

New Age as a form of individual religiosity

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The article discusses features of individual religiosity in the context of the New Age Movement. In modern society, the structure of religiosity is undergoing significant changes as traditional religious institutions face problems with a rise in non-institutional forms of spirituality. One of the main factors contributing to the growth of non-institutional religion is the growth of secularization of society. It was this process that led to a decrease in the influence and authority of traditional religion and contributed to the revival of new ways of actualizing religiosity. The New Age Movement, combining elements of different religions, philosophy, and practices, becomes a kind of an answer to this issue. The authors draw attention to key religious and spiritual tendencies that affect the individual beliefs and practices of the Movement's participants. The philosophical, social and cultural, as well as psychological aspects of this phenomenon are analyzed. The influential factors that contribute to the emergence and development of the New Age Movement, as well as the Movement's place and role in the modern religious landscape are discussed. The authors argue that the New Age Movement is a form of non-institutional religiosity and as such is a unifying idea for those forms of religiosity that do not fall under the paradigm of institutional religiosity. The authors argue that the intersections of spirituality and morality in the New Age Movement and non-institutional religions create both opportunities and problems. While this Movement offers people the freedom to explore different spiritual paths and ethical dilemmas, it also raises questions regarding the nature of moral authority and the possibility of reaching a consensus on ethical principles.

KEYWORDS

Religion, religiosity, New Age, secularization, religious institutions, non-institutional religion

Introduction

Given the diversity of the modern world, featured with rapid changes and swift technological transformations, religion not only retains its relevance, but also finds new ways to reveal its essence. One of these ways to reveal the religious essence is the phenomenon of the New Age Movement, which has become a fairly popular alternative to institutional religiosity. Growing interest in alternative forms of spirituality and religious practices, which has become noticeable in many countries, indicates a need of the modern society in new ways to actualize religiosity. The modern set-up of the world can be evaluated by a person not so much from a traditional religious point of view as from the positions of natural science or modernist ideas. The person themselves chooses a denomination or even constructs their own religion, relying on elements of different denominations. Under these conditions, the analysis of individual trajectories of the development of religiosity and the factors that influence them is relevant. The New Age Movement, which combines elements of different religions, philosophies, and practices, becomes a kind of answer to these issues.

The **purpose of the article** is to analyze the New Age Movement phenomenon as a manifestation of the individual religiosity of a modern person, as well as to analyze the philosophical, sociocultural, and psychological aspects of

the New Age Movement to understand its essence and significance in the modern world.

Research methods

The methodological basis of the study is driven by a combination of philosophical, sociological, cultural, and psychological analyses. The basis for the study is formed by the scientific works of foreign scholars in the field of religious studies, cultural studies, and philosophy. The theoretical basis for the study consisted of publications and articles issued in late 20th and early 21st centuries as dedicated to individual religiosity, history and philosophy of the New Age. To achieve the purpose, the following was carried out:

- Ontological analysis: A study of the essence and nature of the New Age Movement, including its philosophical foundations, concepts, and ideas. This approach allowed us to identify the general philosophical principles underlying this Movement.

- Ethical analysis: A study of the moral principles and values that are defined by the participants in the New Age Movement, and their impact on individual and collective behavior. This approach allowed us to clarify the ethical aspects and the role of religious morality in this context.

- Metaphysical analysis: A study of the philosophical concepts and ideas that form the basis of the New Age



Movement such as beliefs in the unity of the universe, energy flows, and reincarnation. This approach allowed us to identify the main metaphysical ideas that influence the religious beliefs and practices of the participants in the New Age Movement.

The New Age Movement emerged in the second half of the 20th century as a new cultural and religious phenomenon that gained popularity among the younger generation of the Western world. The Movement is often portrayed as a modern eclectic mix of Eastern spirituality and new ideas of social transformation, but its roots are deeply intertwined with Western esoteric traditions of Europe.

