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Science and the Sacred: New Technologies within New Religions
A Reaction to Secularization and a Reinterpretation of Myth

Christopher Helland

A Thesis

In

The Department

Of

Religion

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Masters of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

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ABSTRACT

Science and the Sacred: New Technology within New Religions A Reaction to Secularization and a Reinterpretation of Myth

Christopher Helland

This study is a social historical examination of the use of science and technology within new religious belief systems. The emphasis is placed upon the incorporation of scientific method, scientific findings, scientific theory, scientific terminology, and technological components within the rhetoric and praxis of historical and contemporary new religions.

The purpose of this study is to examine the social factors that have influenced the amalgamation between religion and science within these groups. Exploring both the secularization theory and the rise of scientific ideology as sources that instituted this combination, I will demonstrate that new religious movements incorporating science within the belief system are representing a direct reaction to these phenomena. By relying upon the work of theorists, combined with primary source material from three new religious movements, I hope to demonstrate that this appearance represents a current religious reaction to contemporary Western culture.

To Sandra Elaine Alföldy

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The written word does not express my gratitude for the example my mother, Dr. Janice Helland, has imparted upon me throughout the years of our life together. Her abilities as a scholar, mother, and friend have proven invaluable through the stresses and difficulties of my choice to return to university and pursue an academic career.

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Introduction

In a detailed study of new religious movements in America, Robert Ellwood noted that one of the general characteristics of many of the movements examined revealed “a desire [by the group] to be ‘modern’ and to use scientific language”.¹ His classification demonstrated an easily verifiable recognition that, “there is an instinctive realization that something in science—especially the broad confident assertion of unchanging natural law more typical of Victorian than of contemporary science—is congenial with the experience of timeless absolute reality and can be used to strengthen it intellectually.”²

The general characteristics put forth by Ellwood were arrived upon through a detailed examination of the majority of new religious movements in North America available for study when his work was published. His classifications recognize 15 general characteristics; science within new religions is the 4th. A quick survey reveals that a variety of new religious movements have incorporated science within some aspect of their tradition. Many groups directly incorporate the term within their name; Christian Scientist, the Church of Religious Science and Scientology are representative examples. Other groups have presented themselves as institutes for gaining higher “scientific” knowledge; The Academy for Future Science, the Occult Institute of Technology and The Unarius Academy of Science demonstrate this usage. While other groups may appear Eastern or New Age, scientific components permeate their belief system; Transcendental Meditation or The International Raelian Movement illustrates this aspect.

¹ Robert Ellwood and Harry Partin, *Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America*. (New Jersey, 1988), p. 14.

Despite the large number of groups that have incorporated some form of science within their religious belief system, it must be noted that not all new religious movements have reacted in this manner. Concerning science and technology, there are a variety of responses from contemporary new religious movements. Some groups are distinctly anti-scientific and opposed to the technological advancement made by humanity. This reaction is typical of many neo-pagan organizations (but not all) and several world rejecting groups that have formed self-sustaining communities as a reaction against science and modernization. Other new religious movements are indifferent to the scientific element embraced by our contemporary culture and present their material without attempting to accommodate scientific aspects.

However, with science becoming such a recognizable element within many new religious movements two questions regarding this amalgamation between the scientific pursuit and the religious manifestation arise. First, how are these new religious groups using science within their belief system? Is there a consistent pattern of incorporation or does the usage vary from group to group? And secondly, why do new religious movements present science within their belief system when secular society has developed a division between religion and science, each designated to a different sphere of knowledge?

The purpose of this study will be to undertake this examination and present a detailed account of the methods used by several new religious movements to incorporate scientific method and practices, scientific findings, scientific theory, and technology within their religious belief system. This examination will be presented through a comparative analysis of three successful new religious movements. The

² Ibid., p. 14.

comparison will demonstrate the wide variation in beliefs and social structures of the groups and the consistent techniques used to manifest science within religious narrative and rituals.

This research will demonstrate the role of science and technology within new religious movements by examining components of this manifestation.³ I have divided several of these aspects into two categories, primary and secondary. Primary components are methods used by new religious movements in a direct attempt to accommodate science within the religious belief system. Secondary components represent attempts made by new religious movements to be in consonance with science or modernity while maintaining their religious belief system apart from scientific developments or aspects.

Primary Components

The first five characteristics represent an attempt by the group to intentionally expand the boundaries of science, allowing for its inclusion within their belief system. This accommodation may draw upon scientific, pseudo-scientific, or even non-scientific⁴ elements as support and validation for the belief system and practices. The characteristics are:

- 1) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of the group's beliefs.
- 2) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of certain or all of the group's practices.
- 3) The utilization of modern scientifically crafted techniques or technologies as tools supporting the religious narrative and rituals.
- 4) Attempts to restate mythic or scriptural accounts in the language of science.

³ I am indebted to Dr. Frederick Bird for suggestions and examples concerning the amalgamation of scientific aspects within new religious movements. This framework draws upon several factors yet is not inclusive and remains open to further development.

⁴ The classifications of scientific, pseudo-scientific and non-scientific will be explored later in the thesis.

- 5) Attempts to lend credibility to the belief system through scientific or academic credentials or associations.

The sixth characteristic represents an intentional challenge by the group regarding the boundaries established by the scientific pursuit concerning the parameters, scope and application of scientific research. Although this is also an attempt at expanding the boundaries between religion and science, unlike the first five characteristics this represents an aggressive confrontation to orthodox positions.

- 6) Efforts to criticize orthodox science as narrow-minded and promote a new or expanded version of scientific theories.

Secondary Components

The secondary components represent an association between religion and science that has become a more common characteristic in the dialogue between religious traditions and the scientific community. These aspects do not attempt to validate the tradition through science but rather support the scientific pursuit as a valid form of knowledge while also maintaining the validity of the religious tradition.

The secondary components are:

- 1) Attempts to gain support and endorsement of scientists or academics by fostering dialogue between the new religious movement and the scientific or academic community.
- 2) Efforts to defend new or overlooked or marginalized scientific practices.
- 3) Promotion of higher learning among members of the new religious movement.

The focus of the thesis will be limited to new religious movements that have incorporated primary aspects within their religious belief system. These aspects vary among groups and are often used in conjunction with one another. In the detailed analysis of Transcendental Meditation, Scientology and the Raelian Movement the usage of science within the belief systems will be demonstrated and then analyzed in

conjunction with these different primary manifestations. Through this comparative analysis of science within new religious movements I will address the theoretical questions concerning the ability of these new religious movements to incorporate what seems incompatible, namely science within a religious belief system.

This thesis is divided into five sections that highlight the role science performs in the beliefs and praxis of new religious movements, providing what I believe to be the theoretical foundation and primary support for this undertaking. Chapter one examines the social influences that shaped the development of science within new religious movements. The first component of this chapter is a detailed account of the theory of secularization and an examination of the factors which influence religious plurality and religious economies. The exploration of data and theories notes the appeal of new religious movements in contemporary culture and their desire to recruit larger memberships. The first chapter will also examine the development of Victorian science and the challenge this presented to traditional religious belief structures. This section reviews the rise of atheistic beliefs in correlation with the development of the scientific pursuit and the diminishing influence of religious thought in Protestant countries.

Chapter two traces the opposition that arose to the developments of the scientific pursuit and especially its atheistic and reductionistic viewpoints concerning religious and spiritual beliefs. Drawing from primary and secondary research, this chapter demonstrates the reaction of those holding spiritual beliefs to the new focus and development of a secularized scientific community. This opposition became manifest in a number of avenues, but the primary focus of this thesis is upon those

groups that developed religious innovations incorporating science within the belief system as a viable alternative to what they regarded as the now discredited Christian tradition. Each of the six primary aspects of the incorporation of science within new religious movements will be explored and examples from contemporary movements will be utilized to support this framework.

Chapters three to five are an in-depth examination of contemporary new religious movements which have incorporated science within their belief systems. Transcendental Meditation, Scientology, and the Raelian Movement are examined in a detailed manner to demonstrate how science has become an integral component of each tradition. All three movements are successful in that they maintain a large number of adherents and have been functioning for decades. Each group will be classified according to the social and religious structure of the movement. A detailed analysis of the use of science within each tradition will then be presented. This format will confirm that although each religious group is different in beliefs, the use of science within these groups is done in a consistent manner and for similar reasons.

I will explore the primary difficulties faced by religious traditions that incorporate science within their belief system and demonstrate the tensions between science and religion. These tensions move the religious movement to either abandon the amalgamation of science and religion or to retain the scientific component but alter the role of science so that it becomes a dimension of their religious myth.

Due to the appeal of a scientifically based or supported religious belief system in our current religious economy these new religious movements are representative of a trend that chooses to retain the scientific or technological component despite

tensions with both the scientific community and traditional religious structures.

Science within these new religious movements becomes interwoven with the religious myths of the organization. As a component of a religious myth it is no longer within the parameters of a belief that can be proven or disproven, validated or objectified.

New religious movements that attempt to amalgamate science and religious beliefs through the primary components outlined are becoming more common in the pluralistic structure of our religious environment. This combination of religion and science represents a new dimension of religious myth that incorporates contemporary secular symbols, beliefs, and practices within a religious mythic framework. This development of a contemporary myth will likely not disappear with the continued tensions faced by these traditions through their combination of religion and science. I believe it will remain a current fixture in the make up of many new religious movements. This form of amalgamation between religion and science considers both these elements in a new way and presents a religious framework that has appeal to members of a secularized and modern society disenchanted with traditional religious belief systems.

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Chapter 1

Secularization and Science

In the presentation of this thesis there are two components that play fundamental roles in the analysis of new religious movements that have incorporated science within their belief systems. The first is an explanation and exploration of the process of secularization. Through the examination of statistics I will demonstrate the decline of membership in traditional or mainstream church organizations and the continuation of religious and spiritual beliefs apart from these organizations. This information will be related to the rise of religious pluralism within our contemporary culture and the influence of economic factors upon new religious movements. The second component examines the historical development of the scientific pursuit. This will show what led to the development of the classification and methodologies of science, and the apparent incompatibility between the scientific pursuit and religious beliefs.

Within our contemporary Western culture there has been a noted decrease in the authority and prevalence of institutionalized religion. Sociologists of religion call this phenomena secularization and recognize that religion has suffered diminishing influence, membership and support. In the most recent analysis from Statistics Canada the decline in church attendance has been noted and recorded as a social trend.¹ Statistics from 1985 to 1996 compiled from Statistics Canada and the United States General Social Survey show weekly attendance falling. Those reporting that

¹ For the most detailed account of religious participation in Canada see Reginald W. Bibby, *Unknown Gods: The Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada*, (Toronto, 1993).

they did not attend any church service during the year has risen sharply (Figure 1, p. 148).² Statistics compiled from 1957 to 1988 demonstrate that this trend has been underway for some time. Despite occasional fluctuations in attendance, the overall percentage of individuals attending a church or synagogue on a weekly basis has been reduced in Canada almost 30%.³ People reporting on the 1991 census “No religion” numbered 3.3 million in Canada, an increase of 90% from the 1981 census.⁴

Attempting to analyze this decline in church participation and influence in institutions has been a major undertaking in the sociological study of religion. Peter Berger classifies secularization as, “the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols.”⁵ His classification recognizes the decline of influence of the dominant Christian traditions in areas where they once held power. This can be seen in the political separation between church and state, “or in the expropriation of church lands, or in the emancipation of education from ecclesiastical authority.”⁶ The definition also includes more than just the withdrawal of church influence from the social structure of Western society. It also recognizes the decline of religious symbols in “the arts, in philosophy, in literature and, most importantly of all, *in the rise of science as an autonomous, thoroughly secular perspective on the world.*”⁷ (emphasis added).

² Warren Clark, “Religious Observance, Marriage and Family”, *Canadian Social Trends*, No. 50, Autumn 1998, p. 7.

³ Alain Baril and George A. Mori, “Leaving the Fold: Declining Church Attendance”, *Canadian Social Trends*, No. 22, Autumn 1991, p. 25.

⁴ *Statistics Canada: The Nation*, Cat. 93-319, p. 1, 16-17.

⁵ Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, (New York, 1967), p. 107.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

The classification of secularization presented by Berger has its foundation in the theoretical model presented by Max Weber concerning the progressive “rationalization” of the Western social structure. Weber viewed rationalization as a manifestation of the “disenchantment of the world”, and saw it as a complicated demonstration of the decline and displacement of magical elements of thought and the development of effective means of producing and securing this-worldly benefits.⁸ According to the argument, the Hebrew tradition presented within its theological structure a God above the world, removed and transcendent from the attempted manipulations of this worldly activities. This theological perspective altered the role of those involved in the religious tradition to begin manipulating the earthly realm for their own benefit. The world was no longer perceived to be occupied by supernatural forces, it was thus viewed in a secular fashion that allowed for “rational” development and technological manipulation.⁹

Several theoretical paradigms have been presented that challenge or develop the argument presented by Weber.¹⁰ Despite the difficulties presented with the argument concerning the source of secularization, some elements and interpretation of the theory add an important dimension in examining the role of science in new religious movements. One element presented by Berger is the rise of a pluralistic religious economy within a secularizing/secularized community. With the dissolution

⁸ Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, trans., (Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 123. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, (Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 51. Roy Wallis and Steve Bruce, “Secularization: The Orthodox Model”, Steve Bruce, Ed., *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists of Religion Debate the Secularization Thesis*, (Oxford, 1992), p. 14.

⁹ See Peter Berger, 1967, Chapter 5.

¹⁰ For a summary of the current debate and theoretical arguments concerning the secularization thesis see Lorne L. Dawson, “The Cultural Significance of New Religious Movements and Globalization: A

of a dominant form of religious belief two new elements enter the religious arena, namely privatization and pluralism.¹¹ Each religious tradition has to compete with other religious traditions to gain adherents and practitioners. Berger views this as a form of religious free enterprise, where the belief system must modify “their product in accordance with consumer demands.”¹²

The economic correlation between the religion’s ability to finance its operation reflects upon and influences the function, belief system and the organization itself. Berger traces the influence of religious pluralism in contemporary society to a *religious market*, where social economic forces play a vital role in the organization and its ability to appeal to a “market generation”. The religious institution in a pluralistic society becomes susceptible to the same factors affecting other organizations in a consumer commodity market. In an attempt to expand membership and adherents, the religious organization may tailor its product to fit the demand.¹³

The economic strategies of all religious groups, including new religious movements, correspond to the overall policies of these groups. These strategies are rarely accidental. In order to produce and reproduce themselves, religious associations not unlike other social groupings, must obtain economic resources to meet their economic needs. The economic strategies which religious groups develop to gain economic resources closely reflect and influence other policies regarding their social and religious objectives and their attitudes toward recruitment and membership.¹⁴

This exploration of how religious movements function within society by examining the economy of the movement has been investigated by a number of

Theoretical Prolegomenon”, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Volume 37, 4, December 1998.

¹¹ Berger, 1967, 134.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 153.

¹³ Peter L. Berger, “Secularization and Pluralism”, *International Yearbook for the Sociology of Religion*, 2, 1966, p. 73-84.

scholars. Frederick Bird and Francis Westley have developed a framework that examines and classifies followers according to the various mechanisms and patterns of recruitment. Although they argue that religions have always had to develop an economy to support their financial needs, several new patterns fulfilling this role appear in our contemporary society. "As a result of these several patterns of recruitment, religious movements net four distinct categories of followers: namely, (1) affiliates, (2) clients, (3) members, and (4) adepts."¹⁵ "Not only have the availability of adherents, and hence of income, depended upon the success of particular recruitment techniques but the recruitment techniques themselves have shaped the ensuing commitment, producing distinct groups of adherents whose economic support has different configurations."¹⁶

The economic strategies employed by a new religious movement to finance their operation has a direct impact upon how the group presents itself to the public in general, and the function of the membership within the group. "The inclusion of the 'economy' is essential to the aim of explaining the process of change which takes place in NRM's mode of insertion into the society. It tries to account for the establishment of priorities and for the relative advantage which help to determine changes in the way in which members of NRM's relate separately and collectively to outside people, groups, and institutions."¹⁷

¹⁴ Frederick Bird and Francis Westley, "The Economic Strategies of New Religious Movements", *Sociological Analysis*, 1985, 46: 2, p. 158.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹⁷ James Beckford, *Cult Controversies: The Societal Response to New Religious Movements*, (London, 1985), p. 80.

The analysis of secularization presented by Berger allows for the examination of the economic factors influencing new religious movements and an assessment of how the group may tailor its belief system or presentation to meet the demands of the religious market. This is particularly relevant to the examination of the incorporation of science within new religious movements and may represent a key component involved in the occurrence of this phenomenon. There are also other presentations of the secularization thesis that examine different aspects of the loss of religious influence in contemporary culture which may influence the use of science in conjunction with a religious belief system.

In the examination of secularization by Steve Bruce he recognizes three areas that together form the phenomena of secularization. "Secularization may be sought in the following three related changes: the decline of popular involvement with the churches; the decline in scope and influence of religious institutions; and the decline in the popularity and impact of religious beliefs."¹⁸ The difficulty with the classification presented by Bruce is his examination of the decline in the popularity and impact of religious beliefs. This has become a point of contention for scholars studying secularization. Strong and well-supported arguments have been presented to demonstrate that although large mainstream church organizations have lost membership, religious participation and beliefs have remained strong.¹⁹

¹⁸ Steve Bruce. *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults*, (Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 26.

¹⁹ For an example of the counter argument see: Reginald Bibby, *Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada*, (Toronto, 1987); Reginald Bibby, *Unknown Gods: The Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada*, (Toronto, 1993); Daniele Hervieu-Leger, "Present-Day Emotional Renewals: The End of Secularization or the End of Religion?", William H. Swatos, Jr. Ed., *A Future for Religion? New Paradigms for Social Analysis*, (London, 1993).

Statistically it is difficult to demonstrate that there has been an overall decrease in the popular religious beliefs of Western society. Although participation in established churches and the role of the church has declined in contemporary Western culture, religious beliefs remain strong. This can be seen in a number of surveys asking the general public about a belief in God, life after death, and the concepts of heaven and hell. In a survey conducted during the 1970's it was noted that 96% of Americans and 76% of the population of the United Kingdom believe in God.²⁰ This belief is not isolated to just a belief in God, as can be seen in a more recent survey by Reginald Bibby, the large numbers of people accepting a belief in God also believe in other spiritual and theological components. Despite the noted decrease in participation within a church body, many people maintain a religious belief system.

In a thorough survey called PROJECT CAN90, Bibby amassed an enormous amount of data concerning the religious beliefs and practices of the Canadian population. His statistics show that 82% of those surveyed believe in God, among those believing 44% report that they have had an actual experience that validates their belief. Significant numbers also believe in the spirit world, life after death, heaven and hell, and even ESP.²¹ Despite the process of secularization, Canadian Culture appears to maintain a strong religious belief system. This can be seen in a number of areas.

- intrigue with mystery is almost everywhere;
- people are fascinated with the supernatural;
- they want to find out how to make life more meaningful;
- they seek out the churches for rites of passage;

²⁰ J. Wilson, *Religion in American Society*, (New Jersey, 1978), p. 34.

²¹ Bibby, 1993, p. 117-137.

- almost all continue to identify with religious traditions;
- their biographies typically are characterized by religious memories.²²

This is particularly relevant to the study of new religious movements; it has been argued that as traditional religions decrease in authority and membership, new religious movements will arise and fill the gap left by the dominant institution. Several theoretical paradigms have been developed to demonstrate the rise and appeal of new religious movements. Frameworks have been presented by a number of scholars to examine how new religious movements provide a religious environment for individuals no longer affiliated with traditional religious structures.

Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge have developed one theoretical paradigm examining secularization and the rise of new religious movements.²³ Stark and Bainbridge define religion as “human organizations primarily engaged in providing general compensators based on supernatural assumptions.”²⁴ The theoretical framework for this definition recognizes that the purpose of a religion is to provide compensators for rewards that cannot be attained by the individual. “A compensator is the belief that a reward will be obtained in the distant future or in some other context which cannot be immediately verified.”²⁵ Stark and Bainbridge recognize that secularization is a major trend in modernity but they believe it is impossible for there to be a religionless future. Their theory stipulates that as the larger institutional religions decline, new religious movements will provide the compensators that individuals require.

²² Bibby, 1993, p. 178-179.

²³ Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*, (University of California Press, 1985) and, *A Theory of Religion*, (New York, 1987).

²⁴ Stark and Bainbridge, 1985, p. 8.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

There are several difficulties with the Stark-Bainbridge model. On a social level it has been shown that new religious movements provide more than just compensation for rewards. New religious movements provide something real. They allow practitioners to benefit from a community of like minded individuals, gaining experiences from interactions and membership. They also provide moral and ethical frameworks, friendships, and a sense of belonging and support for individuals considered marginal.

Despite the difficulties with the Stark Bainbridge theory, it becomes an important component in the examination between new religious movement and the use of science within the belief system. Groups relying upon this amalgamation present their belief system and the benefits the organization can provide as something that can be empirically verified. Claims made by groups that would normally reside in the sphere of unattainable rewards are now being presented in a scientific manner, implying that they can and will be attained through participation in the group.

Another difficulty with the Stark Bainbridge model is the claim made that new religious movements will fill the gap left by the decreased membership in church participation. Current statistics gathered concerning participation in new religious movements show that membership in these groups has not risen to a level that compensates for the numerical decline in traditional church organizations. Statistics Canada has shown an enormous increase in the percentage of those participating in new religions. According to the most recent census figures available, from 1981 to 1991 participation in groups recognized as sects, cults, and “para-religious” movements have increased 109%. According to the survey, despite the large

percentage increase the actual number of participants in Canada numbered only 28, 160 or 0.1% of the population.²⁶

However, it must be noted that statistics can be problematic. Within the survey only certain groups were listed. These included Scientology, Kabalarian, pagan, Rastafarian, Theosophical groups, Satanism and “other” para-religious groups.²⁷ There was also a broad category called “New Age” showing only 1200 practitioners.²⁸ If only 1200 people were involved in the new age movement the multi-million dollar market providing books, crystals and other new age paraphernalia would not exist. This representation also does not take into account the varying levels of participation and commitment or short-term membership in these groups; many participants in new religious movements are transitory.²⁹ Even the classification of “no religion” may not be truly representative of the beliefs of the population.³⁰

The presentation of the secularization theory in conjunction with the exploration of science within religion was done for two reasons. The first was to demonstrate the pluralistic nature of religion in our contemporary culture and the influence of the *religious economy*. The second point was to demonstrate that although there has been a decrease in membership and affiliation in mainstream church movements, there remains a component of personal religious beliefs within the population. It is difficult to assess how many of those that profess belief in God,

²⁶ Highlights, *Statistics Canada: The Nation*, Cat. 93-319, p. 1.

²⁷ *Statistics Canada*, Cat. No. 93-319, p. 16-17.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16-17.

²⁹ See Lorne L. Dawson, “Who Joins New Religious Movements and Why: Twenty Years of Research and What We Have Learned?”, *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, Vol. 25 no. 2, 1996.

³⁰ See Bibby, 1993, p. 158.

or some form of spirituality, have migrated to become clients of new religious movements. Yet it cannot be dismissed that new religious movements play a role meeting the needs of certain individuals.³¹

Designating the source of secularization in contemporary society is an extremely difficult undertaking. It is not the point of this thesis to establish the cause of such a phenomenon but rather to explore certain aspects. One component that does play an extremely important role in the development of a secularized society and attitude is the emergence of the scientific pursuit and “rational” human thought.³² In an examination of the role of science, philosopher Ernest Nagel writes that science as an institutionalized pursuit has provided many advancements for humanity. Among the four things listed as the most beneficial in this development, only one seems truly scientific. The other three are based on the evolution of the thought process and the removal of the influence of religious dogma from the inquiring mind of the scientist and the structure of the society.

Foremost among these are: the achievement of generalized theoretical knowledge concerning fundamental determining conditions for the occurrence of various types of events and processes; the emancipation of men’s minds from ancient superstitions in which barbarous practices and oppressive fears are often rooted; the undermining of the intellectual foundations for moral and religious dogma, with a resultant weakening in the productive cover that the hard crust of unreasoned custom provides for the continuation of social injustices; and, more generally, the gradual development among increasing numbers of a questioning intellectual temper toward traditional beliefs, a development frequently accompanied by the adoption in domains previously closed to systematic critical thought of logical methods for assessing, on the basis of reliable data of observation, the merits of alternative assumptions concerning matters of fact or of desirable policy.³³

³¹ See Frederick Bird and Bill Reimer, “Participation Rates in New Religious and Para-Religious Movements”, Patrick H. McNamara, ed., *Religion: North American Style*, (California, 1984).

³² I disagree with Steve Bruce when he states, “I do not actually think that science has directly contributed much to secularization”, Bruce, 1996, p. 48-49. As I will attempt to demonstrate, the loss of the validity of religious truth claims and the development of philosophy and science directly in opposition to a belief in God played a key role in the development of secularization.

³³ Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation*, (New York, 1961), p. vii.

This classification of the benefits of the scientific pursuit represents the modern conception of the classification and role of science. In the popular understanding, science is considered a method of observation and investigation that attempts to explain the cause and effect relationships between certain observable occurrences. This observation in turn provides theories or scientific laws that account for that occurrence, which can be verified by other observers employing the same methods. These theories and laws are accessible for public validation and verification and can be replicated under the same conditions giving the same results.³⁴

This classification and description of science is a broad and general description that explains what is referred to as *natural science*.³⁵ Natural science provides a technical knowledge of the natural world, and presents itself as an objective interpretation of the phenomena being observed. There are no metaphysics or miracles within this form of scientific paradigm, all phenomena is reducible and open for interpretation and hence understanding. It presents itself as a legitimated form of knowledge, removed from any spiritual or divine influence and mystery.

The development of natural science has been a point of contention among scholars. Arguments have been presented that place the development of natural science within the Puritan religious tradition of England. This is based upon an examination of the founding scientists of the Royal Society in the seventeenth century. According to the research of Robert Merton, and others supporting this argument, a large percentage of the founding members of the academy were

³⁴ This is a general summary of the scientific method. For a detailed account of the method and goals of science see Ernest Nagel, chapters 1-7.

