

**Prophecy, Cosmology and the New Age Movement
The Extent and Nature of Contemporary Belief in Astrology**

Part 2

Chapter 6

New Age Astrology

Chapter Summary

In part 1 the astrological nature of Millenarian belief and the relationship between the concepts of the Age of Aquarius and the New Age were discussed. This chapter explores the implications for astrology of New Age ideology and the resulting reform of astrology by two theosophical astrologers: Alan Leo in Britain in the 1890s to the 1910s, and Dane Rudhyar in the USA from the 1930s to the 1970s. The deliberate result was the development of two distinct but related forms of astrology: the first, esoteric, was concerned with the soul and second, psychological, was concerned with the development of the personality. The latter astrology, with its rich character descriptions of the zodiac signs, is that which most modern western astrologers study and practice. While it will be argued that the impact of New Age ideology from the 1910s onwards has been so pervasive that modern astrology may be largely regarded as New Age, it will be acknowledged that there are astrologers who are actively hostile to the combination of New Age ideas with astrology.

Introduction

That modern astrology is essentially a New Age discipline is assumed by most external commentators whether evangelical (Anderson 1988: 39; Walter 1989: 15; Amano *et al* 1989: 32-3; Cole *et al* 1990: 6; Miller 1990: 19; Newport 1998: 8), historical (Curry 1992: 161) or academic (Saliba 1995: 23; Bruce 1995: 105; Gill 1999: 50-1, 81, 135). This proposition, though is, essentially what Sutcliffe would call an 'etic' formulation. In other words astrology's inclusion as a New Age discipline is taken for granted and there has to date been no study of astrology's nature in any commentary on New Age

culture, with the sole exception of Feher (1992). The purpose of this chapter is to explore the textual evidence, examining the attitudes of some leading astrologers and their impact on astrology in the English speaking world and to consider Heelas' proposition that, along with other ancient or pre-modern practices, astrology in the hands of New Agers has adopted a ' detraditionalised' New Age form (Heelas 1996: 23). He notes the paradoxical New Age devotion and aversion to tradition which leads to traditional practices being adopted but then transformed (Heelas 1996: 27). However, none of these studies examines any primary material. It has been noted elsewhere that there are ' two basic forms of astrology' , one ' outward based on traditional techniques and concerned with behaviour, and the other ' inner' and psychological (Kelly 1998: 528). It will be argued that the latter form of astrology emerges from, and is associated with, New Age ideology.

The Reform of Astrology

It is generally agreed amongst astrologers that astrology in the twentieth century underwent a substantial change. According to Dean and Mather, ' In 1900 astrology was effectively medieval. It was modernised largely by the work of Alan Leo (1860-1917). The result was a renaissance of interest in astrology' (Dean and Mather 1977: 5; see also Hand 1990: 13-18; Oken 1988 11-13). Jeff Mayo, former Principal of the Faculty of Astrological Studies, wrote that,

Astrology as practised today by trained astrological-consultants is, by its correlation to modern psychology and the eradication of many muddle-headed esoteric theories and ' fortunetelling sensationalism' , far removed from the astrology of even the turn of this century (1981: 7).

Although the underlying principles of astrology, Mayo argued, have not changed since its origins in Mesopotamia, whereas once planetary patterns were associated with divine influence, they are now, he declared, associated with ' impulses and drives rooted in the unconscious mind...reflected in disposition, emotional response, general behaviour' (1981: 7).

Hand' s assessment of the change in perspective was that ' I think this may be the twentieth-century' s outstanding contribution to the history of astrology: the use of astrology as a developmental tool' (Phillipson 2000: 76).

Theosophical Attitudes to Astrology

Madame Blavatsky set the tone for theosophical attitudes to astrology when she stated that,

Astrology is a science *as infallible* as astronomy itself, with the condition, however, that its interpreters must be equally infallible; and it is this condition, however, *sine qua non*, so very difficult of realization, that has always proved a stumbling block to both. Astrology is to exact astronomy what psychology is to exact physiology. In astrology one has to step beyond the visible world of matter, and enter into the domain of transcendent spirit (1877: I.259).

In two sentences Blavatsky had set out a manifesto for what was to become New Age astrology. The core argument was that astrology, as a ' Department of the Divine Wisdom' (Besant 1919: 8), is infallible but that astrologers, being only human, are fallible. However, by moving beyond the realm of the visible into the transcendent, they can become infallible. Blavatsky thus established a requirement for those astrologers with a deep commitment to the theosophical vision of New Age to condemn the fallible astrologers they saw all around them and instead set out to create an astrology which would be, as she hoped, infallible (Leo 1911: 8.5.180, 8.3.95; Rudhyar 1977: v).

Blavatsky was familiar with the basic symbolism and interpretative structure of astrology (1877: I.168), but never concerned herself with its technical aspects. Instead she was far more concerned with its roots in the esoteric universe and angelic cosmology of the Platonists, Hermeticists, Zoroastrians, Kabbalists, Hindus and Sufis (See for example 1877: 1.312-3, 328-9, 331, 502; II. 306-7, 454-5). Her primary interest was in the solar origin of religion and the representation of both the sun and the zodiac as ' emblems' of such Biblical incidents as Ezekiel' s dream (Ezekiel) and the prophets and patriarchs; indeed, all the religious traditions of Babylon, Persia and India,

as well as the evolution of the entire human race (1877: II. 454-472). Thus, she argued, there were deeper truths, which had been handed down orally, and to which she, via her own studies and communications from the 'Masters', the spiritual beings who directed her, was privy. Amongst these truths was knowledge of reincarnation, the cause of which, she wrote is 'ignorance of our senses, and the idea that there is any reality in the world, anything except abstract existence' and its consequence, 'evil desire' and 'cleaving to existing objects' (1877: 346, 351; see also I.329-30). Thus, there is a purpose to each human life, which is to work to purge one's self of the 'dross' of one's nature working towards a gradual improvement in each incarnation until one can finally secure the chance of escape to nirvana at the end of the sequence of zodiacal ages (1877: II.456). Astrology, at least Blavatsky's proposed astrology of the transcendental spirit, thus became, as Popper suggested (1986: I.210, 244), an essential tool of the historical process. Its immediate purpose, she wrote, was to 'establish a still closer metaphysical connection between the earliest races and their Creators, the *divine* men from other worlds' (Blavatsky 1888: II.437), and thus to promote the shift into the new historical era.

