 1985. The first two publications of Adriaanse come from the pro-New Age World Unity and Service Press, while the third one was published by the Sun Centre.

Shirley MACLAINE - *Out on a limb*, 1983; *Dancing in the light*, 1986; *It's all in the playing*, 1987; and *Going within*, 1991.

David SPANGLER - *Revelation: the birth of a new age*, 1976; *Towards a planetary vision*, 1977. These two publications are from the New

Age press in Scotland, Findhorn. *Emergence: the rebirth of the sacred*, 1984. This was published by Delta/Merloyd Lawrence. *Introduction to the New Age Catalogue*, 1988. Published by Doubleday in New York.

7.2.2. General sources compiled by less-known New Agers

Some of the other authors or publications who are also pro-New Age but is perhaps less prominent or who concentrate more on one aspect of the movement are the following :

A Course in miracles, 1985. Published by the Pro-NAM Foundation for Inner Peace.

Bruce F CAMPBELL - *Ancient wisdom revived: a history of the Theosophical movement*, 1980.

J H CAMPBELL and Eileen BRENNAN - *The Aquarian guide to the New Age*, 1990. Published by Acquirius in Wellingborough.

Gina CERMINARA - *Insights for the Age of Aquarius*, 1973. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House.

Terry COLE-WHITTAKER - *The inner path from where you are to where you want to be : a spiritual odyssey*, 1986. Published by Rawson, New York.

Ina CRAWFORD - *A guides to the mysteries: an ageless wisdom digest for the New Age*, 1990. Published by Lucis Press.

Levi DOWELING - *The Acquarian gospel of Jesus the Christ: the philosophic and practical basis of the religion of the Aquarian Age of the world*, 1969

Max HEINDEL - *Blavatsky and the secret doctrine*, 1933.

Stuart HOLROYD - *Psi and the consciousness explosion*, 1977 . *The quest of the quiet mind: the philosophy of Krishnamurti*, 1980. Published by Aquarius in Wellingborough.

Michael HOWARD - *The magic of the runes: their origin and occult power*, 1980. Published by Aquarius in Wellingborough.

Peter LEMESURIER - *This New Age business*, 1990. Published by Findhorn in Scotland.

Richard MOSS - *The I that is we : awakening to higher energies through unconditional love*, 1981. Published by Celestial Arts.

Jane ROBERTS - *Seth speaks*, 1972.

A P SINNET - *The occult speaks*, 1921. Published by the Theosophical Publishing Society.

Robert SKUTCH - *Journey without distance: the story behind A course in Miracles*, 1984.

Published by Celestial Arts.

Sir George TREVELYAN - *A vision of the Aquarian age: the emerging spiritual world view*, 1984. .

Anna Kennedy WINNER - *The basic ideas of occult wisdom*, 1982. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House.

7.2.3. Specific New Age sources

Material on the internalization of the divinity/ creativity

Terry-Cole WHITTAKER - *The inner path from where you are to where you want to be*, 1986

Dick SUTPHEN - *Master of life manual: metaphysics, brain/mind awareness and human principles to create your own reality now!*, 1987

Joan WINDSOR - *The inner eye: your dreams can make you psychic*, 1985

Montague ULLMAN and Nan ZIMMERMAN - *Working with dreams: self-understanding, problem-solving and enriched creativity through dream interpretation*, 1979

- **Material on the coming of a new era**

Fritjof CAPRA (Physicist) - *The Tao of physics*, 1975 and *The turning point*, 1990.

Willis HARMAN (Futurist) - *Global mind change: the promise of the last years of the twentieth century*, 1988

Donald KEYES (United Nations consultant) - *Earth at Omega: passage to planitization*, 1982

James LOVELOCK (Atmospheric biochemist) - *Gaia: a new look at life on earth*, 1979

Material relating to reincarnation and karma

Joe FISCHER - *The case for reincarnation* (with a preface by the Dalai Lama), 1984

Sylvia CRANSTON and Carey WILLIAMS - *Reincarnation: a new horizon in science, religion, and society*, 1984.

Material on holistic health and medicine

Louise HAYS - *Heal your body*, 1982; and *You can heal your life*, 1987

Norman COUSINS - *The anatomy of an illness as perceived by the patient*, 1979 and *Head first: the biology of hope*, 1989

Chris GRISCOM - *Ecstasy is a new frequency*, 1987 and *Healing the emotion*, 1990

Bernie S SIEGEL - *Love, medicine and miracles: lessons about self-healing from a surgeon's experience*, 1986

Harold REILLY and Ruth BROD - *The Edgar Cayce handbook for health through drugless therapy*, 1975

Paul REED - *Serenity: challenging the fear of AIDS: from despair to hope*, 1987

Material about the Gaia hypothesis and the Mother Goddess

James LOVELOCK - *Gaia: a new look at life on earth*, 1979

Peter RUSSELL - *The awakening earth*, 1982

STARHAWK - *The spiral dance: a rebirth of the ancient religion of the great Goddess*, 1989

Monica SJOO and Barbara MOR - *The great cosmic mother: rediscovering the religion of the earth*, 1987

Elinor LENZ and Barbara MYERHOFF - *The feminization of America: how woman's values are changing our public and private lives*, 1985

Material relating to mediums and channeling

John KLIMO - *Channeling: investigations on receiving information from paranormal sources*, 1987

Jane ROBERTS - *Seth speaks*, 1972 and *Psychic politics*, 1976 (Channeled works)

Helen SUCHMAN - *A course in miracles*, 1976 (Channeled work)

J Z KNIGHT Edited by Steven Lee WEIBERG) - *Ramtha*, 1986

Jach PURSEL - *The sacred journey: you and your Higher self*, 1987 (Channeled as Lazaris)

Material relating to meditation

Ram DASS - *Journey of awakening: a meditator's guidebook*, 1985

Laurence LESHAN - *How to meditate*, 1974

Material regarding human potential and positive thinking

Charles TART - *Waking up: overcoming the obstacles to human potential*, 1986

Jean HOUSTON - *The possible human*, 1982

Jean HOUSTON and Robert MASTERS - *Mind games*, 1972

Ken WILBER - *Up from Eden*, 1981 and *Eye to Eye*, 1983

John Randolph PRICE - *With wings as eagles*,
1987

Matthew FOX (Creation theorist and Dominican
Catholic priest) - *Original blessing*, 1983;
*Breakthrough: Meister Echart's creation
spirituality in new translation*, 1980; *The coming
of the cosmic Christ*, 1988

Matthew FOX and Brian SWIMME (Physicist) -
Manifesto for a global civilization, 1982

Harold REILLY and Ruth BROD - *The Edgar
Cayce handbook for health through drugless
therapy*, 1975

Paul REED - *Serenity: challenging the fear of
AIDS: from despair to hope*, 1987

**Material regarding metaphysical and occult
practices**

David and Lucy POND - *The metaphysical
handbook*, 1985

Dane RUDHYAR - *Person-centred astrology*,
1980

Eden GRAY - *The tarot revealed*, 1960

Henry WEI - *The authentic I-Ching*, 1987

Sam REIFLER - *I Ching: a new interpretation
for modern times*, 1974

Joseph WEED - *Psychic energy: for achieving
wealth, success and happiness*, 1981

Material relating to UFO's and extra-terrestrials

Whitley STRIEBER - *Communion: a true story - encounters with the unknown*, 1989 and *Transformation: the breakthrough*, 1989

Ken CAREY - *The starseed transmissions: an extraterrestrial report*, 1988

7.3. Neutral New Age sources

It is difficult to differentiate between authors who are altogether neutral on the topic of the NAM and those who have researched the topic properly and have a positive attitude towards the movement, although they might not refer to themselves as New Agers. Most prominent of these authors are :

J Gordon MELTON, Jerome CLARK and Aidan A KELLY - *New Age Almanac*, 1991

Theodore ROSZAK - *The making of a counter culture*, 1970; *Where the wasteland ends*, 1973 and *Unfinished animal*, 1976 Roszak termed the phrase “Aquarian frontier” to include all the different expressions of rebellion or opposition to modern society, starting during the 1960’s hippie revolution. He includes in this term the different fundamentalist and charismatic movements that have sprung up during or after this revolution.

Joseph NEEDLEMAN - *Understanding the new religions*, 1978 Needleman sees the NAM as a philosopher and scholar of new religious movements. He concludes that this new trend is in its broadest sense a crucial aspect of the immense cultural change happening in America.