³⁵ Ian Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, (New Jersey, 1966), p. 9.

religiously considered Puritans.³⁶ The counter argument to over emphasizing the Puritan role in the development of the Royal Society and the scientific pursuit has been presented by a number of researchers that have examined other influences in the development of science during this period.³⁷

It is certainly less problematic and perhaps more academically sound to accept the latter argument that there were a number of influences that contributed to the rise of science in England and the establishment of the Royal Society. However, it is not an argument among scholars that the development and rise of the scientific pursuit occurred among Protestants. The source for the support of the scientific endeavor among Protestant traditions is linked to the work ethic and emphasis upon the performance of “good works” by the various Protestant denominations. Other dimensions that may have contributed to the rise of science in Protestant countries may have been the reformation of the universities and the removal of ideologically dominant religious control over the individual pursuit.³⁸

Another dimension contributing to the rise in science has been one element of the Protestant reformation, particularly the literal interpretation of the scriptures. Although this may seem contradictory, both Calvin and Luther were opposed to the works of Copernicus. Peter Harrison argues that the literal interpretation of scriptures

³⁶ Robert K. Merton, “Puritanism, Pietism and Science” and A. Rupert Hall, “Merton Revisited or Science and Society in the Seventeenth Century”, C. A. Russell, ed., *Science and Religious Beliefs: A Selection of Recent Historical Studies*, (University of London Press, 1973). For a more recent examination of the role of Puritans in the Royal Academy and the development of science see, David Lindberg and Ronald Numbers, ed. *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*, (University of California Press, 1986).

³⁷ See Douglas S. Kemsley, “Religious Influences in the Rise of Modern Science”, C. A. Russell, ed., p74-102. For a detailed examination see Peter Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science*, (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

³⁸ Douglas S. Kemsley, p. 80-87.

removed a component of the Catholic tradition that had been hindering the “scientific” examination of the natural world for fifteen hundred years.

Through the influences of Origen, Augustine of Hippo, Tertullian, and other early Church theologians an elaborate system was developed that correlated the written word in scripture with an understanding of the natural world. Components of nature were related with scriptural elements to establish an allegorical interaction between the divine and humanity. “Scriptural references to natural objects were not intended to provide information about the world. Indeed, knowledge of natural objects was only to be pursued in order to understand the similitudes of scripture.”³⁹ The text *Physiologus*⁴⁰ became a primary example of this allegorical relationship and established a framework for interpreting natural phenomena. All aspects of the observable world were juxtaposed upon the ethical and moral framework of the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Canon. The example of the serpent drawn from the *Physiologus* clearly demonstrates this relationship:

The first nature is this: when he grows old, his eyes become dim and, if he wants to become new again, he abstains and fasts for forty days until his skin becomes loosened from his flesh. And if it does not become loosened from fasting, he goes and finds a narrow crack in the rock, and entering it he bruises himself and contracts and throws off his old skin and becomes new again. We, too, throw off for Christ the old man and his clothing through much abstinence and tribulation. And you, seek out Christ the spiritual rock and the narrow crack. “The gate is narrow and there is tribulation on the way which leads toward life, and few are those who enter through it” [Mathew 7:14]⁴¹

Within this framework animals and the components of nature are not examined in and of themselves, but become representative of the vices and virtues

³⁹ Harrison, p. 26.

⁴⁰ The *Physiologus* was most likely written by a disciple of Origen and was used to disclose the allegorical meanings of natural objects and their relationship with the divine. See *Physiologus*, translated by Michael J. Curley, (Austin, 1979).

⁴¹ From *Physiologus*, xiii, as quoted in Harrison, p. 24.

found in and related to the scriptures. Although the *Physiologus* did not list as many animals as Aristotle had in *Historia Animalium*, the same method was used in examining the different properties of the animals, listing explanations and causes for their behavior taken from philosophical or theological frameworks.⁴² The *Physiologus* was widely translated and a number of works appeared using the same formula to relate the observation of nature to morals and vices. “The Hexameron of St. Ambrose is little more than a catalogue of the moral lessons to be learned from nature. ‘Take care not to be bent over like cattle’, he councils, ‘see that you do not incline—not so much physically as they do but morally’.”⁴³

The allegorical association between the natural world and the spiritual was developed by Augustine and became one of the four categories of study later employed by medieval universities. The *quadriga* represented the study of *historia*, *allegoria*, *analogia*, and *aetiologia*, presenting a curriculum that incorporated the study of the natural world in association with the study of humanities. A distinct relationship was formulated for higher learning that incorporated historical studies, allegorical meaning, morals, and spiritual ideals in a form of scriptural hermeneutics geared at informing and enlightening the individual.⁴⁴

The allegorical interpretation of nature focused those examining natural phenomena to use their intellect to develop a correlation between natural characteristics and scriptural references. Something was not examined in and of itself but rather with a predisposition for seeking moral and spiritual understanding. The allegorical interpretation of scripture was contrary to a fundamental component of the

⁴² Hanneke Writjes, *The Middle English Physiologus*, (Oxford, 1991), p. xviii.

⁴³ Harrison, p. 22.

Reformation, namely *Sola Scriptura*—scripture alone. “The major reformers—Martin Luther, John Calvin, Phillip Malanchthon, and Martin Bucer—shared a clear preference for the literal or natural sense of scripture, combined with a suspicion of allegory.”⁴⁵ Among those developing the Protestant traditions, allegorical representation of the scriptures represented not only an adulteration of the scriptures but also an offense against the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶

This removal of allegory from the natural world opened it up to be seen as something that contained mystery and was a phenomenon unto itself. Nature began to be studied as a manifestation that provided its own information and revelation concerning the observable world. Harrison recognizes the publication of John Ray’s *The Ornithology of Francis Willughby* as a primary example of this new manifestation of natural examination. Unlike many contemporaries, Ray was not concerned with “*Homonymous and Synonymous words, or the divers names of Birds. Hieroglyphics, Emblems, Morals, Fables, Presages* or ought else appertaining to *Divinity, Ethics, Grammar, or any sort of Humane Learning.*”⁴⁷

This new interpretation of the natural world developed several shifts in thought concerning observable phenomena and the influence of other observable phenomena. Along with the establishment of the Royal Society for physical research, an institute was also formed to license physicians. Called the Royal College of Physicians of London, the group would begin to develop the practice of medicine, limiting the role and ability of those who were not licensed to practice. The main

⁴⁴ See H. Rashdall, *The Universities in Europe in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford, 1936).

⁴⁵ Harrison, p. 108.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

group the Royal College opposed were astrologers, who until that time, had also been practicing healing. Medicine was viewed as an endeavor that was benefiting from the advances of science, while astrology was relegated as a “ridiculous cheat”.⁴⁸

The position of the rise of medicine and science lent more and more credibility to the role and function of nature within the observable world. This perspective would eventually remove the supernatural from medical diagnosis and practice, and also from the pursuit of other scientific endeavors. Those practicing science also now had the ability to share their work through publications and lectures at universities without the fear of censure or persecution from Church authorities.⁴⁹

The dominant ideology of the Catholic Church could not suppress their theories and examinations. Despite the earlier positions of Luther and Calvin against the theoretical works of Copernicus, the various Protestant groups for the most part did not have the ability to enforce their dogma upon their followers.⁵⁰ Although the Catholic tradition could rely upon the use of the Inquisition to exert its control over theology and philosophy, it was powerless in states that no longer recognized Papal authority. In a similar manner the control over written material and publishing by the

⁴⁷ John Ray and Francis Willughby, *The Ornithology of Francis Willughby*. (London, 1678), as quoted in Harrison, p. 2.

⁴⁸ The statement was taken from a letter written by Seth Ward (1617-1689) in the defense of university reform, from Terry M. Parssinen, “Professional Deviants and the History of Medicine: Medical Mesmerists in Victorian Britain”, Roy Wallis, ed., *On the Margins of Science: The Social Construction of Knowledge, Sociological Review Monograph 27*, (University of Keele, 1979), p. 99.

⁴⁹ Although the Protestant reformation lacked the machinery for enforcing its dogma it must be noted that civil authorities under the influence of the Reformation movements persecuted heretics. An example of this can be seen by the execution of Michael Servetus in Geneva, under the direction of Calvinist church authorities. Paul Johnson, *A History of Christianity*, (London, 1976), p. 289-290.

⁵⁰ Bertrand Russell, *Religion and Science: With a new Introduction by Michael Ruse*, (New York, 1997), p.22-23, 42.

Catholic tradition manifest in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* could not control the wide spread distribution of banned literature beyond its ecclesiastical borders.⁵¹

Within the Catholic tradition attempts made to challenge the orthodox position on matters concerning nature were met with opposition and force. The most famous of these challenges was undertaken by Galileo concerning not only the position of the sun and the planets but also Aristotelian principals that had been accepted by the Catholic tradition and those intellectual institutions under its control. It is important to recognize the difficulty with the challenge presented by Galileo to the Catholic Church. Although Galileo went against scriptural references that had been considered an infallible source of knowledge,⁵² the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas concerning mathematical theories,⁵³ and even the theory of Copernicus,⁵⁴ members of the Clergy, religious laity, and also members of the Jesuit Order supported him.⁵⁵

It is also important to recognize that Galileo, like his scientific contemporaries in the Protestant tradition, was a deeply religious man. He did not view his undertaking as a challenge against Christianity but rather a clarification and

⁵¹ The official Index appeared after the Council of Trent (1545-1563) and contained a listing of books separated into twelve different classifications, including books against faith, books against morals, and books attacking religion. See Redmond Burke, *What is the Index*. (Milwaukee, 1952).

⁵² An example of this break with scriptural interpretation in the works of Galileo can be seen in his publication of *Siderus nuncius* (1610), where he identifies the moons of Jupiter. The reaction from the Church can be seen in their use of Exodus 25:37 recognizing that the seven lamps referred to in scriptures represents the seven heavenly bodies created by God. See Stillman Drake, *Galileo at Work: His Scientific Biography*, (University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 467.

⁵³ Although Aquinas recognized the role of mathematics in certain sciences, the use of mathematics to deduce causation in nature was not considered proof only a theoretical hypothesis. This was based on the position in which Aquinas placed mathematics in his examination of Aristotelian logic, mathematics itself has a hypothetical formulation and not a real substance so it played a less significant role than observable "real" phenomena.

⁵⁴ During the trials against Galileo in 1633, he repeatedly refused to admit that he regarded the Copernican theories as true.

⁵⁵ For the most recent examination of Galileo and the reaction from the Catholic Church see Rivka Feldhay, *Galileo and the Church: Political Inquisition or Critical Dialogue?* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

development in the understanding of the relationship between God and nature. The scientific pursuit during the early seventeenth century was undertaken in an attempt to glorify God and the magnificence of the natural world. Within the Catholic tradition the dominant ideology of the Church limited the development of this process of thought,⁵⁶ however the Protestant traditions of Europe (particularly England) supported it. Conditions in England were "favorable to the growth of science, through its emphasis on the right of private judgement, its critical spirit, its insistence upon knowledge and reason, independence, and uprightness of character, and its demand that men spend their time more profitably."⁵⁷

As the scientific spirit continued to flourish, new theories were presented concerning the relationship between God and nature. The theory of Natural Design recognized the perfection innate in nature and proposed that something as perfect as God could have only created the human eye or the wings of a butterfly through a divine plan and for a divine purpose. However, those studying the natural world continued to develop theories concerning phenomena that had before been placed solely under the providence of God. As the perception of the micro levels and macro levels of the observable world increased, the recognized influence of God decreased. Over the next one hundred years science began to account for a number of phenomena that until that time had been considered the work of spiritual forces. The influence of the supernatural was recognized in less places and natural law expanded to account for more and more occurrences and physical events. Referred to as the

⁵⁶ After the trial of 1633 the works of Galileo were placed upon the official Index. His theories and information concerning the rotation of the earth and the position of the sun were prohibited from being taught in all universities under Catholic control and Galileo spent the rest of his life under house imprisonment.

“God of the Gaps”, the role of the supernatural in the natural world was becoming relegated to fewer and fewer phenomena.

By the early seventeenth century philosophical thought began to utilize the findings of science in a manner that challenged the very nature and existence of God himself. Although there were several philosophers that contributed to this movement, David Hume and the publication of his essay “On Miracles” in 1748 would represent a new influence that would alter the position of science and religion, questioning the very foundations for the basis of religious beliefs. Hume’s argument is based upon the large number of “Laws of Nature” that were discovered and developed during the rise of the scientific pursuit. The laws stipulated the absolute regularities of the natural world in an undeviating manner. The evidence for these laws was, according to Hume and his contemporaries, so set that there was no room for any occurrence of a paranormal or miraculous event in nature.⁵⁸

The methods of critical inquiry utilized in science and now philosophy also began to develop in the social sciences. Religion itself was viewed as a phenomena that could now be studied with the same critical attention to detail as had been applied in the previous two traditions. “Higher” criticism of the Bible began in Germany and found its way to England. Scripture was viewed by many in the same analytical manner as any other text. Research began into the true authorship of the Bible and the historical reality of the events contained in the Gospels and the Hebrew Canon. Archeology, anthropology, and even the beginnings of psychology,

⁵⁷Douglas S. Kemsley, p. 76.

⁵⁸A. Gould, *The Founders of Psychological Research*, (New York, 1968), p. 341.

combined with philosophical thought and the scientific pursuit, began to create an atmosphere of doubt.

By the 1860's and the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* the religious belief structure in England had been seriously challenged by those seeking a "true" understanding of religion, God, and the natural world. The theory of evolution put forward by Darwin became a scientific paradigm that instigated a number of scientific and philosophical beliefs.⁵⁹ Evolutionary theories were applied to the development of culture, society, morals, and even religion.⁶⁰ Anthropological works such as Taylor's *Primitive Culture* (1871) questioned the very purpose of religious beliefs and William Reade's work *Martyrdom of Man* (1872) designated Christianity and Judaism as a manifestation of this same form of animism.

Up to this point the foundation for the validity of the Christian tradition had been based upon the acceptance of the miraculous events contained in the scriptures. But as science and philosophy continued to demonstrate, the belief in miracles was ill founded. "Though 'science' could not disprove a single miracle, men who talked of the miraculous began during the sixties [1860's] to look anti-scientific. Extraordinary and unaccountable things were confessed to happen. The incurably ill were cured. But the scientists preferred to call such events inexplicable rather than to call them supernatural. Liberal theologians slowly accepted the old doctrine of Hume, republished by Mill, that no evidence could prove a miracle to a man who did not already believe in God. Retaining all the belief that God acted in the world, they

⁵⁹ For the establishment of evolution as a scientific paradigm see Eileen Barker, "In the Beginning: The Battle of Creationists Against Evolution", Roy Wallis, ed., p. 179-200. For a reaction of the Church of England to Darwin's theory see Owen Chadwick, "Evolution and the Churches", C. A. Russell, ed., p. 282-293.

slowly became agnostic on whether some acts were breaches in 'the laws of nature', and refused to follow James Mozley in basing faith upon the evidence of miracles."⁶¹ W. H. Mallock wrote in 1877 that, "one may almost say that with us one can hear faith decaying".⁶²

Science was viewed by much of the intellectual elite as an objective system of "vigilant" verification and validation, while religion and religious beliefs were classified as a pre-scientific form of intuition based upon a subjective method.⁶³ The natural world was reduced to a series of laws concerning matter, motion, force, the conservation of energy, and evolution. "Reduced to the common denominators of evolving matter and energy, all natural phenomena could be explained mechanically and interpreted without reference to God, supernatural agencies, or independent mind."⁶⁴

Several individuals began to champion this development in the natural sciences as a "New Nature" which involved the development of humanity towards a higher level of material and psychological well being. Writing in 1878 G. H. Lewes, an advocate for the development of natural science stated, "in the struggle of life with the facts of existence, Science is the bringer of aid; in the struggle of the soul with the mystery of existence, Science is the bringer of light."⁶⁵ According to these positivists, the natural progression for human evolution was to expand science and eliminate religion. Called by some the religion of science or the cult of science, it

⁶⁰ A. Gauld, p. 50-65.

⁶¹ Chadwick, p. 290.

⁶² W. H. Mallock, "Faith and Verification", *The Nineteenth Century* IV, (1878), p. 673, as quoted from A. Gauld, p. 64.

⁶³ Turner, p. 18-19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

promised that “by the methods of physical science, and by these methods alone, could be solved all the problems arising out of the relation of man to man and of man towards the universe.”⁶⁶ Science was now thought to provide all the knowledge and information concerning reality, nature, and human purpose. Quoting from this period amply demonstrates this point. “What science cannot tell us we cannot know...objective knowledge is the only authentic source of truth. Science has actually advanced to the point where what were formerly religious questions can be seriously tackled...[by] the new physics.”⁶⁷

The most active and recognized figures in championing the replacement of religion through the development of science were Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer. At public gatherings and through numerous publications they promoted Darwin, criticized the myths of religion (particularly Christianity), and promoted the advancement of humanity to a new level of existence.⁶⁸ Not all scientists and educated people supported the radical advancement of this form of positivist thought.⁶⁹ Despite the progressive affirmations by the above group, science didn't answer the questions concerning life after death or other philosophical problems faced by the individual.

In defiance of opposition to the new exalted role of science by certain individuals, the previous developments of the scientific pursuit created a demarcation between religion and science. By the late nineteenth century historical and current opposition to natural science was viewed in antagonistical terms. The “war between

⁶⁶ Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship*, (London, 1926), p. 83, as quoted from Turner, p. 12.

⁶⁷ From Ted Peters, ed., *Science and Theology: The New Consonance*, (Oxford, 1998), p. 14.

⁶⁸ Turner, p. 8-31.

religion and science” was seen as a genuine phenomenon by a majority of the people involved in the study of nature or humanity. Religion was removed as an academic endeavor from a large number of universities and relegated to colleges as a theological, denominational pursuit. The study of science became a vocation and those involved in this undertaking no longer considered the belief in religion a necessity to their development.⁷⁰ If anything religious and spiritual beliefs could be seen as a hindrance. “Science in the name of ‘intellectual integrity’ has come forward with the claim of representing the only possible form of a reasoned view of the world.”⁷¹

The period of Victorian Scientific Naturalism did not last past the early 1900’s. The developments in physics by Rutherford and Einstein rendered their concepts of nature and scientific laws obsolete.⁷² It quickly became recognized that the understanding of nature and the natural world was not as simple or straightforward as presented in scientific naturalism. Despite the development of science past the structures first employed by the earlier framework, the issues regarding the position of religion and religious beliefs remained constant. The scientific community still reduced phenomena to natural occurrences and not supernatural. Boundaries were established designating the role, function, and purpose of the scientific pursuit. Those attempting to function on the peripheries or outside these boundaries were ostracized from the scientific community.

⁶⁹ For a detailed account of the reaction of several prominent intellectuals against the positivist stance see Turner.

⁷⁰ See Rodney Stark. “On the Incompatibility of Religion and Science: A Survey of American Graduate Students”, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. III, no. 1, October 1963, p. 3-20.

⁷¹ Max Weber, *Essays in Sociology*, Gerth and Mills, trans, (Oxford, 1958), p. 355.

⁷² Turner, p. 13.

Through the development of boundaries in the scientific pursuit, undertakings such as those practiced by the Society for Psychical research, which will be examined in detail in the next chapter, were classified as pseudo-science. The classification of pseudoscientific research as opposed to scientific research relies upon several factors and at times it is difficult to differentiate the two. The boundaries established for these classifications are arrived upon through consensus and reflect a practical activity undertaken by scientists against those that attempt to claim the authority and resources allocated to the scientific pursuit.⁷³ In Thomas Gieryn's research he recognizes 12 different pursuits against which the scientific community developed boundaries differentiating their work from non-science. His classifications are science against pseudo-science, religion, philosophy, amateurs, magic, art, popularizers, ideology, politics, common sense, technology, and others.⁷⁴

Pseudoscientific work is designated in two ways. The first demarcation recognizes that pseudo-science is research undertaken in what appears to be a scientific manner but in fact has methodological problems and flaws that make it less than scientific. This charge was leveled against the early psychical researchers over their experiments concerning contacting the dead or the study of extrasensory perception. Those participating in psychical research were not criticized for their lack of scientific training and credentials, but rather the methods in which they employed their training. The classification of pseudoscientific has been applied to works such as Immanuel Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* and Erich Von Daniken's *Chariot of*

⁷³ Thomas Giern, "Making the Demarcation of Science a Sociological Problem: Boundary-Work by John Tyndall, Victorian Scientist", *Working Papers in Science and Technology: The Demarcation Between Science and Psuedo-Science*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (Virginia, 1983), p. 57-86.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

the Gods, Gods from Outer Space, and The Gold of the Gods. Velikovsky and Von Daniken presented their material in a manner that appeared to be valid scientific research to the general public, despite being criticized by specialists as being flawed and methodologically unsound.

The other manner in which research is designated as pseudoscientific is through the direct challenge of the credentials of those undertaking the work. In this manner there is a demarcation between those qualified to do scientific work and those not qualified. Despite the results of research from non-qualified individuals a boundary has been established that recognizes the parameters of research and the qualifications necessary to work in that established field. In this way criticism has been leveled against people such as Philip E. Johnson, an established law scholar, for his criticism of Darwin's theory of evolution in his work *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*.

The method for ostracizing researchers and data pertaining to the study of metaphysical or spiritual/extra sensory phenomena has been examined by a number of scholars. H. M. Collins and T. J. Pinch have examined the process that occurs when phenomena that conflicts with the accepted scientific opinion is researched and presented in a scientific manner. Their analysis recognizes two basic responses by the scientific community. Either there is implicit rejection and the rival claims made against scientific orthodoxy are ignored or there is explicit rejection. This can happen in a number of forums, including scientific journals, semi-popular and popular journals, or forums of exchange such as conferences. Most often there is simply a blank refusal to believe the claims made by the "pseudo-scientists". Collins and

Pinch list a number of ways the blank refusal can become manifest, most often the data presented by pseudo-scientists is simply ignored and associated with unscientific beliefs. Such material does not get published and those involved in presenting the material are viewed as fraudulent or misguided.⁷⁵

Despite recent developments in the philosophical study of science regarding the objectivity of experimentation⁷⁶ and the exploration of the concept of the scientific paradigm,⁷⁷ dogmatic views and assertions have become entrenched within the scientific community and the general public.⁷⁸ As demonstrated by a number of researchers, despite “hard” scientific evidence and proper scientific methodologies, those attempting to explore phenomena outside the parameters of what has been termed orthodox by the scientific community are marginalized.⁷⁹

This development over the last one hundred and fifty years has created a gulf between religious beliefs and the scientific pursuit. According to all the precepts of science, the two traditions simply do not mix. Science, because of its objective analysis of data and system of verification, cannot be used to support a religious belief or belief system. Despite this perspective, during the rise and development of the scientific pursuit, new religious belief systems have attempted to incorporate science within their belief system, attempting to validate their tradition. This can be

⁷⁵ H. M. Collins and T. J. Pinch, “The Construction of the Paranormal: Nothing Unscientific is Happening”, Roy Wallis, ed., p237-270.

⁷⁶ John Polkinghorne, *Quarks, Chaos, and Christianity: Questions to Science and Religion*, (London, 1994), p. 1-20.

⁷⁷ The scientific paradigm refers to, “universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners.” Thomas Khun, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, (Chicago, 1970), p. viii.

⁷⁸ See David J. Hess, *Science in the New Age: The Paranormal, Its Defenders and Debunkers, and American Culture*, (Wisconsin, 1993).

⁷⁹ See, *The Demarcation between Science and Pseudo-Science*, Working Papers, Vol. 2, no. 1, (Virginia Tech, Center for the Study of Science in Society, 1983).

seen in two primary developments. The first is the attempt by certain elements of the scientific community to explore phenomena outside of the parameters accepted by the orthodox scientific community. Originally referred to as Psychical Research, the common representation of this endeavor is now called parapsychology. The second development has been the foundation of new religious movements that have drawn upon contemporary scientific methods and practices, scientific findings, scientific theory, and technology within their religious narrative as a component of their belief system. Both aspects will be explored in the next section of the thesis with a particular emphasis placed upon the latter.

Chapter 2

Pseudo-Science the New Age and New Religions

With the continued development of natural science during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, traditional religious beliefs had been challenged, discredited, and even abandoned by a number of individuals. Through philosophical and empirical means, the notion of the miracle had been discounted among many of the educated elite. Christianity, having been based upon miracles, had its very foundation shaken. New research into anthropology and the social sciences developed theories concerning the development of religion and its purpose. For many of these same educated people, religion became a thing of the past.

Several individuals from the scientific community reacted differently than those assuming a new form of agnosticism or atheism. Although they abandoned their Christian belief system, they maintained a belief in the supernatural and the spiritual. This maintained belief manifest itself in a number of ways. A survey of religious literature from this period quickly displays the diversity and religious pluralism that irrupted at this time. Henry Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*¹ presented a paradigm that combined current scientific information concerning natural law in conjunction with a religious framework. Other publications examined spiritual phenomena and presented "how to books" on contacting departed souls and conducting seances. Academics also presented material concerning a new view on religion in conjunction with science, Alexander Campbell Fraser's *Philosophy of*

¹ Henry Drummond, F.R.S.E.; F.G.S., *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, (New York, 1890).

*Theism*² was well received and purchased by a large number of individuals and in 1869 William James, while a senior at Harvard medical school, called for the proper examination of religious and spiritual phenomena.³

People began exploring alternative religious views that attempted to incorporate scientific components within the belief system, Deism being one of the most popular manifestations. The Deist world-view accommodated the mechanical laws of nature and Newtonian physics but removed any conception of a God that acted within nature, whether in the answer of prayers or the manifestation of miracles. Religious movements began to form that brought together individuals holding these and other innovative religious beliefs into popular organized religious structures. Groups presenting an alternative religious belief system to Christianity appeared and gathered significant membership, Swendenborgianism⁴ being a primary example.

During this same period a new phenomenon had gained popularity in the United States and then Europe that also attracted the attention and following of a number of these people. Called Spiritualism, this belief system was not based upon a religious narrative founded thousands of years ago but rather upon an apparently empirically validated system that obtained contact with departed souls. Advocates of Spiritualism believed that they “could scientifically demonstrate the survival of individual humans after death.”⁵

² Alexander Campbell Fraser, L.L.D., *Philosophy of Theism*, (New York, 1896).

³ Alan Gauld, *The Founders of Psychical research*, (New York, 1968), p. 30-31.

⁴ The founder of the Swendenborgian church, Emmanuel Swendenborg, was a scientist. Then at the age of 55 he claimed to have a series of mystical visions and “was more effective than anyone else in popularizing ideas that came out of the alternative reality tradition.” Ellwood and Partin, p. 50-52.

⁵ J. Gordon Melton, “A History of the New Age Movement”, Robert Basil, ed., *Not Necessarily the New Age*, (New York, 1988), p. 38.