Blavatsky's astrology then, was teleological, based on the theory of a final state into which all individuals were to evolve. This evolutionary process was also driving humanity as a whole as well as the entire cosmos towards its ultimate return to pure spirit. Individuals passed through successive incarnations but individual evolution took place only within a vast historicist framework defined by the yugas and long astrological periods. The creation of the Theosophical Society was the outward demonstration of her belief that action is important and that each individual has a duty to participate to the full in the coming historical shift, the beginning of humanity's return to its spiritual condition.

Alan Leo

The seminal figure in the incorporation of New Age ideology into astrology was William Frederick Allen (1860-1917), who is generally known under his pseudonym, Alan Leo. In Leo's own account he discovered astrology as a teenager in 1877 (Leo 1925: vii), although other versions make him twenty-one (Howe 1967: 358). Over the next forty years, he worked ceaselessly to study it and understand its principles. From around 1890 he was one of the dominating figures in British astrology (Besant 1919: 8; Hone 1973: 295; Melton, Clark and Kelly 1991: 274; Curry 1992: 122-159). Annie Besant, Blavatsky's successor as President of the Theosophical Society, stated that 'Mr Alan Leo is so well known among all who are interested in Astrology, and he has done so much to raise Astrology from the position of a superstition to that of a science' (Besant, *The Theosophist* February 1911, cited in Leo 1936: viii). (In return Leo (1911: 8.10.399) called Besant 'without a doubt the most remarkable woman of the twentieth century.

According to Ellic Howe, discussing the early theosophical astrologers of the 1880s and 1890s,

The most important of these pioneers was Alan Leo, an obscure commercial traveller who was to become this century's first major astrological publicist and, furthermore, the first astrologer of all time to practise his art on a large and well-organised professional scale (Howe 1967: 56-7).

Leo's astrology was originally the standard event-oriented, character-describing astrology of the nineteenth-century, dealing with such matters as infant mortality and the horoscope of ships (Lacey 1919: 50, 54). In the late 1880s, though, he began reading theosophical material, including the journal *Theosophical Siftings* and, in around 1890, he was invited by the theosophist and astrologer Sepharial (1864-1929) to the theosophical headquarters at Avenue Road in London, where he met Blavatsky and her fellow heads of the movement, Henry Olcott and William Q. Judge (Lacey 1919: 40). Leo became a devout theosophist and began to study theosophy, *Isis Unveiled* and

The Secret Doctrine becoming two of the only books he ever read deeply (Besant 1919: 7-8; Lacey 1919: 43). If anything, he loved theosophy more than astrology although, as Anne Besant reported, he believed that the two were so intertwined that they were almost indistinguishable (Besant 1919: 8). Even though Sepharial was always much closer to Blavatsky than was Leo, Annie Besant, Blavatsky's successor as President of the Theosophical Society, was much closer to Leo. He became her personal astrologer and performed tasks such as the election of the moment to lay the foundation stone for the new Theosophical Society headquarters in London (Leo 1911: 8.10.402).

The 'great upheaval' in his social life occasioned by his introduction to Blavatsky, Olcott and Judge prompted Leo to begin an empirical study of all the horoscopes in his possession with accurately timed births. The result, in his opinion, was 'to establish beyond all question the permanent value of Esoteric Astrology, itself defined as the combination of astrology with the 'eastern teachings concerning Reincarnation and Karma' (1925: vii). Leo was no relativist, though. He wrote that the 'laws which guide the evolution of the world are infallible laws which work incessantly for the ultimate good of humanity' and 'are capable of demonstration to all who apply themselves thoughtfully to the methods required to obtain first-hand knowledge' (Leo 1925: v). He added,

Today my whole belief in the science of the stars stands or falls with Karma and Reincarnation, and I have no hesitation in saying that without these ancient teachings, Natal Astrology has no permanent value. The law which gives to one soul a nativity of good environment in which refinement, opportunity, and sound moral training are uppermost; and to another poverty, disease, and immoral training, is manifestly unjust to say the least, apart from its being without any apparent purpose (1925: vii).

The essence of Leo's reformed astrology was an attempt to convert theosophical cosmology to practical astrology. This was an important and profoundly helpful task, for, he believed, only esoteric astrology was capable of solving certain problems that were beyond the bounds of traditional astrology, such as why planetary movements

might be ' calamitous in some cases and transmutative in others' (Leo 1911: 8.3.95). He argued that understanding one's character and past, including past lives, was central to the control of one's future, adapting the Heraclitian aphorism ' Man's character is his daemon' as ' character is destiny' (Kirkley and Schofield 1983: 211; Leo 1911: 8.3.95, 1936: 134-141). It is still widely quoted (see for example Greene 1992: 5; Sasportas 1989: 4-5). This, as Arthur Mee wrote, became ' the keynote' of Leo's teaching, and paraphrased it in Biblical terms as ' What we sow so shall we reap' (Mee 1919: 156). Leo wrote,

Sooner or later it must be realised that character is destiny. That is why so much stress is always laid upon the fact that the nativity must be fully understood before ' directions' can be interpreted. We each bring our character with us as a result of past efforts, aspirations and opportunity (Leo 1922: 35).