7.4. Sources which are critical of the New Age Movement

Scholars, scientists, sociologists, clergy and Christian sources that are critical towards the New Age phenomenon are :

Pul KURTZ - *The transcendental temptation: a critique of religion and the paranormal*, 1986.
Kurtz is the editor of *The Humanis*, journal of the American Humanist Association. He regards religion as a harmful delusion, and regard all psychic phenomena as religious forms.

Elliot MILLER - *A crash course on the New Age Movement*, 1989

Russell CHANDLER - *Understanding the New Age*, 1988

J VERKUYL - *De New Age beweging: Kernbegrippen, beoordeling, uitdaging*, 1989

Constance CUMBEY - *Hidden dangers of the rainbow*, 1983; and *Dark secrets of the New Age*, 1987

Texe MARRS - *Mystery mark of the New Age: Satan's design for world domination*, 1988

Paul DE PARRIE and Mary PRIDE - *Ancient empires of the New Age*, 1989; and *Unholy sacrifices of the New Age*, 1988

Douglas GROOTHUIS - *Revealing the New Age Jesus: challenges to orthodox views of Christ*, 1990

Dave HUNT - *The cult explosion: an expose of today's cults and why they prosper*, 1979; *Peace, prosperity; and the coming holocaust: the New Age movement in prophecy*, 1983; *A Woman Rides the Beast: the Roman Catholic Church of the Last days*, 1994; and *Occult Invasion: The subtle Seduction of the World and the Church*, 1998.

Carl A RASCHKE - *The interruption of eternity:
modern Gnosticism and the origins of the new
religious consciousness*, 1980

Johan S MALAN - *Die Basuin, 1990 – 1999*

CHAPTER 8: CHRISTIAN vs. NEW AGE BELIEF

8.1. Goals of this chapter

The main goal of this chapter is to compare traditional Christian belief with that of common New Age belief, in order to understand the differences and possible comparisons between them. To facilitate this goal one will have to address the basic source of Christian belief. New Age belief has been highlighted in preceding chapters and core concepts of their belief was identified.

Since it can be accepted that most Christians see the Bible (either a specific translation or any translation) as their main source of guidance and revelation, it can be concluded that the content of this source is vital to Christian belief. When addressing Christian understanding it is

important however to briefly look at different important issues in this regard. The **first** is the problem of ancient sources of the Bible; the **second** is the two different methods of Biblical translations; the **third** is the problem of Biblical interpretations or exegeses.

There are major differences between three basic schools of Bible translations. The **first** believe unequivocally in the *Textus Receptus*, a collection of 80 to 90 percent of all old Bible book manuscripts which have been retained through the ages. The **second** base their translations on two old manuscripts, the *Vaticanus* and the *Sinaiticus*.³⁷¹ A popular translating committee who falls under this second group is the one under chairmanship of Drr. Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton Johan Anthony Hort. This committee produced the third edition of the Greek New Testament in 1975, also called the *Nestle Aland Text*. The *Authorized Version* of

³⁷¹ C J Visser (snr), *Die Egte Afrikaanse Bybel*

the Bible, also called the *King James Bible* (1611) falls under the first category. Differences between the two schools include: many words and even whole verses which appear in the Authorized version have been omitted from translations being categorized under the second school; and the different way (dynamic equivalent) interpretation which often changes the perceived meaning. Prof. Malan of the University of the North, South Africa, identified more than 200 changes in meaning or omissions in the Afrikaans New Testament Translation of 1983, which is based on the *Nestle Aland Text*.³⁷²

The **third** school is those who create interpretations based on the so-called lost Akashik records every person's word, thought or deed inscribed in allegedly written in Sanskrit, (also inscribed in the earth or spirit realms).³⁷³

major work here is of course Scottish pastor Levi Dowling's 270 page *Acquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*.³⁷⁴ Most traditional Christians reject

³⁷² *Die Basuin*, August 1994, pp.12- 20.

³⁷³ Website www.execpc.com/logos/nadict.html

³⁷⁴ L W Dowling: *Op.cit.*

this third source since no empirical evidence for it exists, although some open to New Age influences have found value in it. For the exercise of this study, we will however concentrate only on comparing the first and second schools' translations. Some authors have indicated that the NAM has in fact infiltrated the second school and that only translations stemming from the *Textus Receptus* are divinely inspired and complete.³⁷⁵

The older method of Bible translation has been referred to as the literal or “word-for-word” method. The more modern method is the dynamic equivalent method. With the former method great care was taken to produce a literal translation of the most original Bible manuscripts available to the applicable scholars. In the dynamic equivalent method, on the other hand, scholars use their own theological insight to produce a supposed equivalent of the original meaning in a

³⁷⁵ see *Die Basuin* magazines in general and the seminar notes of C J Visser (snr)

more modern context.³⁷⁶ Since the former method is based on Judaism's tradition to reproduce every letter in sacred sources with great care under penalty of death, one could argue that it must be accepted as technically more accurate to the original divine inspiration. Postgraduate statistical research done by D Witztum, E Rips and Y Rosenberg "Equidistant Letter Sequences in the Book of Genesis" as quoted in *The Bible Code*,³⁷⁷ confirmed their hypothesis regarding the uniqueness and accuracy of the Bible only in the *Authorized Version*. This of course in turn implies the accuracy of the *Textus Receptus*. The dynamic equivalent method depends on the theological insight and background of translating scholars, which is subjective. One must conclude that, accepting the premise that translations have in fact been infiltrated and affected by the NAM, those worse affected would be ones translated using the dynamic equivalent method.

³⁷⁶ seminar notes of C J Visser, pp.1, 9, 10.

³⁷⁷ M Drosnin: **The Bible Code**

The third issue that one needs to address here is the different methods of Biblical Exegesis. Two main methods are the literal interpretation and the allegorical interpretation. The literal interpretation does not accept *per se* that everything in the Bible should be accepted as literally, only that most things should, depending on the context of the relevant scripture. The beasts coming out of the sea in the book of Revelation for example, are obviously not literal animals. The seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3 could again be interpreted as both literal and symbolical of seven ages of church history. The allegorical approach however, interprets most scriptures in the Bible as having a symbolic meaning. This is true especially in the prophetic books such as Daniel and Revelation.

Traditional Christianity has long held certain beliefs regarding eschatological events. Eschatology is defined by the Collins English Dictionary as the “study of death, judgment and

last things.”³⁷⁸ This is of course but one definition and it merits further explanation. Furthermore one finds different schools of thought within Christianity regarding the end times or “last things”. There is firstly a distinction between so-called pre-, mid- and post Millennium believers, where the Millennium refers to the golden age or “thousand years of peace” referred to in the book of Revelation.³⁷⁹ The Pre-millennium doctrine can again be divided into those who believe in a pre-, mid- or post “rapture” of believers. The word “rapture” is not found in the Bible but refers to the belief that Christian believers will be “snatched away” prior to, in the midst of, or after “the Great tribulation”, a period generally accepted amongst pre-Millennium scholars to be seven years long.

The doctrine that interests us most here is that of the pre-Millennium scholars, since there are many similarities to ideal-type New Age belief.

³⁷⁸ **Collins English Dictionary**, p.166.

³⁷⁹ The Bible, Rev 20: 1- 10.

Both expect the imminent transformation into a new era or dispensation where global peace, cooperation and benevolence will be prominent. Both expect the appearance of a messianic figure prior at the start of this new dispensation. Both believe that the number 666 has significant importance. New Agers and Christians in this group differ however drastically on certain events just before the entering of this golden age. They also differ radically on the interpretation of certain issues. For example, where both believe in the significance of the number 666, New Agers generally believe it is a “most holy number”, while pre-Millennium Christians see it as “the mark of the Beast”, an evil number. Both groups expect the appearance of a messianic figure, but the Christians believe in the appearance of “the anti-Christ” , also called the “man of perdition” , as world dictator *before* the appearance of the true Christ. Christians believe in a rapture of true

Christian believers, the NAM talks about a massive removal of people opposing New Age thought.

It is therefore also the goal of this chapter firstly to define the term “eschatology” more fully, then to identify the eschatological events predicted by these Christians, since there are uncanny resemblance between these predicted events and those predicted by the New Age Movement. This brings us to our hypothetical questions in the Introduction to this study, namely are the characteristics, *modi operandi* (and similarities if any) of the New Age Movement and that of Christian eschatological doctrine so strong that it merits explanation? Should one find that the answer is yes, what is the most logical explanation of these similarities?