Beginning in 1848 in Hydesville, New York, a Methodist farmer and his family began to be plagued by thumping noises coming from different areas of their house during the night. After a period of time the Fox family began asking the noises questions, which would be responded to by an appropriate number of thumps. To their surprise they were given confirmation that the noise was in fact a spirit communicating with the family from the dead. After having the noises validated by neighbors as being authentic, it became publicly known that the Fox family, and later specifically the Fox daughters, had the ability to communicate with the departed.⁶

The events occurring in New York State would precipitate a long chain of developments that would lead to the rise and popularity of this belief. Becoming popular in America relatively quickly, it spread to England in 1852 when Mrs. Hayden (a medium) was introduced to the English populace. The phenomenon attracted attention from skeptics of the scientific community but it also gathered supporters, one of the most prominent being Alfred Russell Wallace, the co-discoverer of the theory of evolution by natural selection.⁷ Wallace and other scientists, including William Crookes a prominent physical chemist, believed that the events they witnessed during seances could be verified using the traditional methods they had employed in their scientific studies.

The development of the study of this phenomenon gained momentum. Despite being ridiculed by the established scientific community as pseudo-scientific, several committed people founded an organization to examine the phenomenon.

⁶ There are a number of works that research and document the events surrounding the Fox family and the rise of the Spiritualist Movement. For a detailed account see Alan Gauld, *The Founders of Psychological Research*, (New York, 1968), p. 3-31.

Originally called the Society for Psychical Research (founded in 1882), the members employed all the methodology used in the study of natural science to examine the events that were transpiring in the Spiritualist movement. They published their findings, lectured about the phenomena, and also established their own journals allowing for a forum of discussion among those immersed within and curious about the pursuit.

The aim of those involved with psychical study was to develop a sound methodology towards studying phenomena that was considered extra-sensory or paranormal.

... we must remember that our very *raison d'être* is the extension of the scientific method, of intellectual virtues—of curiosity, candor, care,—into regions where many a current of old tradition, of heated emotion, even of pseudo-scientific prejudice, deflects the bark which should steer only towards the cold, unreachable pole of absolute truth. We must recognize that we have more in common with those who may criticize or attack our work with competent diligence than with those who may acclaim and exaggerate it without adding thereto any careful work of their own. We must experiment unweariedly; we must continue to demolish fiction as well as to accumulate truth; we must make no terms with any hollow mysticism, any half-conscious deceit.⁸

As the above address demonstrates, the purpose of the study of psychical research was to examine the paranormal phenomena and not to validate or support a religious belief system. Despite the numerous cosmological claims made by those participating in the Spiritualist movement, the SPR avoided becoming embroiled in choosing one over the other. This “detached” examination of spiritual phenomena would create a gulf between those studying paranormal events and those participating in religious belief systems that developed because of the events. This division remains current to this day and becomes most pronounced in the study of UFO

⁷ Jon Palfreman, “Between Skepticism and Credulity: A Study of Victorian Scientific Attitudes to Modern Spiritualism”, Roy Wallis, ed., 1979, p. 202.

phenomena. Professional organizations studying the events and possibility of UFO existence distance themselves from those groups basing a religious narrative upon the same phenomena.

Early divisions between those studying psychical phenomena and organizations presenting a religious narrative that incorporated science within the belief system can be seen in the reaction from psychical researchers against the Theosophical Society and the teachings of Helena Blavatsky. Spiritualists had earlier argued against the Theosophical Society because of its unscientific nature, despite its claims to be scientific.⁹ To validate the scientific nature of the movement and its authenticity, Richard Hodgson of the SPR did an extensive examination of Blavatsky and “exposed” her as a fraud.¹⁰

Despite the opposition of the psychical researchers to religious movements that had incorporated science within their belief system as an attempt at validation, numerous movements continued to appear at this time. These groups were now operating well beyond the parameters of the orthodox scientific community and even the more liberal framework examining paranormal physical occurrences. They continued to be debunked or ignored by those pursuing the scientific vocation.

Despite this opposition, the incorporation of science within “new age” beliefs systems became a hallmark of this movement. J. Gordon Melton notes that this amalgamation of religion and science became wide spread during the late 1800’s and continues to this day.

⁸ Quoting an address from Frederick Myers, from A. Gauld, p. 143.

⁹ J. Gordon Melton, 1988, p. 39-40.

¹⁰ See K. Paul Johnson, *The Masters Revealed: Madame Blavatsky and the Myth of the Great White Lodge*. (New York, 1994).

The occult, largely destroyed by Protestantism and the first major waves of religious skeptical thinking represented in such movements as Deism, needed a new vehicle to replace the outmoded supernaturalism of medieval magic and alchemy. It found that vehicle in the new science of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Indeed, one cannot understand the New Age Movement without recognizing its full acceptance of science and its subsequent use of science as a major vehicle for expressing its perspective. Thus, as science has grown, so has the metaphysical/occult community. Metaphysics rejoiced in science's critique of Christianity, celebrated its dominant ideas of natural law and evolution, and from scientific affirmations built a new alternative spiritual vision capable of interacting, and even contributing, to the fullness (from the occultists' viewpoint) of scientific knowledge.¹¹

Despite the recognition by several scholars of new religious movements that science has become an important component of many of these belief systems, it remains to be demonstrated how these belief systems maintain scientific components within the religion when the scientific community discredits them. In the further analysis of the New Age movement by Melton, he stipulates that eventually because of the disparity made by the groups using science and the continuing development of the scientific endeavor, this form of movement will fail.¹² It is true that the use of science within new religious movements is problematic for a number of reasons. However I disagree with Melton that this trend will decrease and eventually disappear. Statistically, groups that rely upon the incorporation of science within their belief system are a significant portion of the new religious movement phenomena. These groups have extremely high client appeal in the current religious economy and membership rates in these forms of groups continue to significantly increase. If new religions using science within the belief system can be viewed as a reaction to secularization, then this phenomenon will not diminish but will continue.

¹¹ Gordon Milton, 1988, p. 36.

¹² Ibid., p. 51.

Arthur Parsons, in his examination of secularization, argues that “while innovative religious movements often appear to arise as a response to tension within their secular host societies, they also tend to incorporate central cultural elements from these societies.”¹³ In our contemporary culture “science” has become a central element and if the theory presented by Parsons is credible, this amalgamation of religion and science can be viewed as a reaction to secularization. This view runs parallel to the issues concerning religious innovation presented by William Bainbridge. Examining the use of science within new religious movements Bainbridge states, “new religions are constantly arising, and some will rest on assumptions more in tune with science and providing comfort more satisfactory for inhabitants of advanced industrial societies. Thus, admittedly without great confidence, one can imagine a future time when the central religious denominations were scientific in character, rather than biblical.”¹⁴

Although at this time the new religious movements¹⁵ that incorporate science within their belief systems are marginal and not denominational in character, a wide variety of groups present themselves in this manner and membership in such organizations continues to grow. As detailed in the introduction, the incorporation of science within new religious movements appears in a number of manifestations. To

¹³ Arthur Parsons, “The Secular Contribution to Religious Innovation: A Case Study of the Unification Church”, *Sociological Analysis* 50, p. 212. From L. Dawson, “The Cultural Significance of New Religious Movements and Globalization: A Theoretical Paradigm”, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 37, 4, p. 584.

¹⁴ William Sims Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements*, (New York, 1996), p. 417.

¹⁵ The classification for new religious movement is based upon the framework outlined by Ellwood and Parsons recognizing new religious movements as groups that have arisen or taken root in the West in the last 150 years and are extant today. They are also not normatively Judaeo-Christian in origin meaning that the group’s main symbols and teachings are not derived from traditional or mainstream interpretations of Jewish or Christian sources, being either innovations or importations. Ellwood and Parsons, p. 6-7.

give a brief demonstration of the usage in our contemporary culture, the primary aspects that demonstrate this amalgamation will be paired with a new religious movement or teachings that illustrate these principles.

The primary components are:

- 1) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of the group's beliefs.

This may be one of the most common manifestations of the incorporation of science within new religious movements and can be seen in a variety of groups. All three groups detailed in the later portion of the thesis (Transcendental Meditation, Scientology and the Raelian Movement) incorporate this component as a primary aspect of their narrative. To achieve this combination the group presents scientific theories or findings, pseudo-scientific claims or parapsychological information in a manner that appears to support their beliefs. As an example, research material such as Michael Cremo and Richard Thompson's *Forbidden Archeology: The Hidden History of the Human Race*¹⁶ is used to endorse a belief system by drawing from contemporary research to support a religious narrative. In this manner scientific and pseudo-scientific information concerning archeological finds that appear to challenge traditional Darwinian theory are used as conformation by groups such as the Young Earth Society and the Edgar Casey Foundation to validate their belief in advanced civilizations such as Atlantis and Lemuria. The Academy for Future Science draws heavily upon such research in public presentations, however its usage of the same material is done to support their view concerning extraterrestrial intervention and

¹⁶ Michael A. Cremo and Richard L. Thompson, *Forbidden Archeology: The Hidden History of the Human Race*, (Los Angeles, 1993).

visitations upon the planet.¹⁷ The support can seem credible or very provisional as with UFO groups that rely upon sightings and abduction reports to validate their belief system, despite the original UFO research distancing itself from supporting any religious narrative or belief system.¹⁸

- 2) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of certain or all of the group's practices.

This characteristic is used by new religious movements to lend credibility and support to their practices or rituals. Often this has been done in association with meditation practices and relies upon physiological investigations into the benefits associated with this form of exercise, Transcendental Meditation being a foremost example. This has also been done by groups that rely upon parapsychological information as valid support for teaching ESP or astral travel to their practitioners. Although the orthodox scientific community does not regard information concerning psychical research or parapsychology as valid¹⁹ it is presented by the group as an authoritative confirmation that their practices are supported or legitimized by the scientific community.

- 3) The utilization of modern scientifically crafted techniques or technologies as tools supporting the religious narrative.

This incorporation of technology or scientifically developed items to augment a religious narrative has become a key component of the new age movement. What is

¹⁷ James Hurtak, "A First Time Report of Lost Prehistoric Civilization Discovered Under the South-China Seas". 1999 Conference of the International Institute of Integral Human Sciences.

¹⁸ For an example of the position of UFO researchers against those developing religious narratives from their research see Jacque Vallee, *Messengers of Deception: UFO Contacts and Cults*, (Berkeley, 1979).

¹⁹ See John Taylor, *Science and the Supernatural: An Investigation of Paranormal Phenomena Including Psychic Healing, Clairvoyance, Telepathy and Precognition by a Distinguished Physicist and Mathematician*, (New York, 1980) and C. E. M. Hansel, *ESP and Parapsychology: A Critical Re-Evaluation*, (New York, 1980).

implied by this amalgamation is that legitimate research and development of technologies has been undertaken to provide specific tools used in the religious or spiritual development of the practitioner. Scientology's use of the E-meter is a primary example that will be examined in detail, however many other groups rely upon this aspect as a source of income and legitimation. The type of technologies supplied by movements to their practitioners varies widely. The Golden Humming Bird sells special oils for "Starchild protection" and medallions for magical powers. Other groups such as A.R.M. (Alien Resistance Movement) provide psionic pistols, psychic protection field increasers, time travel devices and sonic sound weapons. Technology such as Aum's PSI (Perfect Salvation Initiation) were worn by hundreds of followers and was claimed to synchronize the brain waves of the practitioner with their guru (Figure 2, p. 149). Despite the type of item being supplied, each group presents the devices in such a manner that they appear to have been vigorously tested and developed, giving a sense of validation and support for the technology.

4) Attempts to restate mythic or scriptural accounts in the language of science.

The use of scientific language in restating religious myth has become common in the religious narrative of groups incorporating science within their belief system. This alteration in the language used to present the discourse implies that the religious narrative is not myth-based but rather based upon scientific investigation. This alteration accommodates a more secular worldview and attempts to present information as valid and authenticated or plausible, based upon current understandings of scientific objectivity. The Raelian Movement has developed its entire religious narrative in this manner and will be explored in greater detail in

chapter 5. An example of this amalgamation can also be seen in groups such as O.D.F. (Outer Dimensional Forces); "The MEASURES are HIS 'blueprints/service manual/Technical guidelines/Timeclock' for the proper operation, maintenance, and repair of Time Station Earth and its inhabitants.... The MEASURES are part of the original package HE created, namely: Patterns [spirits], Time Stations [planets], Time Levels [heaven], Time Arks [Service Modules], and MEASURES for knowledge."²⁰ Members of the group are called the Cosmic Corps of Engineers and their central organization is referred to as the Command Starship Ark or Armageddon Time Ark Base not a church. Groups such as the Occult Institute of Technology or the Academy for Future Science incorporate scientific language within their name. Others use this language in their teachings; "prophetic technology" is taught by John Zachary and "spiritual physics" is used by Jim Harmon.

- 5) Attempts to lend credibility to the belief system through scientific or academic credentials or associations.

This primary aspect in the amalgamation of science within religion can be seen in a number of organizations. The Transcendental Movement stresses the scientific training the Maharishi received before he became a disciple of Swami Brahmananda Saraswati as a legitimation for their ability to undertake and develop scientific theories to support their practices. Scientology stresses L. Ron Hubbard's scientific research and background as an academic, rather than a science fiction writer, to legitimate the development of Dianetics. The Blue Rose Ministry promotes Rev. Robert Short "Space Channel" as an "untiring researcher of archeology, Indian

²⁰ ODF Intelligence Report, 1994, p. 2.

cultures, prophecy, customs, UFO's and ESP"²¹ despite this having little to do with his work as a medium. Often founders of new religious movements with an academic background use their credentials as a form of validation despite there being no carry over between the prior academic training and the current religious pursuit. Examples of this would be Rev. Frederick Cale, Ph.D., "past-life regression expert" or Dianne Morrisey, Ph.D. who teaches how to attain out of body experiences. Also drawing upon academics or professionals to support the belief system implies a sense of credibility, this can be seen in the use of quotations and citing in the new religious movement's written material.

- 6) Efforts to criticize orthodox science as narrow-minded and promote a new or expanded version of scientific theories.

This form of polemic is often used by the movement as a reaction against criticism from the scientific community or the public concerning the theories developed by the group. A recent reaction can be seen in groups that recognize the picture provided by NASA in 1976 of the Martian surface as proof for extraterrestrial civilizations. The initial image showed the likeness of a sphinx face and other anomalies that these groups claimed supported their belief in advanced alien visitations to our solar system. NASA stated that the appearance of the images was due to light and shadow. In a more recent image provided in 1998 from the Mars Global Surveyor they reiterated their claim that the formations were natural. Despite the scientific disconfirmation of the anomalies, these groups maintain that the images upon the surface were created by extraterrestrials and that NASA is involved in a cover-up. In a similar manner SETI (the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) has

²¹ Blue Rose Ministry promotional pamphlet. Cornville, Arizona.

found no sign of space craft or advanced civilizations despite the beliefs held by many new religious movements that the universe teems with extraterrestrial life. Criticism of the project not being able to find proof for their beliefs has been done by claiming that the frequency used by SETI is not technologically advanced enough to receive communications. Other groups claim that the ships are cloaked or earth has been quarantined and is not allowed to correspond with these beings.

Other arguments against orthodox science rely upon archeological or anthropological discoveries that do not fit with the traditional paradigm of evolution outlined and supported by the scientific community. Also the existence higher light beings are viewed by theosophical based groups to be operating upon a higher dimension or plain of existence than can be viewed by current scientific technologies. Their criticism against the scientific community is based upon what they feel are proofs for the existence of spiritually developed beings and the inability of the scientific community to attempt to develop its technology to account for these proofs.

This is a very brief survey that highlights six of the most common forms of the amalgamation of science within new religious movements. Although the groups utilize this aspect of combination between science and religion in an attempt at validation, the usage is problematic for a number of reasons. The difficulty with the combination of religion and science remains situated in the different methodological focus of each endeavor. Despite relying upon scientific theories, methodologies, language, or technologies the basic framework of the belief system is myth based and religious in nature.

New developments in the dialogue between religion and science have formulated a relationship that recognizes the purpose of each field yet stress the inability of science to validate a religious belief.²² These new religious movements have disregarded these boundaries and now operate beyond the parameters of science and religion, challenging the paradigms of both pursuits. Despite being marginalized by scientific and traditional religious groups, these belief systems are thriving in our contemporary culture. Scientology reports to have millions of adherents while other groups such as the Raelians and the Academy for Future Science have memberships in the tens of thousands.

To examine this phenomenon, a detailed analysis of three new religious movements that incorporate science within the belief system will be undertaken in the remaining sections of the thesis. All three movements are successful in that they maintain a large number of adherents and have existed for a number of decades.²³ The analysis will examine the social structure of the new religious movement showing how the group functions within contemporary society. A detailed survey will then demonstrate how science has been incorporated into these belief systems, showing its uses, its failure as a valid scientific element, and the movements attempt to maintain the scientific component despite this failure.

²² See Ted Peters, ed., *Science and Theology: The New Consonance*, (Colorado, 1998).

²³ Rodney Stark has developed a framework for designating the potential success of new religious movements. The three movements used for this study do not conform to his classification. I recognize them as successful based solely upon their significant membership numbers and the longevity of their organizations. Rodney Stark, "How New Religions Succeed: A Theoretical Model", David Bromley and Philip Hammond, eds., *The Future of New Religious Movements*, (Georgia, 1987), p. 11-29.

Chapter 3

Transcendental Meditation

“Enlightenment is now subject to careful scientific investigation and can be systematically gained by almost anyone who chooses to do so.”

Harold Bloomfield, TM

Classification

Transcendental Meditation does not consider itself a religious movement but rather refers to its organization and beliefs as an “institution primarily occupied with scientific research and human development”.¹ Against their wishes secular authorities classified the movement as a religion during a court battle instigated by concerned individuals over the teaching of TM in public schools.² The factors that were used to support the view that Transcendental Meditation was indeed a religion are based upon two characteristics of the movement. The first is the initiation ritual participated in by all adherents when they begin learning the meditation technique. the second is based upon the philosophical components of the tradition.

Learning the meditation techniques from a trained teacher at the TM center requires very little commitment on the part of the new practitioner. However, after deciding to undertake the training there is an initiation ceremony. The new member is also required to remain off of non-prescription drugs for fifteen days prior to

¹ Mikael Rothstein, *Belief Transformations: Some Aspects of the Relation Between Science and Religion in Transcendental Meditation and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness*, (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 33.

learning the technique. For the actual ceremony they must bring with them twelve fresh flowers, a clean white handkerchief, and a contribution of money. Although the new member does not participate in the ritual, he or she must watch and listen to what the teacher is saying. Quoting from the official teacher bulletin, "Explanations of the Invocation" explains:

The Lord of Creation has to maintain all levels of creation—both gross and subtle. Therefore he cannot be limited to any level of time or space, for the Lord is omnipresent—the omnipresent level of life is his abode. The recital of the words helps us to gain Transcendental Consciousness and establish the eternal truth of gaining purity in the inner and outer fields of individual life. ...

The truth of the Brahma, the Creator, born of the lotus, rooted in the eternal Being, is conventionally and traditionally depicted by a picture where Lord Narayana, laying in restful pose, has the stem of the lotus emerging from his navel, and Brahma, the Creator, is seated on that lotus. So the wisdom of Transcendental Meditation, or the philosophy of the Absolute knowledge of integrated life came to the lotus-born Brahma from Lord Narayana.³

After the ceremony is completed the new practitioner is given a personal mantra and coached upon their meditating technique. The mantra is meant to be individual and members are told not to reveal it to anyone, even closest friends, however it is now common knowledge among those examining the TM movement that the mantra is in fact based upon the meditators age.

The second component concerning the philosophy of the movement will be examined in greater detail later in the study. However, at this time it is worth noting some of the basic universal precepts of the Transcendental Meditation Movement. The teachings of TM are based upon the beliefs and practices of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, although the TM movement may appear to present itself as an institution

² Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*, (Berkeley, 1985), p. 284.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

providing the opportunity for members to learn meditation, the overall goals of the organization have been listed as seven distinct aims;

1. To develop the full potential of the individual
2. To improve governmental achievements
3. To realize the highest ideals of education.
4. To solve the problems of crime and all behavior that brings unhappiness to the family of man.
5. To maximize the intelligent use of the environment.
6. To bring fulfillment to the economic aspirations of the individual and society.
7. To achieve the spiritual goals of mankind in this generation.⁴

Although the ruling by the federal court of New Jersey was later appealed, it was concluded that Transcendental Meditation was indeed a religious practice and therefore could not be taught in public schools.⁵ The secular ruling designating the movement as “religious” does not assist in the academic classification of the tradition, but several points presented, when examined, demonstrate the specific nature of the Transcendental Meditation Movement.

The primary consideration in designating Transcendental Meditation as a new religious movement and not a religious movement in a new country resides in the particular version of the Advaita-Vedanta tradition presented by Maharishi. The developed Hindu philosophy within the TM movement has a distinct characteristic separating it from the roots of its parentage. As an attempt to appeal to the western audience the TM movement was now recruiting, a conscious effort was enacted by Maharishi to develop the terminology and focus of the group by incorporating scientific language and methodology within the belief system. In a detailed examination of the role of science within the movement Mikael Rothstein notes

⁴ Harold Bloomfield and Robert Kory, *Happiness: The TM Program, Psychiatry, and Enlightenment*, (New York, 1976), p. 352.

⁵ Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedic Handbook of Cults in America*, (New York, 1986), p. 188.

several occasions that support this transition. Stating that, “the scientific dimension of the belief system was introduced in order to obtain legitimation.”⁶ This amalgamation of scientific terminology and focus altered the appeal of TM from a traditional Hindu audience and developed the tradition into a new religious movement distinct from its origins. The altered movement is now predominantly a western phenomenon, no longer having allure to the population of India.⁷

The general classification provided by Roy Wallis designates the Transcendental Meditation Movement as a *world-affirming* tradition. According to Wallis, Transcendental Meditation has a specific orientation to the society or social world from which it has emerged, embracing the world and affirming its normative goals and values.⁸ Typical of world-affirming movements TM presents itself as a religious alternative that functions within and supports the society in which it operates. TM also represents world-affirming traditions because it, “lacks most of the features traditionally associated with a religion”⁹. The prototypical characteristic of such groups is that they present a means the practitioner can employ to unlock their spiritual, physical, and emotional well being. The technique provided does not require the individual to radically alter their role in the contemporary society but rather provides a framework to be actualized in every day life as a means of benefit to the individual and the community.¹⁰

In world affirming movements, the social order is not viewed as entirely and irredeemably unjust, nor society as having departed from God as in the world-rejecting case. The beliefs of these movements are essentially individualistic. The source of suffering, of disability, of unhappiness, lies within oneself rather than in the

⁶ Mikael Rothstein, p. 43.

⁷ Ibid., p. 38.

⁸ Roy Wallis, *The Elementary Forms of the New Religious Life*, (London, 1984), p. 4.

⁹ Ibid., p. 20.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 22.

social structure. This view is stated in TM by Formen (1973: 235), but could be duplicated for many movements of this type:

When individuals within a society are tense, strained and dissatisfied with life, the foundation is laid for conflict in its various forms: riots, demonstrations, strikes, individual and collective crimes, wars. But a society composed of happy, creative individuals could not give rise to such outbreaks of discord.¹¹

The classification provided by Wallis examines several of the components of the TM beliefs system; his analysis of the movement provides a large portion of the data used to support his framework. Issues concerning the 'Maharishi Effect' and the "Governors of the Age of Enlightenment' demonstrate the role TM has chosen to play in contemporary society and the position of the practitioners in relation to the religious tradition and their environment.¹²

As already noted in the examination of the secularization thesis the economic strategies employed by the group to finance its operation have a direct impact upon how the group presents itself to the public in general and the function of the membership within the group. The Transcendental Meditation Movement presents itself to the community at large as a distinctly client based organization. "Clients are recipients of religiously sponsored charitable, therapeutic, recreational, and medical services. Their relationship is defined in relation to specific services rendered. They may, initially, have no interest in the belief system at all, although they may in time come to think of themselves as affiliates."¹³

Although the classification of "client based" NRM has been used by a number of researchers, the typology presented by Bird and Westley presents the most cohesive framework for examining this phenomena. I disagree with the later

¹¹ Ibid., p. 24.

classification presented by James Beckford concerning the role of the client in the tradition, particularly his view that “clients accept whatever the movements are offering—wisdom, skills, therapy, friendship—on a contractual basis with very limited assumptions about the movements’ impact on the conduct of their life.”¹⁴ Although it can be shown that clients are participating within the NRM in an attempt to receive specific goods or benefits, many sincerely seek out such benefits to have a direct impact upon their life. This will be demonstrated with the client based participation in TM and Scientology, where direct benefits are sought in an attempt to remove negative traits (stress, drug or alcohol problems, emotional disorders, etc.) from the new practitioners life.

This classification also highlights the resistance presented by TM when they were confronted by secular authorities and forced to identify themselves as a religion. The movement had begun an internal campaign in the late 1960’s to present itself as a scientific based organization, promising specific benefits for services purchased through TM. As noted by Bird and Westley this is a characteristic element in many contemporary religious groups in that they, “approach potentially interested individuals by inviting them to participate in a client like role, without directly seeking any kind of formal commitment.”¹⁵ The presentation of the TM material to perspective meditators and the proselytizing aspect of TM developed a specific client based aspect of the religious movement. The method of incorporating science within the client based appeal of the organization will be examined in further in the study as

¹² Ibid., p. 24-25.

¹³ Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁴ Beckford, p. 83.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

one of the fundamental aspects to the incorporation of science within the Transcendental Meditation Movement.

A second interpretive framework for classification is structured upon the relationship of the membership of the group to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the moral accountability experienced through this relationship. In this analysis moral accountability is defined by Frederick Bird as, "the individual awareness that a person is expected to act in keeping with moral expectations."¹⁶ The framework recognizes three classification of relationships between the adherent and the master or sacred power revered by the organization. Through an analysis of new religious movements in North America, Bird classifies membership of adherents into three categories, "(a) devotees of a sacred lord or lordly truth, (b) disciples of a revered and holy discipline, (c) or apprentices skilled at unlocking the mysteries of a sacred, or inner power."¹⁷

Each typology of adherent functions within a different relationship to sacred power, authority structure and moral model. The TM movement is representative of the apprenticeship group, which offers its practitioners a unique moral structure based upon their own personal power and authority gained through techniques taught by the Maharishi. Through the meditation practices of TM members are taught that within their own self they have the ability to function in perfect accordance with "Natural Law". By being in harmony with Natural Law, they no longer need to be concerned about making mistakes or acting improperly when making moral decisions.