Leo added two other traditional aphorisms ' the stars incline, they do not compel' and ' the wise man rules his stars, the fool obeys them' (Leo 1911: 8.3.95), announcing himself to be a believer in free will. Astrology's immediate purpose, he argued, must therefore be self-understanding, the goal being to ' react...on circumstances, remoulding and reshaping them' , changing the world and introducing far-reaching changes into the life-map drawn from the horoscope at birth' (Besant 1919: 9). Prediction, by inference, is useless. As explained by Annie Besant,

as the power of the Spirit, the Inner Ruler Immortal, passing in ever increasing measure out of latency in potency, so did the future become more and more inscrutable by means of ordinary rules, since the emergent new forces brought about their necessary results in fashions well nigh incalculable by most Astrologers (Besant 1919: 9).

Leo conceded that what he came to call ' exoteric astrology' (which is concerned with outer events, as opposed to ' esoteric' astrology, the astrology of the soul), might be studied and practiced satisfactorily within its own terms, just as medicine can study the body alone without the soul. But, he added, ' the deeper students of human nature know that physiology acquired a profounder meaning by the addition of psychology' (1925:

vii; see also v). Psychology, for Leo, was essentially a means of analysing the individual's spiritual condition. His use of the word 'Ego', for example, is more analogous to soul in that it may move between different incarnations (1911: 8.9.353; 1925: 88-89) while the 'Self' is characterised by 'intellectual-selfconsciousness', as opposed to the normal definition of the self as an individual person (1925: 88-89). In a cosmic scale the Ego of the Logos² survives the complete destruction of the universe as envisaged in Hindu cosmology, and passes intact to the next. Elsewhere, Leo defined the Ego, in theosophical terms, as the Self, 'the consciousness in man or the feeling of *I am* ship'" (Leo 1911: 8.9.353). 'Esoteric philosophy' he wrote, 'teaches the existence of two egos in man, the mortal or personal, and the higher, divine or impersonal; the former being termed the Personality and the latter the Individuality' (Leo 1911: 8.9.353). The Ego in the sense of the higher, divine nature, was itself revealed in the horoscope for, if the human being and the universe were part of each other then the horoscope, as a map of the universe must reveal the entire person, physical and spiritual. The new esoteric, spiritual-psychological astrology, Leo believed, was the coming astrology, and it was his urgent task to create it. Leo announced his historically driven millenarian mission: 'I am actuated by the primary motive of expressing what I believe to be the true Astrology, for the new Era that is now dawning upon the world' (1925: v).

Leo followed Blavatskian neo-Platonic, Gnostic cosmology in every detail. All souls, he wrote, are a 'Divine Fragment' of 'the great Being whom men ordinarily call God the God of this system - and whom theosophists often refer to as the Solar Logos', and of whom they were once part (Leo 1936: 1). Through successive incarnations, souls then descend lower and lower into matter and, as they do, so the inner light becomes so obscured that the memory of the soul's origin is almost obscured. Following Blavatsky, he believed that humanity was at the lowest, half-way point of its evolutionary cycle, the fifth sub-race of the fifth root race. The Age of Aquarius, he argued, would begin

with the arrival of the new world Teacher (Leo 1925: 116), who will inaugurate the religion of the sixth sub-race, preparing the way for the sixth root race and a significant evolutionary shift back to spirituality and the long return of humanity to God, the Solar Logos. Urgency was added by the fact that the souls of the sixth sub-race were already beginning to incarnate (Lowe 1911: 406). In addition, the 'Intelligences at the back of things' (Lowe 1911: 406), 'the Great Beings who are the Guardians of Humanity and the Teachers of the individual Souls' (Besant 1919: 9), devas and planetary spirits (Leo 1925: 122-128, see also 63), were encouraging the use of astrology to guide humanity through the current crisis. The crucial stages in the historical process might therefore be better understood within the context of his essentially spiritual understanding of precession of the equinoxes: the zodiac, he wrote, 'is the book of life that is read on Judgement Day' (Leo 1925: 63). Leo was actually present in India for the Theosophical Society's foundation of the Order of the Star in the East under the leadership of Jiddu Krishnamurti, in order to make preparations for the great spiritual Teacher's arrival (Leo 1911: 8.10.397-8),³ and he became convinced that the Age of Aquarius was to begin on 21st March 1928 (Leo 1911: 8.7.272, .8.10.398).

Leo posited a form of dualism in which the universe is divided between 'the being, soul, man or creature...the Self' on the one hand, and the environment, nature, sensual stimuli, including planetary influences, and the 'Not Self' on the other. He also added a third pole, the physical body, which mediates between the environment and consciousness. As an example, he argued, although every external stimulus can produce a change in consciousness, it also corresponds to a fragment of inner experience. Thus the sound of a gun or the colour red only exist in the consciousness. In the environment all that exists are vibrations in the air or ether (Leo 1936: 3-5). As Leo acknowledged, this notion is ancient, although, in claiming that humanity is the microcosm of the universal macrocosm, he used a more recent designation for the latter, Swedenborg's 'Grand Man'. The novel feature of his astrology was provided by his emphasis on

subjective inner experience as the determinant of one's relationship with the environment, together with his modification of the techniques of horoscope interpretation in order to comment on different levels of consciousness and spiritual evolution.

The core features of Leo's Esoteric astrology were drawn partly from neo Platonism: the doctrine of correspondences as expressed in the Hermetic maxim 'as above so below' (Leo 1925: 122), a revival of Hermetic angelology mediated through theosophy, in which humanity is surrounded by invisible beings with superior powers (Leo 1925: 63, 120, 122-128) and the zodiac as a 'book' in which divine plans could be read, using astrology as a language (Leo 1925: 63). From Blavatsky's version of sumas-god theory he adapted the concept of the solar logos as the manifestation of God, within the context of her theosophical, teleological, evolutionary and spiritual universe.

