THE COMPLEX FORMS OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE:

A DURKHEIMIAN VIEW OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Frances R. Westley

McGill University

PREFACE

In the effort of researching and writing this dissertation, I am indebted to a number of people. First and foremost, I am indebted to Professor Michael Carroll who, as my thesis advisor, guided me in its writing and conception and unfailingly provided a clear head and a steadying influence. Secondly, I am indebted to Professor Frederick Bird, who conceived of and headed the Concordia project on new religious movements, and whose ideas and insights provided the initial stimulation for this dissertation. I am also indebted to the other members of the Concordia research team, in particular Susan Palmer, whose intriguing thesis on Shakti attracted me to the study of this particular kind of group. I am indebted to the Canada Council and the Quebec government for the doctoral fellowship and research grant which financed my doctoral study and research. I am indebted to Joyce Granich whose typing and editing of the manuscript was an invaluable aid in its completion. Lastly, I am indebted to the members of the groups themselves, without whose cooperation this dissertation could not have been written.

ABSTRACT

In 1898 Durkheim predicted that religion in modern complex societies would express and hold sacred what human beings still had in common: their common humanity. This dissertation combines Durkheim's theory with data gathered in the Montreal area in order to analyse groups corresponding to his "cult of man." Included in this sample are "transpersonal" groups such as est, Psychosynthesis and Arica, whose beliefs and organization are compared to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement and to Canadian harmonial cults. Not only are belief and organization related in each case, but "cult of man" groups are shown to represent a distinct development, sensitive to the technological urban environment. Members' experience of personal and social flux is expressed in their beliefs and rituals. The latter act to protect members from the dangers of such a flux, and to empower them to master and survive it. While such groups may have few implications for a new ethic, they do represent an ingenious adaptation to modern life.

ABSTRACT

En 1898 Durkheim avait prédit que la religion, dans
les sociétés complexes modernes, experimerait et
sacraliserait ce que les êtres humains avaient encore en
commun: leur humanité commune. Cet essai englobe la
théorie de Durkheim et les données recueillies dans la
région montrealaise de facon à analyser les groupes
correspondant à son "culte de l'homme." Nous avons inclus
dans cet échantillon des groupes "transpersonnels" tels que
est, Psychosynthesis et Arica. Nous avons établi un
parallèle entre les croyances et l'organisation de ces
groupes et celles du mouvement catholique du Renouveau
Charismatique et des "cultes de l'harmonie." La croyance
et l'organisation sont non seulement reliées dans chaque
cas, mais nous avons démontré que les groupes apparentés au
"culte de l'homme" représentent une èvolution distincte,
sensible à l'environnement technologique urbain. C'est
l'expérience des membres vis-à-vis le flux personnel et
social qui s'exprime dans leurs croyances et leurs rituels.
Ces derniers ont pour fonction de protéger les membres des
dangers d'un tel flux et de leur permettre de les maîtriser
et d'y survivre. Même si de tels groupes s'interessent peu
à une nouvelle éthique, ils représentent certainement une
adaptation ingénieuse à la vie moderne.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section III

RITUALS IN THE "CULT OF MAN"

LIST OF TABLES

SECTION I

RELIGION IN A COMPLEX SOCIETY: DURKHEIM'S
PREDICTIONS AND THE NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

In defense of his book Elementary Forms, Durkheim
indicated that the study of very primitive or simple forms
was the first step towards a study of the more "complicated"
modern forms of religious life.

> It is because a science in its infancy must pose prob-
> lems in their simplest form, and only later make them
> gradually more complicated. When we have understood
> very elementary religions we will be able to move on
> to others. (Durkheim, 1919:134-5)

Durkheim's theories particularly those relating
religious beliefs and rituals to social forms have been used
extensively by anthropologists and social anthropologists
but have been largely ignored by sociologists. This has been
due to several factors. Durkheim's analysis of Elementary
Forms described a cohesive culture, all members of which
participated in an overarching symbol system. Modern
society (particularly contemporary society) presents a
picture of religious and cultural plurality with little con-
sensus about symbols. It also offers a picture of secular-
ization, of a situation in which increasing numbers of people
do not seem to participate in any religion.

A closer study of Durkheim suggests, however, that

Durkheim foresaw both the above factors and found them not incompatible with his basic theories about the relation between religion and social order. In fact, in other articles, Durkheim suggested that as society evolved so would religion, and that in a modern complex society religion would reflect the diversity and specialization of that society. Religion would not die out, however, for men would always need a symbolic arena for expressing what they still had in common.

The pun in the title of this dissertation is, therefore, intentional. What this work hopes to accomplish is an examination of those forms of modern religion which seem to capture and express the essence of life in a modern, complex society, in the way in which the primitive cult explored in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life was revealed to articulate life in a primitive society. To this end we will follow the general outline of Durkheim's study, focusing in turn on the relationship between beliefs and social organization, and the function of rituals in a selection of new religious movements, which we shall term, after Durkheim, the "cult of man."

CHAPTER I

EMILE DURKHEIM'S SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION

Emile Durkheim's theories of religion are primarily
developed in his 1913 work, The Elementary Forms of the
Religious Life (although his interest in religion predates
this work). In this book, Durkheim drew a series of con-
clusions about the nature of religion based on ethnographic
data gathered from a primitive Australian tribe, the Arunta.
His purpose was not only to "explain" this "most simple" form
of religious life (as a scientist would examine a most prim-
itive life form like the amoeba) but to use it as a basis
for making hypotheses about religion in general. As our con-
cern is with Durkheim's predictions about the future of
religion, it is worth examining those elements which he pos-
tulated as basic to all religions.

In this analysis we have adopted Stephen Lukes'
classification of Durkheim's hypotheses, as it provides an
efficient but complete understanding of the aspects of
Durkheim's thought on religion. Lukes indicates that
Durkheim's hypotheses may be divided into three groups:
causal, representational and functional (Lukes, 1975:462).

His causal theories about religion postulate a

structural correspondence between social structure and religious organization as manifested in beliefs and rituals. The latter, it is argued, is derived from the former. What will be held sacred in any social group is what members of that group hold in common. This theory leads directly to Durkheim's hypotheses about the representational aspects of religion.