The enlightened person does not make mistakes; his [her] every action brings joy to himself [herself] and others. The basis of this skill in action is attunement with all

¹⁶ Frederick Bird, "The Pursuit of Innocence: New Religious Movements and Moral Accountability", *Sociological Analysis* 1979, 40, p. 335.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

the laws of nature through establishment of individual awareness at the least excited state of consciousness—optimum mental temperature and baseline happiness.¹⁸

One further dimension of enlightenment deserves mention—the ability to perform spontaneous right action. Wise men of every generation have sought ultimate criteria for right and wrong behavior. Laws have evolved to fill the need for a system of right and wrong, but laws paint a picture of right and wrong only with broad strokes. How can a person always know what is the right course of action in his [her] daily life?¹⁹

In the face of a breakdown in cultural values, Maharishi points out that one absolute criterion of right and wrong is accordance with all the laws of nature. If a person acts naturally to bring the best effect to himself [herself] and others, his [her] actions are right.²⁰

The level of moral accountability presented to the members of TM is based upon the teachings of Maharishi and his philosophy concerning the individuals relationship to a sacred power, in this case “Natural Law”. One of the important characteristics of TM is the manner in which support for the Natural Law theory is attempted to be verified through contemporary physics. Although the teachings of Maharishi are based upon the Advaita-Vedanta system of philosophy and “Natural Law” has become representative of Brahma, membership is not required to take the teacher’s word as the source of verification but rather they are presented with a series of complicated system of physics concerning the Unified Field Theory or Grand Unification Theories as proof.

Summary

The Transcendental Meditation Movement has undergone a number of alterations in the manner the movement is presented to the general public. Although always maintaining itself as a world-affirming movement in social structure, the

¹⁸ Harold Bloomfield and Robert Kory, *Happiness: The TM Program, Psychiatry, and Enlightenment*. (New York, 1976), pp. 329-330.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

client-based appeal of the organization has shifted drastically. Moving from a counter-culture religious movement embodying the 60's, to a technologically, scientifically oriented religion of the nineties, represents this change. In an attempt to gain followers and participants in its organization TM responded to the changing times that affected contemporary culture. This alteration supports the theories outlined earlier regarding the religious market and appeal of organizations attempting to gain participants. All components of the TM movement, including their moral accountability, are situated upon scientific principles.

Science within Transcendental Meditation

The movement now known as Transcendental Meditation or TM was begun in the United States by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (formerly Mahesh Prasad Varma) in 1959. The movement was originally called the Spiritual Regeneration Movement and presented itself as a form of Indian Meditation techniques, beliefs and practices. The Spiritual Regeneration Movement had followed a fairly recent development in the India tradition by attempting to present itself to the Western World, recruiting followers outside of its normal sphere of influence.²¹

The religious tradition presented by Maharishi was a continued development of the Advaita-Vedanta tradition linked to Sankara (788-820), a religious innovator in India. The Maharishi has claimed authority through a discipleship relationship with the renowned guru Swami Brahmananda Saraswati (1869-1953); a well revered representative of the Sankara tradition. According to Maharishi he approached

Saraswati with the prospect of becoming a disciple while he was a student in physics at Allahabad University. According to the teachings of TM he was told to wait until he had graduated before joining the order, he did so and became one of Saraswati's closest disciples.²²

During the early 1960's the Transcendental Meditation movement presented itself as a component of the counter culture movement. The teachings appealed to a younger generation that was experimenting with alternative forms of religious beliefs and practices. Through talk shows, press and also the attention he received by having well know personalities join his movement the Maharishi became a recognized guru figure.

His appearances were in the nature of spectacles. Many eager young persons filled auditoria in the 1960's to see the master, with his tiger-skin pallet, his long gray hair and beard, roses twirling in his hands, his twinkly eyes and bubbling giggle. He hired PR men and began to court personalities in the movies, TV, and sports. Mia Farrow, then married to Frank Sinatra, became a meditator, as did the Beatles. ... TM became something of the vogue.²³

During this period the TM Movement presented itself as a viable alternative to the religious traditions of the West. However, as a component of the counter culture movement TM had limited appeal to the general population. With the well publicized disenchantment felt by the members of the Beatles after their trip to the training center in Rishikesh, India, membership began to decline.

Since its founding in 1959 it has gone through several stages. During the halcyon sixties, the Maharishi and TM were highly colorful, highly publicized facets of the 'youth culture'. But with the Beatles episode, pictures of the master riding in

²¹ The brief outline presented concerning the formation and development of Transcendental Meditation has been drawn from a number of sources and represents a compilation of general characteristics and developments of the organization.

²² This account was presented as an overview of the relationship between Maharishi and Swami Brahmananda Sarawati in the teachings of TM. See Jack Forem, *Transcendental Meditation—Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the Science of Creative Intelligence*, (London, 1984), p. 208.

²³ Robert Ellwood and Harry Partin, *Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America*, (New Jersey, 1988), p. 194.

chauffeured limousines and an ill-advised speaking-concert tour with a famous rock group, produced an inevitable reaction as the bubble burst.²⁴

Early publications from the Maharishi were specifically Hindu and religious in nature. Works such as *Love and God*, *Art of Living*, and *Commentary on the Bhagavad-Gita*, appealed to a small portion of the population of the United States. Apparently after returning to India in 1968, Maharishi was disappointed with the appeal and low rate of initiations. The several years spent participating in the counterculture movement of 'peace and love' and 'communal living' was not overly beneficial to the promotion of TM as a belief system.²⁵

A thorough examination of the membership statistics presented by Stark and Bainbridge demonstrates the slow and unsteady increase in monthly initiations over this period (figure 3, p. 150).²⁶ The greatest growth to the organization occurred after a transition and alteration in the presentation of the TM program to the general public. Correlating the establishment of the Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa, the statistics of Stark and Bainbridge demonstrate a dramatic increase can be noted during the mid seventies. The peak to the statistical analysis occurred in 1975 with a reported 292,517 people learning TM in the United States (figure 4, p. 151).²⁷

The development of MIU coincided with several other factors that shifted the appearance of the Transcendental Meditation Movement from the semblance of an eastern philosophical religious tradition to a more secular and scientific appearing belief system. Beginning in the early 1970's support for TM began appearing in academic and scientific circles. The earliest presentation of scientific

²⁴ Ibid., p. 195.

²⁵ Mikael Rothstein, p. 69.

experimentation to validate the claims made by Maharishi and his practitioners came from Robert Keith Wallace. Wallace completed his Ph.D. dissertation in Physiology at the University of California, Los Angeles, examining the meditation practice and benefits of TM. A summary of his findings were published under the title "Physiological Effects of Transcendental Meditation", in the March 1970 issue of *Science*.²⁸ Several other publications followed from his initial findings including "A Wakeful Hypometabolic Physiological State"²⁹ and "The Physiology of Meditation"³⁰.

In the analysis of TM presented by Stark and Bainbridge they recognize the publications from Keith Wallace as the most important public relations success of the movement. In their opinion this placed TM above contemporary new religious groups that were participating within the counter culture movement, giving them the opportunity to recruit from and appeal to a new base of potential membership.

TM's greatest public relations success was not the movement's endorsement by the Beatles musical group or other celebrities, but the large number of articles published in scientific journals, apparently proving TM's claims or at least giving them scientific status. ... These articles proclaimed to a wide scientific audience that TM produced a new state of consciousness, distinguishable from the waking state, sleep, or the hypnotic state. Although the very concept of 'state of consciousness' remains of dubious scientific value, at the end of the 1960's, many scholars accepted it and lay people assumed it was a valid part of respectable psychology.³¹

²⁶ Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*. (Berkeley, 1985), pp. 291-294.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

²⁸ R. K. Wallace, "Physiological Effects of Transcendental Meditation", *Science* 167, 1751-1754, (1970).

²⁹ R. K. Wallace, H. Benson and A. F. Wilson, "A Wakeful Hypometabolic Physiological State". *American Journal of Physiology* 221, 795-799, (1971).

³⁰ R. K. Wallace and H. Benson, "The Physiology of Meditation", *Scientific America* 226(2), 84-90, (1972).

³¹ Stark and Bainbridge, pp. 285-286.

Shortly after the first publication appeared by Wallace, TM undertook a drastic alteration in the manner the movement was presented to the general public and the scientific community at large. Establishing the TM movement as a valid component of the academic community, the Maharishi International University formed and began offering courses through rented space at the University of Santa Barbara. Within two years MIU was offering 24 courses including, “world literature and the Science of Creative Intelligence, art and SCI, technology and SCI, music and SCI, psychology and SCI, biological sciences and SCI, and physics and SCI.”³²

The presentation of scientific terminology and method within the TM belief system was directly undertaken by Maharishi and his close followers in an attempt to increase the appeal of the movement. The Science of Creative Intelligence, or SCI, was developed upon the principles of Transcendental Meditation, but specifically give a technological sounding name to have appeal to the academic body the movement was attempting to enroll in courses at the university. This alteration in the presentation of the TM belief system was directly reflective of the influence of the need for “client” appeal within the belief system and was first presented at Stanford University shortly before Wallace finished his thesis.

In the fall of 1969 the Associated Students of Stanford University (ASSU) nominated me the ASSU professor for that year. In this capacity we were able to present a course of our choice. Rather than calling the course ‘The Principle and Practice of Transcendental Meditation’, which didn’t sound very academic, we called it ‘The Science of Creative Intelligence’. The admissions office gave us 25 enrollment cards, thinking that would be enough, but at the first meeting of the new course over 300 students came!...It was a great experience to teach the Science of Creative Intelligence (SCI) in the context of an academically accredited course. This course in SCI is what really developed the interest of the academic community in Maharishi’s teaching.³³

³² Ibid., 289.

³³ Quoting Jerry Jarvis in Jack Forem, *Transcendental Meditation—Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the Science of Creative Intelligence*, (London, 1984), p. 216. Taken from Mikael Rothstein, pp. 40-41.

The quote from Jerry Jarvis demonstrates that the new presentation of science as a component of TM was deliberately used to appeal to the academic community for increased interest and membership. This specifically relates to the world-affirming nature of the movement and its client based component for recruiting membership.

Many of the world-affirming movements ... have also drawn substantially upon developments in modern science and psychology for their beliefs and practices—or at least for the rhetoric of their presentation—and, marketing a soteriological commodity in quite highly secularized surroundings, the tendency has been to emphasize the scientific character of their ideas and techniques, and to suppress the more overtly religious aspects.³⁴

Due to the structure of the organization any such alteration in the language and scientific component of the movement would have to come initially from the Maharishi himself. In a detailed analysis of the TM movement Mikael Rothstein shows that this was indeed the case. In 1972 talking of the 'experiences of gods and angels' Maharishi stated: "It was found that those experiences can also be expressed in the languages of the West, which in modern times [is] scientific language. objective exploration of objective explanation."³⁵ "Originally the idea of combining religion and science was Maharishi's, and the introductory work in order to establish this combination as being meaningful was conducted by him alone. At the same time, however, there is no reason to believe that Maharishi's efforts to bring together science and religion are anything but strategic."³⁶

³⁴ Roy Wallis, 1984, p. 34.

³⁵ Quoting the Maharishi from a 1972 lecture. from Mikael Rothstein, p. 37.

³⁶ Ibid., 38.

The shift beginning in the 1970's to incorporate science within the belief system became one of the central focuses of the organization. From that point forward the scientific confirmation of the claims made by the TM organization concerning the TM practice was heavily promoted by the organization, to the point of limiting the presentation of the former religious aspects of the tradition. Eric Woodrum has noted this alteration in his classification of the phases and transitions undertaken by the TM movement.³⁷ Woodrum notes three phases in the development of the TM tradition, the third and final phase represents a secularization of the religion, where other-worldly references have been completely replaced by scientific and secular vocabulary.

Although TM came to rely heavily upon scientific confirmation of the benefits of their practice, it must be noted that it is only a selected inclusion of scientific literature used by the group. Studies that do not support TM are not mentioned, and those that provide only partial support have been used selectively and are often edited.

After the publication of Keith Wallace's summary of his thesis research in *Science*, 1970, a number of investigators attempted to verify his findings. Demetri Kanellakos and Jerome Lukas received funding from the Stanford Research Institute and published a survey and assessment of the scientific literature that had been produced examining the TM practice and its benefits. The methodology of their study was undertaken to assess three particular aspects, "(1) to prepare a literature survey of the physiological and psychological effects of Transcendental Meditation

³⁷ Eric Woodrum, "Religious Organizational Change; An Analysis Based On the TM Movement", *Review of Religious Research*, Vol. 24, No.2, pp. 89-103.

(TM), (2) to carry out a pilot study to determine the teachability of the TM technique to a non-predisposed section of the population... and (3) to replicate some of the findings of the investigative studies on meditators that have been reported in literature."³⁸

In the summary and conclusion of the study the researchers note that:

A number of papers (many unpublished and many based on pilot or preliminary experiments of poor or questionable design) have reported various physiological, biochemical and psychological variables associated with the practice of Transcendental Meditation (TM) in both novice and seasoned meditators. Taken at face value, the data gathered thus far appear to suggest that some consistent and characteristic psychobiological effects accompany the practice of TM. But these are apparently shared by some of the other meditation techniques.

The degree to which the psychobiological effects reported for TM may have features in common with effects produced by other techniques of deep relaxation (including yoga, Zen, progressive relaxation, autogenic training and biofeedback) and the reliability of the reported effects remain to be determined by further research.³⁹

This confirmation that the scientific community accepted some of the benefits of the practice of TM but through their examination found other relaxation and meditative practices equally beneficial did not support TM in the manner they had hoped. This became a difficult issue for the TM organization. TM had altered its appeal to the general population by incorporating scientific data to support the effectiveness of its practices, now that same scientific community had methodologically proven that the benefits of meditation could be gained without the institution or TM organization.

The presentation of the scientific community's findings did not remain isolated from the public sphere. In 1975, Herbert Benson, M.D. published a number one best seller demonstrating the effectiveness of meditation, the proper method and

³⁸ Demetri Kanellakos and Jerome Lukas, *The Psychobiology of Transcendental Meditation*, (Menlo Park, 1974), p. iii.

technique, and his scientific findings. His book demonstrated that the “Relaxation Response” was as equally beneficial as the TM practice.⁴⁰ Receiving funding from a variety of medical research groups, Benson undertook a detailed examination of the TM practice at Harvard University. Working with several scholars, including R. K. Wallace, Benson received permission from Maharishi and volunteers from a group of practitioners of the TM tradition. Despite the initial support received by the TM organization, his findings would challenge the tradition showing that the same benefits could be gained without having to join TM. Although four articles would be published in scientific journals showing the benefits of the TM practice, Benson strongly advocated a secular form of meditation, which he believed (and demonstrated) was just as beneficial.

In his best selling book, *The Relaxation Response*, Benson correlated the benefits of meditation as a counter to hypertension brought on by the “fight or flight response” inherent in our human nature. He acknowledged the benefits of TM as a practice but also advocated a simple method of meditation that would produce the same benefits.

It is important to remember that there is not a single method that is unique in eliciting the Relaxation Response. For example, Transcendental Meditation is one of many techniques that incorporate these components. However we believe it is not necessary to use the specific method and specific *secret*, personal sound taught by Transcendental Meditation. *Tests at the Thorndike Memorial Laboratory of Harvard have shown that a similar technique used with any sound or phrase or prayer or mantra brings forth the same physiological changes noted during Transcendental Meditation.*⁴¹ (Benson’s emphasis)

According to Benson stress and stressful situations caused by our environment create hyper-tension, leading to a number of medical problems. This can easily be

³⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

⁴⁰ Herbert Benson, M.D., *The Relaxation Response*, (New York, 1975).

countered or reduced by practicing a simple technique of meditation for 20 minutes, two times a day. The relaxation response requires the individual to; 1) find a quiet, calm environment, 2) use a mental device to focus your attention, this could be a simple word such as “one” or any sound, word, or phrase, 3) have a passive attitude, disregard distracting thoughts and don’t concern yourself with issues such as your meditative progress, just return to the mental device. and 4) sit in a comfortable position.⁴²

It appeared that the scientific component and conformation of the practices of TM had backfired upon the organization. Contrary to their proclamation, the TM practice was not a unique or special form of meditation producing special benefits apart from other practices. To counter this scientific challenge to their claims TM continued to present the argument that they were unique, using selective quotes and a variety of sources for support. The TM organization also now had the ability to produce and publish its own scientific verification through MIU (Maharishi International University) press and MIU scholars.

Publications produced by the MIU organization continued to endorse their position that TM was a unique and special form of meditation that produced measurable results, unlike any other practice available:

Often people ask whether the same effects of the Transcendental Meditation program might be achieved through just cat napping, relaxation exercises, biofeedback techniques, or do-it-yourself ‘meditation’ practices picked up from books or magazines. The unique brainwave changes during the Transcendental Meditation technique distinguishes the TM program from any other practices.⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 161.

⁴² Ibid., p. 159-161.

⁴³ Robert Kory, *The Transcendental Meditation Program for Business People*, (AMACOM, 1976), p. 31.

Although they continued to develop the correlation between scientific confirmation and the unique benefits of the TM program, the organization also developed other components of the tradition to support its client base. Stark and Bainbridge viewed this alteration in the purely secular presentation of the TM tradition as an alteration in the compensators being provided by the tradition to its membership and prospective clientele. By tracing the rise and decline of TM initiations they concluded that in an attempt to compensate for the drastic reduction in numbers from the period of 1975 to 1977, TM began announcing new and revolutionary ideas. These new ideas altered the trend that had begun in the movement to present TM as too secularized of a phenomenon.⁴⁴ Namely, why would an individual pay a high price and undergo an initiation ceremony when the same benefits could be gained through a five dollar self help book.⁴⁵

In a 1977 publication TM announced a new breakthrough in human potential called the *siddhis*, promising such things as, "the ability to know the past and future, knowledge of other minds, the ability to become invisible, passage through the sky...."⁴⁶ Scientific confirmation was still used in an attempt to validate the practice but the correlations between the new claims and scientific confirmation are tenuous. Stark and Bainbridge viewed this period in the evolution of the TM organization as a period when the movement shifted from a client cult to a cult movement. The claims now promised by TM in the form of clairvoyance, levitation, and invisibility

⁴⁴ Rodney Stark, "How New Religions Succeed: A Theoretical Model", David Bromley and Philip Hammond ed., *The Future of New Religious Movements*, (Georgia, 1987), p. 23-24.

⁴⁵ Martin Ebon, *The Relaxation Controversy*, (Winnipeg, 1976).

⁴⁶ Stark and Bainbridge, p. 299.

represented “a full package of supernatural claims compromising the general compensator of real religion.”⁴⁷

Although the phase demonstrated by Stark and Bainbridge can be correlated to the statistical decline of membership in the movement, TM continued to present itself in correlation with scientific confirmation. Although new claims were made by the TM organization (such as yogic flying), they still tried to associate the benefits of their practice with measurable statistical analysis. Even the higher state of ‘enlightenment’ now being taught to practitioners was, according to TM, scientifically demonstrable. “Enlightenment is now subject to careful scientific investigation and can be systematically gained by almost anyone who chooses to do so.”⁴⁸ “Exciting research on the neurophysiology of enlightenment is under way at Maharishi European Research University (MERU) in Switzerland.”⁴⁹ “With the neurophysiology of enlightenment becoming better defined, Maharishi has designed course to speed the process of gaining enlightenment.”⁵⁰ Although never admitting other forms of meditation produced the same effects as TM, they now presented benefits that only they could produce.⁵¹

Beginning in the mid 1980’s the TM organization also began a strong campaign to align itself with a new theoretical paradigm presented by non TM physicists concerning the Unified Field theory or the ‘Grand Unification Theories’. According to TM this confirmed the Maharishi’s teachings concerning the expression

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 300.

⁴⁸ Bloomfield and Kory, p. 331.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 334.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 335.

⁵¹ The transcendental meditation state is referred to by TM as “restful alertness” and is considered the fourth state of consciousness. The fifth state is called the enlightened state and is the “permanence of unbounded awareness”. Ibid., p. 333.

of the Perennial Truth or Theory of Natural Law.⁵² TM now presented its methods as a source of verifiable moral accountability to perspective clients and its practitioners. The theory of Natural Law represented an opportunity for the practitioner to tap into the universal flow of all energy, living in harmony with all aspects of nature. According to TM this new source of harmony removed the possibility of the individual making mistakes or wrong decisions.

Current literature from TM continues to promote the benefits of their practice with selective documented scientific evidence, often using very complicated scientific language inaccessible to the common person. In the case of the ability of TM to give instant relief from chronic disorders they state: “ The principle is explained mathematically through Chaos theory and the Theories of Self-Organization of modern science. An example is found in autocatalytic cyclic reaction chains whose dynamic patterns easily shift from chaos to order if specific control parameters are slightly varied.”⁵³ This combination has become the central component of the TM organization in presenting itself within our contemporary society.

Each course, whether it is yogic flying or Maharishi Jyotish (a system of divination), offered by TM centers or Maharishi Vedic Colleges, has a corresponding account of its benefits as verified by MIU researchers or other studies.(Figure 5, p. 152) The introduction of material promoting TM always contains phrases such as, “A proven program for greater happiness, vitality and success”, “Validated by Rigorous Scientific Research”⁵⁴. “The scientific research on the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi program of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is the largest and strongest body

⁵² Mikael Rothstein, p. 85.

⁵³ *Enlightenment*, 1998 Vol. 1, no. 3, p. 8.

of research in the world on any program to develop human potential.”⁵⁵ “To date the benefits of Transcendental Meditation have been confirmed by more than 350 scientific studies in 160 universities and research centers all around the world including Harvard, UCLA, Stanford and McGill University.” (Figure 6, p. 153)

Even aspects of the movements teachings such as the ‘Maharishi effect’ and the ability to lower the crime rates of areas are supported by TM researchers and presented to the public as a scientifically validated phenomena. “Scientists have named this phenomena the Maharishi Effect—the finding that even 1% of the population practicing the Transcendental Technique, or the square root of one percent of the population practicing the more advanced Transcendental Meditation-Sidhi program, improve the quality of life, as indicated by such changes as reduced crime and sickness in the larger society.”⁵⁶

The ability for modern scientific research to correlate the reduction in crime and sickness to the practices of TM is not possible. There are simply too many factors present that effect the situation. However, the same inability of the scientific community to prove the statement does not allow for its scientific disproof. Claims now made by TM concerning abstract physics theories in relation to their belief in Natural Law reside in same sphere of hypothesis. Unlike the earlier reaction from the scientific community to show the benefits of meditation could be achieved through similar practices other than TM; Natural Law, crime reduction based upon

⁵⁴ *Enlightenment*, 1998 Vol. 1, no.3.

⁵⁵ TM world wide web page, <http://www.tm.org/research/summary.html>

⁵⁶ David Orme-Johnson, “Summary of Scientific Research on the Transcendental Meditation and TM-SIDHI Programs”, <http://www.tm.org/research/summary.html>

meditation, the ability to know anything, do anything, and accomplish anything cannot be verified.

The TM movement continues to present itself as a scientific endeavor. The most recent development has been the establishment of the Open Learning University. Through satellite transmissions people may take courses within their own home or at local Maharishi institutes. Although the movement is supported scientifically through the attempts made by its own members, and not external authorities, it remains situated upon the premise that all of its beliefs and practices are scientific. Despite being disconfirmed on several occasions regarding its scientific belief system, the Transcendental Meditation Movement has become absolutely structured upon its conception of scientific principles. Membership within the movement accepts the claims made by the scientists and scholars of the Maharishi Institute, no matter what scientific argument is used to disprove their theories, they will present their own scientific argument to support their view.

Summary

In an application of the material provided concerning Transcendental Meditation and the 6 primary components used as a framework for analysis, it can be demonstrated that the TM movement relies heavily upon 4 of the 6 aspects.

- 1) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of the group's beliefs.

In the analysis of TM it has been demonstrated that its founder, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, strategically brought together religion and science in an attempt to legitimate their belief system. When the TM system was reintroduced to the public in

the 1970's all components concerning its beliefs were now associated with scientific principles. The movement developed this application to an extreme level by stating that their beliefs were in fact not religious and went to great lengths to legally defend their new secular position. Issues concerning Natural Law or sacred power were related to physics and the concept of Brahma was expressed in scientific terms and through scientific methodologies, no longer represented as an aspect of traditional Hindu philosophy.

- 2) Claims that scientific investigation and methodologies demonstrate the validity of certain or all of the group's practices.

This component has become the most developed and the primary aspect of the presentation of TM to the public and its membership. Every practice and technique taught by TM is related to specific scientific investigations and studies. Their teachings concerning meditation, divination, astrology and even Yogic flying, are demonstrated by the organization to produce measured and verifiable results for the practitioner. Drawing primarily from their own scholarship and research done through the Maharishi Universities and colleges, TM presents all of their practices in a scientifically legitimated manner. None of the practices of TM are presented without some form of apparent support or validation from the scientific community. This insures that claims made by the group concerning their practices appear to have been legitimated by secular authorities in an attempt to remove any aspect of religious or mythic status from their practices.

- 3) The utilization of modern scientifically crafted techniques or technologies as tools augmenting the religious narratives and rituals.

This is a component of the framework of analysis that TM does not incorporate into their belief system. Unlike other groups such as est, TM does not use bio-feedback machines to assist in the development of human potential. According to the TM movement's practices and beliefs, the individual has within them the ability to achieve higher states of consciousness or enlightenment, without the need for technological assistance. Although in studies done by the TM organization the most modern and current technologies are used to study the practices of the group, they are not relied upon to assist the individual in their spiritual development.

4) Attempts to restate mythic or spiritual accounts in the language of science.

In 1972 the Maharishi stated that when discussing the experiences of gods and angels: "It was found that those experiences can also be expressed in the languages of the West, which in modern times [is] scientific language, objective exploration of objective explanation."⁵⁷ With this intention in mind the Maharishi restated the traditional religious myth of the Hindu, Advaita-Vedanta philosophy, using scientific language and technology. Even the teaching of the Rik Veda text to practitioners is promoted as a development of the scientific pursuit:

One Verse of Rik Veda Offers Total Knowledge—All theories of all disciplines of modern science, and knowledge of all areas of Maharishi's Vedic science, the science and technology of consciousness—available to every student in one's own self-referral consciousness, for a life of perfect harmony and all possibilities.⁵⁸

5) Attempts to lend credibility to the belief system through scientific or academic credentials or associations.

This aspect is another primary component of the presentation of Transcendental Meditation. The organization continually makes reference to the

⁵⁷ Quoting the Maharishi from a 1972 lecture, from Mikael Rothstein, p. 37.