Leo's primary contribution to practical astrology his maximising of the importance of psychological delineation and his minimising of the relevance of prediction, in the process dramatically simplifying the technical procedures of interpretation (See McCann 2002: 60-70). Relying on the notion that the soul is superior to the body and that the planets have essentially spiritual natures, he argued that planets therefore 'manifest' through the individual life (see for example Leo 1925: 187). There was a considerable degree of uncertainty, though, for it is impossible to ever be sure of how this manifestation will take place, given that all things - including states of consciousness - are in a constant state of transition into another (Leo 1925: xix, 88-89). However, by understanding these processes, individuals can then change themselves and the world (Besant 1919: 8-9). Leo wrote (1936: 2),

Souls come forth into manifestation to gain experience, to grow in wisdom, in love, and in power; and they can only do this by coming into practical touch with the world around them by experimenting and then learning from the results. Power is gained by the exercise of practical ability, by going out into the world and living the life of

action, by doing all manner of works, some wise, many unwise, and by registering within the soul the consequences that follow from each' (Leo 1936: 2).

Charles Carter and Marc Edmund Jones

Alan Leo was followed by three other highly influential theosophical astrologers. In Britain his natural successor was Charles Carter (1887-1968), President of the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society from 1920 to 1952. In the USA, Leo's lineage and the development and promotion of theosophical astrology was pioneered by Marc Edmund Jones (1888-1980) and Elbert Benjamine (1882-1951), who also wrote under the name C.C. Zain. Carter, Jones and Benjamine were highly competent teachers and organisers and prolific writers, but confined their innovation in astrology to minor technical modifications. There was also a strong strand of theosophical millenarianism in the USA represented by The Brotherhood of Light, founded by Thomas Burgoyne 'before 1876' (Melton, Clark and Kelly 1991: 275). Another society, The Rosicrucian Fellowship, was founded in 1907 by Max Heindel (1865-1919), a student of Steiner and head of the Los Angeles Theosophical Lodge in 1904 and 1905 (Melton, Clark and Kelly 1991: 275). Heindel, like Steiner, was also overtly Christian, believing that the key event in the approach of the Aquarian Age was to be the coming of the Christ, and he had little patience with Blavatsky's high regard for eastern religions and teachers. However, while Heindel was an energetic teacher, writer and publisher, his legacy has been entirely eclipsed by that of Alice Bailey (1880-1949).

Like Alan Leo, Bailey came from a profoundly conservative British Christian background. In 1915 she came into contact with theosophy, began studying works such as *The Secret Doctrine* and Annie Besant's *A Study in Consciousness*, and began teaching for the Theosophical Lodge in Pacific Grove, California (Bailey 1951: 133, 7-8). In 1917 she moved to Krotina, near Hollywood, at what Peter Washington (1995: 216) has described as the Theosophical Society's 'cultural and missionary centre'. There she met Foster Bailey, her second husband, long-term collaborator and, in 1919,

National Secretary of the Theosophical Society (Bailey 1951: 144, 152, 156-7). However, Bailey became disillusioned with what she found to be the authoritarian atmosphere at Krotana and she and her husband then embarked on the process of separating from the Theosophical Society and setting up their own classes which, in April 1923 became formalised as the Arcane School (Bailey 1951: 158, 161, 193).

Bailey had immense respect for esoteric astrology, which she regarded as 'one of the keys to *The Secret Doctrine* (Bailey 1925: 625; 1933: 19) and 'the purest presentation of occult truth in the world'. She argued that it was absolutely essential to an understanding of the approach of the New Age, and hence of the entire great evolutionary shift in consciousness which she believed was then taking place (Bailey 1973: 5). Ultimately, she thought, esoteric astrology would reveal 'the true karma of the Heavenly Man', the 'incarnation of a Planetary Logos' (1952: 119-120). This new astrology would satisfy humanity's need to make spiritual preparations for the Aquarian Age. She wrote that,

The sequence of the Mysteries which each of the signs of the Zodiac embodies will be clarified for us by the Christ, because the public consciousness today demands something more definite and spiritually real than modern astrology, or all the pseudo-occultism so widely extant (Bailey 1948: 127)

Dane Rudhyar

Alice Bailey's fellow theosophist and student in the Arcane School, Dane Rudhyar, was arguably the second most important astrologer in the twentieth-century English-speaking world after Leo, and the most significant to emerge from the United States. In the tribute published in the *British Astrological Journal* in 1985 to mark his ninetieth birthday, Layla Rael, Rudhyar's student, collaborator and wife, wrote that 'virtually no astrologer practising today is unaffected by Rudhyar's work' (Rael 1985: 77). Aidan Kelly described Rudhyar as 'the leading figure in the movement that reoriented twentieth-century astrology from the prediction of events to its present emphasis on the

analysis of personality' (1994: 458). Others saw him as the ' seed man for the New Age' (Rupert 1986: 55; see also Arroyo 1975: 41; Somerfield 1995b: 56; Bogart 2002: 30).

If only because of its sheer scope - some twenty books and around a thousand articles - Rudhyar's published work constitutes as great an application of theosophy's broad principles to astrology as do Leo's. They were driven by the same sense of urgency as were Leo's, which arose from his belief that the upheavals of the twentieth century were the final prelude, the Baileyite ' seed period' necessary to prepare for the New Age which, as the Age of Aquarius, he thought was to finally commence in 2162 (1972: 135). They are also influential in the wider New Age movement, partly through the writings of David Spangler (Spangler 1976: 211) and Jose Arguelles, who endorsed Rudhyar's 1974 book *An Astrological Mandala*. Arguelles wrote that the book was ' invaluable...for every person seriously interested in symbols as a medium for achieving the kind of transformation necessary to bring about the "new age"' . Rudhyar was also one of the few astrologers to be recommended in the wider literature of the New Age *sensu stricto*, receiving an endorsement in 1976 from David Spangler, who recommended Rudhyar's *Planetarization of Consciousness* and *Occult Preparations for a New Age* (Spangler 1976: 180).

