



In an eight part article, Hank Wesselman, PhD., opens the window on an emerging worldview, breathing a fresh look at the inevitable transformation we're all currently undertaking.

### **The Transformational Perspective: An Emerging Worldview**

by Hank Wesselman

#### **The Invitation**

On a bright autumn day in New Mexico, in October of 2002, I crossed trails with Dr. John Mack at an international conference on altered states of consciousness at which both he and I were offering keynote presentations. John had read several of my unusual books and over dinner one evening, he asked me if I would consider contributing an essay to the Primacy of Consciousness Project that he was co-chairing with Trish Pfeiffer. When I responded with interest, John began to talk about the project's epicenter – how the world might be transfigured as the public at large becomes increasingly aware that consciousness, not matter, is the ultimate reality and thus the ground of all being.

As I listened, my thoughts turned toward those parts of my life spent working as an anthropologist among the tribal peoples of Africa, for it was out there, among the indigenous traditionals, that I had first stumbled upon this perspective more than thirty-five years before. It was expressed differently, of course, but it was always there, right at the core of their worldview—the perception that the multi-leveled field of the dream is the real world; that we human beings are actually dreaming twenty-four hours a day; and that the everyday physical world came into being in response to the dream, not visa-versa. These assertions were always accompanied by a conviction, strongly-held, that the dream world is minded, that it is consciousness itself, alive, intelligent, and power-filled, infusing everything that emanates from it with awareness, vitality, and life force.

In the Western world, this perspective is often referred to as panpsychism, a view that has found notable supporters among such mainstream philosophers as Schopenhauer and Goethe, Leibnitz and Rudolf Steiner and Alfred North Whitehead.

Among the indigenous peoples with whom I had lived and worked, this was not a philosophical theory, nor was it a concept. It was a percept, an absolute known based upon direct experience. But it wasn't until I became aware of the 'Mind-Within-Nature' focused upon me one starry night in 1972 while I was out on the savannas of southwestern Ethiopia that I began to understand what they were talking about.

I was 30 years old then, a member of the Omo Research Expedition, spending my days with an international team of scientists involved in the search of answers to the mystery of human origins. One evening a group of us drove north from our safari camp, out across the grassy plains to a place we all knew. I turned off the engine, then we all climbed up to sit on top of the Land Rover in the light of the full moon. In retrospect, this was one of the most magnificent

moments of my life, my friends and I inhaling the sweet winds of eternity into our lungs in deep draughts, our blood sparkling with the light of the twinkling stars and the simple joy of being alive.

Far and away, jackals offered their high keening song to the moon followed by the hoarse, churring calls of nightjars that drifted on the warm wind... and then I felt the Presence. The sense of being watched surged within me like boiling water as I looked slowly around in the ghostly light, staring out in all directions across this empty dry land, but nothing out of the ordinary presented itself. It was just there, at the edge of my awareness... that sense of being observed by something, or someone. It was very, very close... and then it was gone.

This spooked me, and spooked me good. I was certain that it had been RIGHT HERE, whatever it was. Raymonde Bonnefille, a French palynologist picked up on the shift in my mood. "What is it?" She asked. "I dunno," I hedged. "I felt like there was something here... something that was watching us..."

"Ah oui," she breathed with an intake. "We all feel this from time to time, I am sure, although we don't talk about it." A sudden sweet scent swept over us from some unseen night-flowering plant. The air was thick with this wonderful smell and then it was gone, as quickly as it had come.

"What do you think it is?" I had asked her. "I do not know but sometimes I feel it too..." she offered. We all continued to sit thoughtfully, in silence, for the best part of an hour, then in the end, we climbed down and drove slowly back to camp, the nightjars rising like ghostly spirits from the dusty track in front of the car.

