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RESEARCH ARTICLE

REFLECTIONS OF NEW AGE BELIEFS INTO HUMAN BEHAVIORS.

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Abstract

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Introduction:-

New age beliefs are a paradigmatic reality which makes it possible to build a discourse and whose roots the discourse are based on. According to Hanegraaf new age approach can be considered as an umbrella of movements surrounding many sub-doctrines and groups which differ from each other. The doctrines and groups which may be considered under these movements have two basic principles in common. The first one is an opposition to modernization in general which means being against dualist, rational and positivist paradigms and non-totalitarian concepts of religion and science. The second one, however, displays a view mixed with eastern philosophy. This approach is totalitarian and it is monist spiritually. It emphasizes herbalism over modern medicine. It considers humans' power as well as removing the obstacles in front of this power important. This approach stresses the belief and individualism that humans have creative potential and that therefore they build their own life and they are responsible for what they have experienced (1996:52).

New age beliefs re-shape the beliefs of the past, and they also contain current religious beliefs. They emerge as an umbrella of doctrines different from traditional Eastern and Western mystics (Paker 2011:61-98). These beliefs entered into ordinary people's lives in a variety of forms. The inclusion of new age symbols in the daily lives of ordinary people caused these people to form special groups of belonging. Their belief that they have perceptions different from other people caused the new age movement to emerge as a communitarian structure. This communitarian structure differed from other belief groups with symbols containing local and primitive beliefs. Symbols were determinant in this formation. When all humanity is considered, very few people would deny the universality of a certain form of religion. There are hardly any societies who have not exhibited their views of the sacred and the spiritual. On the other hand, there are also societies in which monotheist perspective is questioned (Morris 2004:9). Those who question monotheist perspective and who cannot participate in the current religion are in search of new meanings. New age beliefs brings together those who are not comfortable within the monotheist, authoritarian and totalitarian belief structures and of religious institutions, but who cannot otherwise make sense of their lives. The language used is based on mysticism, and is used on a daily basis. No conflicts are experienced with the prevalent religion in building this mysticism-based discourse. Neither are the limits exceeded. For instance, while radical Islamists wish to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia, those who cannot take part in this formation generate a new religion composed of several traditional beliefs. These mystic groups form a loose organization, but have not been able to set up ties with Islamic organizations (Howell 2005:473-493). According to Baudrillard, the era in which we live is an era when tradition is sucked away by economy and when there is immoderation and extremism (2013:68). Such extremism is also available in new age beliefs.

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Study group:-

Movements described as new age religious movements keep emerging under different names. These formations offer training on being spiritual through private courses under the roof of associations. System, which was announced with the slogan, let the master inside you come out and which offers education was analyzed through observation based on participation and was interpreted. Participation in the program started in 2013, yet it was completed in 2014 and the intervals between seminars were too long. For the completion of the program, active participation occurred in three seminars each of which lasted for 10 days and each of which was completed in stages. Besides journeys with stop overs were organized for the group who had completed their education. Meetings were also held with this group after completing the program.

This research uses a face-to-face, in-depth interview technique, and observation with those participants who active participants in three seminars. In line with our purposes, interviews were conducted with participants in seminar, at homes or in coffee houses, and participants were asked to tell their stories of seminar. Subsequently, the audio and visual data of the recordings were decoded and interpreted.

Ethical Statement:-

The Author declares that she has no conflict of interest. This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by the author. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

The Formation of new age beliefs:-

The religious movements of the new age focus on astrological cycles in a special way. According to this belief, cycles are repetitive and each age is followed by another stage. According to this cyclical vision, while new age spirituality is on one side, the dominant Christian-Jewish traditional values of belief are on the other side. Important traditions of the antique age have been enlivened again within the scope of new age beliefs. Most of the views in new age beliefs were obtained from the traditions of western esotericism. Indeed, new age beliefs are a reaction to western culture which is thought to have been dominant for the last two hundred years (Hanegraaff 1996:302-303). At the same time, it cannot be ignored that it is will power as the essence of its ethical character in front of the flexibility of capitalism (Sennett 2012:38). The deep change that western culture has undergone manifests itself not only in political and intellectual terminology (Callinicos 2001:222-223), but also in beliefs. Nietzsche says god has died in the period when modernism influences human life, and thus states that the source of religion has disappeared. Weber, on the other hand, claims that the world is no longer magical. Religion is pushed aside with the emergence of modernism as a project. Yet, religion varies and revives again. Days called as God's revenge by Giles Keppel come again. Religious metaphysical searches from Islam to Reiki, from fortune telling to magic, from the miracle of the crystal to Telli Baba re-appear all over the world without distinguishing between traditional and modern (Atay 2009:10).