8.2. Definition of the term “eschatology”

According to the New Concise Bible Dictionary³⁸⁰ “eschatology refers to the belief system regarding “last things” It entails consummation of the whole world’s history as well as individual human destiny, since Bible scholars generally understand history as a movement under God leading towards specific events and goals. In the Old Testament one finds the prophets looking forward towards a permanent goal of God’s purpose in history. An act of God’s judgment, “The Day of the Lord” often referred to in the Old Testament, not always refers to the last days but to an expected intervention of God in the prophet’s historical context. Throughout the Old Testament a final Day of Judgment and a permanent golden age of peace emerges. Is 2:2,4 predicts international peace and salvation. A main occurrence during this time is the return of the Messiah who will rule in righteousness.

³⁸⁰ New Concise Bible Dictionary, pp.152 – 154.

The specific characteristic of New Testament eschatological perspectives is that God's decisive act has already taken place in the coming of Jesus Christ to planet earth, although the final consummation still needs to happen. This highlights the dualistic aspect of Biblical eschatology: there is a present aspect and there is a future aspect. In some measure, man has been living in the Old Testament's "last days" since the appearance of Jesus Christ on earth (1 Cor 10:11; 1 Pet 1: 20) In another sense the "last days" are still to come (Tim 2:18; Mark 14:25) This duality was confirmed by the resurrection of Jesus, pointing to Him as first example of what will happen to many (1 Cor 15: 20) All the New Testament writings agree that eschatology is Christ-centred, although different New Testament books have different emphases. The New Testament then concentrates on the imminent return of Christ, but qualifies that expectation

with the assertion that certain key events must first occur.

In Jesus' prophecy of the judgment of Jerusalem (Matt 24; Mark 13; Luke 21- often called 'The Olivet Discourse') his disciples asked Him when the prediction of the destruction of the temple would be fulfilled and when the events of the last days will be fulfilled. Jesus then replied that that false Christ's and many sufferings are the start of the 'last days'. Persecution and a desolation of a rebuild Jewish temple will follow, as well as cosmic catastrophes. The desecration of the temple was also prophesied in Dan 11:31 and 12:11. Although this saw fulfillment in 168 BC when Antiochus Epiphanes defiled the Jewish temple and again in AD 70 with the fall of Jerusalem, Bible scholars generally agree on the notion of ongoing prophetic fulfillment and it is normally accepted that this also refers to a specific event in the 'last days'.

God's final vision for this world includes the elimination of all evil, the unification of all things in Christ (Eph 1:10) and the whole creation will be liberated from the curse of sin (Rom 8:19ff).

8.3. The Anti-Christ.

Since certain Bible scholars' views on the Anti-Christ form part of eschatological thinking, it merits some examination. Alice Bailey ³⁸¹ herself sees the spirit of the Anti-Christ as a "deluder of souls", who through false teaching and "so-called miracles" will infiltrate and work through religious agencies. Mass hypnotism, Mass Psychology, the teaching of riches (prosperity) and the misuse of devotion and the arts will be characteristic here ! This sounds remarkably like the prosperity teachings in certain *Third Wave* Christian churches.

³⁸¹ Alice A. Bailey: **A Treatise on White Magic**, p.240.

If one studies church history four main views surface regarding the anti-Christ and the book Revelation.³⁸² The **first** is the spiritual view. Augustine and other church fathers taught that the anti-Christ is simply an evil system that the Christian Church must oppose. Today this is still the main view amongst reformed Christian churches. The **second** view is the preterist view. This view was formulated in the 17th century, mainly through the input of a Catholic Jesuit priest, Alcazar. According to this doctrine everything described in the book of Revelation has already been fulfilled at the end of the first century. The Roman Caesar Nero is this view was in fact the anti-Christ. The **third** view is the historical, which states that everything which have been written in the book of Revelation regarding the anti-Christ, has been fulfilled during the last 2000 years. This view uses strange comparisons to validate their doctrine, for example the earthquake of Rev 11: 19 was supposed to have been the French revolution of

³⁸² *Eindtyd Bulletin*, pp.2,3.

1789. This view is part of Replacement Theology, where one facet is replaced by another. The futurist view is the **fourth** option, which accepts that the first three books of Revelation are history – there were in fact seven such churches in Asia Minor. The rest of the book of Revelation, it is said, is however prophetic and must still be fulfilled.

Jesus himself predicted other “signs of the times” only to occur during the ‘last days’, specifically the strange comic events and the appearance of the Antichrist (2 Thes 2:3ff) The evil of the end times is seen in the New Testament to reach a crescendo in this false Christ who will hold himself as the Messiah, but who will in fact be inspired by Satan to perform miracles and then to claim divine honors (Rev 13:5ff). The second coming of the real Christ will see the destruction of this figure, also referred to as “the beast” (2 Thes 2: 8). Paul Henri Spaak, first president of the ‘Council of Europe’, said: “Send us a man who can hold the allegiance of all the people, and

whether he be God or the devil we will receive him.”³⁸³ In June 1996 Nicholas Burns of the Clinton Administration stated: “We need, all of us internationally, to identify someone capable of reforming the UN bureaucracy,...We think the time has come for a new leader.”³⁸⁴ One can accept the premises then that the futuristic view of the book Revelation should be applied when one compares prophetic events such as the appearance of the anti-Christ, with New Age belief.

8.4. Chronological order of eschatological events in the Christian calendar

Some pre-Millenium Christian scholars such as Prof. Johan S. Malan ³⁸⁵ define the following events that bear resemblance to New Age goals or beliefs :

- A breaking down of the old order and the doing away of national borders, leading to the

³⁸³ Quoted in *Eindtyd Bulletin*, July 1997, p.2.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁵ *Die Basuin*, December 1996, pp.12 , 13.

introduction of the New World order in every country

- Replacement of nationalism with globalism where the idea of global citizenship is propagated
- Replacement of group rights with human rights where the United Nations protects these rights
- Governmental authority declines and anarchy increases
- Equation between Christianity and other religions which leads to syncretism
- Increase of individual permissiveness which becomes part of a world culture
- Increase of crime, corruption and violence which necessitates the establishment of a global peace force
- Morals decline worldwide
- Doing away with cultural identity leading to the loss of national pride
- Doing away with racial stereotypes leading to increased racial integration
- Doing away with sex stereotypes leading to an increase in homosexuality

- A predictions of the rapture or disappearance of Christian believers

Prof. Malan is one Biblical scholar believing in a literal interpretation of prophetic scriptures also refer to the following events allegedly predicted in the prophetic books of the Bible: ³⁸⁶

- The “rapture” or disappearance of Christians
(1 Cor 15:52; Matt 25: 13; Luke 21:35)
- The start of a time of great tribulation
(Matt 24:21; Jer 30:7; Ez 22:19) which will centre on the state of Israel. This period will last seven years, divided into two sections of three-and-half years each. (Rev 13: 5; 12:6)
- A time of great spiritual decay
(2 Tim 3:1-5; 2 Pet 3: 3)
- The appearance of a world leader referred to as the Antichrist. (1 John 2: 18-22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7)
This person will have the following characteristics:
- He shall “ascend from the bottomless pit”
(Rev 11:7)

³⁸⁶ *Die Basuin*, August 1995, pp. 2- 10.

- He comes in his own name to earth
(John 5: 43)
- He will exalt himself
(2 Thes 2:4)
- He will be accepted by the state of Israel
(Rev 13: 4)
- He will rule for a period of 42 months (three-and-a-half years or “ a time, times and the dividing of times”) (Dan 7:25; Rev 12:6; 12:14)
- He will be finally destroyed
(Rev 19: 20)
- He comes to do his own will
(Dan 11:36)
- He comes to destroy many and to prosper for a season (Dan 8:24)
- He will speak “great words against the Most High” and will “wear out the saints of the most High” (Dan 8: 25)
- He will contemplate changing “times and laws”
(Dan 8:25)
- He is referred to as the “evil shepherd”
(Zech 11:16); The lie (2 Thes.2;11); The lawless one (2 Thes.2:8); The mystery of iniquity

(2 Thes.2:7); “Satan manifested in the flesh” (Rev 12:9); “the beast” (Rev 13:1); “the man of perdition” (2 Thes.3:3-8).