This brief anomalous experience marked the inception of an ongoing continuum of spontaneous epiphanies involving abrupt, transient altered states of consciousness—unsought experiences that completely changed my understanding of the nature of the self as well as the nature of reality. Profoundly challenging psychologically, these episodes took me far beyond the carefully patrolled borders of science, and not surprisingly, my personal worldview shifted in response (1).

As I continued to listen to John talk about his project with rising enthusiasm, my thoughts rotated again, this time toward the experiential workshops that I had been leading for almost a decade at various retreat centers like the Esalen Institute in California and the Omega Institute near New York. Motivated by the need to more fully understand what had happened to me, I had designed these gatherings to draw in other visionaries so that together we might explore aspects of an ancient technology pioneered tens of thousands of years ago by the shamans of the Paleolithic Period—a technology of transcendence. Utilizing techniques such as monotonous, rhythmic percussion combined with focused intentionality, the participants in these gatherings were encouraged to search for an inner doorway through which they might journey into the dream worlds while very much awake. Surprisingly, most were able to do this on first attempt, and once 'there,' most were able to establish connection with those inner sources of wisdom and power that the traditional peoples call 'spirits.' Through my ongoing participation in these groups, I came to conclude that the different levels of reality on which the shaman

operates are simultaneously levels of consciousness as well as levels of experience. By intentionally expanding their conscious awareness, shamans are able to transcend the physical world and change their level of experience, effectively shifting from one level of reality to another.

My years of facilitating such groups had left my inner scientist deeply impressed by the internal consistency of these experiences and by the transformative effect that they obviously conferred upon the experienter. I had watched, fascinated, as these inner explorers were led toward an inescapable conclusion--that the fabric of reality is composed of a multi-leveled vibrational field that is alive, conscious, and intelligent.

So allow me to take up John's invitation and share some thoughts about what I have come to think of as the Transformational Community, an important subculture that is coming into being in the Western world. Perhaps through consideration of their closely held values and beliefs, we shall gain glimpses of what our world may become once the certainty that consciousness is primary takes hold on an increasingly wider and potentially societal scale.

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### **The Foundation**

It is no news to anyone that a widespread spiritual reawakening is currently taking place—one that has two distinct aspects. On one side, we find a resurgence of religious fundamentalism that embraces an historic view derived from the Middle Ages—a literalist belief system that proclaims this world to be the kingdom of a remote, transcendent authoritarian father-God, alternately wrathful or beneficent—a narrow perspective that has been embraced in our time by misguided religious zealots who have the capacity to ensure that this world will be their God's kingdom... or nothing. On the other side and in opposition to this view, we have the spiritually awakened and expanded perspective of the secular humanists who perceive an omnipresent, immanent Divine Presence or Creative Force existing within all of creation, one that is benevolent, life enhancing and life sustaining (2).

It is significant that this latter view is quietly, yet definitively, being embraced by increasing numbers of well-educated, well-informed, and well-connected individuals, many of who are in professional and social positions from which they may influence the larger society's ideas and trends. Their secular yet spiritual perspective is intensely democratic, cutting across socio-economic levels of achievement and status, transcending cultural, political, and ethnic boundaries as well. In response, a broad social movement is taking form, one made up of people who hold a set of beliefs and values that differ considerably from those of the fundamentalists as well as those of the public at large. The number of people who hold the new view is not known with certainty, but fourteen years of sociological research conducted in the United States by demographer Paul H. Ray and his wife Sherry Ruth Anderson, has revealed that more than fifty million Americans fell into this group as of the year 2000, representing more than twenty-six percent of the adult population. This is not a small number, and it appears to be growing (3).

Ray's analysis suggests that we Westerners have arrived at a point in our history in which our prevailing mythologies are not working any more. The fifty-plus million among us know, without being told, that the time has come to create a new cultural mythos in which we synthesize a new set of ways of viewing ourselves and our society, our problems and our strengths, our communities and our world—a concern shared by another ninety-or-so million in Western Europe (4).