Within new capitalism, conditions necessary for the applicability of the goals for life and the conditions necessary for gathering the energy in order to attain the goals have been unbalanced or unreliable. This unreliability is not only limited to uncertainty in subsistence, it also harms existential safety (Bauman 2005:148-149). The search for safety has paved the way for new age beliefs. The new paradigm put forward by new age believers replaced the previous reductionist paradigm. In brief, new age movements can be characterized by their religious aspect which these movements include in their world view. According to them, although new age believers strongly demand that scientific facts spread, their real purpose is to discover a new world (Hanegraaff 1996:62, 67). This model is a transformation made by setting up ties between the religion of the antique period and modernization. A new axis belonging to the characteristics of modernism is observed. Several beliefs come together with modernization, and they constitute an empirical form (Lambert 1999:303-333). The vigorous advocates of modern societies do not have difficulty in producing arguments against those who look at modernism doubtfully. For this, it is sufficient to exemplify the great welfare that societies have (Botton 2004:71). Those who oppose modernization exemplify this with spiritual ignorance. What new age believers call spiritual ignorance or restricted consciousness is restricted by modern sciences or by western culture. Modernization eliminates humans' intuitions and reduces their strength (Hanegraaff 1996:220). On the other hand, what Sheik Nazim, who said ignorance has spread all over the world, and his followers had difficulty in understanding was that how an educated person could say there is no God (Atay 2011:171). Just as the members of a sect who shape their lives in accordance with Islamic rules associate ignorance with disbelief, new age believers also associate humans restriction of spiritual perspective with ignorance. Modernization is considered as the cause of ignorance.

New age beliefs and existing religion:-

Another important characteristic of new age belief is that antique age beliefs are re-created by modern sciences. This emergence is the production of reality lacking an origin or reality, as Baudrillard said (2014:13). Spiritual perspective has been interpreted with the development of theoretical physics. Yet, a gun was pointed at scientific consensus in this way (Hanegraaff 2000: 288-312). On the other hand, although new age beliefs look like eastern religions at the beginning, monotheistic religions are not ignored. Boundaries are permeable, and there is no such thing as single truth or gain of status. It is believed that perceptions differ from person to person. Because mystic traditions are synthesized with new age movements in an eclectic conception, people form their own system of belief as they wish. It may be observed that almost everyone forms their own belief. Therefore, it is not quite possible to exhibit the principles of new age beliefs. Nevertheless, it is possible to mention some common approaches. For instance, new age disciples believe that all humans in general and life in general are closely tied to each other and that God is the name given to the energy of which we are a part.

Religion is any symbolic system whose symbols affect humans actions. Symbolic system has a broad meaning. For example, one of the most important symbols associated with Christianity is going to church. A church is full of symbols such as objects, images, words and sounds. People spend their daily life by continually coming across these symbols and by regulating their lives accordingly. This is another symbolic system. Here actions, words, images and sounds represent another complex system of symbols. Some new age groups can form an institution for themselves, and they can even call it a sect. Yet, they are quite different from sect members. We can see this formation as a different form religion and we can even call it spiritualism (Hanegraaff 2000:288-312). New age movements range from alternative religions to those which do not consider themselves as a religious movement. They are generally taking some elements from existing religious cultural structures in syncretic and eclectic ways, and forming different structures of belief. Legends, religions, myths, religious and cultural structures belonging to other societies can act as a source for new age beliefs (Emiroğlu & Aydın 2003:993).