The Antichrist it is said, will enforce the “mark of the Beast” on everyone’s right hand or forehead as a type of identification code to enable one to buy or to sell. The number of this code or mark is 666. (Rev 13: 16- 18)

Another Christian newsletter, *Christian Action for Israel*, with editor Malcolm Hedding, identifies the following prophetic events:³⁸⁷

movement towards a global government

(Dan 8 and Rev 13)

movement towards a global religious system

(Rev 13, 17, 18)

existence of a global peace movement

(1 Thes. 5)

a wider Middle Eastern conflict

(Ezek 38-39); and

conflict over the city of Jerusalem (Zech 12-14).

Malan³⁸⁸ summarizes the Biblical dispensations as follows :

The dispensation of Israel from the creation till the time of Jesus Christ on earth as seen in the Old Testament

The dispensation of the church from Jesus Christ to the present as seen in the New Testament
(represented in the churches of Rev 2-3)

The “rapture” or removal of believers
(1 Thes 4:15-18 and 1 Cor 15: 50-53)

The “great tribulation” on earth for a period of seven years (Rev 6-19)

The visual return of Jesus Christ to earth

The thousand years of peace on earth
(Rev 20)

The destruction of the earth
(2 Pet 3:10)

The last judgment

Eternity either in the new heaven and on the new earth, or in hell (Rev 20: 15, 21, 22)

³⁸⁷ *Christian Action for Israel*, 2nd quarter 1996, pp.1,2.

³⁸⁸ *Die Basuin*, August 1994, p.23.

Well-known Christian scholars such as Dr. H.L. Wilmington, graduate of the Moody Bible Institute, Dr. Tim LaHaye, and Prof. P.N. Benware of the Moody Bible Institute confirm this theological position. Other scholars and authors, even Christian authors, see most or all of the above prophecies of course as either fallacy, illusionary or spiritual. Yet the resemblance with the New Age Movement becomes very apparent when one compares these events with historical facts and with the vision, characteristics and *modi operandi* of the New Age Movement.³⁸⁹

Historically, for example, the barcode on most products is already well known in all societies. The basic barcode consists of three parts: at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of it. It is also commonly accepted that a building in Brussels houses a gigantic computer called "De Dier" which has the capacity to allocate a type of

³⁸⁹ *Personality* 25 September 1989.

identity number to every person on earth in barcode form. The possibility of laser scanning on the forehead or onto one's hand is also not unheard of and it is a fact that financial institutions across the world are working towards a cashless society. More detail of these efforts have been expounded in the section on global political unity and economic integration.

This chapter is concluded then with the fact that certain Christians falling in the pre-Millennium camp foresee many events, backed up by Biblical prophecies written thousands of years ago, which have a remarkable similarity with events which have already happened, or that are busy happening within the New Age Movement.

8.5. Basic Biblical doctrine vs. New Age belief

The *Discovery Series* of books (1982) with editor Davis Sper is an excellent example of generalization in basic traditional Christian doctrines. It identifies God and man's nature

from a Christian point of view respectively as follows : God is defined as a moral, personal Being, who is all-powerful, all-knowing, present everywhere and yet Personal, creator of the universe. Man is defined as creation of God in His image as a personal, rational, moral being. In thousands of Christian writings authors identify man is sinful, having fallen from grace, needing God's salvation. Rom 3: 23 is often quoted: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" This study expounded on New Age belief which sees man normally in a pantheistic sense, part of God, the apex of earthly evolution, having unlimited potential, giving self-awareness to the divine force, capable of guiding the universal process of evolution, reincarnating after physical death. God, we concluded, can be seen in New Age thought as being an impersonal, amoral, creative evolutionary force within and part of the universe. Joshua Ramo ³⁹⁰ has even equated God with the Internet. Said he; "We stand at the start of a delicate dance of

³⁹⁰ *Time*, 16 December 1996, pp.38 – 44.

technology and faith – the marriage of God and the computer networks.” Sherry Tukel, professor of Sociology of Science at M.I.T agrees. “People see the Net as a metaphor for God....Like it or not, the Internet is one of the most dramatic examples of something that is self-organized. That is the point. God *is* the distributed, decentralized system.”³⁹¹ Science-fiction author William Gibson is quoted as saying that it seems as if Internet itself has become conscious.³⁹² It is seen as a “vast cathedral of the mind...where faith can be shaped and defined by a collective spirit...that binds all of us, Christian and Jew, Muslim and Buddhist, together, interconnected...”³⁹³

In Christian thought traditionally God reveals Himself objectively through natural revelation (nature and conscience) and through special revelation (theophanies, the prophets, the Holy Scriptures and through Jesus Christ). In New Age

³⁹¹ Website www.time.com/godcom

³⁹² *Time*, 16 December 1996, p.44.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

thought the triune God of the Bible cannot be properly described in personal terms since He is not seen as one individual, but as energy gestalt.³⁹⁴ God is experienced as impersonal energy field whose only personal quality is the sum of its parts. Judaism and Christianity are the two monotheistic faiths that affirm a personal, caring, unshakeable, unchanging God view. A difference between Creator and creation is absolute. Deut. 6:4 forms the basis of Jewish prayers: “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one.”

Groothuis remarked that New Age information sources always contradicts essential Biblical truths about Jesus.³⁹⁵ Jesus made strong claims that directly oppose New Age teachings. In John 14:6 He remarked that no-one comes to the Father but through Him, and in Luk 19: 19 He explained that His mission was “to seek and save the lost”. This is rather contradictory to New Age belief in man’s divine nature.

³⁹⁴ J Roberts: **The Seth Material**, p.237.

³⁹⁵ quoted in **the new age Jesus** in *Today*, October/ November 1996.

In New Age belief revelation is almost entirely subjective. It is believed that man can mystically become aware of the divinity of all things, and that man can experience union with the divine life force. It is said that guides or angelic messengers assist man in this process. In Christian thought revelation is from an external source, given to man.

In Christian thought Jesus Christ is the same Being, the Son of God, eternal second person of the Trinity, who while on earth became both man and God, Redeemer of the human race and the universe. In the chapter on core New Age concepts it was highlighted how New Agers firstly distinguish between the master Jesus on earth some 2000 years ago, aware of his deity, and the Christ, working hand-hand with Lucifer for the good of mankind, dedicated to helping each of us become aware of our divinity. No ideal-type New Ager will accept Jesus Christ as the “one and only Son of God sacrificed by His

loving Father to save humanity from the results of its sins.”³⁹⁶

In Christian thought salvation is deliverance from the penalty and power of sin through faith in Jesus Christ, whose death on the cross paid the penalty for all sin. New Agers generally accept that salvation is the “rebirthing” or deliverance from fear and guilt through awareness of our own deity. It is a basic and unchangeable belief of New Age teaching that man is born (reincarnated) into this world both good in nature and divine. Mary Baker Eddy writes:³⁹⁷ “Man as the image of God is already saved with an everlasting salvation...whatever is possible to God, is possible to man as God’s reflection.” This also explains the NAM’s emphasis on man’s creative and self-empowerment ability. On the other hand man is constantly portrayed as a sinner in the Bible, having transgressed the law of God. Jesus Christ recognized this when He said: “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Matt 9:13) The evasion

³⁹⁶ B Crème: *Op.cit.*, p.25.

of guilt is important in New Age thought. As one author put it : “No one who sees himself as guilty can avoid the fear of God.”³⁹⁷ Evil does not really exist in ideal-type New Age belief, and Lucifer is seen as great planetary consciousness. Benjamin Crème in his *The Reappearance of The Christ*³⁹⁹ remarked: “Of course, yes, the forces of evil are part of God. They are not separate from God. Everything is God.” In traditional Christian thought however Lucifer is seen as fallen angel, now called Satan , the “god of this age” (2 Cor 4:4 New International Version). Jesus called him the “prince of this world” (John 12:31). Other Biblical passages refer to him as “murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44) and “enemy of his Maker” (Isa 14:13-14).

The return of Jesus to earth (the second coming John 14:3) has been interpreted by New Age authors differently. Some spiritualize this cosmic event, others such as Benjamin Crème connect it

³⁹⁷ M B Eddy: **Science and health with Key to the scriptures**, pp. 183, 261.

³⁹⁸ J Roberts: **A Course in Miracles, Vol. 1 – Handbook for Students**, p.594.