To understand the connection between Western esotericism and the New Age phenomenon, it is important to define Western esotericism. According to Kocku von Stuckrad, professor of religious studies at the University of Groningen, Western esotericism encompasses a wide range of mystical, occult, and spiritual traditions that have developed primarily in Europe since the Renaissance (von Stuckrad, 2005). These traditions typically involve the search for hidden or secret knowledge about the essence of reality, the divine, and the self.

According to Wouter J. Hanegraaff, New Age draws inspiration from various spiritual traditions around the world but is deeply rooted in Western esotericism (Hanegraaff, 1998). Its nature includes elements of Eastern mysticism, indigenous spirituality, and alternative healing methods, but these are filtered through a distinctly Western-oriented lens. W. J. Hanegraaff considers the following ontological relationships that exist within the New Age Movement:

1. All reality is separated from an absolute source. This source provides unity - or rather, the existence of holism in the reality. The Seth Material is an example of such a worldview.

2. Everything in the world is interconnected: it is like a kind of network, but at the same time there is a higher source that connects the whole world with a ray of light.

3. According to Hanegraaff, other forms are less common, e.g., the Polar Approach, according to which the world is perceived as a dynamic unity of opposites. All forms of thinking in the new age can be divided into two general assumptions about the nature of reality. The first concept is that reality is a single whole. The second concept, common to the New Age, is that reality is included in the process of evolution. Hanegraaff believes that while the holistic view emphasizes the unity of the universe, the evolutionary view emphasizes the unification of the process over time (see: *Hanegraaff, 1998*).

One of the key features of the New Age Movement is its nature, which reflects the syncretism present in Western esotericism. Antoine Faivre notes that New Age practitioners often combine elements from different spiritual traditions, such as yoga, meditation, astrology, and shamanism, to construct their own personal spiritual path (*Faivre, 1994*).

The New Age Movement shares with Western esotericism the belief in the existence of hidden or esoteric knowledge that can lead to spiritual enlightenment and transformation. This knowledge is often associated with concepts such as the Age of Aquarius, which signifies a new era of spiritual awakening and global consciousness. According to Nevill Drury, the New Age followers seek to tap into this hidden wisdom through various practices such as channeling, divination, and energy healing (*Drury, 2004*). Similarly, to Western esotericism, the New Age rejects traditional doctrines and believes that true wisdom can be gained through personal experience, meditation,

contact with the inner self or nature, and openness to unconventional forms of knowledge (*Drury, 2004*).

The New Age Movement has had a significant impact on Western culture, influencing trends in spirituality, health, and self-help. However, it has also been criticized for its apparent superficiality, commercialization, and appropriation of indigenous and Eastern traditions. Furthermore, scholars such as J. Gordon Melton in *The Encyclopedia of Religious Phenomena* caution against the intrinsic rise of the New Age Movement, noting its diversity and internal contradictions (*Melton, 2007*).

The New Age Movement's focus on self-realization and self-empowerment reflects a central theme of Western esotericism, i.e. the search for personal enlightenment and transcendence. As Christopher Hugh Partridge notes, the New Age spirituality encourages people to explore their inner potential and connect with their higher selves: "... true religion is located within, not without; one focuses on the good self per se, rather than the self over against the Good (i.e. God)" (*Partridge, 2005: 32*). This emphasis on inner transformation echoes the alchemical tradition of self-transmutation that exists in Western esotericism.

Results of the research

In modern society, the structure of religiosity is undergoing significant changes as traditional religious institutions, once the cornerstone of spiritual life for many, face challenges amid the growth of non-institutional forms of spirituality.

Non-institutional or individual religion encompasses various expressions of spirituality that exist outside of the structures of organized religious institutions. These expressions can take many forms, including individual practices, alternative communities, and non-traditional beliefs. According to Linda Woodhead, Professor of Sociology of Religion, non-institutional religion reflects a shift toward personal autonomy in matters of faith, as people construct their spiritual paths outside of traditional religious frameworks (*Woodhead, 2001*).

Non-institutional religion cannot be understood without a general theory of a human as a religious being. Religion, even when separated from formal institutions, is deeply rooted in human behavior and psychology. When religion transcends institutional boundaries, it often reflects a more personal and intimate expression of faith, shaped by individual interpretations, experiences, and cultural influences.