God in new age beliefs:-

The history of religions demonstrates that the principles of religions are different in terms of faith, worship and morals. A concrete relation is available between man and God, as in Judaism. God is perceived just like a king (Tokat 2012:252). Yet, God is regarded as the creator- created motif, as the universal energy in general- that is to say, as the strength of the universe in new age beliefs. New age beliefs are against dualism. They are against, for example, distinguishing between spirit and body. They are also against another distinction between the creator and the created because the creator and the created originate from the same essence. New age movements are also against reductionism. The universe is not a non-living organism; on the contrary, it is a living organism (Hanegraaff 2000: 288-312). It is implied that all existing things are a part of God's existence. The belief that man is the part of a divine essence is prevalent. Attention is called to a rather cosmic connection, and it is believed that man's existence is a perfect statement of God or that there is a channel between god and universe (Hanegraaff 1996:204-205). Neopaganism is often mentioned in new age beliefs. Neopaganism is associated with the goddess movement, and it is shown that new age movements cannot be continued without women's spirituality. However, the definition of woman's spirituality is very loose and its boundaries are indefinite (Hanegraaff 1996:212). No direct mention of god was made in studies. Managers conducting the program used religious motifs, but they tried to avoid religious comments. Organizers only talked about one creator. Yet, some of the participants interpreted god as energy or as the source of something else. Some participants claimed that the source of the creator and of the created was the same.

A stated I consider myself as a part of God while B. stated that they do not see what I have seen, they don't understand. Now I can see everything. No one could understand what that woman had seen or understood. Managers stressed that participants should not share all their experiences, and they even forbade sharing such experiences. It was emphasized that the program which had been perceived differently by people had different effects on people, and that their experiences were different. It was said that participants should hide their experiences. Not sharing the experiences increased the mystery of the program.

The relations of new age beliefs with sects:-

Although new age movements are often associated with sects, they have several different aspects. Groups formed within new age movements are temporary, and one of them vanishes while another comes into existence. New age beliefs, which seemed to be very close at the beginning, later became loose (Hanegraaff 2000:288-312). According to Campbell, for instance, while new age beliefs display individualism, sects display sharing behavior. While sects

are tightly organized, new age beliefs are looser in terms of organization. Whereas sects expect more from their members, new age beliefs are rather tolerant in this respect. Sects are exclusionist but new age movements are inclusive. While the members of sects are permanent, those participating in new age beliefs are temporary. While those joining in sects have certain limits, those joining in new age movements do not have certain limits. While beliefs are more permanent in sects, the belief system of those joining in new age movements fluctuate. While the arrangements in sects are permanent, the arrangements in new age are simpler. Whereas the arrangements in sects are for longer terms, the ones in new age beliefs are to shorter terms (cited in Hanegraaff 1996:15).

Dualism in new age beliefs:-

New age beliefs oppose dualism- that is to say, dualism of spirit and body- as well as the discrimination between healer and moral (Hanegraaff 2000: 288-312). Basic dualism is not between goodness and evil, but between spiritual comprehension and ignorance. Spiritual ignorance is the property of restricted personality, and it stems from the restriction of the self by modernization. Spiritual comprehension corresponds to higher order consciousness in which higher self is represented (Hanegraaff 1996:291). Totalitarian approach is closely related with health, just as spirit is closely related with body. According to this perspective, each person is unique, and his body is tied to his mind, his emotions and his spirit. According to new age beliefs, health is a personal process, and it should be handled more deeply in physical, emotional and mental terms. In holistic health, mind plays an important role in the improvement of physical health. Immune system affects the relations between the chakra system and psychological, mental and emotional abilities. Psychological factors such as stress negatively affect physical health, and cause diseases. However, physical diseases can also be cured by changing psychological conditions. According to these beliefs, everyone can both make himself ill and can cure himself (Hanegraaff 1996:53-54). Individuals are responsible for all their actions related with their life. Accordingly, their responsibilities play roles in the emergence of their illnesses and in recovering from those illnesses.

It is difficult to describe the movements of herbalism and personal development. The same tendencies can sometimes be evaluated differently by different researchers. The distinction between holistic health and psychological and physical recovery is emphasized through the actions that individuals do. New age believers often feel that the integrity of body and spirit is ignored. There is a sector of holistic health practitioners who hold this belief. According to the supporters of this belief, body and spirit should be perceived as a whole. Yet, it is observed that individuals' psychological discrimination is not made clearly while doing this (Hanegraaff 1996:48). The causes of illness or health is the most controversial part of new age movements, and it is also the part attracting the most interest. According to new age beliefs, each person can create his own reality. Also, according to this claim, beside curing himself, an individual can also make himself ill. This belief causes medical experts and patients who have illnesses that are difficult to cure to take action. Indeed, this case is not limited only to new age beliefs. Medical arguments concerning psychosomatic factors is known to create placebo effects on the appearance and the medical importance of an illness (Hanegraaff 1996:242).