The representational elements of religion may be seen as twofold. First, Durkheim felt that religion expresses, symbolically and metaphorically, the individual's relations to society and the sentiments engendered by collective life. Secondly, it serves a cognitive or interpretive function. By mirroring society, religion allows society to see itself, to become self-conscious.

Durkheim's functional theories about religion form the third group of hypotheses. Religion functions to order life both on an individual (microscopic) and societal (macro-scopic) level. In the former instances, Durkheim suggests that the individual's behavior and motivations are regulated by his interactions with the sacred as manifested in collect-ive gatherings. This regulatory process is largely contained in the rites or ritual acts which any religion prescribes for its adherents and which serve to empower the individual (in the case of positive rituals) and restrict the individual (in the case of negative rituals). On the larger, societal level religion serves to order social life by maintaining social

order and providing social integration on a moral and/or cul-
tural level.

Criticism has been levelled at Durkheim that as his
theories are based on such a restricted (and often faulty)
data base, they cannot be generalized to other societies,
particularly to our post-industrial and technological age.
It is important to remember, however, that Durkheim was an
evolutionist. As he posited a relation between social and
religious organization, it follows that as social organiza-
tion evolves so would the content of religious rituals and
beliefs. In addition, Durkheim felt that the representa-
tional and functional aspects of religion would evolve. Par-
ticularly the cognitive, or interpretive role of religion in
traditional society was bound to be usurped by the sciences
and social sciences as these gathered momentum and interpre-
tive power.

The only immutable aspects of religion, Durkheim
argued, were its expressive aspects, and its ability to pro-
vide motivation. Man's need to express his relation to
society would never vanish: "Symbolic representations are
as necessary for the well-working of our moral life as food
is for the maintenance of our physical self" (Lukes, 1975:
475). Nor would man's need for motivation and the sense of
being "empowered" ever be satisfied better than by religious
gatherings and rituals. Finally, religious beliefs and
rituals would continue to be an _expression of what held_

society together. To the extent that these beliefs were in
disarray and religious practices indecisive, society could
be seen as in a state of transition (Ibid.:475).

It is this latter point which has come under criticism
in Durkheim's time as well as in our own. In a highly tech-
nological society, based on utilitarian individualism and
increasingly specialized and diversified, how is it possible
(it is argued) to expect cultural integration on any basis
besides that of the demands of the marketplace?

Durkheim's answer to this was ingenious; at once a
defense of individualism and a reiteration that man was a
social animal and that this would be nowhere more apparent
than in his religion.

Durkheim predicted that as society becomes more
differentiated and highly specialized, geographically and
culturally diversified, men would come to feel that they had
little in common besides their sheer humanity. The result-
ing cult he suggested would be the "cult of man" -- a cult
in which the human individual, idealized, would be wor-
shipped and held sacred.

This idea first emerged in 1897 in the concluding
chapter of Suicide. Having established that suicide resulted
from an imbalance in the individual's relation to society, as
an outcome of over or under-evaluation of individual autonomy,
Durkheim stressed that not only a degree of freedom but a
degree of restraint was necessary for individual survival.

These restraints were best exercised by religion. In a
society increasingly dominated by individualism where free-
doms for the individual were being daily won, Durkheim sug-
gested that the defense of these individual rights must
become the religion in order to hold people together,
motivate them as a group and protect the individual from
anomie (1951:336-38).

Durkheim resurrected his idea about the "cult of man"
in much greater detail the following year in a paper,
"Individualism and the Intellectuals" (Durkheim, 1969 tr.).
This paper, was meant as a defense of Dreyfus and an attack
on those that suggested the protection of individual rights
meant the sacrifice of social order. In it he suggested that
increasing individualism, closely linked as it was with
differentiation, was the irrepressible wave of the future
(Ibid.:26). Not only was it encouraged by "population
growth, geographical expansion and increasing social differ-
entiation," but by our Christian heritage and morality which
transferred "the very centre of the moral life from outside
to within and (set up) the individual as the sovereign
judge" (Ibid.:27). To defend these liberties is therefore to
defend the very fabric of society, that which we must
increasingly rely upon to hold people together. To worship
the idealized individual was not egoistic but raised the
individual personality above itself, empowering it as
religions have always done and yet providing social

integration through a common cause.

As in traditional religion, Durkheim predicted that this "cult of man" would represent and dramatize social relations on the expressive level. By this he meant that those aspects which individuals in a society felt that they had in common would be represented as sacred in the religious beliefs of that society. The religious rituals on the other hand, would represent the control mechanisms, both negative and positive, by which a society governed its members.

In terms of the beliefs and rituals of this projected "cult of man" Durkheim is unspecific. Besides an increasing use of science (which Durkheim also sees as an outgrowth of the Christian separation of the spiritual and the temporal) in the belief systems, he suggests that the divine "humanity" in each person will be "invested with that mysterious property which creates an empty space around holy objects which keeps them away from profane contacts and draws them from ordinary life" (Ibid.:21). Durkheim also states, somewhat grandiosely: "Its first dogma is the autonomy of reason and its first rite the freedom of thought" (Ibid.:24).

Finally, in the cognitive or interpretive realm, this cult of the future would find itself guided and influenced by social science:

> Although faith, under the pressure of practical needs always had to anticipate science and complete it prematurely, Durkheim predicted that an increasingly rationalized and secularized religion would become ever more subject to the criticism and control of science. (Lukes, 1975:477)

This latter statement has a bearing on what Durkheim called the "cognitive" aspects of religious expression. In an age increasingly dominated by rationality, science and social science, religion could no longer be expected to fulfill a cognitive or interpretative function, explaining society to its members. Instead, social science would take over this role and be incorporated into the religious belief system in a sort of uneasy dialogue with faith.

Durkheim felt that although the "cult of man" would function to celebrate individualism, it would also function to restrict and control the individual. Hence it would not "indulge our instincts -- it offers us an ideal which surpasses nature" (Durkheim, 1969:24). Authority would still be respected if it was rationally based. Submission would be on the basis of recognized inadequacy. In the face of the lassitude and the despondency which marks the aftermath of a breakthrough in civil or social liberties, the "cult of man" would ritually guide the individuals involved so that they make best use of the hard-won liberties, to societies' advantage (Ibid.:29). In so regulating human behavior, these "cults of man" would be performing the same function as religion in the traditional societies. The difference would lie in the focus of this regulation: the defense of individual rights and liberties would be of paramount importance to the new cults.