One of the main factors contributing to the growth of non-institutional religion, according to Meerten ter Borg, is the increasing secularization of society. From this perspective, the resurgence of religion is a consequence of the process of secularization. "Because religion appears toothless, we are no longer afraid to embrace it" (*Borg, 2008:8*). This trend has led to a decline in the influence and authority of traditional religion, prompting people to seek spiritual fulfillment outside of the framework of organized religion. Secularization, characterized by an increasing emphasis on scientific reasoning and rationality, challenges the dogmatic and often rigid structures of institutional religions, thus pushing people towards more personalized and flexible forms of spirituality.

The contemporary emphasis on individualism and personal autonomy encourages people to develop their own spiritual paths, free from the constraints of institutional doctrines. This is also facilitated by the spread of information and communication technologies, which provide access to

a variety of religious and spiritual resources, allowing people to explore and integrate different beliefs and practices into their own unique spirituality.

As per ter Borg, non-institutional religion “is no longer like a book that is read from cover to cover. In a sense, people surf through religious content. Few people still look for a static religious system. Instead, they go shopping on the religion market” (Borg, 2008:10). Unlike traditional religions, which adhere to fixed doctrines and rituals, non-institutional religion allows for the blending of different spiritual traditions and practices. People draw on a wide range of sources, including Eastern philosophy, New Age spirituality, local traditions, and even elements of popular culture, to construct a personalized belief system that resonates with their personal experiences and aspirations.

Another defining feature of non-institutional religion is its experiential and pragmatic orientation. Rather than focusing on theological concepts or established rituals, non-institutional religion often emphasizes personal spiritual experience and practical application.

At a societal level, the growth of non-institutional religion reflects broader cultural shifts toward pluralism and diversity. However, it also requires new ways of addressing social and ethical issues as the diverse and individualistic nature of non-institutional religion can complicate efforts to establish shared values and norms.

One of the most striking manifestations of non-institutional religion is the growth of spirituality without formal affiliation. This is largely the case with the New Age, often used as a catch-all term for beliefs and movements that do not fit into the paradigm of institutional religiosity. Many people consider themselves “spiritual but not religious” (McGuire, 2008:6), seeking transcendence and meaning through personal exploration rather than adherence to established dogma.

The rise of non-institutional religion has profound implications for both individuals and society as a whole. At the individual level, it offers a sense of autonomy and personal agency in spiritual matters, allowing people to explore diverse beliefs and practices without being bound by institutional norms. Furthermore, non-institutional religion promotes inclusivity by welcoming people who may feel marginalized or alienated by traditional religious institutions, thus promoting diversity and tolerance in society (see: McGuire, 2008).

However, the spread of non-institutional religion also poses challenges to social cohesion and the social belonging of the individual. Non-institutional religion represents a significant paradigm shift in the contemporary religious landscape, reflecting broader trends toward individualism, pluralism, and secularization. Its emergence challenges conventional understandings of religion and spirituality, emphasizing the fluid and dynamic nature of human belief systems (Stark & Bainbridge, 1980).

New Age, as a religious phenomenon of modern times, has been shaped by both sociocultural transformations of society and global religions. Embodying syncretic combinations of spiritual beliefs and practices, New Age has been significantly influenced by various religious traditions, including Buddhism and Christianity.

Buddhism has left an indelible mark on the New Age thought, shaping its philosophical and semantic foundations and spiritual practices. The concepts such as impermanence, suffering, and the pursuit of enlightenment are central to Buddhist. They have found deep resonance in the New Age Movement. The idea of spiritual evolution and the

pursuit of self-realization, rooted in the Buddhist philosophy, have become the basic principles of New Age spirituality.