Rudhyar's major contribution, though, was to take Leo's theosophical astrology forward by one important logical step. While Leo believed he was developing a psychological astrology, writing in the 1890s and 1910s prior to the translation into English of the emerging work on psychoanalysis, he lacked the language of depth psychology. Leo's psychology, like Blavatsky's, concerned the psyche as soul rather than as a set of internal processes. Jung, who did so much to create a psychology that could be applied to astrology, was studying the subject only in 1910 (Main 1997: 79), near the end of Leo's career. By the time Rudhyar began writing in 1930, Jung's early works were available to him.

Rudhyar's studies of western occultism had begun in 1917, the year that Alan Leo died, with his first serious exposure to theosophy, along with its Neoplatonic, Gnostic, Hermetic and Kabbalistic elements, and the later addition of Indian and Chinese wisdom (Rudhyar 1977: v-vii). He began to study astrology when he lived at the Theosophical Society headquarters at Krotina in California from 1920 to 1921, exactly when Bailey was separating from the society (Rudhyar 1970: vii; Kelly 1994: 459); it was Bailey who, in 1936, suggested that Rudhyar's series of astrological articles be gathered together into his first book. Rudhyar's interest in astrology waned when he left Krotina but was restored around 1930 when he began to study Marc Edmund Jones' mimeographed courses and, shortly after, encountered C.G. Jung's depth psychology (Rudhyar 1970: 85-113) and Jan Smut's holism (1970: vii, xv). For Rudhyar, holism, which rests in the simple premise that the universe is inexorably moving towards greater wholeness (1970: 125), rather than fragmentation, formed a fitting complement to theosophy's teleological principles.

Rudhyar began publishing his 'psychological and psychospiritual' astrology in 1931 in a series of seven pamphlets under the general title *Harmonic Astrology* (Kelly 1994: 459), which formed a preparation for a further series of articles from 1933 onwards in the newly founded popular magazine *American Astrology* (Rael 1985: 83). While being firmly based in the theosophy which was to remain the foundation of his philosophy until his death, Rudhyar's articles represent the first comprehensive application of Jungian principles and depth psychology to astrology in the English-speaking world. These were then read by Alice Bailey, who suggested that the Lucis Trust publish them in book form as *The Astrology of Personality* in 1936. Paul Clancy, *American Astrology's* editor, described this book as 'the greatest step forward in Astrology since the time of Ptolemy. It represents the birth of a new epoch' (1975a: 77). More cautiously, the *Larousse Encyclopaedia of Astrology* considered that the book 'is

generally acknowledged to be a classic' (Brau, Weaver and Edmunds 1982 244).

Rudhyar' s own description of the book was that it,

was an attempt to reformulate traditional astrology in terms of the modern philosophical and psychological outlook...It established new foundations for a consistent system of symbolism, using astrological factors as its symbols. Its goal was the formulation of an "algebra of life", using organic life-qualities as its primary elements, defining these qualities particularly at the psychological level in terms borrowed from C.G. Jung' s analytical psychology (Rudhyar 1938: xii).

In 1974, thirty-eight years after its publication, the book was voted second in ' a survey of 100-200 opinions on "The 7 Best Books in Astrology"' (Dean and Mather 1977: 3).

In 1970 Rudhyar remarked that his outlook in 1934-5 had been so heavily theosophical that, had he written *The Astrology of Personality* in 1970, he would have formulated some of his interpretations differently. Yet the publication of *Occult Preparations for a New Age* in 1975 stood as the enduring testimony of Blavataskyan eschatology as a central theme in his thought. There is no real evidence in his writing that his adherence to theosophical teachings ever diminished,

Ideologically, Rudhyar' s astrology was a synthesis of nineteenth-century theosophy and twentieth-century psychology, including the ideas of Jung with Indian and Chinese wisdom. The basic principles of his work were laid out in his *The Astrology of Personality* (1936) but went through a further development in the wake of what he saw as the apocalyptic nature of the 1960s. The influence of theosophical historicism and the expectation that the New Age is about to begin were crucial to his entire body of work. Even his psychology was couched primarily in terms of Blavataskyan cosmology, the personality being defined as ' man as a whole solar system...in constant relationship to the zodiac' (1970: xv).

Essentially Rudhyar adhered to what had become standard theosophical historiography, that the Age of Pisces was about to give way to the Age of Aquarius (1972: 17, 20, 98, 117) and that this would coincide with an evolutionary leap back to a more spiritual

condition (1975a: 25). He took from Bailey (Bailey 1934a: 35) the concept of the ' seed man' , arguing that Budha had been the germ but Christ the seed of the Age of Pisces (1972: 117). However, as the democratic Age of Aquarius approaches any person may become a seed man of the New Age by developing their individuality (1970: xiii, 1972: 167). The importance of astrology in this process is rooted in the argument that the birth chart reveals the person' s spiritual condition (1970: xkii) and hence their seed potential (1969: 12; see also 1938: xii). Spirit, Rudhyar wrote, is,

The consecration that comes to the wholeness of an individual whole. It is the "identity of this whole - its uniqueness, its capacity to be the origin of a cycle of subjective duration; thus to be creative and original (1967: 13)

It was this tendency to wholeness which gave Rudhyar' s astrology its spiritual character. ' Spirit' , he wrote, was the active power of wholeness enveloping the total organism of differentiated parts, pervading all the parts and acting upon them in a "spiritual" manner (1978: viii). To be spiritual is therefore to open one' s self up to the universal spirit, and the function of a spiritual astrology is to enable the person to achieve this. Rudhyar accepted Blavatsky' s teleological, evolutionary, spiritual cosmos in its entirety (1967: 12-13), arguing that the development of individual self-hood (1967: 13, 1972: 22, 99, 1975a: 86:114) and the Christ-within, or God-within (1963: 55-7, 1970: 29; see also 1977: 54) is a necessary part of the ultimate return of the cosmos to its pure spiritual state and humanity' s return to God.