Ray and Anderson have observed that a shift of this magnitude in a dominant cultural worldview happens only once or twice in a thousand years, and this one is occurring during a period of ever-accelerating social change, enabled by a high technology and a communication system unlike any seen before. Their survey reveals these citizens who hold the new view to be socially concerned, environmentally aware, and spiritually focused, creative people who are carriers of more positive ideas and values than in any previous period in history. These awakened souls know with absolute certainty that if we continue to do business as usual and fail to produce a new story, Western Civilization may well collapse, taking the rest of the world with it.

As the awareness of this percolates into the public psyche, it is being reinforced by the specter of catastrophic environmental change, producing a sense of urgency, accompanied by a growing insistence on social, political, and economic reform that will benefit everyone, not just the powerful and the privileged. Anthropologists might call this a new kind of cultural revitalization movement, one that is oriented toward the future rather than retreating into the past, and a recent analysis of Western history reveals that this one is happening right on schedule.

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### **Recurring Phases in Western History**

Historian Richard Sellin has suggested that our Western preoccupation with the linear development of human civilization is, in fact, a misconception, and that the zeitgeist, the spirit of the times embodied within the intellectual trends and moral values characteristic of any age or epoch, has tended to express itself in cycles that repeat themselves every several thousand years (5).

From my perspective as an anthropologist, the Neolithic Period could be considered as the first of these cycles, a long one that began with the closure of the last ice age and the end of hunting-gathering as the predominant lifeway. This cycle lasted for perhaps four thousand years and was defined by animal and plant domestication and by the establishment of settled communities. Spiritual awareness during this period was animist, a view that affirms everything, both animate and inanimate, to be invested with its own personal supernatural essence or soul. For the cultures of the Neolithic, everything in Nature was ensouled and the religious practitioner was the shaman.

This cycle came to an end with the emergence of the first city-states in the Middle East, and it was among them that a new religion took form—polytheism, a stratified, hierarchical view of the

supernatural world that reflected an entirely new perception of ourselves.

The cycle that followed lasted about three thousand years and included such cultures as the Sumerians and the Akkadians, the Babylonians and the Persians, the Assyrians and the Egyptians, the Mycenaeans, the classical Greeks and the Romans among others. All of these cultures expressed polytheistic religions featuring various high gods and goddesses situated above and beyond Nature—a new perspective that resulted in the creation of the first organized hierarchical religions run by full-time priesthoods. With the collapse of the Roman Empire, this second cycle came to an end, and as before, a new religion emerged: monotheism.

This new belief system, originating in the deserts of the Middle East, could really be considered a form of polytheism with an omnipotent creator deity variously known as YHWH, Jehovah, Allah or simply GOD as the divine CEO, the heavenly father, king or president on top of the supernatural stack, with all the reified saints and prophets, angels and demons ranked below it. Monotheism's three major expressions —Judaism, Christianity, and Islam— have been the dominant religions in the Western world for our current two-thousand-year cycle.

Sellin has proposed that our cycle began with a comparatively long Theocratic Phase in which society relied heavily on religious doctrine and truth was determined by divine direction from the father God operating through a bureaucratized and politically motivated priesthood. Any informed overview of Western History reveals that such has indeed been the case from the emergence of Christianity at the end of the Roman Era until the Renaissance, a period that lasted roughly fourteen hundred years. The spirit of the times changed considerably at this point. The rise of science, as well as the infrastructure of the current corporate world-state through the guilds, initiated the second stage of our cycle, a Secular Phase, in which an expansion of our geographical and intellectual horizons, as well as economic power, occurred on an unprecedented scale. In response, truth was redefined within a new mythology—science--and religion was generally discredited. This relatively shorter phase, dominated by rationalism, has lasted for about three hundred years.

The current spiritual reawakening suggests that it has now drawn to a close. With the dawning of the age of Aquarius, Sellin asserts that we are moving into the third and final stage of our two-thousand-year cycle, a Spiritual Phase, in which science and spirituality are being synthesized and integrated in an attempt to transcend both previous stages. The plethora of recent conferences that have featured mystics and scientists, shamans and quantum physicists as plenary speakers are a testament to this impulse.