³⁹⁹ B Crème: *Op.cit.*, p.103.

with the coming “divine messengers” such as Matreya e.g. with his advertisement in newspapers across the globe *The Christ is now here*, some point to a specific event as its fulfillment. David Spangler again believes that the Scottish Findhorn Community represents the second coming.⁴⁰⁰

Believers will be rewarded in heaven according to their faithfulness, and nonbelievers will be punished in hell according to the degree of their rebellion against the Creator, says traditional Christian belief. New Agers on the other hand generally agree that sin and evil are illusory. No personal Judge exists, man will be purified through endless series of reincarnations, attaining ever higher levels of consciousness, with the ultimate aim to become a master.⁴⁰¹

Even alleged revival in Christian Churches, such as the *Toronto Blessing* experienced in many Christian churches across the world, is seen by

⁴⁰⁰ D Spangler: **Reflections on the Christ**, p.10.

⁴⁰¹ *Time*, 16 December 1996, pp.30, 31.

some Christian authors such as Hunt as evil and part of New Age influence. Events similar to that occurring in this alleged revival occur in New Age circles. Said leading guru Swami Muktananda: “when I sat for meditation, my whole body shook violently, just as if I were possessed with a god or a bad spirit.”⁴⁰² Ankerberg and Weldon concludes that it is very likely the impersonal kundalini energy, where people “sooner or later” experience spirit possession.⁴⁰³

It is concluded that it is clear that unless traditional Christian thought (which is exclusive in character) steer toward New Age belief (which is inclusive and could thus accommodate the former when the former has adapted), major differences will keep them apart. The option of Esoteric Christianity (which sees its core truth as identical to the core truth of every other religion), which accepts Aldous Huxley’s Perennial philosophy (all religious truth or

⁴⁰² S Muktananda: **Play of Consciousness**, pp.84, 122.

experience is the same) again steers traditional Christian belief towards New Age thought.⁴⁰⁴

8.6. Syncretism vs. Exclusivity

When one studies the Ecumenical movement it becomes clear that there is a drive to unite all world religions. Said Joe Rogaly under the heading “World Needs a Global Religion” in the *Financial Times*:⁴⁰⁵ “Christianity... has survived for nearly 2000 years. the question is, will it last out the next century?...The great religions must be amalgamated. A series of takeovers is required. The breakup of Christianity should be reversed. The Church of Rome should join hands with that of Constantinople. The rest-Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists – should be coaxed in”.

⁴⁰³ J Ankerberg and J Weldon: *Op.cit.*, pp. 10.

⁴⁰⁴ Website www.execpc.com/logos/nadict.html, pp.4, 7.

⁴⁰⁵ as quoted in *New Haven Register*, 11 January 1998.

Robert Muller, past assistant Secretary-General for the United Nations ⁴⁰⁶ stated : “I hope that the religious leaders will get together and define before the end of this century the cosmic laws which are common to all faiths...We must hope that the pope will come before the year 2000 to the United Nations, speak for all the religions and spiritualities on this planet and give the world religious view of how the third millennium should be a spiritual millennium...the integration...of humanity with creation, with nature...” Muller also declared that it is his personal goal to get a gigantic alliance between all the major world religions and the United Nations. Pope John Paul II confirmed that the world will have the first one-world government ever. He also mentioned that it is inevitable. Other authors such as Mendlovitz, director of *World Order Models Project*, accepts that an united world-government and religion is a *fait accompli*. A strong effort is specifically being made across the globe to unite Catholics and

⁴⁰⁶ as quoted in *NRI Trumpet*, January 1990.

Protestants. Many agreements have been signed in this regard and more symbolism acting out this unity is foreseen for the near future. In 1994 for example, Catholic and Protestant leaders signed a document: "Evangelicals and Catholics together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium."⁴⁰⁷ The well-known Christian magazine *Christianity Today*⁴⁰⁸ carried an article wherein Catholics and Protestants were said to believe in the same "Gift of Salvation". A massive Interfaith meeting has also been scheduled by the Catholics as part of the 2000 celebrations where Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, Voodoo worshippers, Protestants and Catholics will all pray together to the same god.⁴⁰⁹ Formation of the *Christian Coalition* under directorship of well-known Pat Robertson of the *700 Club* is another example of Christians, Catholics, Mormons, Jews and many others uniting under the banner of mutually agreed upon moral issues. When the Pope visited the USA in

⁴⁰⁷ *Eindtyd Bulletin*, August 1998.

⁴⁰⁸ *Christianity Today*, 8 December 1997.

⁴⁰⁹ *Eindtyd Bulletin*, August 1998.

1995 the *New York Times* reported Robertson as having said: “There was a real sense of harmony”. The newspaper added: “We all want to build bridges with the Catholic Church.”⁴¹⁰

In response to a speech by the Dalai Lama, Tibet’s alleged reincarnation of the first Dalai Lama, Cardinal Cooke (who received approval from the Pope for sainthood) of the Catholic Church declared that: “This is one of the dramatic movements of the Spirit in our time. We make each other welcome in our churches, temples and synagogues.”⁴¹¹ According to the literal interpretation method we find a Biblical prediction of deception in the Christian Church in the last days (Matt 24: 4). It warns that many will come in the name of Jesus Christ and will deceive many. Matt 7:15 also predicts the appearance of false prophets. In 2 Tim 3: 8 one reads of a false “signs and wonders” movement in the last days. There is a strong train of thought

⁴¹⁰ *New York Times*, 7 October 1995.

⁴¹¹ *Newsweek*, 17 September 1979, p.115.

amongst evangelical Christians then that there will be an apostasy, also in the Church, during this time. When studying primary and secondary sources it becomes clear that there is indeed some apostasy at work in the traditional Church. The first problem that surfaces is that of sin. The NAM completely ignores sin and the Christian view of God's remedy for this problem. Groothuis⁴¹² writes that the Christian concept of man being a sinner and the New Age concept of man being good, trustworthy and having great potential are two extreme opposite poles. In terms of New Age thought sin equates ignorance. If we can rid ourselves of this ignorance we will not have this problem. Ridding ourselves lies in the enlightenment of pantheism. Traditional Christianity sees this enlightenment as counterfeit and rejecting the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. David Spangler⁴¹³ remarks that:

"Man holds the ultimate responsibility for the redemption of what we have come to call 'evil

⁴¹² D Groothuis: **Unmasking the New Age**, p.105.

⁴¹³ D Spangler: **Revelation: the birth of a new age**, pp.13, 38.

energies’“ He also states that these are plainly energies that have been used at the wrong time or place, or are unsuited to evolutionary needs. New Age ethics, he says “is not based on...dualistic concepts of ‘good’ or ‘bad’ ”. Apostasy in the Christian church becomes clearer when one look at specific infiltration areas of New Age thinking.

The **first** is the blurring of distinction between creator and creation, thus leaning towards pantheism. The monistic nature of the NAM’s belief treat all creatures, including human beings, as part of the great god-soul. Mark Satin explains that global consciousness recognizes our unity with all humanity and with all life everywhere.⁴¹⁴ Christian leader Kenneth Copeland has said on numerous times and in his writings that Christians are partakers of the divine nature. It was “injected into your spirit man”, he said, “You don’t have a god in you. You *are* one.”⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁴ M Satin: *Op.cit.*, p.148.

⁴¹⁵ Tape recording *The Force of Love* : BCC - 56

Another Christian preacher and author, Earl Paulk, confirms this trend when he remarks that God has little gods just like dogs or cats have puppies or kittens. So man are little gods and should act accordingly.⁴¹⁶ In *The Road Less Traveled*⁴¹⁷ author M.S.Peck states that Christians are all growing towards godhood, since God is the source and destination of the evolutionary force.

The **second** area is the incorporation of guided imagery and visualization into Christian teachings. Pastor C.S.Lovett advocate both meditation and visualization. "...the cults have discovered certain of God's healing laws...should born-again believers be denied healing simply because certain cults exploit these laws?"⁴¹⁸

In his book *The Fourth Dimension*⁴¹⁹ Paul Yonggi Cho, senior pastor of the largest church on earth,

⁴¹⁶ E Paulk: **Satan Unmasked**, pp.96, 97.

⁴¹⁷ M S Peck: **The Road Less Traveled**

⁴¹⁸ quoted in *Personal Christianity*, August 1979.