⁵⁸ Maharishi Vedic College promotional pamphlet, 1994-1996.

This aspect is another primary component of the presentation of Transcendental Meditation. The organization continually makes reference to the claim made by the group that the Maharishi has an academic background in physics. All members of the organization in positions of authority are also presented as being academic or scientific experts, although their degrees may be from the TM universities or colleges. The presidents of the International Organization are Dr. Bevan Morris and Dr. Tony Nader, and the regional president for Canada is Dr. Neil Paterson.

- 6) Efforts to criticize orthodox science as narrow-minded and promote a new or expanded version of scientific theories.

The TM organization does not include this as a component of their belief system or practices. In their presentation they attempt to maintain an amicable position between the current scientific community and their organization. Even when there is a contradiction between current scientific research and their practices (the major case being research that supports meditation as a benefit but not the TM practice as being any different than other meditation practices) they do not criticize the research. By using contemporary research selectively they incorporate the information into their belief system while maintaining a working relationship with non-TM scientists and researchers.

By drawing upon these four components Transcendental Meditation presents itself in a holistically scientific manner. The entire TM organization, from the grass routes level to their highest positions of authority, has incorporated science and scientific research as a primary component of their organization. All teachings, practices, and myths are based upon scientific elements. All members in authority

have academic or scientific training and a relationship between the non-TM scientific community and TM scientists is fostered. The incorporation of scientific method and practices, scientific findings, and scientific theory is done as a complete package representing their religious tradition and beliefs in a very modern and contemporary manner.

Chapter 4

The Church of Scientology

“While Scientology owes a spiritual debt to the Eastern faiths, it was born in the West and its beliefs are expressed in the technological language of the mid-Twentieth Century. Scientology adds to these spiritual concepts, a precise and workable technology for applying those concepts to life.”

The Church of Scientology

Classification

Establishing Scientology as a religious tradition has been a long battle for the organization. Beginning with the founding of the first Scientology Church in 1954, the organization has met firm resistance from government and the public concerning its practices and belief systems. The battle between Scientology and some governments has been so dramatic that they have listed a detailed account of the attempts made, through legal channels, to suppress the organization and its practices.¹ Called “The Victories of Scientology”, the organization catalogues each event of persecution it has faced in court over its right to practice its belief system and use the methods and technologies outlined by Hubbard.²

Beginning in 1956 Scientology has been active protecting its own rights and also those groups that practiced alternative therapies. Much of the difficulty came from the use of the E-meter and the psychological therapy used by the group in

¹ For a detailed analysis of the challenges faced by Scientology in maintaining tax exempt status see Roy Wallis, “Societal Reaction to Scientology”, Roy Wallis, Ed., *Sectarianism: Analysis of Religious and Non-Religious Sects*, (London, 1975), p. 86-116.

² *What is Scientology: A Guidebook to the World's Fastest Growing Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1993), p. 489-501.

auditing. After gaining recognition as a religious institution by the Internal Revenue Service in 1957, repeated challenges by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to seize the equipment of the organization have been repealed by Federal Courts. As recently as 1991 in Toronto, the courts have ruled that material seized in raids against the church was unconstitutional and ordered its return.³

These legal battles represent the difficult position the Scientology organization faced, and still faces, in presenting itself as a religious tradition. The reason for this difficulty resides in the world-accommodating nature of the movement. Although Scientology has organizations it refers to as churches and officials it refers to as clergy, the movement itself is focused primarily upon the advancement of the individual. Their religious beliefs represent a technique for individual spiritual advancement closely aligned with the early practice of Dianetic therapy. This focus upon the individual represents a form of religious practice concerned more with, “individual experience and individual subjective reality rather than social reality or social concern.”⁴

Wallis considers these characteristics of the Scientology movement when he states that it is one of the most “notorious of the world-affirming new religious movements”.⁵ The religious focus of the movement is completely devoted to individual achievement and developing the practitioner to function within the world on a super-human level. Bryan Wilson has classified the goals of the organization as “manipulationist”, in that they offer the believer an esoteric means of achieving

³ Ibid., p. 500.

⁴ Roy Wallis, 1984, p. 26.

⁵ Ibid., p. 28.

superiority within the world and society.⁶ The purpose of the religion is to impart knowledge and specific techniques that enable its membership to pass “the Bridge to Total Freedom”, making them superior to the masses of people that have not received this esoteric knowledge.⁷

To this end the Scientology movement begins its recruitment structured upon a client-based appeal.⁸ In 1956, Hubbard developed “the three methods of dissemination” for recruiting membership.⁹ The first entails an aggressive attempt to solicit individuals by placing newspaper advertisements that state you are a personal councilor who “will talk to anyone ... about anything”.¹⁰ This appeal presents the Scientologist in a manner somewhat like a councilor who can provide the psychological services the client requires. The second method called “Illness Research” was also done by placing advertisements in newspapers, this time to solicit individuals seeking help in recovery from illness. After an initial phone interview those coming to the session are given free auditing and assured that they will receive improved abilities (such as walking in the case of polio).¹¹ The third method, “Casualty Contact” requires the Scientologist to read through newspapers looking for

⁶ Bryan Wilson, *Religious Sects: A Sociological Study*, (New York, 1970), p. 144-166.

⁷ *What is Scientology: A Guidebook to the World's Fastest Growing Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1993), p. 95-99.

⁸ Roy Wallis uses the term “enrolment economy” stating, “Its economic base is dependent upon the sale of services in the form of auditing and training, books, E-Meters and memberships. Like any sales organization, therefore, Scientology is faced with marketing the available range of products...” Wallis, 1977, p. 157. This classification represents a parallel with the terminology used by Bird and Westley and therefore I will continue to use the classification “client-based”.

⁹ L. Ron Hubbard, *The Professional Auditor's Bulletin*, from Roy Wallis, *The Road to Total Freedom: A Sociological Analysis of Scientology*, (New York, 1977), p. 157.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

people bereaved or injured and approach them as a minister, give them nominal support and then leave a card telling where Sunday services will be held.¹²

By 1964 Hubbard had developed his attempt to petition a specific market, purchased mailing lists and placing adds in magazines that appealed to individuals involved in self-betterment and mystical groups. General wide spread appeals were also used, offering free “personality tests” or using promotional statements such as, “We don’t care what your problem is we can help you. Get some auditing.”¹³

By these means the client appeal of scientology had taken two avenues, both offering services to the potential member. The first promised help for emotional or physical problems. The second offered a means to attain a more developed personality, better able to function within society and achieve greater pay, promotion or fulfillment at work. Promotional pamphlets from 1973 and 1974 read:

BE A MEMBER OF SCIENTOLOGY

The world has waited thousands of years for a technology to change conditions for the better. Scientology is the answer.¹⁴

UNDERSTAND OTHERS

These books give you the keys to understanding the human mind and human nature. With them you have the Vital Knowledge necessary to understanding others, handling them, and establishing sane growing relationships.¹⁵

The messages are ambiguous enough to promise benefits for any individual in any situation. All that is needed is for the perspective member to take the first level course in Scientology.

The Scientology movement has also been able to promote itself through their more successful members. Most notably, Hollywood movie stars have come forward

¹² Ibid., p. 158.

¹³ Ibid., p. 162.

¹⁴ *Change* 55, 1973, from Wallis, 1977, p. 162.

¹⁵ *Change* 62, 1974, from Wallis, 1977, p. 162.

and defended Scientology as a religion and promoted its benefits as a therapy. In his interview with *People Magazine* as one of “twenty five legends from twenty five years”, Tom Cruise reported that Scientology had helped him overcome his dyslexia.¹⁶ John Travolta appeared on Oprah Winfrey defending Scientology, telling of the benefits he had received through his over twenty years of membership. This level of appeal promotes the movement on a very popular level, giving itself credibility through noted spokespeople. This credibility is geared at attracting wide spread membership in the hope of enrolling more people in the introductory courses.

Courses within the movement are not free nor are they inexpensive. The original Personal Efficiency Foundation Course is nominally priced but for further advancement and benefits new members are required to invest a great deal financially. A 1980 price list “offers a package deal for basic processing from OT I through OT VIII, costing \$15,760.03, not counting special treatments.”¹⁷ This high level of financial commitment operates upon several levels. First, the individual receives status within the Scientology organization for taking the courses and attaining the higher levels, outside of the group achieving OT VIII has no significance.¹⁸ Secondly, according to the cognitive-consistency theory the more an individual invests in an organization the harder it is for them to leave.¹⁹ In the case of Scientology the commitment level is extremely high. Not only is a large amount of money invested but also due to the time involved, the social aspect of the organization becomes central in the individual's life. Leaving the organization after

¹⁶ *People Weekly*, March 1999, p. 130.

¹⁷ Stark and Bainbridge, 1985, p. 274.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

such a great commitment means leaving a form of community or family, along with tens of thousands of dollars.

The belief system is structured upon the narrative vision of L. Ron Hubbard. Although the movement began as a form of therapy the teachings quickly developed to become a religious tradition. According to Hubbard the foundation for the movement is based upon, “the science of certainty”.²⁰ Although the original Dianetics movement was formulated around “exhaustive tests” and “specific and invariable results”²¹, Hubbard was not a scientist.²² The theological or doctrinal aspect appears to be founded more upon Hubbard’s ability to write science-fictional stories than scientific methodologies.²³

Hubbard claims several experiences that attempt to validate his authority as an intermediary for the teachings he is presenting. His biographical material states that while serving in the armed forces he technically died twice. On one account when he was dead for eight minutes he later reported that he had been given special knowledge that he was to share with humanity.²⁴ He also reports experiences that occurred through auditing that validate the belief system, including travelling to an area where thetans were waiting to reincarnate and confirming an individual lived in a past life 55,000,000,000,000,000,000 years ago.²⁵

¹⁹ See Rosabeth Moss Kanter, “Commitment Mechanisms in Utopian Communities”, Kenneth Westhues, Ed., *Society’s Shadow: Studies in the Sociology of Counter Culture*, (Toronto, 1972).

²⁰ *Journal of Scientology*, 166, n.d. from Wallis, 1977, p. 109.

²¹ L. Ron Hubbard, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, (New York, 1968), p. 9-17.

²² For an account of the academic credentials of Hubbard see Wallis, 1977, p. 21.

²³ See William Sims Bainbridge, “Science and Religion: The Case of Scientology”, Bromley and Hammond, Ed., *The Future of New Religious Movements*, (Mercer University Press, 1987), p. 59-79.

²⁴ Ellwood and Partin, 1988, p. 142.

²⁵ L. Ron Hubbard, *Have You Lived Before This Life?, A Scientific Survey*, from Wallis, 1977, p. 105.

Hubbard maintains absolute authority over the Scientology organization and is revered by his followers. According to their teachings he has presented a method for salvation that has never before been available to humanity. The teachings given are reported to place the individual upon a spiritual level higher than Jesus Christ or Buddha²⁶ and assure them of their salvation and mastery over MEST (matter, energy, space, and time).

An aggressive attempt has been made recently by Scientology to validate its religious belief system to the public, governments, and the scholastic community. Its publication *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, draws upon support from the academic community to validate its practices.²⁷

Commissioning well-known scholars such as Bryan Wilson and M. Darrol Bryant, they leave little doubt that the belief system is indeed a religion. The articles presented in the appendix and Chapter 1 begin by defining religion then applying the definition to Scientology. The movement formulates its religious classification based upon several components including its theology, rituals and practices, and social structure.

Summary

Scientology has had a long and difficult history establishing itself as a religious tradition. There have been attempts made by the media, governments and past members to discredit the institution. Despite these difficulties the movement has developed and established itself as one of the most influential and prosperous new

²⁶ *Ability*, 81, 1959, from Wallis, 1977, p. 104.

²⁷ *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998).

religions in North America. Internal reforms to the organization have attempted to remove the “totalitarian” aspect perceived to be a factor by external critics. Over a period of decades the movement has altered its structure, removed a large number of members, and reorganized itself to function as a more open religious belief system.

The basic appeal of the organization is centered upon the benefits obtainable through undertaking auditing with the organization. These benefits are based upon personal development and physical/emotional betterment. The religious myth of the movement, contained within the higher OT levels, is not accessible to the general public or lower level membership therefore this component is not a factor of the initial appeal. Commitment within the Scientology movement expedientially increases as the participant invests in the belief system. As already demonstrated, the cognitive consistency factor is extremely high due to monetary and social factors.

In 1986 L. Ron Hubbard passed away and the leadership of the Scientology Organization was given over to David Miscavige. He appears to be extremely competent and has continued to establish the Scientology movement as a valid form of new religious belief. This transition in leadership and progressive development of the religious component of the movement may have a long term affect on the organization and develop it from a world-affirming to a world-accommodating religious tradition.

Science within Scientology

Scientology began as a development of the abreaction therapy²⁸ technique called “Dianetics”, which was presented by L. Ron Hubbard in the late 1940’s. The original delivery of the material occurred through a science fiction periodical titled *Astounding Science Fiction*, in which the editor John Campbell presented Hubbard’s practice with enthusiasm. Campbell stated that, “it is a totally new science called *dianetics*, and it does precisely what a science of thought should do.... It is, quite simply, impossible to exaggerate the importance of a true science of human thought.”²⁹ Hubbard had been working on the material before it was published in *Astounding*, but the original work outlining his ideas was not accepted for publication in book form prior to its exposure in the magazine.

Hubbard and the practice of Dianetics had impressed Campbell when he reported that the therapy had relieved his chronic sinusitis.³⁰ He enthusiastically promoted Hubbard’s article, “Dianetics ... An Introduction to a New Science” stating the benefits he felt could be gained from Hubbard’s therapy.

A technique of psychotherapy has been developed which will cure any insanity not due to organic destruction of the brain.

A technique that gives man a perfect, indelible, total memory, and perfect, errorless ability to compute his problems.

A basic answer, and a technique for curing—not alleviating—ulcers, arthritis, asthma, and many other nongerm diseases.

A totally new conception of the truly incredible ability and power of the human mind.

Evidence that insanity is contagious, and is not hereditary.

This is no wild theory. It is not mysticism. It is a coldly precise engineering description of how the human mind operates, and how to go about restoring correct

²⁸ Although the Dianetics has been called a form of psychotherapy, Hubbard reacted against this association. For this reason I have used the classification presented by Bryan Wilson.

²⁹ John W. Campbell, *Astounding, Science Fiction*, 45, 1 (March 1950), p. 4. From Roy Wallis, *The Road to Total Freedom: A Sociological Analysis of Scientology*, (New York, 1977), p. 23.

³⁰ Martin Gardner, *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*, (New York, 1957), p. 264.

operation tested and used on some two hundred and fifty cases. And it makes only one overall claim: the methods logically developed from that description work.³¹

The Dianetics belief system presented itself as a systematic, scientific form of therapy guaranteed to produce measurable results. Gaining support from J. A. Winter, M.D., Dianetics claimed authentic verification for its truth claims. In the introduction to Hubbard's best selling book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, Winter makes several statements that appear to authenticate the practice.

For the past year I have been practicing DIANETICS on my patients, on my friends, and on my family. For the first time in my life, I'm satisfied that there is a method by which many questions, hitherto unanswerable, can be answered with definiteness and proven correct. Correct, insofar as the improved health of the patient is concerned. Correct, insofar as his well-being has been implemented by a feeling of security. Correct, insofar as his approach to living has become more advanced, interesting, and productive to growth. To me this correctness is meaningful and worthy of acceptance.

DIANETICS is a science. It has certain laws, and by following these laws we can predict the results which will be obtained under certain circumstances. These laws have no exceptions—or at least, no exceptions have been found. In this respect the laws of DIANETICS are like the law of gravity.³²

Hubbard claimed that Dianetics was an "exact science" that when performed properly would produce objectively measurable results. According to the teachings there was no form of mysticism or metaphysics involved within the practice nor was the material theoretical or based upon assumptions. A comparison was made of the science of Dianetics to that of physics and chemistry, stating that dianetics was similar to these, yet much simpler.³³

The early work of Dianetics presented a method for any individual to undertake and achieve the state called "clear". According to the workbook this could

³¹ John W. Campbell, "In Times to Come", *Astounding Science Fiction*, 45, 2 (April 1950), p. 132, from Wallis, 1977, p. 24.

be accomplished through about twenty hours of therapy. The therapy could be undertaken with the help of a friend or associate and was a simple procedure. All that was required was to follow the guidelines outlined by Hubbard and the individual could avoid hundreds of hours of expensive professional therapy and achieve better results.³⁴

The benefits guaranteed by Hubbard included the ability of the practitioner not only to remove any and all psychosomatic ailments but also to gain a higher IQ, have total recall of all past and present events, and avoid illnesses such as colds and flues.³⁵ The basis for these claims resides in the assumption put forth by Hubbard concerning the function of the mind and the influence of “engrams”. According to Hubbard the mind operates on two distinct levels, the reactive and the analytical. Going against traditional psychological theory concerning the conscious and the unconscious mind, dianetics states that there in fact is no level of unconsciousness when the reactive mind cannot be influenced. The reactive mind functions as a form of recorder that can be imprinted with negative “engrams” or experiences. These engrams in turn limit and influence the analytical aspect of the individual. It is the influence of negative engrams that are responsible for all the problems of the individual. They remain within the reactive mind, causing problems, until proper therapy (Dianetics) removes them.³⁶

³² Dr. J. A. Winter from the introduction of L. Ron Hubbard, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, Paperback Library Edition, (New York, 1968), p. 20-21.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁵ These claims were first presented by John M. Campbell in the article that appeared in *Astounding Science Fiction*, 45, 2 (April 1950). They continued and were reaffirmed in Hubbard's book *Dianetics*, p. 28-29.

³⁶ Hubbard, 1968, p. 265-277.

With Dianetics, Mr. Hubbard discovered a previously unknown and harmful part of the mind which contains recordings of past experiences of loss, pain and unconsciousness in the form of mental image pictures....The painful incidents recorded on this time track exist below a person's level of awareness and collectively accumulate to make up what is called the *reactive mind*, the source of all travail, unwanted fears, emotions, pains, and psychosomatic illnesses—as distinct from the *analytical mind* which thinks, observes data, remembers it and resolves problems.³⁷

All events, whether the individual is conscious or not, are imprinted upon the reactive mind. Hubbard develops the theory of engram influence to include events that occur on a cellular level. Going against other forms of psychology that recognize a form of prenatal consciousness, Hubbard argues that negative engrams have an influence upon the development of cells and can be encoded as early as the moment of conception. Therefore, according to his therapy, a fight between the mother and the father after intercourse is just as detrimental to psychological development as a fight watched by a young child.³⁸ He believed that the source of most mental problems occurred during this pre-natal period, the majority being caused by attempted failed abortions.³⁹

Hubbard presented the mind as a computer. Negative engrams act as jamming devices that obstruct the proper functioning and disrupted the full potential of this machine. When pain or emotional trauma influences the reactive mind, the analytical mind becomes overridden and particular aspects, such as basic survival, influence the individual in a negative manner. The initial Dianetics material listed four patterns or dynamics that needed to be cleared of engrams if the individual was to function on their true level of potential. They are:

DYNAMIC ONE: The urge of the individual to reach the highest potential of survival in terms of self and his immediate symbiotes.

³⁷ *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*. (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 16.

³⁸ Hubbard, 1968, p. 265.

³⁹ Wallis, 1977, p. 27.

DYNAMIC TWO: The urge of the individual to reach the highest potential of survival in terms of sex, the act and creation of children and their rearing.

DYNAMIC THREE: The urge of the individual to reach the highest potential of survival in terms of the group, whether civil, political, racial, and the symbiotes of that group.

DYNAMIC FOUR: The urge of the individual to reach the highest potential of survival in terms of Mankind and the symbiotes of Mankind.⁴⁰

The method employed for removing the engrams from the reactive mind of the individual requires an auditor to guide the practitioner back down their “time-track” reviewing events that caused engrams. The time-track is considered to be a complete recording of every event lived and experienced by the individual. It can be accessed much like watching a movie and is thought to consist of a series of mental images. Hubbard differentiates the time track from what is considered memory by establishing that travelling upon the time track is in fact a form of “returning” to the event itself.⁴¹

The individual being audited also has at their disposal a “file-clerk” to assist in finding and reviewing these early events. The file-clerk is a component of the mind that can sort through data and select appropriate material from the time-track at the request from the auditor.

The mind is a well-built computer and it has various services. Auditors, backing off from Latin and complexity, call the source of one of these services, the *file-clerk* (technically, the name of the file-clerk might be “bank monitor units” but the phrase is too unwieldy). This is not a very dignified name and is certainly anthropomorphic. There is no small man or woman in there with a green eye shade. But the action which takes place is a close approximation to what would happen if such an entity did dwell within the mind.

The *file-clerk*, if the auditor asks the pre-clear for the last time he saw a movie, will hand out the movie, the date it was seen, the age and physical being of the person, all perceptics, the plot of the movie, the weather—in short, he hands out everything that was present and connected with the movie.⁴²

⁴⁰ Hubbard, 1968, p. 10.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 202.

⁴² Ibid., p. 204-205.

By having the auditor guide the person back along the time track, with the help of proper questions and the file-clerk, traumatic events can be reviewed. When the engram can be located and consciously examined by the pre-clear, it no longer remains within the reactive mind. After all engrams have been examined in such a manner, the pre-clear becomes clear and can now function without the negative influences of the reactive mind.

After the publication of Hubbard's articles in *Astounding*, Dr. Winter attempted to have the Dianetics material authenticated by the medical profession as a valid therapy practice. He submitted articles to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, only to have them rejected.⁴³ Winter also attempted to have other medical professionals use the methods of Dianetics, this also proved unsuccessful and demonstrated the inability of Dianetics to be legitimated by the professional community.⁴⁴

Failing to find official support for their practice, Hubbard wrote the book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* as an attempt to appeal directly to the lay public. The book was extremely successful and produced the results Hubbard was looking for. Namely, Dianetics became a fad. Although early sales were mostly among science fiction readers, having been familiar with Hubbard's science fiction writing and the articles in *Astounding*,⁴⁵ after a very short time the work became well know to the general public.⁴⁶

⁴³ Wallis, 1977, p. 23.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 23.

⁴⁵ See William Sims Bainbridge, "Science and Religion: The Case of Scientology" in Bromley and Hammond, 1987, p. 59-79.

⁴⁶ Gardner, 1957, p. 265.

Due to the great demand for Dianetic therapy the Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation was established in April of 1950, not as a religion,⁴⁷ but rather as an organization committed to assisting people through the procedures outlined by Hubbard. During the early 1950's the popularity of the Dianetic procedure had become so wide spread that it was being practiced on college campuses and "Dianetic parties" were being held to match auditors with people attempting to achieve a state of clear.⁴⁸ Several grass root organizations also appeared at this time, employing the therapy outlined by Hubbard and in many cases charging for their services. The Hubbard Dianetic Research Foundation attempted to create a sense of uniformity for the movement and began training auditors, auditing individuals, and continuing research in the application of Dianetics.

At this point in the history of the movement, Hubbard although the founder, was among a committee of individuals in charge of the organization. The structure of the group in this format did not last long, and after several schisms, bankruptcy, and lawsuits; Hubbard founded Scientology and assumed complete control of the organization. During these schisms several events occurred that would challenge the scientific nature of the movement. Winter became disillusioned with the practice of Dianetics and founded his own practice using several techniques. Dianetics was soon dropped from his therapy altogether. He was also concerned about the research at the

⁴⁷ Bryan Wilson notes the development of dianetics from a form of therapy to a religion and recognizes that the early presentation of the material contained no implication that Hubbard had set about to develop a religious tradition. Bryan Wilson, "Scientology: An Analysis and Comparison of its Religious System and Doctrines", from The Church of Scientology International, *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 120.

⁴⁸ Gardner, 1957, p. 265.

foundation focusing upon the inclusion of past life experiences in the removal of engrams.⁴⁹

Despite the certification of professional auditors and the wide spread attempt at using the Dianetic method, there also seemed to be relatively few people (if any) who could claim to have achieved a state of clear. Hubbard presented Sonya Bianca to an audience of six thousand, claiming she was “clear” and attempted to demonstrate the power of such individuals. Unfortunately the demonstration did not go well and Bianca was not able to perform the tasks Hubbard claimed she could, namely total recall of all past events. She failed to remember a physics formula and also the color of Hubbard’s tie when his back was turned. After the event Hubbard claimed that he had badly influenced the experiment by saying, “Will you come out here now, Sonya?” The use of the term *now* got her stuck in the present moment, inhibiting her from using her full potential.⁵⁰

Despite having a foundation to perform research and some support from medical professionals, the Dianetic therapy failed to authenticate itself within scientific circles. Sharp criticisms were leveled at the organization and medical doctors began accusing Dianetics of being detrimental and even harmful to its clients. “Dr. Gregory Zilboorg publicly attacked Dianetics before a forum at the New York Academy of Medicine, and the American Psychological Association was widely reported for its resolution calling on psychologists not to employ Dianetic techniques in therapy.”⁵¹

⁴⁹ Wallis, 1977, p. 77-102.

⁵⁰ Gardner, 1957, p. 270-271.

⁵¹ Wallis, 1977, p. 71.

The claims made by Hubbard and the Dianetic Foundation now were not only unauthenticated by the scientific community but also appeared to not to be realized by their own clientele. To counter the lack of authentication Hubbard developed the teachings of Dianetics and began incorporating more spiritual or religious components. The original four categories of dynamics concerning survival were expanded to eight,⁵² survival of life forms, the physical universe, spirits or spiritual being, and finally infinity or survival as the Supreme Being.⁵³ Justification for not attaining clear was also now supported by Hubbard due to the influence of past life engrams also encoded upon the individual.⁵⁴

In 1952 Scientology was established as a “religious fellowship” under the direct control of Hubbard. The Scientology organization began applying pressure on other Dianetic groups and through the charisma and influence of Hubbard a dramatic restructuring and reorganization was undertaken. Groups that Hubbard considered in opposition to his developments were forced to close or isolated from the Scientology movement. People in high positions were fired and a firm set of organizational structures, rules and regulations were now included in the movement.

Due to the restructuring, authority was removed from the individual auditors and status in the group now meant following the strict guidelines of the organization and developing in the levels above clear. To achieve higher levels the individual had to travel, often at great expense, to the Org for further instruction. The Org was the

⁵² In late 1950 Hubbard added the 5th, 6th, and 7th dynamic, then in August of 1951 the final 8th dynamic of “the urge toward survival as a part of or ward of a Supreme Being” was included in the teachings. Wallis, 1977, p. 39.