In addition to shaping the New Age ideology, Buddhism has influenced the development of specific spiritual practices within the Movement. For example, various forms of Buddhist meditation, such as Zen meditation and Vipassana, have become popular among New Age practitioners seeking inner peace and spiritual understanding. These practices have been embraced by the movement as a means to “personal transformation” and “inner peace”. Meditation, in particular, has gained popularity within the New Age community as a means of cultivating present-moment awareness and transcending “egoic” consciousness (see: Campbell, 2010). In addition, the Buddhist concepts of karma, reincarnation, and interconnectedness have been integrated into the New Age worldview. The belief in the interdependence of all beings and the cyclical nature of existence is consistent with the New Age’s emphasis on holistic spirituality and the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit. The adoption of the Buddhist symbols and imagery in the New Age Movement reflects a syncretic approach to spirituality.

Buddhism has played a significant role in shaping the New Age Movement, contributing to its philosophical foundation, spiritual practices, and symbolism. By incorporating Buddhist teachings, practices, and imagery, the New Age Movement demonstrates its ability to synthesize diverse religious influences into a single spiritual worldview. It was thanks to Buddhism, which aroused interest in Christian Europe, that the New Age Movement became popular, mostly among the younger generation of the Western world.

In terms of the influence of Christianity on the New Age Movement, it can be observed in several key areas. First, the concept of divine immanence, central to the Christian theology, has found resonance in the New Age spirituality. The idea that God or divine energy permeates all aspects of creation is consistent with the New Age’s belief in the interconnectedness of all beings and the universe. In addition, the Christian concept of personal transformation and salvation has found expression in the New Age teachings on spiritual growth and self-realization. While Christianity emphasizes redemption through faith in Christ, the New Age Movement promotes the idea of self-awareness and inner healing through a variety of spiritual practices. Christian symbols and imagery have been reinterpreted and integrated into the New Age practices and rituals. The use of the cross, dove, and other Christian symbols in the New Age visual art serves to bridge the gap between traditional religious imagery and contemporary spiritual expression (Sutcliffe, 2003).

In addition to shaping the ideology of the “New Age”, Christianity has influenced the development of specific spiritual practices within the Movement. For example, the practice of “Christian yoga,” which combines yoga postures with Christian prayer and meditation, reflects the syncretic nature of contemporary spirituality (Houtman, Auper, Heelas, 2009).

Christian mysticism, with its emphasis on direct communication with the divine, has parallels in the New Age practices such as channeling, where people claim to receive messages or ideas from spiritual beings or a higher consciousness. The emphasis on personal spiritual experience and direct encounter with the divine is a common aspect of both Christian mysticism and New Age spirituality.

Drawing inspiration from a variety of religious traditions, the New Age Movement reflects a certain reinterpretation of Christian concepts in the phenomenon of individual religiosity. By incorporating Christian themes, images, and practices, the New Age Movement demonstrates its ability to adapt and synthesize diverse religious influences into a single spiritual worldview.

Central to the New Age Movement is its eclecticism, which allows people to draw on a variety of religious traditions. Unlike Christianity, which emphasizes adherence to specific doctrines and rituals, the New Age ethos encourages practitioners to explore and synthesize teachings from diverse sources.

This eclecticism is evident in the blending of Christian concepts with Eastern spirituality, indigenous wisdom, and esoteric traditions within the New Age Movement. The Movement often incorporates Christian themes and narratives alongside other spiritual traditions, reflecting the Movement's inclusive approach to religious diversity. This eclecticism allows people to adapt their spiritual beliefs and practices to suit their personal preferences and spiritual inclinations, making New Age less of a structured and institutional religion and more of an individualistic one. This flexibility allows people to transcend the constraints of institutionalized religion and connect with spirituality in a way that resonates deeply with their inner truth and values. Furthermore, New Age's eclecticism fosters a sense of empowerment and agency as people take responsibility for their "spirituality" and actively engage in a process of self-discovery. Rather than relying on external authorities or intermediaries, people are encouraged to trust their own intuition and "inner wisdom" as they move along their "spiritual path" (see: *Hanegraaff, 1998*).