These predictions about the future of religion,

couched as they are in the form of an impassioned defense of individual liberties, fail to provide an operational definition of the "cult of man." Considered, however, in the light of Durkheim's basic hypotheses about the nature of religion, the picture becomes somewhat clearer. For instance, given Durkheim's hypothesis that the structure of society will causally shape the structure of that society's religious beliefs, it seems reasonable to predict that as society becomes more differentiated and specialized, so will religion. Implicit in Durkheim's work is the suggestion that one all-encompassing religion providing total integration will increasingly be replaced by a variety of religions. As more and more people come to feel they have nothing in common but their human individuality, religions will be based on the belief that the idealized individual is sacred. Groups may still vary in their image of the ideal man, as groups vary in cultural and economic background, but the theme will be the same.

This point has implications for a theory of recruitment. In a highly specialized, differentiated society, a variety of groups exist. Those most attracted to the "cult of man" groups (as opposed to other religious groups) should be those most affected by the sense of having "nothing in common." This will be those, according to Durkheim, who are part of the occupational structure in a highly specialized job, but who (we may hypothesize) do not have other primary

reference groups to provide identity.

On the representational level, these groups will pro-
vide their adherents with motivation and morals as well as
with a chance to dramatize their relations to society through
religious rituals. Science and/or social science will act as
interpreter, however, and so one may expect the belief sys-
tems of such groups to be a mixture of the metaphoric
(expressive) and the scientific (explanatory) perhaps
expressing a tendency towards early closure and hence simpli-
fication of available scientific ideas.

Finally, in terms of the functions of religion, in the
future Durkheim expected to find ritual ordering and regulat-
ing social relations as in traditional religion. The ques-
tion of social order in the future was one that concerned
Durkheim greatly. The problem that disturbed him initially
was how, in a society that allowed for increasing individual
freedom of thought and action, would order be maintained.
His answer, that people would maintain order through the
defense of these individual rights and liberties, only partly
solved the problem. There still remained the question of how
authority would be established and maintained in such a
society. Who would be given the right to command and who
would follow?

As all such structural problems are, according to
Durkheim, expressed or reflected in the religion of the
group, we can see how pertinent this issue was in his

projections about the "cult of man." If all men had equal
access to the sacred, as they must in a cult which holds the
idealized human individual sacred, the process of establish-
ing authority and submission is especially problematic.
Durkheim suggests that authority will be rationally decided
on the basis of competence and submission on the basis of
incompetence (Durkheim, 1969). As Durkheim's study of prim-
itive religions suggests that authority and control patterns
are most vividly expressed by religious rituals, we may pre-
sume that competence and incompetence will therefore be
determined in the rituals of these new cults. Hence we may
also predict that in the cult of man religious rituals will
involve skill development and skill testing of a progressive
nature. As one becomes more ritually skilled, one will gain
in authority.

    In sum, then, it is important to note that Durkheim's
predictions concerning religion in the future allow for the
possible coexistence of a variety of different religions
(and certainly cover the possibility of an increasingly
specialized and differentiated society). The theme running
through these various movements will be the sacredness of
the ideal human. People will still feel a need to join in
groups to dramatize these beliefs and the social realities
which underlie them, and to be empowered and "morally remade"
by this group interaction.

    Since the late 1960's, a variety of new religious

movements have appeared in North America, many of which would
appear to fit Durkheim's description of the "cult of man."
These movements have been heralded as a phenomenon distinct
from the sects which American Protestantism has tradition-
ally spawned. Their membership is largely middle class and
so defied accepted economic-deprivation recruitment theories.
Their rituals and beliefs are also distinct; many influenced
by imported "eastern" religions. As a result, a variety of
sociological and psychological theories have sprung up to
explain the appearance of these groups. Before examining the
groups themselves in the light of Durkheim's theory, these
alternate theories will be explored.

CHAPTER II

ALTERNATIVE THEORIES: A QUEST FOR AN AMERICAN CULTURE

The existing literature on new religious movements
falls into two categories. On the one hand are those studies
concerned only with providing an ethnographic description of
particular groups and on the other are those studies (which
may or may not be informed by empirical observation) which
present theoretical explanations for the emergence of these
groups in modern society. In order to appreciate the unique-
ness of Durkheim's theory (and, generally, to illustrate the
need for a sociological theory in this area), this chapter
will be concerned only with reviewing the studies that fall
into this second category. Almost all of these studies
derive from one of three different theoretical traditions.

The "Counter-Culture" Hypothesis

Observers of new religious movements of the seventies
agree on two facts: one is that these groups recruit not
from the margins of society but from the young middle class
(Wuthnow, 1976a) and the other is that the doctrines, at
first glance, seemed a radical break with the utilitarian
individualism which has been so central in forming and main-
taining the American way of life.

These two observances led to the development of the
counter-culture theory. According to this theory, which is,
in fact, an extension of the theories developed in the six-
ties to account for the hippie-commune movements of that
era , American society is a spiritual wasteland. Based on
such works as Rozak's <u>Making of a Counterculture</u> (1969) and
Slater's <u>Pursuit of Loneliness</u> (1970), this theory suggests
that the youth of today (in particular the middle class
youth) are rejecting: (1) traditional Western acquisitive
and economic values; (2) role-orientated interpersonal
(bureaucratic) relationships; (3) isolationist, competitive
living; (4) rational, non-mystical thought; (5) structure or
standardization and mechanization (Prince, 1975:263). The
reason for this rejection has been variously explained by a
need to reproduce the early "expressive" milieu of the family
(Berger, 1970) a need to compensate for the unfeeling
bureaucracy (Adler, 1975) and a general socio-emotional
deprivation (Anthony and Robbins, 1975:479).

It is further argued that the "hippie" movement which
tried to produce a sense of togetherness through drugs and
street living, turned sour because relationships based on
the acquisition and consumption of drugs became as instru-
mental as any in the larger society (Anthony and Robbins, 1975).

So adherents turned to new religious movements,
hoping for another crack at developing and experiencing a
more expressive communal milieu.