It is also significant that this revitalizing impulse appears to be associated with the appearance of a new spiritual complex, emerging much in the same manner that Christianity took form at the end of the last cycle.

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### **The New Spiritual Complex**

It is not surprising that the 'new spirituality' is integral in nature, drawing on all the world's

wisdom traditions, from the East to the West, from Animism to Zen. What is surprising is that right at its core can be found a cluster of principles that were embraced at one time by all the world's indigenous peoples. (It must be acknowledged here that the religions of the traditional peoples were as diverse and varied as they themselves once were, with each region of the world encompassing hundreds of cultural groups and subgroups, some large, some small, each devoted to their own unique spiritual ways that could differ markedly from those of their neighbors.)

In approaching the idea that principles of indigenous wisdom are involved in the genesis of a new spiritual complex in the West, it is not necessary to compile yet one more academic stockpile of esoteric minutia of interest only to scholars and theologians. Rather, I am broadly concerned with the general mystical insights that were once held in common by virtually all of the traditionals and are thus the birthright of all people everywhere. I should add that modern spiritual seekers do not seem to be retreating into archaic belief systems, nor, with rare exceptions, are they interested in 'playing Indian' or becoming born-again Aborigines. To the contrary, members of the Transformational Community are beginning to reconsider the core beliefs and values once held by the traditionals, and in the process, something entirely new is taking form.

This new religious complex has no name as yet, nor is it focused on the teachings of some charismatic prophet, guru, or holy person. Its singular, distinguishing feature involves the realization that each of us can acquire spiritual knowledge and power ourselves, making the direct, transpersonal contact with the sacred realms that defines the shaman/mystic, without the need for any priest or religious organization to do it for us. In this manner, each person acquires the freedom to become their own teacher, their own priest, their own prophet, receiving their spiritual revelations directly from the highest sources themselves.

As they engage in this ancient human experience, each inevitably discovers that their personal consciousness is part of a greater field of consciousness at large, a deep insight currently being illuminated and confirmed by quantum physics. This is the direct path of the mystic at its absolute best, one that leads the spiritual seeker into the experience of self-realization and spiritual empowerment.

At its inception, this quest is usually intensely personal. Yet as it progresses, it leads inevitably toward a universal and ultimately altruistic perspective, one that takes the seeker straight into the irreversible vortex of personal transformation. This advance, once begun, changes us profoundly and forever because it conveys to each of us the experience of authentic initiation. This is the great game that has been played by the shamans and mystics, saints and sages across time – one that some authors have called the Master Game (6). But at this point, the beginning of the Third Millennium, just how might we categorize these contemporary spiritual seekers, these players of the great game?

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### A Spiritual Revolution

It has been my experience that modern mystics tend to develop in isolation, becoming deeply immersed in personal, spiritual studies that are often triggered by paranormal experiences that society at large has taught them to conceal. An oft-cited Gallup Poll revealed more than a decade ago that as many as forty-three percent of the general population in the United States has had such experiences, revealing that this pool may be even deeper than Paul Ray has suggested. Modern mystics tend to be individualists, people with very full lives who like to gather in local meetings or spend their vacation time attending conferences and workshops in which they can acquire direct experience of such practically useful subjects as qigong and reiki, psychic healing and shamanism, meditation and yoga to name only a few. They then tend to disperse back into the wider society where they utilize what they have learned to benefit themselves, their networks of family and friends, and their communities at large. (7)

Beyond these general contours, it is easier to describe what modern mystics are not, rather than to accurately define what they are, and perhaps this is just as it should be because it is much in keeping with the nature of transitional, evolutionary events. For example, most of these individualist seekers are not religious ascetics, shutting themselves away in monasteries, ashrams, or remote mountain caves. They are not involved in practicing austerities and enduring endless periods of deep meditation. They are not religious extremists, invoking fundamentalist belief systems in search of their own exclusive connection with the godhead. Nor are they outright religious wackos, embracing recently uncovered secret doctrines, hidden away for ages and proclaimed as divine revelation by some smooth-talking New Age charismatic. Modern mystics are not involved in cults, nor are they the least bit interested in turning their power over to some holy so-and-so who claims to have the inside corner on the market of spiritual truth. The time of the guru is over.