A significant part of the supporters of the New Age Movement holds contradictory views on the structure of the world and the reasons for its emergence. It would be more accurate to say that their views change regularly. But some characteristic ideas can be distinguished. The New Age supporters often view the world as a vast ocean of energy in which each person is energetically interconnected with other entities. In a certain sense, there is no difference between God and the world, which is why the New Age Movement is often called pantheistic. The world itself is divine and is subject to a process of evolution that leads from inert matter to a "higher and more perfect consciousness". For supporters of the New Age Movement, it is pantheism that is the driving force in the search for God, a guide to discovering the divinity within oneself through internal transformation. The fate of a person consists in a series of successive reincarnations of the soul into different bodies. This process is understood not as a cycle of samsara, in the sense of purification and punishment, but as a gradual ascent to the ideal development of a person's potential, to the transformation into a deity, and the achievement of the identity of the human with God. The world, like a human, is viewed in motion from the point of view of perfectionism. Many researchers consider the ontology of the New Age Movement as a new Platonic model of the hierarchical Universe. In this model there is a place for a multitude of spiritual beings existing on different planes of being, arranged according to the level of ascent, each of which corresponds to higher levels of spiritual development and ends with an impersonal absolute (*Hanegraaff, 1998*).

In the modern era, spirituality has taken on a variety of forms, often transcending the boundaries of traditional institutional religions. The New Age Movements and non-in-

stitutional spiritual practices have gained momentum, offering people alternative ways to explore their beliefs and values. However, this departure from established religious frameworks raises questions about the definition and application of morality in these contexts. One of the main challenges in understanding morality in the New Age and non-institutional religions is the fluidity and subjectivity of spiritual beliefs. Unlike organized religions with codified doctrines and authoritative texts, these movements often prioritize personal experience and intuition. As a result, moral principles can vary widely among practitioners, leading to ambiguity and ethical relativism.

Researchers often single out as a characteristic of the New Age Movement a specific relationship between God and a human, which can be labeled as "I am God" or "God is within us". Paul Heelas considers the New Age Movement exactly from this viewpoint. To gain the experience of knowing oneself, one must experience oneself as what is called "God", "Goddess", "Source", "Christ Consciousness", or, most simply and most often used, "inner spirituality" (*Heelas, 1998:198-199*). Inner spirituality has become a central theme for Paul Heelas' books. In his view, people have become self-explorers since 1970. This trend does not disappear in modern books popular in the New Age Movement.

It is worth noting that God is rarely presented as a person. But it is not possible to say immediately and unequivocally that the followers of the New Age Movement believe in an impersonal God. Of course, the idea of a personified God is generally rejected as being too limited and narrow-minded, since it is usually associated with personification. In addition, it is usually associated with a God who judges and punishes for sins, incompatible with the basic ideas about ethics and health psychology in the New Age Movement. Various creatures act as intermediaries between people and God. Of course, there are such creatures in traditional religions as well. In the context of the New Age Movement, there is very little information about demons, and, in addition, it is often difficult to separate angels from "highly developed people", or, as they are also called, "ascended masters". People can rise to this hierarchy through spiritual evolution. Sometimes the term "mediator" is used, which is typical for the English-language sources. According to New Age followers, beings can not only be channeling partners but also incarnate on Earth. At the same time, they become a part of religious history, and an example of such incarnation is Christ. For example, Lee Carroll says that Jesus Christ was one of the highest Ascended Masters when they visited Earth (*Carroll, 1993*).

The theme of most of the New Age books is a human, their problems, and ways to solve them. A human is born with a divine spark, which is associated with the one or the absolute. Most often, a human is considered a traveler who came to Earth to learn lessons and move on through the stages of development. In addition, noble teachers help on this path, but the main character is the human. For most New Age people, there is no need for God's revelation or salvation to come to them from outside.

The anthropological views of New Agers can also be characterized as holistic. In their opinion, a person has a great potential that can be revealed through certain practices. In general, the ideas of the Movement's supporters regarding the origin of humankind are eclectic, confusing, and they represent a syncretic combination of UFO-logical theories intertwined with numerous applications of the evolutionary theory.