Rudhyar was profoundly disturbed by the social upheavals of the 1960s (1970:viii-ix, xiv, 1977: vi, 1978: 6), which he saw as both a threat to order and a sign of an impending pre-millennial apocalypse (1970: xiv-xv; see also 1974: 18-19). He therefore set out on a fresh reform of astrology, arguing that both traditional exoteric astrology and Leo' s esoteric astrology were unequal to the task as the New Age approached (1970: vii-ix, 1977: v; see also Arroyo 1975: xi). He conformed to Popper' s activist model, discussed in chapter 2, and set out to maintain order in the face of the chaos of

the 1960s. To accomplish this he turned to the latest forms of psychotherapy, such as Gestalt psychology (1972: 166) and counselling techniques.

The crucial purpose behind Rudhyar' s development of astrology as a counselling art in the 1970s was to open up the individual to the cosmic powers, the spiritual beings and agents of God who are ready to work through the seed-individuals and assist humanity in its task (1970: xiii; 1975a: 148-9; 1978: 262; 1984: 27). He hoped to restore the harmony between individual and cosmos (1977: 193-219), enable the New Age to dawn peacefully and convert the danger of a pre-millennial holocaust into a post-millennial peace. Within this historicist model, then, it is the absolute obligation of each individual to act (1970: xv, 1977: vii, 1980: 9; see also Somerfield 1995b: 56). To act, in turn, means primarily to transform both one' s self and the entire planet (1970: xvi, 1977: 56-8, 149).

Rudhyar' s impact was described by Rael in terms of the extent of the widespread acceptance of his ideas by astrologers in the 1980s. She wrote that ' Today, even the most event-oriented astrologer...*counsels* clients - that is to say, points out the client' s responsibility, indeed purpose in life, to grow and learn from whatever happens, however dire or sublime' (1985: 77; see also Greene and Sasportas 1987: xii). She attributed this phenomenon entirely to Rudhyar' s influence. If, for Rudhyar, astrological counselling was directly designed to facilitate the inauguration of the New Age (Brau, Weaver and Edmunds 1982: 245), it may then be argued that his formulation of psychological astrology is New Age in the *sensu strictu* sense identified by Hanegraaff' . This then opens the way to a definition of modern psychological astrology as a whole, especially when its practitioners and users have no sense of the coming of the New Age as a historical imperative, as part of the New Age *sensu latu* (Hanegraaff: 1996: 96-7).

There was one further implication of Rudhyar's work for astrology: a profound relativism. 'Each individual', he wrote, 'is in a very real sense the center of his own universe. It is the way he orients himself to the universe as a whole that matters' (1970 xii). The individual's concerns in Rudhyar's new 'person centred astrology' (1980) were more important than the rules of astrology. Alexander Ruperti, Rudhyar's interpreter and fellow member of the Arcane School, stated in a lecture in the Czech Republic in the early 1990s that the notion that 'an astrology with a capital A which exists somewhere, has always existed, and which we should all submit ourselves or be faithful to...is merely the result of our imagination' (Ruperti 2002: 3). There was, therefore, no such thing as an astrology which has any independent existence, only astrologers, people who are trying to interpret their relationship with the universe through astrological symbols. Each astrologer has his own astrological system, dependent on time and cultural context (see also Rudhyar 1967: 9, 12, 13; Greene 1977: 7, 13; Hand 1976: 5, 13).

The legacy of Leo and Rudhyar is evident throughout modern astrology. Writers such as Doane (1979), Perrone (1983) and Soric (1985) assume the primacy of spiritual evolution. The teleological notion that there is a purpose to life to which the individual is both led by a cosmically determined evolutionary process, but which is also dependent on personal activity and effort is widespread (see for example Ruperti 1985: 57-8; Oken 1974: 4, 13; 1977: 25, 29; Greene 1997: 135-6). Alan Oken, the theosophist and student of Alice Bailey, emphasised the need for personal growth and evolution within the context of the crisis generated by the approach of the Age of Aquarius (Oken 1973: 3; 1974: 3, 7; 1988: 7, 42; see also Greene 1977: 3). The practical implication of this point of view for astrology is that the birth chart represents not what a person is but what he or she can become through personal transformation and by developing his or her potential (Ruperti: 1985: 56-58; Greene: 1977: 26, 135; 1986: 119). As Sasportas wrote (1989: 6; see also Rose 1982: 20; Greene 1989: 6-7), developing Rudhyar's

metaphor, the birth chart is a ' seed' or, according to Greene (1977: 5), Ma (1981: 6), Pond (1990: 15) and Hickey (1992: 15), a ' blueprint' of potential' . Hand (1975: 5) developed Leo' s idea that planets ' manifest' in human lives, together with Rudhyar' s statement that events don' t happen to people, people happen to events (Rudhyar 1972: 103; see also 1974: 23), to argue that the horoscope is a symbol of intent, or rather, the encounter between cosmic intent and human intent. Hone (1973: 19, 287) for her part, developed the parallel idea that precise prediction is therefore impossible. The future, in other words, is dependent on the present and, if the present changes the future can not be forecast. Schulman (1979), meanwhile, developed ways of examining reincarnation in the birth chart while Rose (1982) developed the techniques of astrological counselling. The relativistic notion that there is no ' good' or ' bad' in a chart, only potential, has also become widely accepted (see for example Hone 1973: 180-198; Greene 1977: 13; Tierney 1983). The need to experience one' s inner dynamics as a means of growth was developed by Barbara Schermer (1989; see also Sasportas 1989: 6), while Jawer (1991, 2003) introduced the techniques of psychodrama into astrology to produce astro-drama, the acting out of astrological principles in order to gain self-awareness. Kirby (1997) published a collection of guided imagery exercises for astrology, designed to enable individuals to contact their inner being. Astrology has become dynamic, process oriented, experiential, driven by the need for self-understanding. The technical procedures of horoscope interpretation have become simplified and subordinated to the pursuit of personal meaning.