It has been my experience that contemporary spiritual seekers are interested in spiritual liberation, not repressive or rigid dogma, and they tend to be deeply distrustful of any organized religious hierarchy. Because of this, steadily increasing numbers are leaving our mainstream religions in droves. In their search for authenticity, they are quietly, yet definitively, gaining a level of spiritual freedom that has not been experienced in the West for almost two thousand years.

Ray and Anderson's research reveals that these transformationals are evenly distributed throughout the general population, suggesting that they are everywhere, in every community, and at every level of society. In short, this quietly and steadily escalating social phenomenon has all the appearances of a spiritual revolution.

Let us now have a closer look at these transformationals, examining their beliefs and values in particular. And as we do, we must keep in mind that these individuals are the seed people who may well determine the shape and orientation of spiritual practice in the Western world for much of the next two thousand years.

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### Values of the Transformationals

When I started leading workshops a decade ago, I perceived that members of my circles tend to express a distinct character profile that I find deeply reassuring – one that the media finds puzzling at best or unworthy of serious news coverage at worst. Our newspapers, magazines, and television news programs inundate us with negative information on a daily basis, creating the impression that violent crime and genocide, economic catastrophes and political mendacity are reaching unprecedented proportions. While this may be true to some extent, it must also be remembered that all the murder and mayhem, political corruption and corporate fiascos are being generated by only about two percent of the world's population. Despite this, the media seems to believe that this is what makes news, a supposition reinforced by polls and surveys created by the demographers who serve the media. The same could be said of the film industry, of course. There is no question that Hollywood knows the big money is to be made by appealing to the dark side of the human psyche.

Given this understanding, I was surprised to discover that most of the participants in my seminars and workshops lack the blade-runner mentality, as well as the cynicism it tends to generate. Instead, they express a strong sense of social justice and seem to be deeply concerned about the quality of human life at all levels of society. They feel strong support for women's issues as well as those of minorities. They are concerned for the safety and well being of both children and the elderly, and human relationships are clearly seen as more important than material gain. Social tolerance, personal individualism, and spiritual freedom are highly valued ideals. The reweaving of the social fabric through the rebuilding of families, neighborhoods, and communities are major areas of concern. This is what I mean by deeply reassuring.

In looking at these values, it quickly becomes apparent that they have little to do with being a liberal or a conservative, a Christian, Jew, or Muslim, or even a patriot. Yet they have everything to do with being a humanist in the evolved sense of the word. Although the Western world continues to be driven by greed and fueled by denial, motivated by fear and dominated by competition, members of the transformational community are oriented toward democratic, humanistic ideals, and they tend to favor cooperative endeavors that benefit the many.

The importance of balance and harmony lies right at the core of their values, and in this respect, they, like the indigenous peoples, have grasped that humans must strive to live their lives in ways that contribute to the greater good rather than following lifestyles and pursuing goals that create its opposite. Accordingly, the value of simple, natural living is seen as a high ideal, and the monumental waste being generated at every level of the world capitalist system is regarded with grave concern.