Being a healer in new age beliefs:-

Beliefs and being a healer are natural in new age beliefs. Both of them present an alternative to the weakness and the helplessness of man. Humans are weak, powerless, deadly, stupid, sinful and criminal. Humans wish to be happy in the long term. Every belief promises salvation. Beliefs' promise of salvation against humans' weakness and pains causes religions to be reductionist. In addition to being a hope for salvation, religions are also an important element in recovering from illnesses as a source of cure. It is believed in religions that illnesses are a punishment for certain deeds of humans (Hanegraaff 1996:45). You can be a healer only to yourself in this belief system. Being unhealthy is not a punishment given by the creator in new age beliefs, but it is believed that humans make themselves ill. It is said that humans summon illnesses. The belief that humans can cure themselves by listening to their inner voice is one of the main issues of New age belief. During practice with the group, H. woman who was a university graduate stated that a scar due to a suture vanished from her body. In a similar vein, a man having physical difficulties due to a traffic accident tried to cure his hand which he could not use. He said that the problems with his hand were not eliminated but that all the spots on his hand disappeared. Both of these participants worked for themselves. Another participant suffered from allergy spreading all over his/her body. All participants witnessed the beginning of the allergy. It was learned later that these participants recovered from their allergy for whose treatment medicine was not influential within two months. Those who conducted the program attributed recovery from the allergy to body's discharging the harmful substances in consequence of the body movements. This period, which was problematic for participants, was seen as an achievement for the organizers of the seminar. The religion of curing (new age) is reported as a phenomenon. A relation can be mentioned between new age beliefs and humanism. According to new

age believers, human intelligence is an instrument in predominating over the body. In a sense, man directs physical reality and thus he also creates his own reality (Khakpour 2015:146-155).

Death in new age beliefs:-

On looking at the issue of death in new age beliefs, we see that existence is a concept familiar to us. According to new age beliefs, it is a fundamental reality that whatever is done to ward off death is useless. New age believers will frequently give descriptions of not suffering agony. They see the universe as a basis for curiosity and mystery. Their experiences, on the other hand, cannot be reduced. We can conclude that almost none of the new age writers gave the necessary answers to people's death experiences and to their existential problems. Immortality and re-birth are rarely commented on. Common experiences concerning death are seen more in neo-paganism. Life and death, darkness and daylight, summer and winter belong to each other. According to a very few of new age believers, death is not an end (Hanegraaff 1996: 256-258). There are innumerable scales from life after death of death after life, and of re-birth (Flere&Andrej 2009:179-184). In general, it is believed that life is a cycle; that is to say, reincarnation. New age believers, who refuse dogmatic approaches in traditional religions, claim that feminine elements in beliefs are pressurized by patriarchal cultures, and they believe in a female soul and in spiritual powers (Paker 2011:61-98).

The concepts of good and evil in new age beliefs:-

A positive psychological state and positive attitude ensure that expectations return in a positive way. In other words, right attitudes naturally lead to right behaviors. Agreement, which is extensively regarded in new age sources, regards love as the highest level response to negativity. Love is the most important solution to fears and negativity. Although the word love has several meanings, it does not have precise definitions in relation to human actions. Love is related with mood and mental attitudes (Hanegraaff 1996:296). New age believers think that the universe is composed of love. Love is regarded as both an unselfish emotion and a strong feeling. All love should ultimately be based on the loving of self. Apart from emphasizing many sources, love is the necessity for honesty to the universe and for submission to the universe. Those who wish to make their life positive are taught how to smile. The message that one should continuously and absolutely smile is given. Those who do not smile are warned. It aims to teach the methods for being fit, happy and successful by smiling. These methods were used from the beginning of the seminar. Some of the participants stated that they obtained positive results by acting accordingly. It was said that acting in this way would assure liveliness. A male participant said that he might have exaggerated smiling, and that he suspected that his friends took medicine against depression.