⁴¹⁹ P Y Cho: **The Fourth Dimension**.

remarks that Christians need to learn how to dream and visualize an answer to a request as being completed. “We can incubate that which we want God to do for us...”⁴²⁰ Most authors do not distinguish between visualization and New Age meditation. Norman Vincent Peale refers to visualization as “positive thinking carried one step further”.⁴²¹ Groothuis remarked that : “an elaborate visualization exercise could induce an altered state of consciousness...Shakti Gawain, for instance says that ‘creative visualization’ can easily introduce us to ‘spirit guides’...”⁴²²

The **third** area of incorporation of New Age thought is that of positive thinking and positive confession. Robert Schuller addressed Unity trainee ministers by remarking that it is their responsibility to “positivize” religion. This, he said, refers specifically to those “Fundamentalists who deal constantly with words

⁴²⁰ P Y Cho: *Op.cit.*, pp.26, 27.

⁴²¹ quoted in W R Martin: **The New Age Cult**, p.77.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, p.78.

like *sin, salvation, repentance, guilt*, and that sort of thing.”⁴²³

A **fourth** area is that of the usage of eastern meditation in Christian practice. While Biblical meditation is in the conscious mind and the person focuses normally on the Bible as God’s Word, eastern or transcendental meditation empties the mind and focuses within. One Christian author suggests that Christians should allow their spiritual body, shining with light, to rise out of their physical body. Their spirits should rise and rise deeper into outer space until they find unity with the eternal Creator.⁴²⁴

A **fifth** area is the abandoning of traditional moral values. Moral absolutes are not allowed in New Age thought, and since all is seen as relative, traditional values are abandoned. This has a definite influence on children when parents and teachers no longer lay down specific rules or apply sufficient discipline.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, p.79.

⁴²⁴ W R Martin: *Op.cit.*, p.80.

A **sixth** area is the shift towards Esoteric Christianity. Similar terminology is used than that of traditional Christianity which become confusing. The former idea of Christianity teaches that spiritual wisdom is limited to a few elite. The NAM, according to Groothuis, views this Christianity as the Christian part of New Age thinking. It is supposed to be the Western substitute of Eastern mysticism. It is allegedly in tune with “the perennial philosophy” of the One source that manifests itself in all religions. The New Age Christ is clearly opposite to the orthodox Christ.⁴²⁵

This attempt to Syncretism stands in opposition to the traditional exclusive Christian gospel. A Namibia newspaper⁴²⁶ published a letter where the anonymous author said *inter alia* that Christianity is a primitive and unbalanced religion which needs to be replaced by an

⁴²⁵ D R Groothuis: **Unmasking the New Age**, p.116.

⁴²⁶ *Windhoek Advertiser*, 11 July 1992.

universal New Age religion, which will be a syncretism of all world religions. It continued to state that all world religions have a main god, and that it is thus possible to unite them under Matreya. The new basis of faith, it was said, should be meditation, yoga, the use of mantras, tantra-exercises, the cumulating of thought, and spiritual enlightenment. It then suggested that because the Protestant faith opposes the New Age, they should be eliminated and punished. These sentiment seem common among large sections of New Age adherents.

The thirteenth point of the Illuminati's Plan was said to read "To eliminate Christians who refuse to give in to pressure to accept 'The Plan' "

An important strategy of one New Age faction to note is that of persecuting those who oppose New Age principles and who refuse to "enter into" the new age of enlightenment. New Ager Vera Elda represents this faction of the New Age Movement

when she states: “Christians are the only spanner in these plans. There will have to be a massive removal.” Mark Satin agrees when he writes about the coming apocalypse, that will “cleanse” the earth of those in need of “purgation”. Satin and other New Age writers often refer to these people as souls less evolved who do not see that “all is one” and “one is all” ⁴²⁷ In Texe Marrs’ *Dark Secrets of the New Age* he lists more than 30 pages of New Age sources dealing with the topic of “cleansing” the earth. This train of thought holds no goodwill toward historic Christianity. ⁴²⁸

2 Thes 2: 6-11 could be interpreted (using the literal method of interpretation) as either the rapture referred to earlier on in this study, or an execution of all Christian believers. Applying the same method of interpretation brings us to the “mark of the beast” in Rev 13: 16, 17. ”. David Spangler is another important New Age author who believes in a “Luciferic initiation” into the

⁴²⁷ M Satin: *Op.cit.*, p.148.

⁴²⁸ D Spangler: **Explorations: Emerging Aspects of the New Culture**, p.85.

New Age, which will be a mark on one's forehead or right hand. Those who refuse, he said, must be eliminated through a "Hitler-like extermination".⁴²⁹ It becomes clear that there are only two options: syncretism or exclusivity. Within the broader NAM there is no place for those adhering to an exclusive orthodox view.

⁴²⁹ T. Marrs: *Op.cit.*, p.74 and C.Cumbey: *Op.cit.*, p.140.

CHAPTER 9: SURVEY RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

9.1. Reporting on the respondents

Because this study integrated, for the sake of objectivity and completeness, a qualitative approach, a survey was forwarded to respondents, and 45 questionnaires were returned from respondents who viewed themselves as Christians. The first objective was simply to answer the research question: What are Christian's perceptions regarding New Age belief vs. Christian belief. Because the respondents were mainly from Christian churches, they were not told that New Age beliefs would be compared with Christian belief, to ensure an unbiased response.

E-mails of churches were at random retrieved from databases on the Internet during July and

August 1999. Internet directories used for this purpose were Yahoo! People Search engine, Cyberramp White Pages and Ozemail. The questionnaire, which is attached as Addendum to this study, was then e-mailed to these people/organizations. Because the initial idea was to include a qualitative analysis of New Agers as well, an attempt was made to elicit response from people via different newsgroups on the Internet, all which had the wording “church”, “Christian”, “religion” or “new age” in their description. This attempt was largely unsuccessful, and only one respondent came from this group. The other 50 respondents all replied to personal e-mail forwarded to them. The author did expect a better response, but the relatively poor response could be attributed to a limited time restraint of one month that the author put on returning the questionnaires. Another reason (especially concerning the failure of newsgroup response) could be peoples’ indifference, especially in the light of thirty or more postings that some newsgroups experience

on a daily basis. It is the author's belief however that 45 unrelated responses from seven different Western countries could add significant insight into Christians' perceptions regarding the NAM.

The survey was structured into two sections: a biographical section with seven questions, and an opinion section with 50 statements, to which respondents had to answer "agree", "disagree" or "unsure". There was an optional "comments" section at the end of the survey, and 27% of respondents (out of 51) made use of this facility. Four of the respondents commented on the ambiguity of some of the questions. It is acknowledged that certain statements should perhaps have been put differently, e.g. statement 26 said: "Meditation should be an importance practice in people's lives". Some respondents commented that they agree that Biblical meditation should be an important practice in people's lives, but disagree that transcendental meditation should play a role in their lives. In the context of the topic, the insinuation was

clearly that the author meant “Transcendental meditation”, but it is acceded that the question should perhaps have included this term. Other remarks from the 45 Christians were “The NAM is out to create a false unity” (Baptist respondent); “The NAM is dangerous – I will never endorse a possible agreement of Christianity and the NAM” (Assembly of God pastor); “The NAM could be the platform for the antichrist” (Assembly of God pastor); “It is unacceptable because it rejects absolute beliefs” (Baptist respondent); “I was once part of the NAM but became born again” (Pentecostal respondent); and “I see a search of spirituality in the NAM which should prompt the church to seek better ways of being Christ to the hunger of the people” (Evangelical pastor).

Respondents were from seven Western countries: the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands. Most were from the USA (53%), with Australia (24%) second. Respondents classified themselves as

belonging to one of 13 different Christian churches. Approximately half of all respondents indicated their church to be either Assembly of God/ Pentecostal – 36% (which is grouped together for the purpose of this evaluation), or Baptist - 22%. Another 11% categorized their affiliations either as Evangelical other than those mentioned, or simply as Other further described as Christian (or Church of Christ) The balance of the churches was thinly spread in representation. The church profile therefore indicates approximately one third Pentecostals, one third Evangelicals (including Baptist) and one third Orthodox or other (including Catholic, Anglican, Methodist etc.) An amazing 69% of respondents indicated that they are in some form of leadership in their church, either as Pastor/Priest/Minister or as Lay pastor/lay Priest/lay minister. It is not surprising then that 84% of respondents indicated that their involvement with their church is very regular (twice a week plus).

