

Getting a Basic Overview of The New Age Movement Today

Although this seminar is primarily intended to present the Theosophical guidelines and teachings in regard to spiritual development, rather than overly focusing on the errors and deceptions of the New Age Movement, it might possibly be valuable to acquaint ourselves clearly with exactly what is going on in the New Age Movement in terms of what's being taught, believed, and practised. It can also be useful to know the historical origins of popular and pervasive "New Age" ideas.

While the term "New Age Movement" is extremely broad and is generally understood to include and incorporate many different and contradictory things, it could be stated that the most prominent, popular, and influential part of the New Age Movement is that still very diverse stream which revolves primarily around such concepts as Ascended Masters, angels, channelling, chakras, fairies, ascension, the pineal gland, the aura, indigo/rainbow/crystalline children etc., and starseeds/pleiadeans etc. (the idea that many of us have incarnated here from other planets or solar systems).

There are very popular speakers and writers who promote all these themes, the most prominent and popular of all being Doreen Virtue. Many of her books (all of which contain many questionable and potentially harmful things) can be found in standard bookshops here in the UK, such as WH Smith and Waterstones, and for many people her books are the first doorway into the confusing and chaotic world of the New Age Movement. She has popularised the term "Lightworker," a word by which many New Age people identify and describe themselves.

To know what passes in the 21st century as New Age spirituality, it would seem advisable to take a look at some of her books or explore her work online or her Facebook pages or the list on Amazon of all the books and products she sells. It's very tragic to see how people are being misled and how the misleaders become wealthy celebrities in the process.

Diana Cooper does much of the same thing and is quite popular, her books also being sold in standard bookshops alongside those of Doreen Virtue and Rhonda Byrne, who is the author of "The Secret," "The Power," and other bestselling books promoting the "Law of Attraction" as a means to metaphysically attract and fulfil all of our desires...material, sensual, spiritual, and anything else. This Law of Attraction concept is accepted and endorsed by many in the New Age Movement.

But although these are a few of the modern promoters of such things, many of the ideas can ultimately be traced back to offshoots from the original Theosophical Movement.

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For example, the term "New Age" although not original to Alice Bailey, was used extensively by her in her books which were the first to particularly emphasise and popularise the term and the concept.

The term "Ascended Master" was coined by the American Guy Ballard in the 1930s, who was chiefly famous for being a con man and only narrowly escaped imprisonment for fraud and exploitation. He and his wife Edna took the names, pictures, and basic biographical details of the Masters of Wisdom spoken of in Theosophy - albeit primarily the distorted details formulated after the time of H.P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge by C.W. Leadbeater, Annie Besant, and Alice Bailey, along with other "Masters" which had been entirely invented by Leadbeater - and then transformed them into "Ascended" Masters, who were not incarnated and working here on Earth but who were more like guardian angel or saint figures, living on other planes and wishing to bless, heal, and prosper those on Earth who would pray to them, recite their special mantras or "decrees," and help support their work on Earth by donating as much money as possible to the Ballards' organisation, the I AM Movement, which still exists today and which seems to be enjoying a revival of interest in some quarters.

The Ballards also invented further Ascended Masters of their own and channelled messages from all of them, as did some of their followers and admirers who ended up starting their own "Ascended Master" organisations such as Geraldine Innocente of the "Bridge to Freedom" and most famously Elizabeth Clare Prophet of the Summit Lighthouse/Church Universal and Triumphant. Although she died a few years ago and her organisation has rapidly shrunk, Prophet's books, ideas, and movement, were very central and characteristic in the New Age Movement of the late 1970s through to the early 1990s when the organisation started to fall into disarray after a disastrous failed prophecy she had channelled from "the Ascended Master El Morya."

Something called the Galactic Federation of Light is also extremely popular in today's New Age circles and seems to have very strong and dark astral influences behind it. It has tens of thousands of followers all over the world and is basically built on the ideas of Ascended Masters and channelling with the added element of spaceships, aliens, starseeds, and "planetary ascension."

It is hoped that some of this information might prove of use or interest in getting a picture of today's New Age Movement.

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