New age beliefs introduce a negative world with more examples. According to new age beliefs, what causes a negative world is the negative part of human intelligence. Negative attitudes attract negativity, and life expectations also return to individuals in a negative way. This sequence is important and is frequently discussed in new age religious movements. What matters here is not what we do not do something, but why we do something. Such questions are answered in the terms of psychology. The negative moods of the brain should be described as the causes of the evil according to new age beliefs (Hanegraaff 1996:291). For example, the source of a negative and devastated mind is an individuals' own behaviors. Individuals' excusing and judging themselves and others makes their brain negative. This is the belief which is related with sin and guilt feelings. If people judge themselves in accordance with these beliefs, everything goes wrong. If they quit excusing and judging themselves and others, everything gets better. According to new age believers, sin is just a word, and it causes one to feel guilty in the presence of others. Guilt, however, is a completely useless feeling. One's feeling guilty does not make one feel better, neither does it solve any problems. Feeling guilty is a negative feeling. It causes people to think that they are not good enough. It cannot create a good enough reality in such a case. Attitudes of actively judging and excusing others means reflecting whereas passively receiving means fear (Hanegraaff 1996:292-292). Thus, people learn to excuse themselves from culturally acceptable beliefs.

Forgiving in new age beliefs:-

The word forgive is a word put forward by new age beliefs, and it is very important. Forgiving is necessary for avoiding feelings of guilt resulting from sins and violations. Forgiving means getting rid of negativity. Another meaning of the word is to deeply understand others no matter what they do. Forgiving replaces revenge, and it saves one from restricting one's dreams beside restricting one's feelings. The reason for this is that new age beliefs are based on personal responsibility. It requires that we should love ourselves prior to loving others (Hanegraaff 1996:297-300). The need for forgiving was also frequently emphasized in the seminar. It was claimed that a kind of purification was achieved after forgiving oneself and those doing us injustice. A day after actively forgiving, someone from the group came by crying and told that he/she forgave his/her father who had left him/her when

he/she was a baby and who had refused to see him/her; and the participant added that his/her father phoned him/her later. This unusual coincidence was considered very important because it is believed that feelings of revenge and hatred impose a burden on humans and that people's intuitions cannot be exhibited unless they lose this burden. In conclusion, forgiving means quitting judging and humiliating people and themselves who have displayed wrong behaviors (Norbekov 2005:60). It is claimed accordingly that when people quit judging themselves and others, their intuitions will guide them into the right way.

Criticism to New Age Beliefs:-

New age thinkers generally describe explicit and implicit cultural criticisms. The context of new age can exclusively contain goals and views. There is usually displeasure in contemporary societies. However, new age cultural criticism is a technical term (Hanegraaff, 2000: 288-312). The followers of new beliefs were not born into these religions, but they chose these religions. New age beliefs encountered severe accusation due to "brain washing" and "love bombardment". Acceptance of new age beliefs as a religion is controversial. Because those who are to participate actively in these movements are accused of being "superstitious", they do not describe these movements as a religion. There groups are accused of being ideological and of earning money out of this (Emiroğlu, Aydın 2003: 994). Even though they are accused of being ideological and of earning money from this, their employers did not display any clear political attitudes towards them. They avoided such a discourse. Participants' political attitudes were not related with radical leftist or rightist parties and they were also kept away from the ruling party. Participants paid for each seminar separately. They needed to be slightly above the middle level income to be able to afford to pay these prices. Thus, these formations are for the class above middle. Participants' attitudes seemed to be elitist. They did not have problems with modern sciences. On the other hand, it looks impossible for participants to reconcile with the conservative party which has been in power for 13 years and which has an Islamic identity. They are observed that they are away from conservative formations. Participants, most of whom are female, describe themselves as the women of republic. It is possible to describe those who took part in these seminars as the search of those who cannot take part in Islamic organizations or who do not want to take part in Islamic organizations. It was also found that those who had an income level above middle in this group were not content with this seminar and that they attended similar activities.