Consistent with this theory is the fact that the membership of many, if not most of these groups, has been shown to be composed, at least in part, of dropouts from the drug "scene" (Anthony and Robbins, 1975; Tobey, 1976; Johnson, 1976; Wuthnow, 1976a). Secondly, there is a doctrinal emphasis in many of these groups on the "oneness" of all creation, on communal living and on the non-rational.

Nevertheless, the assumptions of this theory have not been borneout by subsequent data collected on a variety of these new religious movements, in that few of these groups appear to offer adherents either non-instrumental milieu or a viable alternative to the dominant American lifestyle. For instance, the four most popular groups (in terms of participation) (Wuthnow, 1976a) are TM, Yoga, est and Tongues (Charismatic Renewal). The first three are all offered on a consumer basis. The new member pays for a course and then practices the learned skills alone. No group life of any duration is offered. Nor can the beliefs of these groups be seen as counter-cultural. TM and est self-consciously advertise themselves as techniques to aid adherents in achieving success and personal happiness as traditionally defined. Charismatic groups, while they do offer a sense of community (Westley, 1977; McGuire, 1975) are in no way counter-cultural. Members are nearly always devout Protestants or Catholics to begin with and continue to adhere to traditional belief systems in the context of the new group

(Harrison, 1974).

Finally, even those less popular groups which seem to be both communal and counter-cultural in nature (Hare Krishna being possibly the best example) do not provide warm or affective relationships (Johnson, 1976:45).

Hence, the "counter-cultural" theory has not been borne out by the data. In an effort in part to side-step this discrepancy between theory and fact, a second theory has evolved which may be called the "cultural crisis" hypothesis.

The "Cultural Crisis" Hypothesis

This theory, which is a modification of its predecessor, postulates that the new religious movements of the seventies arose because of a "cultural crisis" in North American society, brought on by the breakdown of the accepted meaning systems and orientations.

All human beings, this theory suggests, have a need for accepted definitions and explanations of human existence and such phenomena as evil, death and suffering. These explanations were formerly considered real and absolute. In this century, however, people have increasingly seen that such codes were socially constructed and therefore purely relative (Eister, 1975:619).

This realization, it is argued, has led on the one hand to a sense of dislocation (a sort of cultural identity crisis experienced acutely on the individual level) and on the other hand, to a sense of freedom in the search for new

orientations ("doing your own thing").

The new religious movements, it is suggested, are a response expressive of both sentiments. They represent an abandonment of science and social science, which have proved inadequate explanations of the purpose of life, and a 'hunger for a new psychology' (Needleman, 1970). These movements purpose to relocate and reorientate adherents from the outer to the inner world. For this reason the 'self' has taken on a nearly sacred quality as the "ens realissimum of the human being" (Berger, 1973:416). Impulse is glorified as the voice of this inner Self (Turner, 1976). The rituals of the movement "allow for improvisation of new roles and the institutionalization of the self, of modulating affect and of establishing points of personal anchorage and orientation" (Adler, 1975:284).

But the realization of the relativity of social facts as mentioned, has opened new horizons as well as creating disorientation. The groups offer people a chance to escape the bonds of rationality or "material reality" imposed for so long by science. They emphasize, to this end, the irrational and the unseen, while using scientific language. They thus offer it is argued, a more inclusive and satisfying meaning system (Whitehead, 1975; Tiryakian, 1974; Glock, 1976).

In sum, then, the "cultural crisis" theory suggests that the new religious movements of the seventies arise in

response to a breakdown of meaning systems and of the orientational institution responsible for their formulation and maintenance. The groups offer adherents (who may be seen as suffering from meaning deprivation) new meaning systems which both supply a new sense of location and a wider, more inclusive vision of human experience unrestricted by science or rationality.

This theory offers a viable explanation for the very private nature of rituals in these groups (after all, focus on self is a private business) but it has, nonetheless, several important weaknesses.

In the first place, the idea that people join these groups as a response to meaning deprivation, and indeed that such deprivation exists, is questionable. Indeed, the one study to make use of any substantial amount of empirical data, suggests that people do not experiment with new religious movements in order to find meaning, rather they experiment because they are already committed to a meaning system which advocates such experimentation (Wuthnow, 1976b).

Secondly, if in fact members were in search of explanations about human existence, we would expect them to value the ideas which the groups present to their adherents, rather than the practices and/or claimed results of those practices. In fact, the opposite appears to be the case. Adherents of the most popular groups (again, TM, Yoga and such groups as est) polled in a recent survey at Concordia

University in Montreal, stated that they joined the group because of its claimed results and practices more than twice as often as they stated that they joined because of the groups' ideas (Bird, 1978). Trainees attending sessions of est, one of the fastest growing cults in America, receive a uniform answer to all demands for explanations: "Because it works" (Bry, 1976).

Lastly, while traditional rituals deal mainly with the kind of fundamental questions (birth, death, puberty, suffering) with which the "cultural crisis" theory is concerned, there is a conspicuous absence of this focus in rituals in these new religious movements (Bird, 1978). In many cases there is no effort to connect rituals that do exist, such as meditation or physical postures, with any overarching cosmology.

The Anti-Cultural Hypothesis

The third theory to emerge, partially in response to or in criticism of the above two theories is the "anti-cultural" hypothesis. This theory suggests that not only do these movements fail to challenge the prevailing ethos of American society, they are part and parcel of the general moral decline and disintegration which marks that society.

These theorists suggest that not only is the work world instrumental but even today's family offers no expressive or affective milieu, but rather "an unparallelled flight from intimacy" (Lasch, 1975). Relationships on all levels

are seen as becoming increasingly superficial; people are preoccupied only with themselves. Even this preoccupation, expressed as it is in sociopsychological jargon (which the cultural-crisis theory deemed expressive of a new awareness) is superficial "psychobabble" which "deludes many people into thinking they need not examine themselves with anything but its dull instrument ... it anaesthetizes curiosity, numbs the desire to know" (Rosen, 1976:49).

Placed in this general picture of the increasing disintegration of the cultural and moral fabric of North America, new religious movements emerge as yet another manifestation of "the new narcissism" centered "solely on the self and with individual survival as its sole good ... a retreat from the worlds of morality and history, an unembarrassed denial of human reciprocity and communication" (Marin, 1975:46). Their tendencies towards egotism and privatism are seen as not counter-cultural but "anti-cultural" spelling the doom of religion and society:

> They indicate the extent to which religion has become inconsequential for modern society. They have no real consequences for other social institutions, for political power structures, for technological constraints or controls. They add nothing to any prospective reintegration of society and contribute nothing toward the culture by which a society might live. (Wilson, 1976:96)

In sum, the anti-cultural theory suggests that these groups reflect the pathological tendency towards narcissism of contemporary society. They offer adherents a chance to take refuge in rituals which formalize this self-preoccupation.