⁵³ *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 23-25.

⁵⁴ The inclusion of past lives in the teachings began in 1951 and was confirmed by Hubbard as a definite component in August 1952, at the same time the 8th dynamic was incorporated into the teachings. Wallis, 1977, p. 40.

organizational headquarters, a heavily institutionalized center where the individual was forced to interact with a new group of individuals and undertake strict and devoted training.

The belief system of Scientology developed at this time to include what Roy Wallis calls an esoteric and an exoteric ideology. The exoteric ideology remains based upon the original Dianetics framework concerned with the development of the individual and their interaction with society. "Such works present Scientology as concerned with the spiritual nature of man (the thetan); with increasing communication; understanding of others; ability to control oneself, ones interactions with others, and the surrounding environment."⁵⁵

The esoteric aspect represents the religious myth of the movement and is concerned with "the cosmological doctrine of the origin and development (or degeneration) of the thetan, and manifests a far greater concern with past lives, and the supernatural abilities that the individual can acquire through the practice of Scientology."⁵⁶ The myth of the thetan becomes a central component of the Scientology belief system and is a primary factor in developing the movement from a form of therapy to a religion.

According to Hubbard the individual incarnated here on earth is in fact a highly developed spiritual being called a thetan. The development in his theories concerning humanity and the concept of the soul appeared after he had incorporated the idea of past lives within his teachings.

After carefully reviewing all relevant research data, Mr Hubbard isolated the answer: Man had been misled by the idea that he had a soul. In fact, man is a spiritual being,

⁵⁵ Wallis, 1977, p. 124.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 124.

who has a mind and a body. The spirit is the source of all that is good, decent and creative in the world: it is the individual being himself. With this discovery, Mr. Hubbard founded the religion of Scientology, for he had moved firmly into the field traditionally belonging to religion—the realm of the human spirit.⁵⁷

The narrative of Scientology represents a form of Gnosticism that teaches the thetan is an immortal, all seeing, all knowing being that existed before the creation of time, matter, energy, and space. According to Hubbard, the thetans were all-powerful beings that became bored with their existence. To enjoy themselves and make their lives more interesting they began playing games by creating matter, energy, space, and time, then immersed themselves in their own creation. Eventually the thetans forgot their true nature and became entrapped in their own creation. The immortal being now was ensnared in a process of continuous reincarnation, taking on a new MEST (matter, energy, time, and space) body after every death. With every incarnation new engrams were accumulated upon the thetans reactive mind, holding them within their own creation and pushing the memory of their true being deeper and further from their recollection.⁵⁸

The Scientology Religion teaches that through the methods and practices of the organization the individual can achieve “Total Freedom”, returning to the original state of an all-powerful, all-knowing thetan. The path to this form of enlightenment and being is highly regimented and extremely structured. Each step in the spiritual development of the individual is highly controlled and monitored. Every level moving closer to Total Freedom (Figure 7, p. 154) requires meeting specific standards and replicating personal results with those outlined by Scientology.

⁵⁷ *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 17.

⁵⁸ Ellwood and Partin, p. 143.

One of the fundamental tools used for the development of Total Freedom is the incorporation of the *E-meter*, a device used in the process of auditing. (Figure 8, p. 155) By incorporating the machine in the methods of advancement used by the students, each level attained is verified and confirmed through the electrical responses measured by the machine. After an individual has completed a course they are examined by a trained auditor to confirm the goals have been met. This conformation is verified and validated by studying the readings on the E-meter.

The original E-meter was introduced to Dianetics in 1951 by V. G. Mathison.⁵⁹ however it did not become a common tool until 1952 with the development of Scientology. Although the original machine fell out of favor, by 1957 Hubbard had developed his own version and made it an essential component of the scientology belief system.⁶⁰ According to Hubbard the machine is infallible. It “sees all, knows all. It is never wrong.”⁶¹ Insiders to the Scientology religion view the machine as an almost supernatural device that enables them to reveal their deepest thoughts.

The auditor could gauge the preclear’s responses by watching the dial, and thereby know how to proceed with the questioning. The E-meter immediately found the areas of tension; it could tell the auditor when the pc was nervous, trying to hide something—or thinking anything at all! My friend lauded the miraculous power of the apparatus as if it were not as small, portable “lie detector”, but a magic divining rod—particularly one of them (I shall call him Morton Morvis) who found that when he was interrogated with an E-meter, he had to reveal his inner most thoughts, no matter how risque or self-incriminating they were.⁶²

⁵⁹ V. G. Mathison also developed the skin galvanometer and founded an organization called Electropsychometry. John A. Lee, “Social Change and Marginal Therapeutic Systems”, Roy Wallis and Peter Morley, Ed., *Marginal Medicine*, (New York, 1976), p. 34.

⁶⁰ Wallis, 1977, p. 116.

⁶¹ L. Ron Hubbard, *Electropsychometric Auditing Operator’s Manual*, p. 57, from Wallis, 1977. p. 116.

The mechanics of the E-meter lend a sense of support or validation to the belief system. It is the primary tool used for developing the spiritual potential of the practitioner and plays a fundamental role in the religious belief system. In the most recent publication from the International Church of Scientology, the religious practices of their order are outlined and the role of the auditing and the E-meter are claimed to be the most important.

The Scientology religion embodies a rich tradition of ceremonies, rites and services. Yet the religious practice of auditing and training are by far the most significant. They are the *sin qua non* of Scientology, for they light the path to higher states of spiritual awareness and ability and, eventually, to spiritual salvation.⁶³

This religious instrument [E-meter] is vital because the mental image pictures that harbor these experiences also hold very minute amounts of electrical energy that can be detected with the E-meter. As this charge varies or dissipates, the auditor knows the parishioner has successfully addressed—and resolved—the source of that aspect of his spiritual entrapment.⁶⁴

By the incorporation of a technological device, each stage in the practitioner's development is authenticated and verified by the Scientology organization. Although the machine is not used externally in an attempt to gain validity in the scientific community, within the organization it plays a fundamental role. The technological component lends credence to the belief system and because of the validation, may support individuals in their advancement even if they do not necessarily feel they have gained any spiritual development.⁶⁵ At the higher levels the individual

⁶² Robert Kaufman, *Inside Scientology: How I joined Scientology and became Superhuman*, (London, 1972), p. 4.

⁶³ *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 31.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁶⁵ Stark and Bainbridge, p. 270-272.

undertakes a form of self-auditing and then affirms to the group the new level has been achieved in a written “success story”.⁶⁶

In the process of self-auditing the individual is supplied with written material or tapes and undertakes an intensive period of study and application of the information. They are taught how to use the E-meter in one hand while they monitor their own responses. Stark and Bainbridge point out that this form of spiritual development places the onus upon the individual to supply the necessary results associated with their development. They become responsible for meeting the requirements and benefits set out by the Scientology organization, if there is a problem, it therefore becomes their fault and is not due to the belief system or ideology of Scientology.⁶⁷

The general scientific community never accepted the practice of Dianetics and its early support from Dr. Winter was removed by his own evaluation of the benefits of the system. Support from the medical community did not exist to validate the claims made by Hubbard. Nevertheless, Dianetics never removed the introduction by Winter from its publication even though he later stated, “I have yet to see a ‘clear’ before and after Dianetic therapy. I have not reached that state myself nor have I been able to produce that state in any of my patients. I have seen some individuals who are suppose to be ‘clear’, but their behavior does not conform to the definition of the state. Moreover, an individual supposed to be ‘clear’ has undergone a relapse into conduct which suggests an incipient psychosis.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Wallis, 1977, p. 120-121.

⁶⁷ Stark and Bainbridge, p. 272-273.

⁶⁸ Gardner, p. 275.

Claims made by the organization are now based upon testimonials and cannot be empirically validated or disconfirmed. The teachings of the organization oppose any member attempting to validate their practice to outsiders through empirical means. The label on the E-meter reads, "By itself, this meter does nothing. It is solely for the guide of Ministers of the Church in Confessionals and pastoral counseling. The Electrometer is not medically or scientifically useful for the diagnosis, treatment or prevention of any disease. It is not mechanically or scientifically capable of improving the health or bodily function of anyone and is for religious use by students and Ministers of the Church of Scientology only." (Figure 9, p. 156) Despite shifting from the earlier Dianetic attempt at conformation of the "clear", Scientology now implies such benefits but does not promise them.

A wide, wide range of benefits have been reported by Scientologists from their participation in Scientology. The conditions that can be improved by wholehearted application of the technology have been thoroughly documented since the 1940's. Following is a long and varied enumeration of what individuals have reported that Scientology achieves and the conditions it handles. None of these benefits are claims made by the Church; they are simply statements made by individuals about what they have achieved.

What Individuals say they have achieved from Scientology: Increased efficiency, increased energy and vitality, increased self-confidence, increased intelligent quotient, alleviation of neuroses, alleviation of psychoses, relief from mental trauma of injury or illness, faster recovery from broken bones, bruises, burns and injuries ... certainty of oneself as a spiritual being able to exist separate from the body ... fewer problems in life ... relief from the upsets of the past and the ability to face the future ... improved memory ... improved perception (sight, hearing, taste, etc.) ...⁶⁹

Although the religious structure of the organization is based upon the myth presented by Hubbard concerning the thetan, accessing this level of spiritual attainment is conditional upon auditing and the E-meter. The Scientology movement continues to present more advanced levels for the practitioners to attain, and

development in the organization remains focused upon meeting the goals set forth by Scientology. According to their literature “The Bridge to Total Freedom”, and hence spiritual enlightenment, now has fifteen levels above “clear”. (Figure 7, p. X) Operating Thetan XV is the highest level advertised, but more levels will most likely be added when a number of individuals have been certified as OT XV’s. This has been a standard pattern of the group, noted by all sociological and religious studies into the operation of Scientology. In 1982 there were 11 OT levels, 1973 had 7, no doubt the trend will continue and the Scientology movement will continue to “release” higher and higher grades.

Despite the changes in the level of Operating Thetan available to those participating in the movement, the incorporation of the E-meter will remain constant. The machine acts as a monitoring device used to support not only the development of the individual but also internally as a method of exacting compliance. With each level attained by the member, new rules and responsibilities are assigned to the individual. There is a strict moral and ethical framework required from those operating in the higher levels, and the E-meter is used as a tool to measure conformity and deviance.⁷⁰

The belief system itself also remains founded upon a set of axioms laid out by Hubbard in 1954. The religious structure of the organization focuses around these guidelines and they represent the theological or doctrinal components of the belief system. Along with the myth of the thetan, Hubbard has established a set of 58

⁶⁹ *What is Scientology: A Guidebook to the World's Fastest Growing Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 390-391.

⁷⁰ Wallis, 1977, p. 148-152. For an example of ex-Scientologist testimonial concerning the use of the E-meter for “security checking” and ethics see Kaufman, p. 199-202

universal components to support the belief system. “These axioms are truth which are proven by all life and which represent the most succinct distillation of wisdom regarding the nature of the human spirit.”⁷¹ The axioms are written using Scientology lingo, and despite being explained, remain inaccessible to non-practitioners.⁷²

Although the original scientific validity of the Dianetic therapy has been questioned by professionals and disregarded as a valid scientific practice, it remains a primary component of the belief system. The Dianetic book is required reading for all Scientologists; the introduction still contains the information provided by Dr. Winter despite his later reversal of opinion. Scientology believes that Hubbard’s development in therapy and understanding concerning past lives was arrived at through a scientific and valid process. They have continued this belief and recognize that the development put forward by their tradition is a form of technology, an empirically verified system of spiritual development.

Summary

In an application of the material provided concerning the Church of Scientology and the 6 primary components used as a framework for analysis, it can be demonstrated that Scientology relies heavily upon all 6 aspects.

- 1) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of the group’s beliefs.

This is a primary component in the presentation of Scientology and results from their development as a form of therapy to a religious movement. The original

⁷¹ *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion*, (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 104.

⁷² An example is axiom 14. “Survival is accomplished by alter-isness and not-isness, by which is gained the persistence known as time.” *Ibid.*, p. 105.

research and scientific studies undertaken by Hubbard and several associates, including Dr. White, were presented in a scientific manner. As the belief system developed to include past lives and a spiritual dimension, the original material was retained by the organization. Fundamental concepts of the belief system, including past lives and the myth of the Thetan, were claimed to have been arrived at through the original scientific practices of the Dianetics. All material presented by Scientology remains situated upon the original principles discovered by Hubbard in his scientific and methodological examination of humanity.

- 2) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of certain or all of the group's practices.

Early claims made by the Dianetics Organization stated that exhaustive tests and exact science demonstrated that the Dianetic therapy produced objectively measurable results. Dr. Winter claimed to have practiced Dianetics on his patients, friends and family and could demonstrate empirically that the practices used by the group could be verified. As the Scientology practices developed to include spiritual dimensions, this same sense of objective validation remained within their belief system. However, due to government pressure and legal action, they can no longer make such claims. To continue to present their beliefs as verifiable, Scientology now publishes claims made by their members as proof. Although the scientific community does not empirically validate these claims, the manner of their presentation implies that this could be done and continues to suggest a sense of scientific objectivity.

- 3) The utilization of scientifically crafted techniques or technologies as tools augmenting the religious narrative and rituals.

As demonstrated in my analysis of Scientology, their entire religious narrative and practice is centered upon the use of the E-meter. According to Hubbard the machine is infallible and is used to validate and verify all of the group's teachings and the practitioner's spiritual development. No component of Scientology is presented, taught, or verified without the incorporation of this tool. The technology itself is claimed to be a "religious artifact" and although the machine is presented as being only a tool that does not produce results on its own, it has become indispensable as a component of Scientology's beliefs and practices.

4) Attempts to restate mythic or scriptural accounts in the language of science.

Scientology claims that its beliefs are expressed in the technological language of the mid-twentieth century. Although Hubbard viewed the human mind as a computer, it may be more sound to state that Scientology uses scientific language to express its practices and some beliefs, but maintains a mythic component. This can be seen in its utilization of scientific terms and terminology when describing the majority of its teachings, however the higher levels taught by the group concerning the Thetan remain expressed in mythic language.⁷³

5) Attempts to lend credibility to the belief system through scientific or academic credentials or associations.

The Scientology organization promotes L. Ron Hubbard as a respected and legitimate researcher of the human condition. His associations with other researchers and medical professionals, such as Dr. White, in the development of the Dianetic therapy is maintained within the organization despite later statements by the same

⁷³ The majority of the religious mythic element of Scientology are found in OT level III. This material is copy written and confidential and although it is available from unauthorized and questionable

people that the therapy did not produce the desired results. The most current support for the Scientology movement has been accomplished through the promotion of entertainers rather than academic or scientific professionals.

- 6) Efforts to criticize orthodox science as narrow-minded and promote a new or expanded version of scientific theories.

Beginning with the failed attempt by Dianetics to be legitimated by the scientific community a strong polemic has developed and continues between Scientology and the medical community. The Scientology organization has been extremely critical of the current psychiatric practice of prescribing medication (such as Prozac or Riddelin) to treat mental disorders. Their argument against the psychiatric community rests upon their belief that removing the engrams with Dianetic therapy can treat all psychological disorders (other than those caused by physical trauma).

Unlike the Transcendental Meditation Movement, Scientology remains in a high state of tension with the scientific community. Their presentation of scientific method and practices, scientific findings, scientific theory, and technology within their belief system is not based upon a community of scientific practitioners or a wide body of literature but rather upon the scientific investigations and development of one man, L. Ron Hubbard. He is the sole authority of all the scientific and technological aspects within the belief system and has presented the religious narrative in conjunction with his own scientific developments and investigation for conformation.

internet sources I have not attempted to present or analyze this material without the permission of the Scientology organization.

Chapter 5

International Raelian Movement

“Science should be your religion, for the Elohim your creators created you scientifically. By being scientific, you please your creators because you act as they do and you show them that you are aware of being made in their image....”

Rael

Classification

The International Raelian Movement began under the direction of Claude Vorilhon after he reported his encounter with an extraterrestrial being he referred to as an Elohim. The original event was reported to have taken place on the 13th of December 1973 in central southern France. Over a six-day period Rael (Claude Vorilhon) claimed that he received a direct one-on-one series of teachings that he transcribed and then reported to the public. Rael founded the original movement under the name MADECH (mouvement pour l'accueil des Elohim createurs de l'humanite) and before reorganizing in 1975 as The International Raelian Movement, may have had as many as seven hundred followers.

The goals of the organization play a strong role in the social structure of the movement. In traditional terms of classification, the movement can be recognized as a postmillennial belief system. Postmillennial beliefs hold that the return of the messiah (or in this case the Elohim) will occur only after the believers, through their work, have reformed specific components of the society. The belief system sees the

world in need of reform, salvation, and purification through the works of the members of the movement, not through divine other worldly intervention. It is the responsibility of the individual and the group to begin the reformation of the planet in preparation for the return of the Elohim. Within the postmillennial belief system humanity is not viewed as something that is beyond salvation, on the contrary humanity is seen as needing proper earthly guidance and assistance.

Only after an earthly transformation has occurred will the expected messianic figure or figures return. Postmillennialists do not expect a triumphant return of a warring savior, bent on destroying and removing evil, but rather the upliftment of humanity to a higher level of consciousness, or being, that will then merge with the divine. This form of belief system sees the transformation of humanity and the world as something that must be accomplished before full contact with the divine can be achieved. A golden era must be created by humanity for humanity before the expected Second Coming can occur.

It must be noted that there are variations in the presentation of the Raelian belief system with the traditional postmillennial model. The most fundamental difference is that the movement originally did not consider itself a religious institution and it was not until 1995 that they received religious recognition in Canada. The movement originally considered itself an "atheist" form of philosophy rather than a religious theology but possibly for tax purposes or public tolerance they accepted the religious classification.¹ Also, within the teachings presented by Rael there are

¹ Susan Palmer, "The Raelians are Coming! The Future of a UFO Religion", Madeleine Cousineau, *Religion in a Changing World: Comparative Studies in Sociology*, (Praeger, 1998), p. 144.

continued references from the Elohim warning humanity that if the proper reform does not occur, there will be swift and devastating repercussions.

But if human beings remain aggressive and continue to progress in a manner which is dangerous for other worlds, then we will destroy this civilization and its repositories of scientific wealth, and there will be another Sodom and Gomorrah until such a time as humanity becomes morally worthy of its level of scientific understanding.²

If you do not, however, and if you become a threat to us, we will only have to destroy your stocks of bombs without sending offensive weapons against you.³

This threat of destruction runs counter to the traditional view of salvation through good works and represents a form of premillennialism, a much more radical millennial worldview. However, the radical component was removed from the belief system after Rael reported his second encounter with the Elohim. Whether as an intentional means of maintaining a consistent form of postmillennial beliefs, or as an amendment to the continuity of the message, the passages containing these teachings were claimed to have been improperly transcribed during the first encounter.

To begin with, we must correct a passage in the first message we gave you that you wrongly transcribed concerning an eventual intervention on our part to destroy humanity. It must be made clear that we will not intervene. Humanity is now arriving at a turning point in its history, and its future depends only on itself. If you can control your aggressiveness toward each other and your environment, then you will reach a golden age of interplanetary civilization, in which universal happiness and fulfillment will be realized. If, on the other hand, your civilization gives way to violence, then it will destroy itself, either directly or indirectly through all this.⁴

Despite making this correction to the teachings, which places more consistency within their postmillennial worldview, elements of “divine” wrath and intervention remain. Reference is made to the possibility of a nuclear war and the

² Rael, *The Final Message*, (London, 1998), p. 91. The publication used for a majority of the primary material for the Raelian Movement is an amalgamation of the earlier material presented by the group. Where there are discrepancies in translation or omitted material I will refer to the original publications.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

ability of the Elohim to save the “just”.⁵ However, the most noted form of this judgement and punishment by the Elohim can be seen in the movement’s teachings concerning the Jewish population and their authorization of the building of the embassy in Israel.

One of the primary needs presented by Rael as a mandatory undertaking before the Elohim will return to the planet is the building of a special embassy in or near Jerusalem. A specific design is given for the construction, with special instructions given for the rooms, landing pad, and the location where it should be built. The purpose of the embassy is to establish a neutral territory where the Elohim ships can land without any threat of attack from earth powers. The embassy will also allow for world governments to meet with the Elohim and scientific exchanges to take place, assisting in the development of humanity.⁶

The difficult component in placing this belief within a postmillennial structure also resides in the teachings of Rael concerning the acceptance of the Elohim as beings from space, and the allowance for the embassy construction by the state of Israel. In a very focused and poignant manner, Rael’s teachings relate the experiences suffered by the Jewish population to their inability to accept the message put forth by the Elohim. Even the crucifixion of Christ is seen as a mistake, resulting in two thousand years of suffering for the Jewish population.⁷

The State of Israel must give some territory located near Jerusalem to the Guide of Guides [Rael] so that he may build their residence, the embassy of the Elohim. The

⁵ This is a recurrent theme in the teachings of Rael. According to the belief system humanity resides in the age of the apocalypse and reference is often made to the possibility of humanity destroying itself if the teachings of Rael are not heeded, but the main focus remains upon having the aliens return after the building of the embassy.

⁶ 1995 Raelian Information Pack, p. 3.

⁷ Rael, 1998, p. 158.

time has come, people of Israel, to build the new Jerusalem as it was foreseen. Claude Rael is the one who was foretold. Reread your writings and open your eyes.

You have suffered for a long time to pay for your errors, but the time of forgiveness has come... You will be able to live there [Israel] in peace if you listen to the last of the prophets, the one who was foretold to you, and if you help him accomplish what we ask of him.

This is your last chance, otherwise another country will welcome the Guide of Guides and build our embassy on its territory, and that country will be close to yours; it will be protected and happiness shall prevail, and the State of Israel will be destroyed once more.⁸

This is a conditional acceptance placed upon the Jewish population and religious tradition. Rael warns those who are Jewish in origin that they should not return to Israel if the Government does not allow for the embassy to be constructed. Rael shows support (or indifference) for his teachings by selected Rabbis⁹ and focuses the wrath of the Elohim upon the government not necessarily the Jewish population. This position by Rael is very problematic and has been viewed as anti-Semitic in nature by members of the Jewish community;¹⁰ however, the movement denies this accusation demonstrating their vocal support against any discrimination based upon race, gender, and sexual orientation.¹¹

In a similar manner to other postmillennial belief systems, membership must be active in the community to which it belongs. This is a fundamental component of the teachings of Rael and categorizes them within the *world-accommodating* classification designated by Roy Wallis.¹² Although the movement accepts that a small number of people must be employed by the group to travel to countries where

⁸ Rael, 1998, p. 157-158.

⁹ Rael, 1998, p. 199.

¹⁰ Susan Palmer, 1998, p. 141.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 141.

¹² Roy Wallis, 1984, p. 38.

the teachings are not present and establish groups, the majority of the membership is strongly urged to remain working and active within the community.

Must they drop everything, leave their job, sell their house and gather on the mountain around the embassy in anticipation of the creators? Must they set off around the world to spread the messages and live the life of a pauper? NO! To be Raelian means behaving genioocratically and not count their chickens before they have hatched. It means being perfectly integrated within society so as to be able to contribute more efficiently to its transmutation and hasten the coming of our parents from space.

It is much better to cultivate your assets so as to succeed even better than others in your professional activities enabling you to not only preach the truth but also to be an example and a living witness that belonging to the Raelian Movement has not weakened but instead strengthened you with the awakening of your mind, rendering you more efficient and happy.¹³

Despite urging the members to remain and function within the contemporary culture, the movement calls for several reforms. Society as it is now functioning needs to be altered if humanity is to merge with the Elohim. The transformational goal of the Raelian movement focuses upon two general components of humanity. The first is concerned with strong social, governmental and political reforms the movement wishes to institute on a worldwide bases. The second component focuses upon the development of the individual and was introduced to the movement after Rael reported his second contact with the Elohim.

The reforms called for by Rael places the movement in a difficult position in relation to the society in which it is functioning. Although the movement sees humanity as reformable, it has contempt for most world leaders and advocates radical changes to contemporary society. Rael teaches that certain components of our culture, particularly world governments, must be changed if humanity is to evolve to the level of the Elohim, its creator. During his first contact, Rael reported to have

received specific commandments from the Elohim regarding several issues concerning governmental and societal reform. They are geniocracy, humanitarianism, world governments, nuclear weapons, and overpopulation.¹⁴

Geniocracy is a term used by Rael to describe a new form of political control over the population. According to his teachings, the ideal society would be ruled by the most intelligent beings upon the planet. "You will also participate in the creation of a worldwide political party advocating humanitarianism and geniocracy, as they are described in the first part of this message of the Elohim, and you will support its candidates. Only via geniocracy can humanity move fully into a golden age."¹⁵

Traditional systems of democracy, including electoral and polling systems, would be abolished.¹⁶ "When individuals reached a responsible age, their intellectual coefficient can be measured and included on their identity or voters card. Only those with an intellectual capacity of at least fifty- percent above the average should be eligible for a public post. To vote, individuals would need an intellectual coefficient of at least ten percent above average."¹⁷ According to this new system individuals that were of average intelligence or less would be allowed no say in the running of the community or country.

The cell in your foot should not decide whether or not your hand should pick up a given object. It is the brain which must decide, and if the object in question is good, the cell of your foot will benefit from it. It is not up to the foot to vote. Its job is

¹³ 1995 Raelian Information Pack

¹⁴ Rael, *The Final Message*, (London, 1998), pp. 85-104.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

¹⁶ The most recent translation reads, "For this to happen, you must abolish all your electoral and polling systems because in there present form they are completely unsuited to human development", Rael, 1998, p. 85. However, the 1986 presentation of the same material read, "In order for this to happen elections must be abolished and also votes which are completely unadapted in there present form to suit the evolution of humanity", Rael, 1987, p. 109.

¹⁷ Rael, 1998, p. 86.

simply to transport the body—including the brain—and it is not capable of judging if what the hand takes is good or not.¹⁸

Humanitarianism is linked to the genocracy system of government presented by Rael. It represents a strict ethical paradigm against any form of inheritance.

Property is owned by the state and may be rented for a period of forty-nine years.

After that time the individual may live there until death, then the property returns to the state and is again rented out. Rael quotes from Leviticus to support the argument and would institute this practice to prevent people from gaining material wealth that they have not earned.¹⁹

The next form of development based upon Rael's belief system concerns the implementation of a one world government and currency. Within this framework for reform, Rael has also decreed that conscription into the military should be forbidden. Armies should only be used for protecting public order. Nuclear weapons are viewed as a threat to humanity that should be removed from the hands of the military. "If people do not want to be exposed to the dangers any longer, all they have to do is take nuclear weapons away from the military."²⁰ Although it is not clear how this is to be done, the teachings advocate the use of nuclear energy only as a power source that should be distributed to those countries in need.