The ethical ideas of the New Age Movement followers clearly express the doctrine of the “absence of evil”. From their point of view, at the higher levels of spiritual reality, from which the phenomenal world arises and on which it depends, duality does not exist. People create for themselves the problem of the existence of good and evil. The idea of the possibility of transforming human consciousness into higher forms of consciousness is not the property of purely individual ethics: one’s own practical development of the personality should lead to cardinal changes in the world around them. Within the framework of the eschatological views of New Agers, the completion of human evolution is a transformation into a deity, the achievement of the human’s identity with God.

The ideas of the New Age spirituality were drawn from ancient religions and cultures. What is new in the New Age Movement is the conscious search for an alternative to Western culture. An important characteristic of this spirituality is the inner experience of harmony and unity of all that exists.

“People discover their profound connectedness with the sacred universal force or energy which is the basis of all life. By discovering these possibilities within themselves, they can embark on the path to perfection, which will allow them to cope with their personal lives, relationships with the world and take their place in the universal process of formation and the New Birth of the world, which is in constant development... Thus, cosmic energy, vibration, light, God, love – even the “I” itself – all this refers to one and the same reality: the original source present in every being” “People discover their profound connectedness with the sacred universal force or energy which is the nucleus of all life. When they have made this discovery, men and women can set out on a path to perfection, which will enable them to sort out their personal lives and their relationship to the world, and to take their place in the universal process of becoming and in the New Genesis of a world in constant evolution... Thus cosmic energy, vibration, light, God, love – even the supreme Self – all refer to one and the same reality, the primal source present in every being” (*Pontifical Council for Culture, 2003*).

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Ann Taves explores how spirituality intersects with morality in the lives of New Age women. According to the New Age teachings, Taves believes that a person consists of body, soul, and spirit, which are at different levels in each person’s life. A person has a desire for purposeful self-realization rather than focusing solely on the development of intelligence and rational abilities (*Taves, 2020*). Most often, a feminine, holistic view of the world is contrasted with a masculine, logical view. Indeed, according to Ann Taves, sociological surveys show that there are slightly more women in the New Age Movement than men. One of the reasons for this may be the fact that one of the most important themes for the New Age representatives, i.e. the “divine within” or the “divine self”, is historically closer to women as this approach gives access to the sacred without the need for a position in religious organizations. From the point of view of the New Age followers, both the mind and the heart are present in varying proportions in all people.

In her work *New Age and Neopagan Religions in America* (2004), Sarah M. Pike examines the moral categories of the New Age and Neopagan practices, emphasizing their focus on ecological consciousness and the pursuit of self-realization. Pike argues that the morality in these movements is characterized by an ecological ethic that views all living beings as interconnected and deserving of respect (*Pike, 2004*).

New Age and non-institutional spirituality followers often claim that their moral foundations are based on principles of compassion, love, and spiritual growth. They argue that by cultivating inner wisdom and empathy, people can develop a deep sense of ethical responsibility to themselves, others, and the planet (*Spangler, 2008*).

In many New Age spiritual traditions and non-institutional religions, personal experience is of primary importance. Followers often prefer direct encounters with the divine or spiritual world rather than adherence to external authorities or texts. This emphasis on subjective experience can lead to a highly individualistic approach to morality, where each person’s inner guidance serves as the ultimate arbiter of right action (*Spangler, 1988; Heelas and Woodhead, 2005*).

The abandonment of institutionalized religious frameworks in favor of personal spirituality can create ethical dilemmas and paradoxes. Without clear guidelines or societal norms, people may find it difficult to navigate complex moral situations or reconcile conflicting values. Despite these challenges, some scholars argue for the possibility of integrating spirituality and morality within the New Age and non-institutional religious contexts. Drawing on insights from diverse religious traditions, philosophical ethics, and psychological research, practitioners can develop robust moral frameworks that respect both individual autonomy and collective responsibility (*York, 2001; Pinto, Vilaça, 2023*).