While this theory provides an antidote to the sometimes naive optimism of the counter-culture and cultural crisis theories, it is, nevertheless, flawed in two respects. Firstly, it rests on a questionable psychological assumption that the privatistic orientation of belief and ritual of the new groups reflects an individual pathological condition of self-preoccupation and inability to relate to others. Secondly, this assumption is used as a basis to draw the equally questionable sociological conclusion that these groups represent a disintegrative trend in this society, and provide nothing in the way of public shared belief.

In order to be considered a religion, a group must have some conception of transcendence, even if only a conception of an inner spiritual Being who transcends the limitations of external reality. An inner focus may be seen as narcissistic if the preoccupation is with the contemplators' own material body and personality, but if contemplation on an inner transcendent may be called narcissism, then many of the great Eastern traditions may be so termed as well as some varieties of ascetic Protestantism. An example of the latter are the Amish and Mennonites, whose notion of salvation is internal and personal and could in many ways be seen as selfish. It is considered idolatrous to invest too much emotion in things and people of the world, all energy should be directed to love of God and the soul's salvation. Of course, implicit in this notion of salvation

is the conception of dispassionate love of fellows and careful observance of the rules of social interaction and obligation. The means is therefore a highly cohesive community, but the ends may well be seen as individualistic and self-orientated: the salvation of the soul within.

If this is true it suggests that an inner preoccupation does not preclude the possibility of a reaffirmation of social bonds. The matter hinges on whether the inner contemplation is in fact on something transcendent or merely on the self and whether the notion of salvation extends to include interpersonal relations. The fact that new religious groups are groups joining people together in a common pursuit argues that their concerns surpass those of mere narcissism. (If it were narcissism why join together with anyone, particularly with others who like you are turned inward and do not provide a flattering audience?). Even the most extreme new religious movements which make no mention of God and dwells on the purely human does not dwell on the purely individual. Some concept of transcendent humanity is included.

While these groups may not provide the utopian brother love envisioned by the counter-culture theorists and/or even the cohesive communities of the ascetic Protestant groups, the evidence is that those groups most accused of narcissism (such as est, TM) do not make world rejecting mystics out of their membership. Quite the contrary, they seem to tie them

more firmly to the world (Tipton, 1977; Stone, 1976; Wallis, 1977). The bonds which are reaffirmed may be the cold "instrumental" bonds of bureaucracy, but they remain bonds. Indeed some of these groups seem to lend these bonds new strength by colouring them with expressive meaning. For instance, a careful study of one group, the Meyer Baba group, suggests that it acts to resuscitate members so that they can continue to perform effectively. To this end, the group "legitimates expressive role orientations for adults ... the cult's ethic incorporates the instrumental values which allow it to perpetuate itself within the larger society while maintaining the expressive emphasis which gave it birth" (Anthony and Robbins, 1975:511).

In sum, then, while the "anti-cultural" theories recognize the unique privatistic and introspective nature of the group's focus, by using psychological variables as a basis for making sociological generalizations, they fail to recognize either the bonds that continue to exist between people or the new bonds being formed. Secondly, they fail to recognize that when the ideal of human potential is shared by a group of people, it cannot be treated as mere individual narcissism but must be seen as reflecting some aspects of social relations, collective views of mass and society.

Summary and Conclusions

In sum, the theories concerning new religious movements have evolved from an optimistic to a pessimistic

perspective. The overt characteristics which seem to make these groups unique (such as belief systems which seem to emphasize the divine self within, a seeming emphasis on the "oneness" of all, and on communal, non-institutionalized relations) and which were initially heralded as counter-cultural, were gradually interpreted as compensatory. Finally, the realization of the essentially privatistic experiential nature of these rituals and groups produced the anti-cultural theory based on a psychological interpretation of members as narcissistic, frightened, maladaptive and irrational.

We have suggested specific weaknesses of the foregoing theories. We will conclude by stating a general weakness of all three. These theories suggest that religion is performing a compensatory role -- providing members either with an alternative to the dominant ethos, a chance to establish a meaning system where none existed before, or a chance to escape and ignore society's problems through a preoccupation with the inner self.

As compensatory theories, they all include a hypothesis about the subjective experience which creates these needs. In all three cases, this is done purely theoretically; there is little evidence provided that such needs and moods exist in society at large. The logic of these constructions seems to be as follows: these groups self-consciously advertize themselves as providing 'x' (say

community). Therefore, it is hypothesized, members must need
'x'. Therefore, society at large must be deficient in 'x'.
When closer study reveals that groups, while advertising
themselves as providing 'x', in fact provide 'y' (privat-
ization) theorists shift either to persist that since society
is deficient in 'x' then the groups are dysfunctional, caus-
ing further disintegration, or else shift their focus from
the society to the individual and postulate that the
individual is hiding from this deficiency in the rituals of
the groups. What remains the focus of interest and unestab-
lished is this original deficiency 'x'.

In sum, these theories seem to be built more in
response to each other and from the need to make a larger
statement about American culture than from the empirical
data. In the process they have failed to give a coherent
explanation of the idiosyncracies of these groups which first
attracted interest, such as their middle class membership.
The theories also fail to reveal the complexity of beliefs
and rituals which these new groups represent.

Durkheim's theory provides a much more refined
instrument for examining these groups. Instead of focusing
on the larger society, it focuses on the group beliefs and
rituals. It allows for the possibility that these cults are
not compensatory at all but rather expressive of members'
experiences. In addition, Durkheim suggests that such cults
need not be expressive of all of society, but only those

parts which members experience.

Hence, Durkheim's theory allows for an explanation of recruitment patterns and of the particular beliefs and rituals of these cults. Because Durkheim has articulated rather precise criteria for his "cult of man," it also allows us to make initial distinctions between groups. It must be noted, finally, that a major failing of all three of the above theories is that they fail to differentiate between the variety of new religious movements which have sprung up in the seventies. One of the first steps in understanding them is to articulate their differences.