During the first group of teaching presented by Rael, there is little mention concerning the liberal sexual practices that would become a large component of the belief system. However, he does mention the importance of birth control and the need for the population of the planet to be limited. According to the Elohim, a couple

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 87-89.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 94.

should only be allowed to have two children, one to replace each parent.²¹ The teachings therefore advocate a zero percent population growth for the planet.

The first group of reforms presented by Rael demonstrated the basic goals of the organization and classifies the Raelian Movement as a world-accommodating tradition. After the second encounter reported by Rael, the basic goals and aims of the Raelians remained similar, but a new dimension was developed increasing appeal in the movement, offering a client base formulation that would increase membership to over thirty thousand.

The initial appeal of the Raelian Movement focuses around the belief system presented by Rael. According to the economic strategies outlined by Bird and Westley it is hard to designate the valued services originally being offered by the movement. This may be seen in the relatively low numbers of early membership and their commitment to Rael. After the founding of MADECH Rael planned to step down as the leader, since he believed the movement could function without his participation.²² It was not until his second encounter that the movement was restructured, renamed, and refocused, designating Rael as the Guide of Guides and an indispensable component of the new religious movement.

The alteration that occurred laid the foundation for the structure of the movement in modernity and represents a dramatic revision in client/membership appeal and moral accountability. Science remains a fundamental component of the belief system, yet the appeal of the movement now can also be seen by examining

²¹ Ibid., p. 94-96.

²² Ibid., p. 128.

new factors, namely the role of Rael as a the divinized leader of the movement, and the teaching and practice of sensual meditation.

The second encounter was reported to have occurred on July 31, 1975 in Perigord, France. The teachings Rael reported to receive clarified the message from his first encounter and developed a number of points new to the movement. Science remains the most important aspect of the belief system, and there is no alteration in the secularization of the Elohim. A typical example of this belief system can be seen through out the general teachings of Rael. "As we have already explained to you in the first part of this message, there is no God, and obviously no soul. After death there is nothing unless science is used to create something."²³

New emphasis is now placed upon the position and authority of Rael within the belief system and new rewards are promised to the membership, including the possibility of a prolonged life, benefits of sensual meditation, and the possibility of immortality through cloning of DNA. It is the second encounter that provides the framework for the new religious movement, removing it from what can be considered a UFO group to that of a genuine religious belief system. New principles are outlined in the teachings, which focus upon a number of social and religious issues. Rael even states that the Elohim told him, "the movement you have created must be the religions of religions. I insist that it is indeed a religion, although an atheistic religion, as you have already understood."²⁴

The section of Rael's teachings called "the keys" develops the belief system and establishes the parameters of conduct and worship for the followers. The keys

²³ Ibid., p. 138.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 155.

are reported to be the final development of the teachings revealed by the Elohim to humanity. As they are now issued from Rael, he is designated as the last of the prophets and the last representative of the teachings of the creator to the created. The teachings encompass several components, including humanity and its place in relation to the Elohim, birth and birth control (including abortion), education, sensual meditation and fulfillment, society and government, prayer and meditation, and the ability to telepathically contact the Elohim.

Participation in the movement now requires members to tithe 10% of their wages to the organization. Although the movement claims it pays no salaries, this amount is split three ways, 3% goes to the national Raelian Movement, 7% to the international movement and 1% is for Rael. By paying this percentage of wages to the movement members can advance within the organization and participate in the functions of the group. Initially new members are not required to pay any amount to attend meetings or retreats, but for status and responsibility within the group the tithe must be paid.

Summary

The International Raelian Movement represents a world-accommodating religious tradition as outlined by Roy Wallis. Although the movement has no churches as central areas of worship, members meet regularly in large monthly gatherings or on weekly bases in smaller groups. Members within the organization often wear a medallion and a particular form of dress when they are in attendance or participating in functions.

Requirements for membership are lenient, there is a brief initiation ceremony where the new participant has a guide place their hand upon the forehead, reportedly to register their DNA with the Elohim. As recognition that the individual is joining the Raelian movement, they must also send a letter of apostasy to the church in which they were baptized. People wishing to participate in the movement are also required to pay a percentage of their yearly earnings to the organization and may then attend group functions and participate in meetings, gaining more responsibility within the organization with the more time and effort they commit.

The goal of the organization is to teach a new interpretation to traditional religious scriptures allowing for, what they believe, is a more developed form of spirituality. Membership is given the opportunity to lead a more fulfilled and rewarding life by practicing sensual meditation and participating in the goals of the organization, the primary one being the building of the embassy in Jerusalem.

Rael maintains sole leadership over the group, being the only guide of guides on the planet. His authority rests solely upon his reported encounter with the Elohim. His position is one of personal charisma, and the information he provides concerning the scientific element of the movement is founded upon his narrative vision. Rael has no scientific training or background and where specific scientific or theoretical information is used to support his truth claims other experts are quoted for conformation.

The Role of Science within the International Raelian Movement

The initial message presented by Rael concerning the teachings of the Elohim has been called a “demythologizing” of the Christian/Hebraic Scriptures and demonstrates the most visible form of the incorporation of science within the belief system. Rael highlights certain scriptures within the Old and New Testament and interprets all the events with a secularized scientific explanation for their occurrence. This interpretation does not remove the myth from the scriptures but rather reinterprets it with, what I term, *scientific dispensationalism*.²⁵

The application of scientific concepts within the movement is done in an attempt to relocate the Christian myth within a valid and acceptable framework, presentable to a secularized community. The difficulty with the presentation is that the scientific component remains as immersed and non-provable as the original myth. The rhetoric used for presenting the creation of life and humanity remains religious in nature although the terminology employed has been altered. By drawing upon the same framework (namely the Hebraic/Christian scriptures) the only alteration that has occurred between the former Christian tradition and the new religious movement is the scientific dispensationalism presented by Rael.

The presentation of the creation myth is in a chapter titled “The Truth” and reinterprets Genesis, highlighting certain sections and stories within the scientific framework. A new creation myth is presented that recognizes the Elohim as

²⁵ Dispensationalism is a form of biblical interpretation that divides the scriptures into seven historical periods in which God deals differently and progressively with humanity. A similar structure of biblical interpretation can be seen with the teachings of Rael, however the scientific component cannot be

advanced scientists from another planet that began experimenting with genetic forms of creation. The Elohim had also developed intergalactic exploration and decided to travel to a suitable planet to seed life and create in their image. The entire new framework is juxtaposed upon the Hebraic creation myth and methodically presented in a manner that attempts both to demythologize the ancient myth and add a form of secular/scientific accountability to the new one.

And the spirit of the Elohim moved across the waters. Genesis 1:2

This means that the scientists made reconnaissance flights and what you might call artificial satellites were placed around the Earth to study its constitution and atmosphere.

The Elohim saw that the light was good. Genesis 1:4

To create life on Earth it was important to know whether the sun was sending harmful rays to the Earth's surface and this question was fully researched. It turned out that the sun was heating the Earth correctly without sending out harmful rays. In other words the "light was good".

Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place and let dry land appear. Genesis 1:9

After they studied the surface of the ocean they studied the sea bed and determined that it was not very deep and fairly even everywhere. So then, by means of fairly strong explosions which acted rather like bulldozers, they raised matter from the bottom of the seas and piled it up into one place to form a continent.

Originally there was on Earth only one continent and your scientists have recently acknowledged that all the continents, which have drifted apart over many years, used to fit perfectly into one another to form one land mass.²⁶

This is a selected sample of the interpretation presented by Rael and clearly represents the manner in which he attempted to unite scientifically sounding principles as a remythologized version of the creation myth. His interpretation covers most of the Hebrew Scriptures including passages from Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, the Book of Judges, Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah, Ezekiel.

ignored from his teachings and replaces the mystical, unknown dimension of the scriptures and belief system.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 26-27.

Daniel, Jonah, Zechariah, Psalms, Job, Tobit, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Amos, and Micah.

The teachings of Rael attempt to remove any form of mystical or spiritual explanation from the former myth. Stories such as Sodom and Gomorrah and the flood are related to a minor skirmish that occurred between the creators of life on our earth and the population from the planet that they came from. According to Rael, the majority of the population on the home planet viewed the creation of life and humanity upon earth as a threat and an injustice. Those within authority attempted to destroy it.

The government then decided from their distant planet to destroy all life on Earth by sending nuclear missiles. However when the exiled creators were informed of the project they asked Noah to build a space ship which would orbit the Earth during the cataclysm containing a pair of each species that was to be preserved.²⁷

To support the belief that Noah was upon a space ship and not a large boat, Rael again quotes from the scriptures using Genesis 7:17. "The ark was lifted above the Earth". "As you can clearly see, it is said that the ark was lifted 'above' the Earth and not 'on' the water."²⁸

Scriptural references such as Genesis 19:11, "And they Smote them with blindness, both small and great", are explained and interpreted with the same formula. In this case the angels that had traveled to Sodom used "pocket atomic weapons" to cause the blindness, then an atomic bomb was dropped on the city.

In Exodus manna becomes, "pulverized synthetic chemical food which, when spread on the ground, swelled with the early morning dew".²⁹ A water repulsion ray

²⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 33.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

was used to part the Red Sea and the vision of the glory of God on Mount Sinai (Exodus 24:17) is a large space ship taking off. There is no longer any element our component of the unexplained or magical in Rael's narrative, all events are reduced to the influence and interference of technologically advanced beings from another planet. There are no miracles, all events can be explained and rationalized through the understanding of "what really" occurred.

Confirmation and descriptions of the Elohim as space travelers is drawn from a number of scriptures. A large portion of the Raelian account is placed in interpreting Ezekiel's vision in a similar manner as had been done previously by Erich Von Daniken in the best selling book *Chariots of the Gods*.³⁰ After quoting the majority of Ezekiel encounter with God, Rael states:

There you have a description which could not be more precise of the landing of the creators in their flying machines.... Later, four creatures appear wearing antigravity suits with small directional jet engines attached.... The small saucers were something like your own LEM's-lunar excursion modules-small, short range vehicles used for exploratory missions. Above the interplanetary vessel waited.³¹

This form of narrative is developed and continued by Rael upon his interpretation of the Christian Canon and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Instead of simply dismissing the miraculous events surrounding Jesus, Rael reinterprets them in accordance with his scientific dispensationalism. It was a spacecraft that guided the wise men from the east to the sight of the birth. A sexual relation between Mary and an extraterrestrial being accomplished the conception.

³⁰ A number of works appeared in the early 1970's that presented this interpretation of Ezekiel's vision including, Erich Von Daniken's *Chariots of the Gods*, *The Gold of the Gods*, and Jacques Bergier's *Extraterrestrial Visitations from Prehistoric Times to the Present*. The difference between presentations is that Rael claimed direct contact with the extraterrestrials, while the other works present information in a suggestive manner allowing for the reader to draw their own conclusions.

³¹ Rael, 1998, p. 50.

Healing was accomplished through a “concentrated ray, something like a laser, which burns only one spot through several layers.”³²

The Lord’s prayer is reinterpreted to give the extraterrestrial dimension concerning “thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. Parables are also juxtaposed upon the new myth presented by Rael. The passage from Mathew 13 concerning the farmer who sows seeds now refers to the Elohim attempting to start life upon other planets. Walking on water was accomplished through the use of an anti-gravity beam “which cancelled the effect of weight at a precise point.”³³

The resurrection of Jesus occurs with the help of the extraterrestrials, in that he is then taken away in a space ship after the crucifixion. According to Rael:

The creators took him away after this last most important phrase: ‘At the time of the end ... if they shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; and they shall lay hands upon the sick and they shall get well.’ Mark 16:18

This refers to humanity discovering anti-venom serums and antidotes, and developing surgery and so on—as is happening now.³⁴

This form of demystification is carried through by Rael to apply to any and all aspects of humanity. The human body and mind are presented as a machine with no spiritual component.³⁵ There is no soul or afterlife and any forms of mysticism are viewed as merely developments of the human senses. The universe is seen as an eternal, infinite place that exists on the micro and the macro level. According to Rael within the smallest atoms resides full galaxies and universes, likewise our universe

³² Ibid., p. 64.

³³ Ibid., p. 67.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

³⁵ Rael, *Sensual Meditation: Awakening the Mind by Awakening the Body*, (Japan, 1987), p.35-54.

and cosmos is merely an atom in another cosmos, there is no beginning or ending and no absolute creator.³⁶

The strongest confirmation presented by the Raelian Movement to validate the teachings is from three distinct frameworks. The first is similar to that used by Transcendental Meditation to confirm the benefits of practicing their form of meditation. The second relies upon a framework often employed by those seeking to support a fundamentalist view of creationism, that is the use of scientific data that challenges the paradigm of evolution or evolution theory.³⁷ The third draws upon recent information concerning scientific advances, particularly in the area of cloning, as implied confirmation of their teachings.

The Raelian Movement does not go to the same lengths as TM to draw upon research to support their view concerning the benefits of meditation. Instead the benefits of sensual meditation are presented as a given and only minor references are made to the scientific confirmation of this practice. A recent publication from the movement made reference to the Maharishi Effect, but instead of mentioning the tests done by TM, the benefits were associated with the Raelian practice of sensual meditation (Figure 10, p. 157). Within their teachings experts sympathetic to the movement also provide testimonials to the benefits of meditation:

Sure, many other techniques now exist, most of them coming from the East, which a long time ago the Elohim had revealed to certain prophets or initiates such as Buddha or other Tibetan monks, but those teachings had been given to primitives who were

³⁶ Rael, *Let's Welcome our Fathers from Space: They Created Humanity in Their Laboratories*, (Japan, 1987), 38-41.

³⁷ The method of relying upon new scientific theories that challenge the scientific paradigm of evolution to support a fundamentalist belief in creationism has become common. Through this method the group does not try to prove that God created the earth and humanity, but rather to disprove the theory that life developed and evolved upon the planet as outlined by Darwin. This argument has recently allowed for the teaching of creationism as an alternative theory to that of Darwin in some American schools.

still dominated by completely absurd superstitions and beliefs, and who, most of them, had badly or only partially understood the Elohim's teachings and had almost entirely distorted them while passing them on to their disciples. Most often, the teachings revealed by the Elohim were mixed together with the beliefs of the times, producing religions which conserved some excellent methods of awakening, but were unfortunately drowned by an oppressive mysticism and atrophying ritualism.

The original teachings, rediscovered thanks to the Elohim, represent a return to the source, allowing us all to understand the concrete basis of all these oriental techniques, which themselves serve as further evidence of the way our creators have, right from the beginning, been consistently helping us to improve the living conditions of the creation they love as their own children-humanity-.

Sensual Meditation allows us to rediscover the techniques for awakening, free from the handicap of centuries-old theological encrustation.³⁸

The second element of support is presented by Marcel Terruse, a chemical engineer and Bishop Guide of the Raelian Movement, and challenges the Darwinian hypothesis concerning evolution. The argument is made by presenting the scientific findings of Dr. H.J. Muller concerning the inability of species to mutate, survive, then reproduce. The Raelians promote this finding and conclude that, "almost all mutations including both those occurring in the wild and provoked in the laboratory result in hereditary illness deteriorations of survival value and genetic monstrosities."³⁹ This view is supported by other literature in the scientific community including Jean Rostand's book, *Evolution*.

The argument used to support the Raelian view of creationism does not attempt to prove that alien beings created humanity but bases its polemic against the theory of evolution. The rhetoric used by the group focuses upon the challenges the Darwinian theory has faced by the scientific community itself. Problems in the methodology of the work of Darwin and the apparent inability of species to evolve to

³⁸ Michael Deydier. Psychologist, from, *Sensual Meditation*, (Japan, 1987), p. 23-24.

other species are used as support for the Raelian's belief that an outside force is responsible for humanity upon the Earth. The argument is problematic from several perspectives. Related to the teachings of Rael, his time line concerning the creation of humanity 25 000 years ago proves the greatest challenge. When questioned about life on planet Earth before the Elohim were reported by him to have arrived here he responded:

The Elohim have explained that they did not create our planet. When they decided to pursue their experiments of creating life scientifically in a laboratory, they set out to search the universe for a planet which would have a suitable atmosphere, allowing them to work easily.... Then they came down on our planet and created the life forms we know, including humans. This means that there could have been on Earth, ten or twenty thousand years ago, other life forms, another creation which could have been destroyed by a natural or an artificial catastrophe.⁴⁰

There is no attempt made in the presentation to validate the claims made by Rael concerning extraterrestrial visitations to the planet. The Raelian movement does not attempt to draw upon the pseudo-scientific work of writers such as Von Daniken. The most current attempt at validation is done by presenting material concerning recent developments in genetic engineering as a secular confirmation of the belief system. A large majority of the group's literature makes constant reference to the break through done by scientists in cloning a sheep and the potential for cloning human beings. Recent medical breakthroughs are also correlated as a form of confirmation, and new technology becomes a sign that humanity is developing to become on par with the Elohim.

Everyday, science is confirming the authenticity of the messages that I was given by the Elohim. In 1973 for example, we created life from inert matter in our laboratories

³⁹ Marc Terruse, "Obscurantism and the Neo-Darwinian Myth", from the Raelian web site homepage at, <http://www.rael.org>.

⁴⁰ Rael, *Let's Welcome our Fathers from Space*, (Japan, 1987), p. 19.

for the first time. One day, without a doubt we will be able to synthesize a human being, bringing us one step closer to what the Elohim scientists did a long time ago, ie. the creation of a completely artificial being, That day, humanity will have reached “divine” status, the status of creator. Several other recent discoveries anticipate that this moment is not far away. Don’t the blind begin to see again thanks to electronic prosthesis? Thanks to telecommunication satellites, is not our voice carried beyond the oceans? Our progress is just as stunning in the domain of the mind....⁴¹

The Raelian Movement does not present the issue of cloning as an ethical problem even though governments and large number of scientist have raised some alarm at this scientific development. Nor does it reveal the difficulties that occurred with the experiment of Dr. Ian Wilmut when he cloned Dolly. One ethical problem is that the initial concept was developed as a form of genetic engineering. The potential for this to continue to develop as a means for the wealthy to abuse this technology and develop and accumulate genetic advantages is extremely problematic. The experiment of nuclear transfer techniques used to clone the sheep Dolly also produced a number of deformities and an extremely high percentage of miscarriages. It took over three hundred attempts to get the one successful birth.

Despite sanctions from governments and an ethical controversy, under the guidance of Rael the movement has founded an international company called Valiant Venture LTD. The company has supplied funding for research and offered perspective clients the opportunity to have their DNA preserved for future cloning or even to have themselves or their pets cloned. Although still in the development stages the movement offers several services including Clonaid, Clonapet, and Insuraclone, prices for the service range from \$50 000 to \$200 000. The company

⁴¹ Rael, “How Can You Believe What Only One Man Says?”, from the Raelian web site homepage at, <http://www.rael.org>.

has a scientific director, Dr. Brigitte Boisselier, and an international PR person, Sylvie Chabot.

The company supports the view presented by Rael but pushes past the scientific boundaries developed by current cloning techniques claiming that the next step in the process, “will be to directly clone adult people without the growing process and to transfer memory and personality.”⁴² The correlation between the teachings of Rael and current developments in cloning technology is used as a primary form of confirmation of the belief system. Although there is no support by this development for verification that extraterrestrials were responsible for creating humanity, according to the movement this is concrete proof of the narrative presented by Rael.

These three components form the locus of the appeal the movement presents to perspective membership. Literature given out by the organization during proselytizing focuses strongly upon the secularized and demystified interpretation of God. The front page of the most current pamphlet reads, “They created humanity scientifically in their laboratories, thanks to DNA. Their masterpiece was described by those ancient men, who first wrote the Bible.” (Appendices 11, p. 158)

Summary

In an application of the material provided concerning the International Raelian Movement and the 6 primary components used as a framework of analysis, it can be demonstrated that the Raelians rely upon 5 of the 6 aspects.

⁴² Rael, from the Raelian web site homepage at <http://www.rael.org>.

- 1) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of the group's beliefs.

Rael claims in his teachings that science is the “most important thing for all of humanity.” He tells his followers, “you will keep in touch with the advances made by scientists, because they can solve all your problems.”⁴³ The reason for this support of the scientific community is based upon the group's belief that science supports and validates the religious belief system and the teachings of Rael. The movement, for direct confirmation of the belief system, presents recent advances in medical technology and cloning techniques as a sign of proof and legitimation. Their secularized attempt and portraying their religious myth states that “science should be your religion” and incorporates this perspective throughout their narrative.

- 2) Claims that scientific investigations and methodologies demonstrate the validity of certain or all of the group's practices.

In the promotion of the sensual meditation technique, the Raelian Movement draws upon the same studies and research used by Transcendental Meditation to demonstrate the scientifically proven benefits of meditation. Although their literature makes no reference to the particulars of the research material, the group implies that sensual meditation has been examined and verified by external scientific study to produce measurable results and benefits.

- 3) The utilization of modern scientifically crafted techniques and technologies as tools augmenting the religious narrative and rituals.

The International Raelian Movement does not rely upon or attempt to incorporate modern technology to support or augment their belief system or rituals. However, their view concerning the human body and mind has been presented in a

⁴³ Rael, 1998, p. 181.

secular manner and according to Rael the body itself is a machine. The human body and mind is viewed as a technological development and a tool created by more advanced science (the Elohim) to be used as a means to an end.

4) Attempts to restate mythic or scriptural accounts in the language of science.

The use of *scientific dispensationalism* is a primary component of the amalgamation of religion and science within the Raelian belief system. Their entire religious narrative is a reinterpretation and a remythologizing of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. The new version of the religious myth presented to their practitioners is done in a manner and language that lends credibility to the belief system, although this credibility is centered on non-scientific and unprovable beliefs. Namely the creation of life upon the planet by more developed extraterrestrial beings.

5) Attempts to lend credibility to the belief system through scientific or academic credentials or associations.

Unlike TM or Scientology, Rael as the founder of the movement makes no special claims to scientific knowledge or training. Despite the lack of scientific training of Rael, the movement strongly promotes its own members that have scientific or academic credentials. Recent changes in the authority structure of the group show that there is a restructuring and reorganizing of the Raelian Movement underway to promote people with academic credentials to higher positions of authority. Within their literature, reports and publications from their members with academic credentials are presented as authoritative accounts and expert evaluations of current scientific theories in conjunction with their belief system.

- 6) Efforts to criticize orthodox science as narrow-minded and promote a new or expanded version of scientific theories.

The criticism leveled by the Raelian Movement against the scientific community has been done in association with the sexual practices and benefits of sensual meditation promoted by the group. Drawing upon research from Raelian psychologists and psychiatrists they have challenged traditional views concerning sexual practices and masturbation as being dogmatic and promoted liberal sexual practices as an answer for and solution to many of humanities problems.

The primary usage of science within the Raelian Movement is situated around the 4th component, and can be viewed as more rhetorically based than methodologically based. Although the movement draws upon 5 of the 6 components used in the amalgamation of science within new religious movements there is significantly few scientific methods and practices, scientific findings, scientific theory and technology incorporated within their religious belief system. Their association and funding for scientific research in cloning becomes the main scientific element recognizable within their practice but their belief that the human consciousness will be able to be transferred to a fully developed and cloned human body is not shared by the scientific community.

For this reason the movement, despite promoting itself as an atheistic science based belief system, remains situated upon a religious myth. Although the movement presents itself as a secularized form of religion, it in fact just as mythic as the original groups it drew upon to create the religious narrative.

Conclusion

Through the scientific endeavor the perceptions of the micro and macro levels of the cosmos have developed and are developing beyond the boundaries of conceivable parameters. On the micro level, new technologies have enabled the discovery of sub-atomic particles. Developments in telescopes and radio astronomy have seen the edges of the universe and looked back in time to the beginning of the cosmos 15 billion years ago.

Science continues to develop, often this development has challenged religions to accommodate and alter their belief systems and theologies. Challenges by Galileo to the Catholic Church concerning the motion of the planets and the position of the earth seem minor compared to the challenge presented by Darwin concerning natural selection and the evolution of the human species. Yet, Christianity for the most part has learned to accommodate these new scientific world-views.

Despite this attempt at accommodation, theology and religion continue to be challenged by scientific developments. Christians have attempted to accommodate the theory of evolution; Theologians now argue that evolution may have been used as a tool by God to create life, including humanity.¹ Developments along this line recognize that God intervened in the process, taking special care to insure human development and survival. This position recognizes a God active not only in history but also throughout pre-history.

¹ Although there has been significant literature presented against the evolutionary paradigm by Christian Evangelicals and Fundamentalists, the theoretical and scientific element of their argument has been challenged within their own Evangelical tradition by educated members. The most recent work attempting to accommodate Christianity and evolution from this Evangelical perspective has been presented by Denis Lamoureux arguing against the work of Phillip E. Johnson.

If God intervened in the creation of life, where is “HE”? The teachings of the Christian tradition stipulate the belief in a throned God, an omnipotent being who resides in heavenly splendor upon a dais issuing commands and supervising “His” creation. Developments in astronomy have revealed the immense size of the cosmos. It is a space so large and full of so many galaxies that numbers cannot rightfully demonstrate its enormity. The Milky Way galaxy is insignificant when recognized as just one of the billions of these galaxies. Our sun is just one of the billions of stars within our galaxy alone. The earth is so small when placed within this context that it becomes rational to question a theology that stipulates God somehow reached into this enormous cosmos and created life here on this planet. This is only one challenge of many presented to the historical and ontological religious frameworks of our contemporary culture.

Religion and the religious myth help the adherent cope with the unexplainable. Questions concerning life and death or inexplicable tragedy are removed from a framework of incomprehensible chaos and given meaning. However, in an attempt to give meaning to these events a framework must be presented to the practitioner of the tradition that incorporates their worldview. How is it possible to use a religious framework to make sense out of the world and give meaning or reason to life if that framework itself does not make sense to the individual?

Some religious traditions accommodate scientific development better than others. Dr. Gerald Schroeder has used ancient and medieval Midrash and Kabbalah in conjunction with his training as a physicist to demonstrate that the earth can be six

days and 15 billion years old at the same time.² Current studies by Islamic scholars point to the compatibility between scientific understanding and Islam. Other traditions feel no challenge by the scientific proof that our world is insignificant and impermanent. Many people may not even think about such concepts and are able to remain untouched by scientific developments that do not impinge upon their religious beliefs and their day to day life.