The demographic profile of the respondents is skewed toward being male (89%), and aged between 35 and 54 (73%). Most of the respondents (69%) indicated their spiritual age to be more than 20 years, while another 22% indicated their spiritual age to be between 11 and 20 years. Forty percent of respondents had a BA degree or similar, 24% had a MA degree or similar. Eleven percent had an Honours or similar and the same percentage had doctorates or similar. Only 13% of respondents had no tertiary education. The demographic profile indicates that those who completed the questionnaire tend to be graduates, spiritually and naturally mature individuals in leading Christian positions – persons who would appear to be in an excellent position to evaluate the New Age Movement. Moreover, 93% of respondents agreed with the statement “I know more or less what the NAM stands for”. It is least likely to represent the uninformed, uneducated or immature person.

9. 2. Reporting on the opinions

The 98% of respondents disagreeing with the statement “In broad terms I agree with NAM belief” was perhaps to have been expected. Only one question had a 100% disagreement, *i.e.* “Christ works closely with Lucifer for the good of humanity”. Respondents agreed strongly that Jesus was the same person as the Christ (98%). Two statements also elicited strong disagreement, *i.e.* “ Buddha can also be seen as the Christ” and “ Mohammed, Jesus, Buddha and others are all on equal footing” (96% disagreed and only 4% agreed on each count).

The statements could, for the purpose of this report, be categorized under the following headings:

Affect of the NAM on the Church

(3,4,10,13,14,15,48,49,50)

The inclusive nature of the NAM

(38,39,40,41,44,45)

Christ and/or Lucifer

(16,17,18,19,22,25)

NAM effect generally on society

(11,27,36,43)

God

(23,24,32,33)

The Anti-Christ

(8,12,42)

Respondents' personal experiences and

beliefs (28, 29,30, 31)

The NAM as religion

(6,7,37)

The duration/ permanency of the NAM

(5,9)

NAM effect on Bible translations

(20,21)

Currency /Economics

(34,35)

Holistic Sciences

(46,47)

Meditation

(26)

Response in terms of the above categories are discussed as follows:

Affect of the NAM on the Church

More questions dealt with this topic than any other did. Most respondents disagreed with the statements “The influence of the NAM can only do the church good” (84%), “ Traditional churches should incorporate itself into the NAM “ (98%), “The NAM has more advantages than disadvantages for the church” (89%), “Our religious group/ church has been positively influenced by the NAM” (89%), “Our church has had some speakers who could be regarded as New Age” (82%), “The NAM will not affect the church at all since it is a separate entity” (73%) and “The NAM and the Church can learn from each other “ (60%). About half of the respondents (56%) indicated that they disagreed that the NAM has not affected their particular religious group/ church.

The inclusive nature of the NAM

Six statements referred to the inclusive nature of the NAM. Most respondents agreed that witches should/can easily associate themselves with the NAM (64%), but disagreed that Pentecostals should/can easily associate themselves with the NAM (84%) or that the Charismatic movement is part of the NAM (87%). About half believe that Catholics should/can easily associate with the NAM. Most (78%) respondents indicated that they agree that the NAM incorporate thousands of smaller groups, while a large percentage of respondents disagreed (62%) that to see something holistically is to be part of the NAM.

Christ and/or Lucifer

Respondents had clear indications where they stand regarding Christ. Ninety-one percent indicated that they believe in the return of a Messiah/ Christ/ Matreya, while 98% agreed that Jesus was the same person as Christ. Ninety-six percent indicated that Buddha can *not* be seen as the Christ, neither is Mohammed, Jesus, Buddha

and others on equal footing (96%). Almost all of the respondents (98%) indicated that they do not agree that Lucifer is the creator of light, and all indicated that they disagreed with the statement “Christ works closely with Lucifer for the good of humanity”.

NAM effect generally on society

Eighty-nine percent of all respondents disagreed with the statement “The NAM will usher in a new era of peace”. The statement “The NAM will affect the whole world (earth’s population)” had not such a clear response. 42% of respondents disagreed, while 33% agreed and 24% indicated “unsure”. Just more than half disagreed with the statements “The world is ready for a world leader” (56%) and two-thirds of respondents disagreed that “The NAM brings changes in attitudes/ paradigms which is a good thing”.

God

About two-thirds of respondents (71%) said they believe that God is *not* found in all of us, 78%

indicated their belief in God as person and not a force/energy. Respondents were fairly equally divided on the idea that “Christianity should share God with other religions” (49% agreed 42% disagreed). This could be due to the ambiguity of the question, since some could have interpreted it as having missionary vision. Just more than half (58%) of respondents believe that Allah is *not* the same God as the God of the Christians.

The Anti-Christ

Three questions dealt with the anti-Christ. Respondents were fairly divided on their opinion whether the NAM is a forerunner or platform for the antichrist or not. This statement had the highest “unsure” responses (47%) of all the questions, while 31% agreed and 22% disagreed. Just more than half of the respondents agreed with the statement that the NAM is evil 58% (with 22% unsure). About half of the respondents said that they believe that the NAM is a demonic conspiracy, with another 22% unsure. This last statement “The NAM is a

demonic conspiracy” was also used as a validity test together with the 12th statement, although the content is slightly different. The difference margin of only nine percent indicates that the questionnaire as a whole falls within reasonable limits of validity.

Respondents’ personal experiences

Three statements dealt with respondents’ personal experiences. Almost all (93%) indicated that they have had a born-again experience, while 82% indicated that they have *not* had an out-of-body experience, and 87% said they have *not* had communicated with angels or departed souls. Two-thirds of respondents do not believe in extra-terrestrials.

The NAM as religion

69% of respondents indicated that they disagreed with the statement “The NAM is simply interested in sociological change”. About two-thirds (71%) agreed however that the NAM is a religion. The 37th statement was simply a validity

check. 62% said they disagreed with this statement. Compared to the 71% who agreed, one can conclude that the difference margin (again nine percent) is small enough to confirm validity of the questionnaire.

The duration of the NAM

56% of the respondents indicated that they do not agree that the NAM is a passing fad, while 33% were unsure (insinuating that it is here to stay), while two-thirds also disagreed with the statement that it is a modern organization.

NAM effect on Bible translations

Big variations are found with responses dealing with questions on NAM effect on Bible translations. 42% of the respondents were unsure whether the NAM has infiltrated Bible translations, although about half disagreed that watered-down Bible translations weakened Christian's' faith (27% said that it has).

Currency/ Economics

There were almost as many respondents who disagreed (49%), as those who were unsure (42%), whether one global currency is a good thing. Only nine percent however agreed with this statement. Respondents were also quite divided on the issue of taking a micro-chip on one's hand as means of electronic banking : 38% agreed that it will be wrong, 36% disagreed that it will be wrong, 27% were unsure.

Holistic sciences

Two questions dealt with the holistic sciences. Just about half of the respondents indicated their disagreement with the statements "Alternative medicine is usually better than orthodox medicine" and "All Holistic sciences are part and parcel of the NAM". Only seven and nine percent respectively agreed with these two questions.

Meditation

One statement dealt specifically with meditation. Respondents again were quite divided on this issue. Close to half agreed that meditation should not be an important practice in people's lives, while 42% agreed that it should. This anomaly, as we have seen, could possibly be the result of the ambiguity of the statement, since it is possible (and some respondents commented on it) that the statement could either have been interpreted as referring to transcendental, or Biblical meditation (or both).

The overall deduction that one makes from the survey is that respondents are generally wary of the NAM. Certain issues seem to be quite unclear in people's minds, such as whether the NAM is a forerunner or platform for the antichrist, and whether a micro-chip on one's hand will be wrong. The quantitative section of this study attempted to answer some of these questions, to bring greater clarity through an empirical study.

9.3. Conclusion

This study attempted firstly to identify an “ideal-type” of New Age believer. It also briefly referred to the typical Christian believer’s thinking, of which many volumes have been written. Identification of an ideal-type Christian belief regarding the NAM has been identified through a qualitative survey. Although much has also been written on individual New Age concepts, little post-graduate research exist on the topic as a whole. This study is also a first to compare the “ideal-type” New Age belief with the literal prophetic interpretation of the Bible, with important conclusions.

One could utilize the core concepts as identified in this study here to define an ideal-type New Ager: One with a pantheistic or panentheistic worldview; believing that God is impersonal evolutionary energy, man is part of God and

therefore has unlimited creative potential, who needs no salvation since sin and evil are mainly illusionary. Ideal-type Christian belief of the NAM was summarized in the previous chapter.