The remainder of this thesis will therefore be concerned with an analysis of data on new religious movements using Durkheim's theory as an analytic tool to examine and interpret various aspects of these groups and the way they articulate aspects of the social structure.

In particular, of course, we will focus on those new religious movements which, at least in their external form, fit Durkheim's description of the "cult of man."

CHAPTER III

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data used in this thesis was gathered over a
period of five years by fifteen different researchers in the
Department of Religion at Concordia University in Montreal.
The project was funded by a grant from the Quebec government
(FCAC), and co-directed by Professor Frederick Bird from the
Department of Religion and Professor Bill Reimer from the
Department of Sociology.

The researchers themselves were graduate students,
largely involved in advanced studies in comparative religion.
In any given year (the project lasted from the Fall of 1973
until the Spring of 1978) the research team vascillated in
size, at its maximum involving seven students (1975-76) at
the minimum three (1977-78). The author participated for
three years (1975-78) both as researcher and as
co-administrator.

The research procedure was as follows: a researcher
would select a new religious movement in the Montreal area
in which he/she was interested and/or had contacts. The
researcher would enter the group, attend weekly meetings and
familiarize him/herself sufficiently with the organizational
format and membership to fill out a standardized Survey

- 28 -

Index Form developed by the team (see Appendix A). He/she would then request permission to interview core members of the group. If this permission was granted by the leadership of the group, he would then obtain a list of the core membership. A random sample of the core membership would then be selected from this list. These individuals would in turn be contacted for interviews, and if they agreed to be interviewed, a standard (formal) interview schedule (see Appendix A) would be administered. This interview was fairly long, modelled on a similar interview developed by Glock and Wuthnow (Wuthnow, 1976b) in conjunction with a similar project at University of California, Berkeley. In addition, Lofland's conversion model was built into the schedule, with questions designed to measure each of the seven categories developed in that model (Lofland, 1966). The interview schedule measured some eighty variables and took from two to four hours to administer. In addition, the individual researcher might add additional questions pertinent to his/ her own project.

In sum, ninety-two interviews were collected from sixteen groups. In some cases the number of interviews was small due to the small size of the group.

While conducting these interviews, researchers continued to attend group meetings and take field notes. The overall exposure to an individual group where interviews were conducted varied between four months to two years.

When permission to interview was denied, researchers in some cases terminated participation in the group and in some cases continued field work.

Finally, a large amount of literature, published by the groups themselves, was gathered, both from the groups under study and from other groups who might or might not have a chapter in the Montreal area.

The interview data has been coded and is available on computer tape at Concordia University. Interviews, field-notes and literature on the individual groups is available on file at the Department of Religion, Concordia University.

- Insert Table 1 about here -

In Table 1, the data concerning individual groups has been summarized. There are conspicuous gaps in this data. In some cases this is due to the refusal of groups to allow interviewing (as in the case of the Zendo group). In others, it is due to the absence of the group in the Montreal area (this is true of Arica and est, where interviews were with contacts from other cities). In some cases group policy refused admission of researchers (Scientology). However, in sixteen groups the data is complete and some data exists on fourteen other groups. In all cases where the data is available, it was systematically gathered, the protocol of interview schedule and fieldwork allowing for cross-group comparisons.

Table 1

<u>Distribution of Data in Concordia Project</u>

	Fieldnotes	Interviews	Literature
† Shakti	* (12 mos.)	* (6)	*
TM	*	*	*
Nicheren Shoshu	*	*	*
Sri Chinmoy	*	*	*
Divine Light	*	*	*
Dharma Datu	*	*	*
Sufis	*	*	*
Tai Chi	*	*	*
Integral Yoga	*	*	*
Catholic Charismatics Renewal (4 grps.)	* (2 yrs.)	* (14)	*
Institut de Yoga Sivananda	*	*	*
† Silva Mind Control	* (4 mos.)	* (12)	*
† Psychosynthesis	* (4 mos.)	* (4)	*
Subud	*		*
Spiritualists (2 grps.)	*		*
Self-Realization Fellowship	*		*
Zendo	*		*
Hare Krishna		*	*
† Arica		* (2)	*
† est		* (1)	*
† Scientology			*
Unification Church			*
Eckankar			*
Aikido			*
Yoga Sivananda			*
Greatheart Buddhist Monastery			*

† Cult of man groups. Numbers indicate length of partici-
pation and number of completed interviews.

For purposes of this dissertation, only a fraction of this data has been utilized: that pertaining to groups which may be defined as "cult of man" groups. There are six such groups in this sample, Shakti, Silva Mind Control, Psychosynthesis, Arica, est and Scientology.

Earlier it was noted that one of the problems concerning the theoretical approaches to new religious movements have been the failure to differentiate between different kinds of movements. Initially, theorists such as Ellwood (1973) and Needleman (1970) omitted completely the new Christian groups such as the Catholic Charismatics, Jesus Freaks, and Children of God (which in fact accounted for a large proportion of the "religious revival" (Wuthnow, 1976a; Bird, 1978). In the case of Needleman, this bias seems due to what he felt were the transformative possibilities of the emphasis on "unity of being" of many of the "eastern" groups. Closer inspection of this sample, however, indicated that some bore the stamp of western occult tradition (long borrowers of eastern ideas) and western transpersonal psychology, while others seemed much more recent imports. Recently, a number of typologies have been developed (most notably Anthony and Robbins, 1978; Bird, 1978; Wuthnow, 1976a; Glock and Bellah, 1976; Wilson, 1976). These typologies conflict considerably. The neo-Christian groups tend to emerge regularly as a distinct group but there is some disagreement about classifying the remaining groups which all

seem to be more or less influenced by eastern beliefs and practices, more or less by western occult and transpersonal psychology. They group differently according to whether the practices, beliefs or organization is selected as a point of reference.

In narrowing our own focus and selecting the above six groups, we have chosen to follow Durkheim's own directive and select on the basis of the most "exterior and apparent form" (Durkheim, 1899:16). For Durkheim, the most apparent feature of all religions and the one he selects for closest examination in his discussion of the "cult of man" is the definition of the sacred. It is the conception of the sacred which reflects the "collectively conceived" as opposed to the profane which reflects "that which is individually conceived and the result of quite naked individual impressions" (Lukes, 1975:242). From this conception of the sacred will flow the relationships between organization ritual and belief which were Durkheim's concern as well as ours.

