

b. Neo-Platonism

-Plato;s ideas of intuitive knowledge

-Aim: the hope to return

-Procedures:

-Conflict with the church:

- =concentration on ideals
- =levelling of religious acts
- =resistance to exclusivism

If you wonder how these ideas got a hold on people and even some believers..note that they are escapist systems which minimize human attainments in the hope of a more meaningful existence. You will find them represented today in the New Age groups, theosophy, Rosicrucianism, and many other "mind over matters" groups.

c. The Older Paganism

Nostalgic things die hard and whether there was a "love" for the older paganism or not, it continued to rise as a challenge to the church. It is represented in the Roman/Grecian mythology, of course, and in representative writers who championed other aspects as well...a few of them ...

-Lucian of Samosota (ca 190 AD)..noted for ridiculing the church and not to be confused with the textual critic of the same name but living a hundred years later.

-Celsus (ca 180) was a biblical critic and author of a work known as "The True Word" (sometimes "The True Doctrine") in which he espoused contrary ideas. Origen wrote a massive work opposing his ideas.."Contra Celsum"

-Crescens..(ca 180) arguing for a multiplicity of gods and supernatural earth beings.

-Philostratus (ca 270) suggested that Appolonius of Tyana was the real Messiah.