Conclusions

In summary, the intersections of spirituality and morality in the New Age and non-institutional religions present both opportunities and challenges. While these movements offer people the freedom to explore different spiritual paths and ethical dilemmas, they also raise questions about the nature of moral authority and the possibility of reaching consensus on ethical principles. As society continues to evolve, understanding moral categories and spirituality in these contexts will remain an important area for further research.

Non-institutional forms of religiosity develop quite dynamically and can adapt to social trends. They will always find a way to resonate and function in society, maintaining their relevance and influence in the modern world. Research on the topic of non-institutional forms of religiosity not only helps to understand modern religious trends in society but also uncovers new perspectives for understanding of the role of religion in human life in the context of globalization. It is these transformational processes that accompany the formation of individual religiosity and contribute to the revival of new ways of actualizing religiosity.

The New Age Movement, despite it being criticized for superficiality, commercialization, and cultural appropriation, continues to attract the attention of many people due to its openness to various religious traditions and approaches. It is a phenomenon of modern syncretization of the consciousness of a certain part of believers, which involves the unification of disparate religious ideas into a coherent, contradictory functioning system of religious ideas.

The New Age Movement emphasizes the idea that a person and their own experience are the main source of authority in spiritual matters. It emphasizes the right of everyone to develop their own worldview, to choose their own path, and to form their own individual "mix": a person can adapt certain religious provisions to personal religious ideas and eclectically combine different-level components, elements of different religious systems, and modern scientific data. This demonstrates what Heelas called "direct individualism" (Heelas, 1998: 21–23).

As a result of the analysis of the texts of various authors, it can be concluded that, in their ontological ideas, the followers of the New Age Movement are inclined to pantheism. A holistic view of the universe as an energetically interdependent integral structure is a common approach for them. The idea of God rejects rigid doctrinal positions. God is known to a greater extent through experience, rather than through belief in him. On this basis, God's existence is considered a self-evident fact and is not a problematic issue.

The central ideas that unite different groups of the New Age Movement include the idea of human development in the form of spiritual practices and the idea of synthesis of any convenient practices belonging to different worldview systems. The New Age Movement promotes a worldview featured by spiritual pluralism, which in turn recognizes the validity of various religious and spiritual traditions. The Movement does not give preference to one tradition over another but accepts the idea that truth can be found in many sources. Such an inclusive approach to spirituality contributes to a sense of individuality, but due to tolerance, mutual understanding and connection between people can arise, overcoming worldview and cultural boundaries.

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Нью-ейдж як форма індивідуальної релігійності

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У статті розглядаються особливості індивідуальної релігійності в контексті руху Нью-ейдж. У сучасному суспільстві структура релігійності зазнає значних змін, оскільки традиційні релігійні інституції стикаються з проблемами зростання неінституційних форм духовності. Одним із головних факторів, що сприяє зростанню неінституційної релігії, є зростання секуляризації суспільства. Саме цей процес призвів до зменшення впливу та авторитету традиційної релігії та сприяв відродженню нових способів актуалізації релігійності. Рух Нью-ейдж, що поєднує елементи різних релігій, філософії та практик, стає своєрідною відповіддю на це питання. Автори звертають увагу на ключові релігійні та духовні тенденції, що впливають на індивідуальні вірування та практики учасників руху. Аналізуються філософські, соціально-культурні, а також психологічні аспекти цього явища. Розглядаються впливові фактори, що сприяють виникненню та розвитку руху Нью-ейдж, а також місце та роль руху в сучасному релігійному ландшафті. Автори стверджують, що рух Нью-ейдж є формою неінституційної релігійності і, як такий, є об'єднуючою ідеєю для тих форм релігійності, які не підпадають під парадигму інституційної релігійності. Перетини духовності та моралі в русі Нью-ейдж та неінституційних релігіях створюють як можливості, так і проблеми. Хоча цей рух пропонує людям свободу досліджувати різні духовні шляхи та етичні дилеми, він також порушує питання щодо природи морального авторитету та можливості досягнення консенсусу щодо етичних принципів.

Ключові слова: : релігія, релігійність, Нью-ейдж, секуляризація, релігійні інституції, неінституційна релігія.

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