Differentiation of new age beliefs:-

Books in the new age sub-culture address Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism, Jewish mysticism and Gnosticism and American Indian beliefs as well as mythology and traditional folklore from various aspects (Hanegraaff 2000: 288-312). Just as the books written within the scope of new age beliefs differ from country to country, symbols included in movements also differ. For example, one of the practices of a new age belief program, in which I take part, was traveling. A journey to Akşemseddin's Shrine in Göynük, which was seen to be a place with high energy, was taken to perform the practice. It was demanded that the shrine was visited in the morning, but no comments were made in relation to performing any Islamic practices. Some of us got up early in the morning and performed the morning prayer while some did not do so. The Rosary was used in the teaching of patience. During the ritual, some of the participants said prayers while others did not. Practices performed by visiting the shrine and using the rosary were associated with Turkey. There were no participants whose life was dominated by Islamic rules or who lived accordingly. Yet, some of them were observed to pray in the shrine. During this journey, religious symbols belonging to an Islamic society were exhibited.

Field study: Accept Seminar:-

Twenty to twenty-two participants were accepted into the program under study. There were conditions for acceptance such as age and psychological health. Alev, "I have been waiting for two years for acceptance. They did not accept me because I was at the beginning of cancer treatment" Some of the people with similar illnesses were accepted while some were not accepted. The managers of the seminar attributed this to the fact that everybody has different perceptions. They pointed out that illnesses had different effects on people and that therefore some of them were not accepted into the seminars. Those who gave the seminars said that they knew whether would-be participants were suitable or not when they first saw them. In addition to that they also said that they had anticipated how much participants could develop their intuitions, and that they did this because they used their intuitions correctly.

Characteristics of participants:-

It was observed that people who took part in new age movements came from the middle class and were well-educated. Those who receive less education are not interested in new age movements (Hanegraaff 2000: 288-312). Most of the participants in the program are female and all of them are university graduates, and some of them academic staff. The participants were found to be in the 33-50 age range and had high income levels. Frisk also found that mostly women participated in activities called new age movements. There are range for women was 35 to 54 and the average age was 42 (Frisk 2007:153-170). The reasons for participating in seminars varied from serious illnesses to emotional problems. They were found to have interest in personal development books published and to have relevant knowledge. At least half of the participants participated in other programs organized by groups of new age movements before. Talat, I read the book incidentally. I came to find a cure to my illness. It was seen that participants did not have any doubts that the program provided cure and maturity. Frisk also found that almost all participants believed that the activities provided them with maturity and cure (Frisk 2007:153-170). Findings concerning the participants are all parallel regardless of countries, languages and religions. Beginning with the third seminars, participants started to report their experiences with the program.

A program for arousing intuitions:-

New age religious movements educate believers through associations and private courses. They increasingly become an inseparable part of popular culture due to the participants who are educated in the program. The program started in Uzbekistan and Russia because the program was developed by an Uzbek. Then the program began education sessions in Germany and Turkey. Education is conducted on behalf of him since he cannot go everywhere. Although educators are not Turkish, they can speak Turkish very well. They are well-educated people. Such discourse as personal development, success in public and in private spheres, using one's power on people and obtaining what one wants, remaining healthy, young and beautiful form the foundation of the program. Learning to be a healer is also included in the activities. In this program, it is believed that people lose their sensitivity by using their mind. Therefore, practice is made on arousing intuitions. Although people differ in their perceptions and in understanding, the message saying everything is in your power is given in general (Norbekov 2014:15).

Wake up Intuition:-

Start your day: Daily work to arouse intuitions was introduced to show respect to information and the sources of that information, accompanied by music. Participants were made to do movements complementary to each other for three hours a day. Homework such as physical movements and dipping one's fingers into hot water was given. It was stressed through almost every movement that one's curing oneself, being healthy, staying young and beautiful, finding the desired spouse and the desired job, and enriching one's life were possible and within one's power. It was also highlighted that realizing one's perfect dreams as well as realizing one's negative thoughts were within one's power.