Yet there is a fundamental difference between the astrology of Alan Oken and that of Stephen Arroyo, whose books (1975, 1978) were regarded as seminal texts in the 1970s and 1980s. Both Oken and Arroyo follow the tradition set out by Rudhyar, but Oken' s emphasis is theosophical and Baileyite, while Arroyo' s is psychological and primarily Jungian. The latter form is, as Curry noted (1992: 116), dominant, and contemporary astrology is psychological rather than spiritual. The primary philosophical distinction

between the two models is that, whereas in esoteric astrology the soul is represented in the birth chart, in psychological astrology the soul is converted into the 'Self' and is regarded as being a higher faculty, the source of free-will, and is outside the chart (Greene 1977: 25-26; Mayo 1981: 6; Sasportas 1989: 6-7). Ruperti (1987), as a member of the Arcane School, responded that the psychological astrologers did not understand the forces they were playing with.

It is clear, then that there is no single entity as New Age astrology. Rather there are two types, one that emphasises spiritual evolution and another that concentrates on personal development. The former is devoted to the coming of the New Age as an imminent, real event (see for example Oken 1973, 1974), whereas, for the latter, the New Age is primarily a motif for the current historical shift (see for example Greene 1977) or, in Sutcliffe's terms, an 'emblem' (2003: 9). Within Hanegraaff's typology, esoteric astrology may be considered New Age *sensu stricto*, while psychological astrology begins to move towards the New Age *sensu lato*. There is also a distinction to be made between a psychological astrology which is more descriptive, which talks of the way people are (see for example Carter 1977) and one which is more dynamic, presupposing personal growth and what people can become (see for example, Greene and Sasportas 1987, 1988). Yet the two can recognise each other. For example, Hone, a prime representative of the former, and Rudhyar, the principle advocate of the latter, were friends and admired each other's work (Hone 1973: 1920, Rudhyar 1968).

Evident in all traditions of New Age astrology is a fundamental secular humanism, in which the understanding of humanity's evolutionary purpose is astrology's primary function (see for example, Ruperti 1985: 57), reflecting Hanegraaff's argument that the 'secularised esotericism' of New Age culture as a whole owes a debt to Enlightenment secularism (Hanegraaff 1996: 409, 521). Secularism in this sense may be defined as a rejection of the institutional church rather than the supernatural (see Hill 1979: 228-

251). The central role of this evolutionary perspective locates such New Age historiography firmly in a Popperian historicist model in which individual action is necessary for the historical process, or as Ruperti put it, 'to undertake the necessary process of transformation of personal living into true transpersonal living' (1985: 56; see also Greene 1977: 25). Even the impact of the Enlightenment, noted by Hanegraaff (1996: 409, 521) as a feature of New Age thought is evident in Oken's (1973: vii, 8, 10) argument that the Age of Aquarius will bring scientific breakthroughs, rational explanations for psychic phenomena and the final end of medieval superstition. The core task of the Aquarian Age astrologer was outlined by Melanie Reinhart in 1987. She argued that,

in order to relate with feeling to a client and to follow the lead of the healing process itself, one needs to...simply be with someone, listen carefully to what they say, observe carefully how they are and what they do without the need to "make it better", interpret, or change anything. This depends not on a large vocabulary of astrological concepts and psychological techniques, but on the astrologer's self-knowledge, self-acceptance and continuing relationship with his or her own unconscious (Reinhart 1987: 113).

At the heart, then, of the ideology of New Age astrology lies Heelas' 'sacred' (1996: 18, 23). The penetration of New Age ideology - its eclecticism, universalism, use of magic and emphasis on the soul - into astrology, including books aimed at a mass market, is profound. For example, *Born Together: Love Relationships, Astrology and the Soul* (1998) by NCGR Council member Terry Lamb, defines the purpose of astrology as 'to help us know our True Self, to find our connection with the Divine, and to know ourselves as part of the source', while 'Aries goes to the deepest of levels back to the Source itself' and 'Capricornians are looking for the keys to the cosmos' (1998: 15, 63, 87). Liz Greene's *Astrology for Lovers* (1986) couched sun-sign readings in terms of the psychological interpretation of myth and the development of one's future potential. Greene's introduction of Rudhyarian concepts into the mass sun-sign literature was followed by a series of imitators. Typical were Sheila Geddes' *Self-Development With Astrology* (1990) and Huntley's (1990) *The Elements of Astrology*, a

guide to learning astrology, which was aimed at the popular market. Huntley wrote that the sun,

rules our ego and individuality, often the deepest, innermost part of our character, which can be hidden from view. We relate to our Sun sign as being our true self, and should strive to achieve the positive characteristics of this sign in order to be living a fulfilled life (1990: 52).

The activist view, meanwhile, was summarised by Donna Cunningham in 1978 (1978:9):

To believe that you are being buffeted by Pluto or held back by some bad aspect is very short-sighted... every difficult thing in the chart can lead us to positive, constructive insights and actions that will help us move along on the spiritual path. We generally grow through the mastery of the adverse circumstances, inner conflicts and difficult times that we go through. With that in mind, you can regard difficult aspects, transits, and sign placements as opportunities to grow. The true usefulness of a chart, as I see it, is to get a better perspective on yourself, to appreciate your own individuality and potential, and to work toward your most positive expression of self. Your chart is only an instrument panel where you take readings on the course of your life. YOU ARE THE PILOT.