Another area of consideration involves healthcare. Ever increasing numbers of the transformationals feel a growing distance from Western allopathic medicine. While all are very much aware of Western medicine's miraculous achievements, more and more feel that it is failing on many levels. Elders who are terminally ill, for example, are often kept alive by a medical system that is trying to do the right thing, but in the process the physical suffering of the dying may be needlessly prolonged while the escalating costs of treatment can wipe out their family's financial resources. In addition, all see quite clearly how the business-oriented and profit-motivated Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO's) are affecting the quality of health

care in an increasingly negative way while inflating costs beyond the imaginable. The need for healthcare reform in the United States, for instance, is overwhelming. The majority within the transformational community express strong interest in preventative and alternative health care strategies, perceived as adjuncts to rather than as replacements for allopathic medicine.

The transformationals are environmentally savvy, and like the indigenous peoples, they feel an active, almost ritual respect for Nature. They express a deep concern for the environment and, by association, the survival of the human species. All are seriously committed to stopping corporate polluters, reversing greenhouse warming, and discovering the limits to short term growth so that we can achieve the long-term ecological sustainability upon which the future of humanity, as well as Western Civilization, depends. Unlike many of the hardcore environmental activists of the last several decades, however, members of this emerging social movement are deeply committed to achieving the direct, transformative experience of the sacred, and it is really this that defines them as mystics.

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### **Modern Mystic Beliefs**

These direct transpersonal experiences leads the transformationals to an inescapable conclusion: that everything, everywhere is interconnected, and that consciousness is the 'etheric field' through which this linkage is achieved. This is a core belief that is clearly articulated by the indigenous tribal peoples at one end of the human continuum and by the quantum physicists and Zen Buddhists at the other.

Another core belief concerns the existence of more than one reality. In addition to the everyday, objective physical level in which we all live and have families, friends, and careers in an ongoing basis, there are the nonordinary, subjective levels of the dream worlds or spirit worlds outside the time-space continuum, where the laws of physics and cause and effect do not work in the same way.

This belief leads directly into another: the ability of some individuals to expand their conscious awareness and enter into these alternate realities—a conviction that reveals why the rediscovery of shamanism has become a major thrust within the movement. The relative ease with which the shaman's time-tested methods for achieving mystical states can be learned and practiced, even by non-tribal Westerners, stands in stark contrast to the years of rigorous training often required in many of the contemplative disciplines like meditation and yoga before significant consciousness shifts are achieved.

Another belief: by utilizing the shamanic method to journey into these inner worlds, the same levels that C.G. Jung called the archetypal realms of the psyche, the seeker may enter into relationship with spirit allies—inner helpers and teachers who may provide them with access to power and knowledge, protection and support. Among these beings can be found the personal Higher Self, variously known as the Transpersonal Self, the Angelic Self, the God Self, the Over Self, or simply the Oversoul.

Interestingly, despite their disaffection for and lack of affiliation with organized religions, most

transformationals profess belief in some form of universal god-like consciousness, and Jesus of Nazareth is regarded as an important spiritual teacher, whether or not the seeker is psychologically Christian.

Another related belief concerns the existence of a field of mystical power, perceived by virtually all as an invisible essence or vital force that is widely dispersed throughout the universe and highly concentrated in certain objects, places, and living beings. It is becoming generally understood within the movement that everyone can learn how to access, accumulate, and focus this power, and that one's health, well-being, and success in life are ultimately dependent on being able to maintain, and even increase, one's personal supply.

This awareness gives rise to the belief in the existence of a personal energy body – a subjective self-aspect that carries this power as life force and provides the “etheric pattern” around and within which the physical body is formed and maintained. The ability of some transpersonal healers to manipulate the energy body in restoring and repairing the physical is a skill that many in the transformational community have personally experienced. It is believed that this energetic matrix can be perceived as an aura by those who have psychic awareness and that it can be enhanced utilizing the energy centers within it called chakras in Eastern thought.

Taken together, these beliefs and values constitute an emerging worldview that is being embraced by an ever-growing population of well-informed souls. Those who hold the new view perceive quite clearly that it offers an unprecedented promise of hope for all human beings everywhere as well as a firm guarantee of sweeping changes to come.