Yet for those individuals that are challenged by both the current developments of the scientific pursuit and questions of ultimate concern, religious myth must modify its content in order to accommodate both traditions. In our contemporary culture there is a fascination with the scientific pursuit. Materialist world-views and a sense of objectivity have become components or pillars of our culture. Secularized economies and social structures reward the individual that is able to function with these perspectives. This worldview has influenced the role of religion and in the past has relegated religious beliefs into a separate sphere of knowledge, creating a two-discourse principle. Namely that religion is focused upon a different cognitive framework than science or the objective interpretation of reality.

More recent developments between the discourses of religion and science have developed a theory of “new consonance” which gives religion a position of importance that can work in harmony with scientific development. This new consonance between science and religion recognizes the significant roles of each tradition and the different functions of these roles. Religion can provide frameworks for value judgements and answers concerning questions of moral and ethical

² Dr. Gerald Schroeder, *Genesis and the Big Bang: The Discovery of Harmony Between Modern Science and the Bible*, (New York, 1990).

character. Science provides important advances in the development of our practical understanding of the cosmos, supplying worldly benefits for humankind. Within this amicable framework religion and science recognize the importance of each other's pursuits. Each is to be cognizant of the boundaries and limitations of their endeavor. Science cannot make value judgements and religion must recognize the inability of its beliefs and practices to be scientifically validated. Religion must also recognize that its belief systems and interpretive frameworks must be in accord with the advances made by science.³

The development of the new consonance between science and religion has been spearheaded by the John Templeton Foundation and is primarily concerned with the relationship between the scientific endeavor and Christian Theology. It demonstrates an ideal or desired outcome between the two traditions and represents a liberal and tempered association between the scientific and religious communities. It remains to be seen if this framework for consonance will be influential in developing a working relationship between these two traditions. Difficulties still remain with claims made by both traditions. Christianity relies upon the acceptance of miracles and its belief that Jesus was born from a virgin birth. Science remains reductionalistic in its worldview and materialistic in its interpretation of reality, leaving little or no room for the miraculous or the spiritual.

This cultural development has positioned religion secondary to science and the scientific or objective worldview when regarding empirical questions. However many individuals do not wish to position the religious or spiritual dimension of their

³ Ernan McMullin, "The Quest for Consonance". from *Religion and Science: Tension, Accommodation and Engagement*, conference, Columbus, Ohio, unpublished paper (May 2, 1999).

lives secondary to the scientific worldview or separate religious beliefs and practices from their scientific understanding of the world. Their ability to create a holistic worldview that draws upon aspects of science in conjunction with religious or spiritual beliefs appears as an affront to modern developments in science and theology. Yet for these individuals this is the worldview that makes sense.

Several new religious movements cater to this holistic incorporation of science within the sacred. In the detailed analysis of Transcendental Meditation, Scientology, and the Raelian Movement we have demonstrated how these traditions present their belief system in this manner. All three groups provided their material in a method that appeared to be scientifically supported. Whether they drew upon actual scientific studies as support or pseudo-scientific material, they consistently attempted to portray their belief system through an objective framework. This portrayal of religious beliefs that appeared to be verified or validated by a scientific and objective perspective added a secular dimension to their religion, creating a new religious tradition that challenges traditional boundaries and appeals to significant numbers of the population.

The scientific dimension incorporated within the religious tradition pushes the boundaries of accepted scientific support and religious theological studies, yet on a popular level this incorporation has been successful. Frances Westley notes that the incorporation of science within new religions is done by groups for their own means and to attain their own religious ends.⁴ They push the boundaries of what is accepted as orthodox science and traditional religion to develop their appeal in a religiously

⁴ Frances Westley, *The Complex Forms of the Religious Life: A Durheimian View of New Religious Movements*, (California, 1983), p. 65.

plural market. This places the new religious movement within the struggle to affirm both the scientific pursuit and the religious endeavor. As demonstrated in the analysis, the science used by these groups as support has not been given the same validation by the scientific community. Despite this tension, the scientific component is maintained within the belief system and accepted as being a form of validation for the adherents. As shown in the thesis, the scientific aspect can be more rhetorical than methodological but even when actual scientific data or experimentation is used the group removes the information from the original context and applies it to support its religious myth. In this accommodation the scientific methods and practices, findings and theory, and even the technological components also become a component of the religious myth.

On a social level all three groups examined present their myth and their teachings so that the practitioner can incorporate the information into their day to day lives. All three groups attempt to create a holistic balance between religion and science that allows the member of the religious group to function in the modern secularized world. The new religions studied in the thesis are representative of the trend to incorporate science within religion and are world affirming or world accommodating in nature. Such amalgamation between religion and science allows the member to achieve a union in their life between their religious myth and the secularized modern world to which they belong.

The purpose of Scientology is to enable the individual to become a superhuman, functioning in the world beyond the normal limitations of the human mind, this ability is said by the group to be scientific and verifiable through the use of

the e-meter. Transcendental meditation teaches that the practitioner can achieve a state of harmony with Divine Law, enabling them to function without making mistakes or being “stressed out”, they claim these abilities have been scientifically proven through experimentation and are available only through their meditation techniques. The Raelians present their myth with scientific language and teach that the body is a machine, with the understanding and techniques the group teaches the individual may advance themselves to a level above the mundane where they will be chosen to be cloned, giving them eternal life.

The appeal of these groups is on several levels and cannot be reduced to only the scientific components and elements incorporated by each tradition. However, it cannot be denied that the incorporation of scientific elements within the belief system and praxis of the group is a vital aspect of the three groups studied. These groups have tremendous appeal, membership particularly in Scientology and the Raelian Movement is continuing to expand at an unprecedented rate. A significant component of this appeal is the manner in which the belief system is presented and accepted as credible by those joining the movement. This is done through the 6 primary characteristic used as a framework of analysis in this thesis. This amalgamation of religion and science represents an ingenious attempt at integrating the two components and reflects the increasing value placed upon the authority of science within our culture. This presentation of a new religious myth in conjunction with the social structures of these new religious movements is meeting the religious and spiritual needs of millions of people in North American and throughout the world.

As science continues to develop it will provide elements that will be amalgamated by new religious movements as components of their myth. Despite the boundaries established by science concerning its application and parameters and the position of traditional religious organizations concerning their relationship to the scientific pursuit, new religious movements will continue to push these boundaries to accommodate the section of the population that desires an amalgamation of both.

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FIGURES

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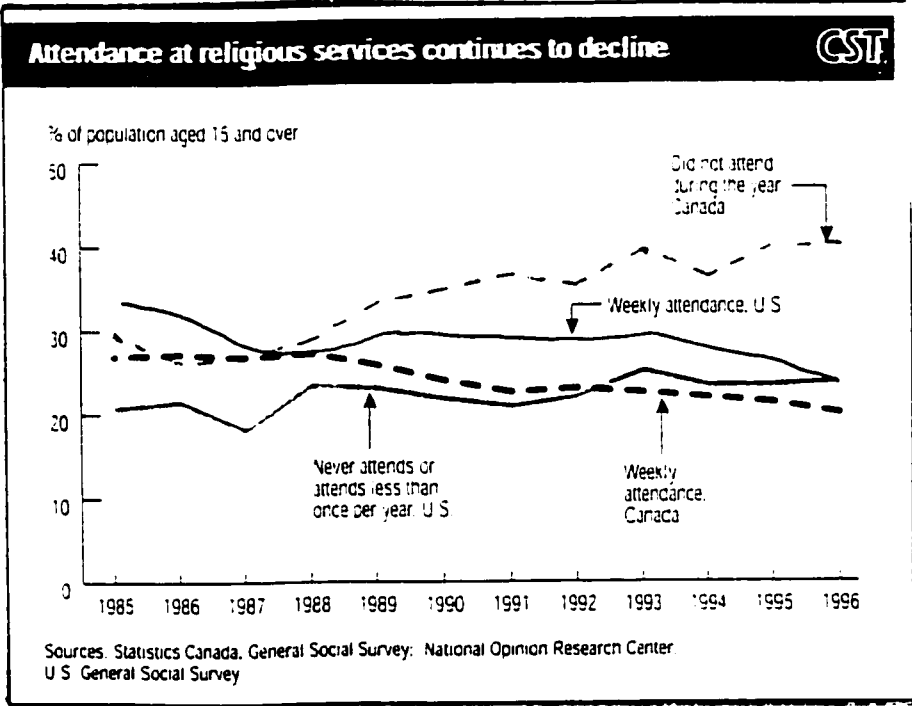


Figure 1: "Attendance at religious services continues to decline", *Canadian Social Trends*, No. 50, Autumn 1998, p. 7.



Figure 2: Aum's electrode cap, Kyodo News Service. From David Kaplan and Andrew Marshal, *The Cult at the End of the World: The Terrifying Story of the Aum Doomsday Cult, from the Subways of Tokyo to the Nuclear Arsenals of Russia*, (New York, 1996).

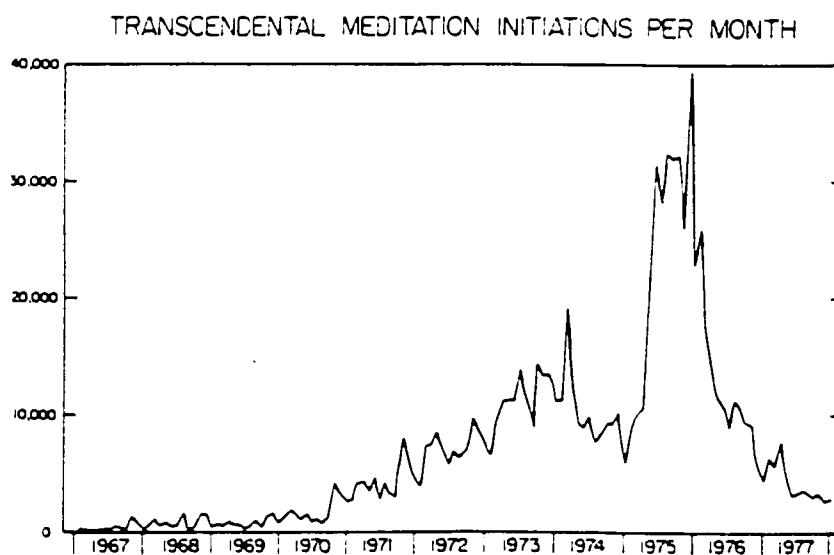


Figure 3: Transcendental Meditation initiations per month, 1967-1978. From Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*, (Berkeley, 1985), p. 293.

Annual Growth in T.M. Initiations in the United States

Year	Cumulative Total at the End of Each Year	Increase in the Year	
		Number	Percent
1966	about 1,000	—	—
1967	5,500	4,459	450
1968	15,300	9,847	180
1969	24,800	9,474	62
1970	45,200	20,444	83
1971	96,400	51,192	113
1972	182,700	86,332	90
1973	315,400	132,634	73
1974	436,800	121,420	38
1975	729,300	292,517	67
1976	869,600	140,273	19
1977	919,300	49,689	6

Figure 4: Annual Growth in TM Initiations in the United States, 1966-1977. From Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*, (Berkeley, 1985), p. 292.

SHORT COURSES FOR EVERYONE

6 Hour Courses—Weekends and Evenings

Students, working people, parents, retired people—everyone is invited to take a rich variety of evening and weekend courses. These courses together give a total perspective of the consciousness-based knowledge offered at Maharishi Vedic College.

1. **Successful Management—Gaining Support of Natural Law:** Programs to reduce stress, improve productivity, and develop full alertness, full creative intelligence, and full support of nature in the manager.
2. **Higher States of Consciousness—Introduction:** Total knowledge for enlightenment to enjoy inner fulfillment and success in all areas of life.
3. **Transcendental Meditation:** Scientifically validated technique to develop the creative potential of mind and body for a stress-free, problem-free life.
4. **The TM-Sidhi Program—Including Yogic Flying—Research in consciousness** for optimal brain functioning, experience of rapturous bliss, and support of Natural Law in daily life. *(Linger, Surfer)*
5. **Philosophy of Action—Success Without Stress:** How to act with full support of Natural Law for maximum success, energy, freedom, and fulfillment.
6. **Discovery of Veda and Vedic Literature in Human Physiology—** Correspondence between the 27 areas of Veda and the Vedic Literature and the key structures and functions of the physiology—a vision of the unlimited potential of life—the possibility of gaining mastery over Natural Law.
7. **Maharishi Jyotish—Vedic system of predicting the future of one's personal life, business, or health, and the application of Maharishi Yjgya procedures—Vedic performances—to help prevent problems and promote good fortune.**
8. **Good Health Through Prevention—Vedic approach to health:** Creating balance in mind, body, behaviour, and environment by enhancing the total inner intelligence of the physiology.
9. **Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation—Scientifically documented programs** to reduce crime and effectively rehabilitate offenders.
10. **Maharishi's Supreme Political Science—Automation in Administration:** Insights into the Constitution of the Universe, which eternally governs the universe with perfect order—alliance of national law with Natural Law to achieve conflict-free politics, a balanced economy, and a self-sufficient invincible nation.
11. **Maharishi's Science of Creative Intelligence—Study of the fundamental field of pure creative intelligence, how direct experience of this field develops all aspects of individual life and can fulfill the highest goals of society.**
12. **Maharishi Yoga—Unifying individual intelligence with cosmic intelligence:** Creating physiological balance and mind-body coordination through simple Yoga postures and breathing exercises.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FINDINGS

Relevant to the Short Courses

More than 140 scientific research studies, conducted at 120 universities and research institutions in 23 countries, verify the benefits of the Maharishi Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi Program for all aspects of life. Sample scientific findings relevant to each short course include the following:

- **Improved job performance, job satisfaction, and work relations.** *References: Academy of Management Journal 17 (1974): 62; Academy of Management Journal 18 (1975): 215.*
- **Increased self-actualization.** *Reference: Journal of Abnormal and Personality Psychology 64 (1972): 149.*
- **Deep physiological rest; reduced stress; increased capacity for warm interpersonal relationships.** *References: American Psychologist 22 (1967): 676; Journal of Learning and Development 10 (1973): 212; Journal of Learning Psychology 4 (1973): 165.*
- **Greater coherence of brain functioning; improved endocrine functioning; improved learning ability.** *References: International Journal of Neurophysiology 4 (1967): 151; Psychosomatic Medicine 14 (1966): 74.*
- **Increased energy level; decreased anxiety; improved family life.** *References: Journal of Learning and Development 10 (1973): 212; Journal of Social Psychology 85 (1972): 187; Psychosomatic Medicine 14 (1972): 172B.*
- **Increased "mobilization of the reserves of the brain."** *Reference: Program Abstracts: New Research in New Subunits: Brain Research Institute, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, Moscow (1992, May): 13.*
- **Increased time competence—increased ability to connect past, present, and future meaningfully.** *References: Journal of Consulting Psychology 4 (1972): 164; (1973): 263; Journal of Social Behavior and Personality 1 (1973): 99.*
- **Reduced need for medical care; reduction of the detrimental effects of aging.** *References: Psychosomatic Medicine 19 (1987): 193; Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 57 (1989): 950; International Journal of Neuroscience 5 (1982): 33.*
- **Decreased urban crime rate; reduced recidivism.** *References: The Journal of Mind and Behavior 5 (1987): 67; Journal of Criminal Justice 5 (1987): 31.*
- **Improved economic performance—reduced inflation and unemployment; improved quality of city, state, and national life.** *References: Proceedings of the American Institute of Statistical Mathematics (1989): 565; The Journal of Mind and Behavior 5 (1987): 67; (1988): 157; Journal of Management Research 22 (1985): 194.*
- **Increased creativity and intelligence.** *References: Personality and Individual Differences 12 (1991): 1105; The Journal of Creative Behavior 13 (1979): 199.*
- **Increased EEG coherence; increased efficiency of information transfer in the brain.** *References: International Journal of Neuroscience 4 (1981): 27; (1980): 65; Psychophysiology 18 (1981): 529.*

Figure 5: Maharishi Vedic College promotional pamphlet, 1994-1996.



Maharishi Mahesh Yogi

introduced Transcendental Meditation 37 years ago bringing enlightenment to millions of people in the world. Maharishi is now introducing total knowledge of Natural Law, the intelligence of nature, for everyone to spontaneously think and act in accord with Natural Law so that no one makes mistakes, and no one creates the ground for suffering.

Maharishi Vedic Colleges in every major city offer courses in Maharishi's Vedic Science and Technology, the science and technology of consciousness. These practical programs develop the full creative potential of mind and body and promote perfect health of the individual and collective health of the nation.

The most time-tested technique for developing your full potential now verified by modern science

To date the benefits of Transcendental Meditation have been confirmed by more than 350 scientific studies in 160 universities and research centres all around the world including Harvard, UCLA, Stanford and McGill University.

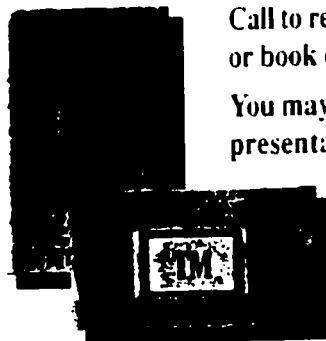
Studies show:

- increased intelligence and creativity
- improved academic performance
- increased confidence and self-esteem
- decreased dependence on cigarettes, tranquillizers, alcohol, sleeping pills, and non-prescribed drugs

Anyone can learn

TM is easy to learn and enjoyable to practise regardless of your age, profession or educational background. TM doesn't require any change in lifestyle, diet, religion or philosophy. TM could be the most valuable technique you will ever learn.

To learn more about TM, phone for your complimentary video tape or book



Call to receive free of charge a VHS video presentation or book on TM to enjoy at leisure in your own home.

You may also call to arrange for a free, no-obligation presentation for your family, friends or colleagues at your home, office or club.

- Call from 9 to 5 pm: **964-1725**
- Fax anytime: **968-1565**

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Figure 6: Transcendental Meditation promotional pamphlet, 1994.

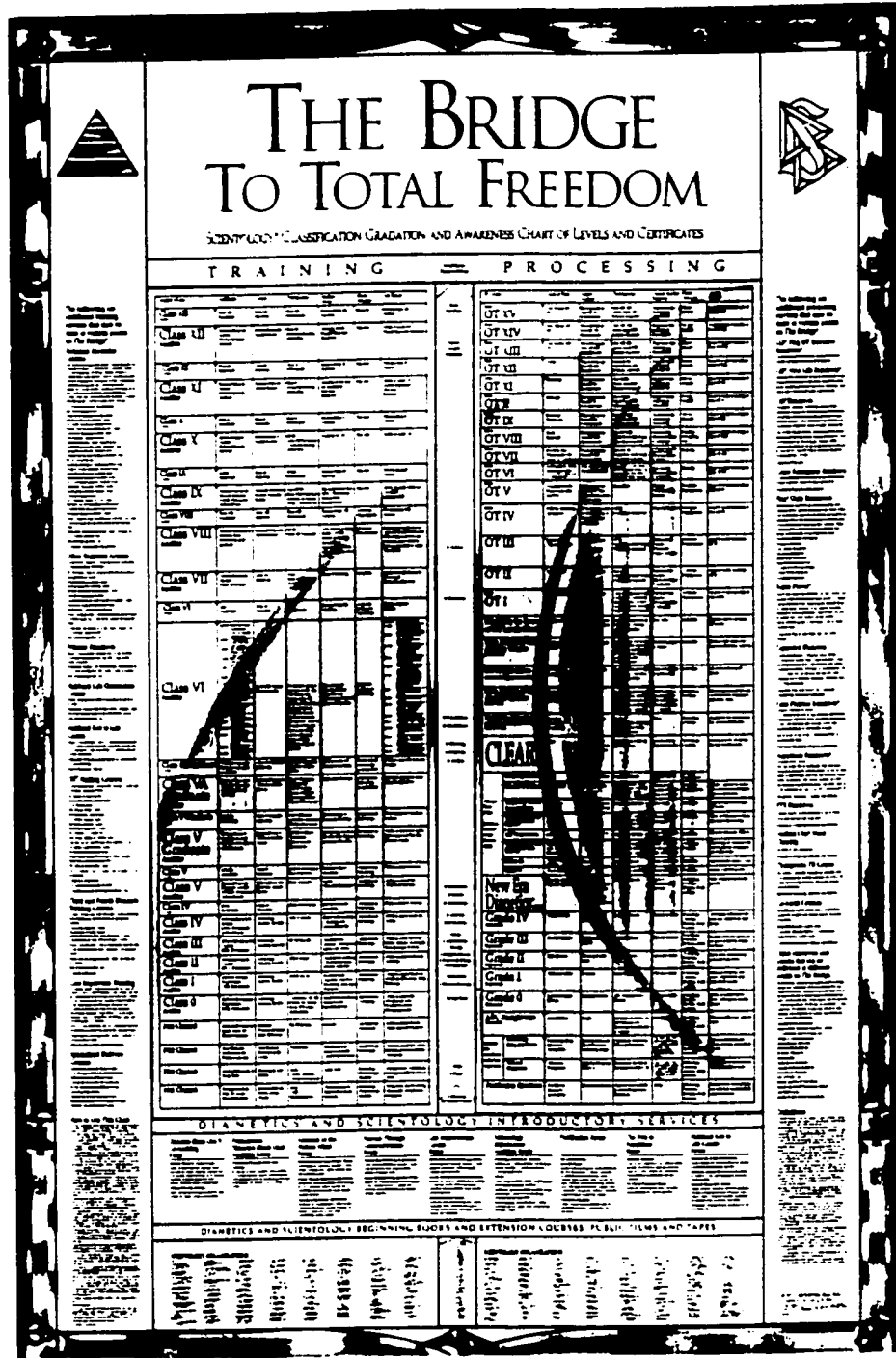


Figure 7: "The Bridge to Total Freedom". From *Scientology: Theology and Practice of a Contemporary Religion: A Reference Work Presented by the Church of Scientology International*. (Los Angeles, 1998), p. 56.



Figure 8: Photograph of a Church of Scientology e-meter.

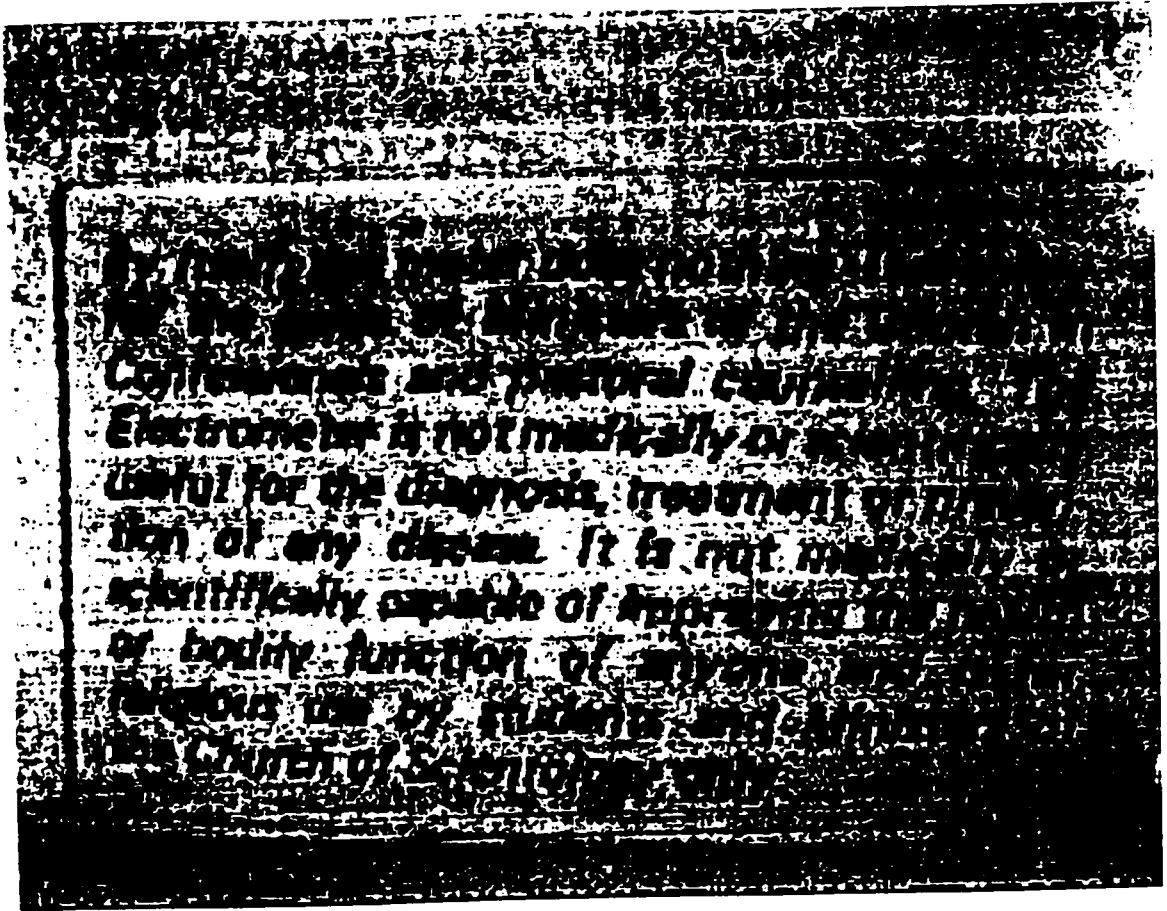


Figure 9: Photograph of label from Church of Scientology e-meter.


THE SCIENTIFIC APPROACH

Meditation and its benefits

— by Marc Letourneau

A personal research has allowed me to discover some thirty studies — published in the last ten years only! — showing positive links between meditation and various aspects of health and mental and physical development.

Because it promotes emotional stability, self-fulfilment, stress management, and longevity, meditation undoubtedly will become an integral part of our societies in the near future. Meanwhile, the Sensual Meditation seminar, held in July in Quebec, is the ideal place to open ourselves to the world of tomorrow before it arrives at our doorstep. Now is the time to become the pioneers of a new emerging humanity.

Some scientists have made an astonishing discovery: A small group of people regularly gathering together to meditate can have a positive influence on the rest of the population. By learning and practising Sensual Meditation, we become heroes, building the society of year 2000. So, we can be proud of our contribution to bringing peace to humankind. 

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Figure 10: "Meditation and its Benefits". From Raelian Church promotional pamphlet.

UFO

*The message given by
Extraterrestrials*



They created humanity
scientifically in their
laboratories,
thanks to DNA

Their masterpiece
was described
by those ancient
men, who first
wrote the Bible.

Raelian Church



Figure 11: Cover of Raelian Church promotional pamphlet, 1999.