In locating six groups as potential representatives of the "cult of man" we have used the simple criterion that they should hold the human individual as sacred. While this focus fails to produce an exhaustive typology of new religious movements, it does highlight two types of groups: those which clearly locate the sacred as lying within the human individual and those which clearly locate the sacred as lying

outside the human individual. These groups must, however, be
seen as points at two ends of a continuum; they are joined by
a variety of movements whose view of the sacred is more
ambiguous. Even among our six groups, there is some variety,
usually in the degree at which the limits of human potential
are set. Groups like Shakti and Scientology see all things
as possible to the developed human being to the point of
defying the laws of time and space. A group like est does
not make such grandiose claims, while not precluding them
either in their statements that the individual is the "cause"
of everything that happens to him (no matter what positiv-
istic explanations are available). The margins of the "type"
are also not distinct. However, all these groups claim
access to superhuman powers for all members, <u>within all</u>
<u>members</u> (as opposed to occult groups which manipulate powers
outside themselves). The leaders of these groups are not
seen as being any more divine than their followers (unlike
many groups like Divine Light Mission and the Moonies who
see their leaders as incarnate dieties). The leaders may
have developed more of their potential, but the potential is
shared by all human beings.

This common definition of the sacred has caused these
groups to be labelled human potential groups by some theor-
ists. They share many beliefs and organizational features
which will be dealt with at length in the body of this dis-
sertation. However, on the basis of this one characteristic,

their location of the sacred within the human individual, we shall tentatively label them "cult of man" groups. The object of this dissertation will be to explore the details of belief, organization and ritual within these groups to try to establish if the other elements which Durkheim predicted would be linked to such a belief are in fact present, as compared to those groups without such a belief.

Obviously, this exploration can in no sense be defended as a test of Durkheim's predictions. Our "cult of man" sample is in no respect random and may or may not be representational. This is equally true of the group selected for comparative purposes, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement. It was selected not because it is necessarily representational but because it clearly locates the sacred outside the individual and because the Concordia project has the most complete data on this movement of all new religious groups with such a belief. The author herself has participated in one chapter of this movement for a period of four months and conducted four interviews. Ten other interviews are available (as well as a total of two years of field-notes) from two other chapters in the Montreal area.

The author has also participated in a Silva Mind Control group (coursework and interview over four months), a Psychosynthesis group (coursework and interviews over five months) and conducted the interviews with Arica members and the est member. Material on Scientology, Shakti are drawn

from the interviews and fieldnotes of other researchers.[1]

Finally, in Chapters V and VI, we use data on turn-of-the-century cults as historical counterbalance to these contemporary groups. This data is entirely drawn from secondary sources which will be identified in the text.

---

[1] The author is particularly indebted to Susan Palmer (Shakti), Paul Schwartz and Elizabeth Sandul (CCR). However, over the years, there has been much discussion and exchange of ideas among all team members. The author is therefore also indebted for these discussions to Scott Davidson, Bill Wheeler, Hugh Shankland, Joan Perry, Karina Rosenberg, Charlie Small, Daryl Leavitt, Katherine McMorrow, Rich Frankl, Judith Strutt and Professors Bird and Reimer.

SECTION II

THE RELATIONSHIP OF BELIEFS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN "CULT OF MAN" GROUPS

Earlier we have noted that Durkheim's view of the religion of the future was that it would reflect the diversity and plurality of modern industrial society. He abandoned the notion of religion as the overarching, conceptual system, insisting, nevertheless, that man would continue to need to express himself in symbolic terms, and to establish his link to society through religion.

This notion of Durkheim's casts a very different light on the study of religion in North America, than that espoused by many contemporary theorists. Following the focus on the "secularization" trend, both Wilson (1976) and Fenn (1972) attack the notion that the new religious movements can have any theoretical importance. Both suggest that never again can religion provide any kind of societal integration. Wilson suggests the new movements offer nothing of general value to North American society; Fenn indicates that with increasing rise in problems of unemployment, the problem will be one of reducing motivation, of disengaging people rather than trying to maximize social solidarity. There will be less and less place for religion.

Hence, Durkheim's emphasis on the integrative aspects of religion have caused many to reject his theories as useful in the study of modern religions. This can be seen as a kind of academic throwing-of-the-baby-out-with-the-bathwater. When Fenn or Wilson dismiss the new religious movements as of little significance, they are in fact dismissing religion as of little significance, which for Durkheim would be the equivalent of dismissing the relation of social organization and collective ideas. Because both the systems of religious beliefs and of social organization are fragmented and pluralistic does not indicate that essential relationship between the two has disappeared, nor that this relationship should no longer be of essential concern to sociologists. The danger of the secularization theory and those who dismiss new religions as being of little significance because they are fragmentary manifestations is that they mistake change for disappearance, and therefore abandon the subject when what is called for is the development of different instruments to measure and define. It seems ironic that at a time of crucial shift in ethics and morality, theorists should abandon the study of that phenomenon which for Durkheim was the basis whereby other collective representations such as law and morality might be interpreted (Durkheim, 1899).

The fact that Durkheim did suggest that modern religion might be diverse and fragmented offers the student

of modern religion the opportunity to look at the new
religious movements comparatively while still employing
Durkheim's notions of the relationships between belief and
social structure. Groups may be compared with each other in
their basic dimensions of belief, organization and ritual
and they may further singly be compared to the larger North
American culture of which they are a part. This latter com-
parison is of particular interest. While Durkheim's basic
tenet was that collective representations or beliefs were a
reflection of the social organization from which they emerged
he also granted these beliefs a kind of autonomy. He felt
that religious beliefs often grew and proliferated in
relation to each other and not in a one-to-one correspond-
ence to features of the social organization:

> ... they (ideas) have the power to attract and repel
> each other and to form amongst themselves various
> syntheses, which are determined by their natural
> affinities and not by the state of the environment
> in the midst of which they evolve. (Durkheim, 1953:31)

In addition, Durkheim also held that beliefs (collect-
ive) once formed could in turn influence the social organiza-
tion of society. His concern was as much with the inter-
action between social structure and social consciousness as
with the causal relationship (Lukes, 1975:226-236).