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### **The Global Consequence**

In summation, the perception of the primacy of consciousness is embedded within a larger complex of beliefs and values being held by an ever-growing sector of the general public in the West. In the United States for example, their numbers currently match and will shortly surpass those of the fundamentalists. It is also significant that this heightened awareness within our citizenry is emerging in a time in which humanity's problems appear to be reaching critical mass—a time in which our leadership seems to be failing us at all levels, political, corporate, military, and even religious.

Whether the solutions to our issues can be achieved by our current political leadership or by the increasingly questionable machinations of our military-industrial complex is in doubt. In response, increasing numbers of concerned citizens are coming to consider the possibility that our problems may not have political, military, or economic solutions, but rather that they may actually be spiritual in nature, in alignment with the beliefs and values outlined above—a conviction that may, in turn, enhance the growth of the new spiritual complex. In addition, if our children are acquiring these altruistic, spiritually based values and beliefs within the fabric of their families, they are already spreading rapidly throughout the larger society, accelerating the shift.

Although the current spiritual reawakening is most visible in North America and Western Europe, the invasive influence of Western Culture upon the rest of the world suggests that it may, in fact, extend deeply into the international community. In Paul Ray's words "we should take heart, for we are traveling in the company of an enormous number of allies."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has put it this way:

*Nowadays, whatever happens in one part of the world will eventually affect, through a chain reaction, people and places far away. Therefore, it is essential to treat each major problem (and social movement), right from (their) inception, as a global concern. It is no longer possible to emphasize, without destructive repercussions, the national, racial, or ideological barriers that differentiate us. Within the context of our new interdependence, self-interest clearly lies in considering the interest of others. (8)*

This insight confirms that the transformational community taking form in the West is of enormous import, for the emergence of the new spiritual complex within it, as well as the awareness that the complex is engendering on an increasingly societal scale, has the power to alter the directions of history in much the same way that the emergence of Christianity utterly changed the Roman world, as well as the Western mind, almost two thousand years ago.

While the time frame for this shift may vary with the ebb and flow of current events, there are no maybes here. The proverbial handwriting is on the wall. The history of the world's peoples will be profoundly and inescapably changed by the spiritual awakening going on in the West. The results will be felt at every level of society, in every country, and will, by association, determine much of the politics and individual lifeways of the Twenty-first Century and beyond.

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### Notes

1. These anomalous experiences are fully documented in my autobiographical trilogy Spiritwalker: Messages from the Future (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), Medicinemaker: Mystic Encounters on the Shaman's Path (New York: Bantam Books, 1998), and Visionseeker: Shared Wisdom from the Place of Refuge (Carlsbad, California: Hay House, 2001.)
2. See Sankara Saranam's God Without Religion: Questioning Centuries of Accepted Truths, (East Ellijay, Georgia: The Pranayama Institute, 2005.)
3. Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson, The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People Are Changing the World (New York: Harmony Books, 2000.) Ray now estimates that the number of people involved exceeds 60 million in the United States alone.
4. Paul Ray, personal communication, March 2002.
5. Richard Sellin, The Spiritual Gyre: Recurring Phases of Western History (Fort Bragg, California: Lost Coast Press, 1997.)
6. Robert S. De Ropp, The Master Game: Pathways to Higher Consciousness Beyond the Drug Experience (New York: Delta Press, 1968). See also Hank Wesselman, Visionseeker, chapter 1, and Roger Walsh, The Spirit of Shamanism (Los Angeles: Jeremy Tarcher Press, 1990), chapter 3.
7. See Joan B. Townsend, Neoshamanism and the Modern Mystical Movement, in Gary Doore, ed., Shaman's Path: Healing, Personal Growth and Empowerment (Boston: Shambhala Press,

1988), pp. 73-85.

8. The Dalai Lama, The Global Community and Universal Responsibility, in Eddie and Debbie Shapiro, eds., The Way Ahead: A Visionary Perspective for the New Millennium (Rockport, Maine: Element Books, 1992.)

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