Argument of the seminar:-

The most important argument of the seminar was to assure that body, mind, soul and emotions worked in unity and in one direction, so that individuals attain totalitarianism. Bodily practices were performed so as to strengthen the immunity system and to increase resistance to stress. Through these daily practices, character was improved and how to look at life in a positive way and how to smile were taught. It was taught that people could make people do whatever they want them to do by smiling and by positive thought. Laughing was stopped with difficulty at first while doing the body movements. Instructors warned people who couldn't stop laughing. As progress was made in work, smiles began to appear on faces. Participants being exposed to 3-hours of training a day learned to smile. Unfamiliar people also greeted them as they wandered around always smiling. The participants were frequently asked the question are you taking tranquilizers? by their acquaintances on those days. Participants stated that they all could control their anger more easily, or at least that they did not quickly lose their temper. They also said that even if they got angry, they soon calmed down. Not only the participants themselves, but also their families benefited from this. The effects of new age beliefs on the participants in the program appeared as smiling faces free of anger and as harmonious individuals. Reflection into the atmosphere as a harmonious and smiling face was observed in all of the participants.

Should never be talked about seminar:-

It was frequently stressed that what happens during the seminars should never be talked about. Surprisingly, participants obeyed the rule seriously. As the program progressed, it was observed that the members did not share their experiences even with each other. They did not share their experiences with their relatives, either. Those who

were to participate in a higher level seminar did not give any clues about the content. The responses to the questions about the education were only smiles. No information was given. That the program was hidden increased the interest in the seminars.

Not allowed to be negative speaking:-

When daily activities finished, we sat in the garden with some of the participants, and had tea or coffee with them. One of the participants turned over the coffee cup for fortune telling. Another participant interrupted and asked, do you trust the fortune teller? According to the interrupter, if the fortune teller reflects her bad emotions, the negativity will go to the one who asks for fortune telling. The control on not speaking in a too negative way was observed both in the people giving the seminars and in the participants. According to them, whatever goes to the universe, it will return like a boomerang.

Opening up space:-

Besides, it is believed that if something is demanded by somebody, it should be given so that the new one can come. One of the participants told another how nice her earrings were, and the owner of the earrings brought a pair of earrings the next day as a gift to the one complimenting on her earrings. One day a beggar asked for money, and a participant gave the beggar what money they could afford. According to the conversations had and the personal development training sessions, things asked for should be given. It was also said that the things not used should be given away. They can be furniture as well as personal belongings. It is claimed that when excessive things are given away, newer ones will come. The discourse that give others so that the universe can give you again was often used. Opening up space was not only related with furniture but also with people's relations and their friends. It is thought that people should leave behind those who break their heart. They will then be opening space in their heart for new people. It was observed that participants believe they will still be unhappy otherwise.

“If you have the intention you will win”: It was emphasized in the activities that anything desired will be obtained. For example, you want to buy a house but you do not have enough money. You should not give up the idea because you haven't got the money. It was said if you have the intention to buy the house, the money will come. It was pointed out if you intend to buy a house and cannot buy it, it means that buying the house is not good for you. Accordingly, when you decide to obtain something, you are certain obtain it. If you cannot obtain it, it means that it will not bring you happiness. The explanation that if something does not come true, it means you did not want it adequately or you wanted it too much and the reverse was given in response to negative consequences. It was stressed that it was meaningless to worry about desires which did not come true.

Being a healer:-

Being a healer was the most important emphasis of this seminar. Therefore, techniques which would develop individuals' will and their qualities, and which would form the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional basis of daily life were taught. People were taught how to use their strengths. They were made to perform physical and mental activities for repairing their own health. These activities were done with the help of someone having a great deal of knowledge of anatomy. While these activities were being done, observation was also done in relation to how healthy participants felt. With techniques using regular movements and psychology, the activity was beneficial to the participants. All the things done reflected into participants' faces as healthy appearance. This strengthened the belief that people could cure themselves. It was seen that as the number of seminars increased in group meetings, experiences differed. Yet, no changes occurred in some participants while changes occurred in others.

The most important practice:-

Our activities were practiced for the purposes of finding and removing the causes preventing us from yielding positive results or delaying the results. The most important practice was forgiving. It was stressed that forgiving was inevitable in uncovering intuitions. A special ritual for forgiving was performed. It was considered as a practice for purification and for removing distressing thoughts. After this experience, some of the participants had some interesting stories to tell.