The New Age and Astrology

Two questions necessarily arise from consideration of astrology' s relationship to the New Age movement. The first is whether astrology in itself can be considered a New Age discipline. The second is whether astrology' s contemporary popularity is a function of the rise of the New Age movement. There are subtleties, though, in these questions. For example, Michael York points out both that astrology' s philosophical roots are classical, yet that it is the ' lingua franca' of New Age movement, which ' establishes itself on astrological nuance, metaphor and interpretation' (York 2003: 256). Patrick Curry (1992: 161) argues that astrological notions of history may be central to both the psychological discourse of New Age culture and the historical prophecy of the New Age as a future epoch, even if it competes within the New Age market place with myriad other routes to self-awareness (Curry 1992: 161). Sutcliffe meanwhile,

acknowledges astrology' s significance as the popular wing of the occult and esoteric revival of the early twenty century (2003: 28, 36-7).

There is, though, no consensus amongst astrologers either on the date or desirability of the coming of the Age of Aquarius, and within the prevailing belief in the Age, there is also an overt anti-New Age tendency, as identified by Shoshanah Feher (1992). Feher reported on her survey of the 1989 United Astrology Congress in New Orleans, in which she broadly distinguishes a New Age astrology mainly represented by women and concerned with personal growth, and an ' Old Age' (Bailey 1934a: 35; Rudhyar 1984: 27; Oken 1988: 43; Lemesurier 1990: 5; Spangler 1993: 102) astrology mainly represented by men and concerned with event prediction. That is, if there is a New Age astrology, there may also be a non-New Age one. For example, James Holden argued that although ' throughout the ages some people who were devotees of a particular philosophy or religion, and some who practiced magic have also been interested in astrology' , concluding that ' this does not mean that astrology itself has anything to do with religion or magic, or, for that matter, with "New Age" thought' (Holden 1996: 261). There was opposition to Leo' s theosophical reform programme from its inception in the 1900s (Leo: 1911: 310; Matthews 1911: 263; Smith: 1911: 396). In addition, some theosophical astrologers, notably Sepharial (Farnell 1998: 34-5; Curry 1992: 161) considered that astrology was self-sufficient and had no need of theosophical input; a point of view represented more recently by Dennis Elwell (1986). The distinction between two types of astrology was also recognised in the astrological literature in 1987 by Greene and Sasportas, who were of the opinion that the psychological branch was expanding at the expense of the event-predicting, character-describing branch (1987: xi). However, the 1980s saw a reaction against the dominance of post-New Age psychological astrology in the so-called ' traditional revival' (Cain 1994b: 3) strongly associated with Olivia Barclay (1998/9). Nevertheless, the influence of New Age ideology is pervasive. Elwell, for example, cites Rudolf Steiner (1987: 40-2, 54-5,

106-7) while Barclay (1990: 19) argued for the unity of the ' Inner Spirit' with the universe and claimed that astrology demonstrated the ' Oneness of Life' ; however, she insisted that such ideas had nothing to do with practical astrology. Thus the issue would appear to be primarily one of rhetorical positions adopted in order to show hostility to the New Age, rather than any real philosophical distinction. As Robert Wallis has noted, ' neoShamans and Pagans often use New Age as a derogatory term, denoting a shallow, woolly approach to spirituality, with one Pagan suggesting ' newage' be pronounced ' rather unkindly, as in "sewage"' (Wallis 2003: 29; see also Pearson 1998). The same tendency may be evident amongst astrologers who have nevertheless adopted aspects of New Age ideology.

Chapter Summary

It has been argued that there were two major reform programmes in astrology in the twentieth-century, both under the impact of the theosophical prophecy that the New Age, or Age of Aquarius, was imminent. The first, by Alan Leo, resulted in the creation of esoteric astrology, concerned primarily with spiritual evolution but with an emphasis on psychological interpretation. The second, by Dane Rudhyar, included a substantial component of depth-psychology, mainly from Jung, as well as from Bailey's theosophical Christianity. The result was the creation of an astrology which conforms in all respects to the characteristics of New Age thought set out in chapter 4: it emphasises the inner divine, individualism, the value of personal experience, and personal transformation, is eclectic, syncretistic, holistic and evolutionary. It also conforms to the principles of Popperian historicism, postulating a universe in which the existence of a teleological, deterministic process requires individual action. It may also be observed, in relation to the characteristic of millenarianism set out in chapter 2, Rudhyar believed that western society was afflicted by a profound moral crisis while both he and Leo believed that the New Age was imminent, expected the arrival of a saviour and believed that education was a major means of ensuring a smooth transition to the millennium.

New Age astrology, it may be argued, through its contrast with traditional nineteenth-century event-oriented astrology, conforms to Heelas' 'detraditionalised' astrology, or to Gill, Hadaway and Marler's definition of astrology, along with new age beliefs as 'non traditional religious belief' (1996: 512). Whilst astrology's connection with millenarianism dates to the ancient near east, modern astrology, then was 'detraditionalised' as direct response to the millenarian imperatives of belief in the coming Age of Aquarius and theosophical doctrines of spiritual evolution.

1. Directions are movements of the planets around the horoscopes which are used as the basis of prediction.

2. Blavatsky defined Logos in its esoteric sense as 'the rendering in objective expression, as in a photograph, of the concealed thought. The Logos is the mirror reflecting DIVINE MIND, and the Universe is the mirror of the Logos...' (1888: II.25).

3. See also Leo 1911: 8.3.92-3, 1911: 8.4.135, 8.5.1135; Vernon 2000: 25, 48-50; Washington 1995: 34-5, 126-133).

4. The concept of the 'seed' as in 'seed' individuals being to start a new race, was familiar to Californian theosophists in the 1920s. See Heindel 1929b: 310.