Remarkable similarities exist between literal prophetic interpretation of the Bible and a faction of the NAM thought : the mark of the Beast vs. the initiation process into the New Age, the number 666, promised elimination of those opposing spiritual transformation vs. the rapture and Great Tribulation. On a balance of probabilities it is clear that these similarities are too exact to be coincidence.

It is concluded therefore that this study's first hypothesis is correct. Characteristics, *modi operandi* and similarities between the NAM and traditional Christian eschatological doctrine are in deed strong and therefore merits explanation. The second hypothesis is also correct. The most

logical explanation of these similarities is that the pre-Millennium scholars who use the direct method of eschatological interpretation are correct. The NAM is in essence a platform for the Biblical anti-Christ and therefore inherently evil in the Biblical, but more so, usual sense of the word.

ADDENDA –

Research questionnaire

C J Visser

Ph.D. Student

johan@isales.co.za

This message = 3 pages

Dear Sir/ Madam

RESEARCH ON THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

I am currently busy with research on the *New Age Movement*. As part of the market research for the project this questionnaire is forwarded to church/ religious leaders and others in your area.

The *New Age movement* could be defined as a loose organization of people, who believe that this world has entered the Aquarian Age when peace, brotherhood and a single government will rule. *New Age* adherents usually reject traditional Judeo-Christian values or doctrine, in favour of an advance in consciousness. Not everyone agrees with this definition however.

Your contribution to this project will be appreciated. Your data returned would stay confidential, although broad tendencies (e.g. 73% of all respondents said...) will be used

in my final thesis, which will eventually be published. All respondents will receive the results once finalized.

Please make use of my e-mail facility. The questionnaire is answered as follows:

Make a X next to the appropriate answers in

Sections One and Two

Click Edit, Select All

Click Edit, Copy

Click Reply to author

Click Paste

Then send. Thank you so much for assisting me with this important project.

Yours faithfully

CJ Visser BA Hons. MA. Dipl Theology.

Research questions start on next page. Section One has 7 questions and Section Two has 50.

The New Age Movement is abbreviated as NAM.

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

SECTION ONE. (Indicate with a X next to the appropriate answer)

My (closest) religious or spiritual affiliation is :

Anglican/ Church of England

Assembly of God

Atheist/ Agnostic

Baptist

Catholic

Christian Science

Dutch Reformed/ Other Reformed

Episcopalian

Evangelical other than those mentioned

Greek orthodox

Jehovah Witnesses

Methodist

Mormons

New Age

Pentecostal other than above

Satanist / Wicca

2. My position in the above organization is:

Pastor/ Priest/ Minister

Lay pastor/ lay priest/ lay minister

Member/ partaker

Not applicable

My gender is :

Female

Male

My age is :

under 25

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

over 64

My spiritual age is :

under 1 year

between 1 and 5 years

between 6 and 10 years

between 11 and 20 years

over 20 years

I don't understand this question

My involvement with the above organization is :

Very regular (twice a week plus)

Regular (once a week)

Often (once or more per month)

Seldom (once or so per year)

Not applicable

My highest educational qualification is :

10 years or less of schooling

12 years of schooling (grade 12)

BA degree or similar

Hons. degree or additional diploma

Masters degree or similar

Doctorate degree or similar

SECTION TWO.

Please write either of : 1 (Agree), 2 (Unsure), 3 (Disagree)
next to the appropriate answer.

I know more or less what the NAM stands for

In broad terms I agree with NAM belief

The influence of the NAM can only do the church good

Traditional churches should incorporate itself into the NAM

The NAM is a passing fad

The NAM is simply interested in sociological change

The NAM is a religion

The NAM is the forerunner or platform for the antichrist

The NAM is a modern organization

The NAM has more advantages than disadvantages for the
church

The NAM will usher in a new era of peace

The NAM is evil

Our religious group/church has been positively influenced by
the NAM

Our religious group/ church has been negatively influenced by
the NAM

Our religious group/ church has not been affected at all by the
NAM

I believe in the return of a Messiah/ Christ/ Matreya

Jesus was the same person as the Christ

Buddha can also be seen as the Christ

Mohammed, Jesus, Buddha and others are all on equal footing

The NAM has infiltrated Bible translations

Christians' faith has been weakened by watered-down Bible
translations

Lucifer is the creator of Light

God is found in all of us

God is a person not a force/ energy

Christ works closely with Lucifer for the good of humanity

Meditation should be an important practice in peoples' lives

The NAM will affect the whole world (earth's population)

I have had a born again experience

I have had an out of body experience

I have communicated with angels/ departed souls

I believe in extra-terrestrials

Christianity should share God with other religions

Allah is the same God as the God of the Christians

One global currency is a good thing

It will be wrong to take a micro-chip on one's hand as means
of electronic banking

The world is ready for a world leader

The NAM is not a religious phenomenon

Witches should/ can easily associate themselves with the NAM

Pentecostals should/ can easily associate themselves with the
NAM

Catholics should/ can easily associate themselves with the
NAM

The charismatic movement is part of the NAM

The NAM is a demonic conspiracy

The NAM brings changes in attitudes/ paradigms which is a
good thing

The NAM incorporates thousands of smaller groups

To see something holistically is to be part of the NAM

Alternative medicine is usually better than orthodox medicine

All Holistic sciences are part and parcel of the NAM

Our church/ religious group has had some speakers who could
be regarded as New Age

The NAM will not affect the church at all since it is a separate
entity

The NAM and the Church can learn from each other

COMMENTS :

B : Respondent scoring

Question	Totals 1	Totals 2	Totals 3	Check
1	42	3	0	45
2	0	1	44	45
3	2	5	38	45
4	1	0	44	45
5	5	15	25	45
6	1	13	31	45
7	32	6	7	45
8	14	21	10	45
9	10	5	30	45
10	2	3	40	45
11	1	4	40	45
12	26	10	9	45
13	3	2	40	45
14	19	12	14	45
15	7	13	25	45
16	41	2	2	45
17	44	0	1	45
18	2	0	43	45
19	2	0	43	45
20	9	19	17	45
21	12	10	23	45
22	1	0	44	45
23	11	2	32	45
24	35	2	8	45
25	0	0	45	45
26	19	4	22	45
27	15	11	19	45
28	42	2	1	45
29	6	2	37	45
30	5	1	39	45
31	6	9	30	45
32	22	4	19	45
33	13	6	26	45
34	4	19	22	45
35	17	12	16	45
36	13	7	25	45
37	12	5	28	45
38	29	15	1	45
39	0	7	38	45
40	6	15	24	45
41	1	5	39	45
42	22	10	13	45
43	4	11	30	45
44	35	9	1	45
45	2	15	28	45
46	3	18	24	45
47	4	16	25	45
48	2	6	37	45
49	2	10	33	45
50	14	4	27	45
totals	620	371	1259	2250

	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
1	93%	7%	0%
2	0%	2%	98%
3	4%	11%	84%
4	2%	0%	98%
5	11%	33%	56%
6	2%	29%	69%
7	71%	13%	16%
8	31%	47%	22%
9	22%	11%	67%
10	4%	7%	89%
11	2%	9%	89%
12	58%	22%	20%
13	7%	4%	89%
14	42%	27%	31%
15	16%	29%	56%
16	91%	4%	4%
17	98%	0%	2%
18	4%	0%	96%
19	4%	0%	96%
20	20%	42%	38%
21	27%	22%	51%
22	2%	0%	98%
23	24%	4%	71%
24	78%	4%	18%
25	0%	0%	100%
26	42%	9%	49%
27	33%	24%	42%
28	93%	4%	2%
29	13%	4%	82%
30	11%	2%	87%
31	13%	20%	67%
32	49%	9%	42%
33	29%	13%	58%
34	9%	42%	49%
35	38%	27%	36%
36	29%	16%	56%
37	27%	11%	62%
38	64%	33%	2%
39	0%	16%	84%
40	13%	33%	53%
41	2%	11%	87%
42	49%	22%	29%
43	9%	24%	67%
44	78%	20%	2%
45	4%	33%	62%
46	7%	40%	53%
47	9%	36%	56%
48	4%	13%	82%
49	4%	22%	73%
50	31%	9%	60%
Ave	28%	16%	56%

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