To find our direction without look and speaking:-

It was emphasized that intuitions were influential in our making correct decisions, and regular activities were done in order to uncover intuitions. It was stressed that we should always trust our inner voice, and efforts were made to teach the fact that our inner voice would be at our service if we learned how to use it and that it would help us to attain success. It was taught that people would begin to use their own power by arousing their intuitions (sixth sense)

with the emergence of their capabilities. In order to arouse our intuitions, we were asked to find our direction with our eyes closed and without bumping into each other, and to try to understand the conversations of others without hearing them. We were expected to go shopping without speaking. The results were shared with the group. Participants had differing experiences. Keeping silent and not speaking was given as homework. All these were done to teach participants how to act according to feelings rather than with reason. After that, one of the participants said that he/she saw himself/herself as a part of God while another said that he thought that a special password was sent to his/her subconscious through the seminars for use when time is due.

After the program which was started with the announcement let the master inside you come out was completed, we met participants in different places. Sharing, which was initially tight and sincere, became looser in accordance with the property of new age beliefs. Meetings then turned into communication through phone calls or e-mails.

Instead of Conclusion:-

New age belief currents originate from older religious beliefs and spiritual movements which have been active since late 20th century, and they include mainly psychology, and ecology in addition to modern science. New age beliefs emerged by being against dualist, rational and positivist paradigms and non-totalitarian conceptions of religion and science; and in a general sense, by opposing modernization. On the other hand, a new form of belief was created by blending modern sciences with antique age beliefs. We can consider this formation as another form of religion. The most important claim of the seminars in parallel to this was to assure that body, mind, soul and emotions worked in unity and in the same direction and that people attain totalitarianism.

New age beliefs are against dualism, and togetherness of spirit and body is shown as the most important indicator of this. Additionally, the creator and the created come from the same essence. Their opposition to dualism of body and spirit activated medical experts and patients having illnesses difficult to treat. Even if recovering from illnesses is perceived as a religious phenomenon in this perspective, it is indeed emphasized that individuals can cure themselves by mental control. It is regarded that psychosomatic factors are greatly influential in becoming ill and in recovering from illnesses. Positive results might have been yielded also in new age beliefs by using the science of psychology and other movements.

New age believers in the group analyzed talked about not suffering from pain. Pain is inevitable, but turning it into a positive result is in one's power. One of the most important issues is the results of positive thought. According to the managers of the program and to the participants, negative emotions attract negativity. It is believed that expectations in relation to life will return to people in a negative way. It is stressed that people can achieve success by learning the correct behavior- or by using the body correctly. It is stated that by behaving in this way, one can get what he wants and can dominate over others. Throughout the seminars individual achievement, beauty, youth and being healthy were emphasized. Achievement is considered almost equal to earning money. It was told participants that people who earned money –that is to say, all rich people- did so with positive thoughts. Learning the methods of being fit, happy and successful by smiling was recommended as a beginning. Additionally, it was also emphasized that forgiving was very important and necessary in arousing the intuitions.

In conclusion, the findings obtained through participation-based observations showed that participants in the formations under the roof of new age beliefs yielded results in a short time, but that the effects were lost in the long term. This is similar to the results obtained by a person who participates in sports. When he/she quits, the results will change. The case of the participants in new age beliefs was similar to that. While those continuing to do what they have learned still look healthy, those who do not continue reverted to their previous state. Some of them, however, continue the activities with different groups. It was seen that staying healthy, young and beautiful was not actualized because they were not sustained. People who earned a lot, who found their ideal husband/wife or job - frequently given as examples were not available in this group.

Neoliberalism transformed economic structure of the societies in the world, and the results reflected into cultural structure. Individualization, rather than organization, came into prominence. According to Sennett, people feel ashamed because they feel they are weak in their society. Yet, weakness was not something to be ashamed of in traditional societies. Individuals took their weaknesses and strengths from others. Weakness became something to be ashamed of in industrial societies. Market-dependent positions are made unstable, people feel responsible for their position in the world, and this is reflected as an ideology. Success or failure in the struggle for existence was seen as personal weakness or strength (Sennett 2005:56). Such discourse as developing the self, being successful in the

public and private domains, and using one's power over people form the basis of new age movements. This basis corresponds to the views suggested by Sennett. Vacuum created in this field or instability seem to be a solution to those who are in search of personal success. Because success, especially economic success, is emphasized under individualism, the desire to gain strength is understandable. These desires also accelerate the spread of new age beliefs under many activities. Besides, it should not be ignored that new age organization also creates a sense of belonging even though it may be temporary.

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