The study of new religious movements gives us a unique
arena in which to study this interaction. Each group has its
own beliefs which may be determined by either the social
structure of the wider North American culture, or by the

social structure of the individual group. On the other hand, these beliefs once formulated may in turn influence the social structure of both the individual group and the larger social organization. What we have then is a system of feedback between beliefs and social structure on two levels: macrocosm and microcosm.

This interaction is particularly crucial at times of social change. If changes in the social structure of North American society produce changes in the dominant religious symbol system, we must presume this takes place over time. It is conceivable, therefore, that at a point in time in the change process, the beliefs will still be representing an outmoded social structure, one which has disappeared. However, if at the same time a small group has developed within the new larger social structure, similar in structure to that larger organization, it may produce beliefs which represent the larger social structure better than the currently held "dominant" belief systems. If this were the case, it might be hypothesized that these new beliefs held by the small group will be of considerably more importance in the larger social structure than the size of the group in which they originated might lead us to believe.

Hence, it is difficult to evaluate the importance of any religious movement solely on the basis of its membership size, particularly in modern times when the mass media does such a good job of disseminating information about social

movements and their ideologies. What we must first do is to look closer at the relationship between group beliefs and social organization.

We are concerned first to locate our "cult of man" sample historically and sociologically. In Chapter IV, the historical antecedents of the "cult of man" groups will be outlined. In Chapter V, the social structure of the groups themselves will be examined in comparison to (a) the Catholic Charismatics, a new religious group which has a radically different view of the sacred than the "cult of man" groups, and (b) the turn-of-the-century occult and healing cults to which these "cult of man" groups are historically related. In Chapter VI, a similar comparison will be carried out, this time involving the specific beliefs which flow from the structural elements discussed in Chapter V. Finally, Chapter VII will return to an examination of the "cult of man" groups themselves, focusing on the way the specific beliefs discussed in Chapter VI relate to the central conception of the sacred and the way in which these beliefs mirror the members' experience in the larger North American social structure.

CHAPTER IV

THE "CULT OF MAN": HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS AND
CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

The "human potential movement" is a term which covers
a wide range of groups. Stone (1976) has included under
that heading encounter groups, gestalt awareness training,
transactional analysis, sensory awareness, primal therapy,
bioenergetics, massage, Psychosynthesis, humanistic psy-
chology, est, Arica, psychic healing, biofeedback and Silva
Mind Control. Some of these are clearly in the realm of
straightforward therapy groups which cannot by any stretch
of the imagination be termed religious; others appear to be
techniques as opposed to movements. There are among them,
however, a number of groups which have been labelled "trans-
personal trainings" which Stone argues offers a "more
elaborated world view or theology than encounter or bodily
disciplines" (Stone, 1976:97). These groups correspond to
our "cult of man" sample: Arica, est, Psychosynthesis, and
Silva Mind Control. Stone notes that they are among the
fastest growing of all contemporary movements, having doubled
in size each year since 1970. In 1974, Arica claimed 20,000
graduates, est claimed 30,000, Psychosynthesis claimed 1,000
(Ibid.:98).

The common ground for all human potential movements,
interpersonal or transpersonal, is, according to Stone,
"gestalt consciousness and its perception that reality is not
as 'hard' as it seems to be. What was once a fixation or a
historical fact becomes very malleable. Following on this is
the realization that reality is personally constructed and
reconstructed all the time" (Ibid., 1976:106). However,
while gestalt therapy is aware of the human mind as the
active agent in the construction of reality, and suggests as
a heuristic device that human possibilities are limitless,
the transpersonal groups in fact elaborate this insight into a
philosophical system, which makes them of all the new
religious movements of the seventies, the closest to
Durkheim's "cult of man." All of these groups share a
central belief: that the human being has two parts, an 'ego'
or 'personality' that acts in the world and a Higher Self,
Essence or Being that transcends the world. This higher self
is seen as a piece of divinity ... a literally limitless
potential of man, and the techniques of these groups center
around the development of this potential.

In addition to the four groups which Stone classed as
"transpersonal," we have also included two groups not men-
tioned by Stone. The first of these is Scientology, which
Stone no doubt omitted because it is one of the "groups that
exert strong pressure for organizational loyalty or orthodoxy
of belief or ritual" which Stone felt barred a group from the

rather open format of all other human potential movements. In many respects, this feature of Scientology also makes it unlike the "cult of man," which Durkheim conceived as a loose association. However, its concept of the sacred nature of the human being, embodied in the notion of the 'Operating Thetan', is similar to that of the "cult of man" and for that reason, we will include some references to this group. The second group, not mentioned by Stone but included here, is Shakti, a group of very small numbers but which has a chapter in Montreal. Below is a summary of each of these six groups:

Scientology: Founded in 1952 by L. Ron Hubbard, this group is a direct outgrowth of Dianetics, Hubbard's first group. Scientology offers a graded hierarchy of courses, of a quasi-therapeutic and highly 'technical' nature designed to release fully the individual's superhumanly powerful inner potential and eliminate most human weaknesses such as illness, incompetence and insecurity. The organization is highly centralized and bureaucratized. The courses are expensive and marketed with sophisticated sales techniques. Size is difficult to estimate but the movement is international and capable of maintaining numerous centres, a permanent staff and a fleet of vessels, on which Ron Hubbard lives called "The Sea Org."

Psychosynthesis: Founded in the second decade of this century by an Italian psychiatrist, Roberto Assagioli. Psychosynthesis spread to North America in the 1960's, where it attracted many people who had a background in the new therapies and growth disciplines such as Gestalt, Transactional Analysis and the Encounter Group movement. It's headquarters are presently located in San Francisco, but there are branches in Montreal, Europe and California. The emphasis of the movement is on releasing constructive forces and developing positive resources, and includes a belief in a transpersonal or higher self, which is distinct from and transcends the personal self, and connects the individual to the universal or collective unconscious. Students enter training either in personal

development or in order to become therapists themselves.
Workshops and courses vary in length and expense but
average around ten dollars per session for group work
and thirty-five for individual.

Arica: An eclectic movement borrowing techniques from
Zen, Sufism, Buddhism psychoanalysis, encounter groups,
gestalt, science fiction and Gurdgieff traditions, this
movement was founded by a South American named Oscar
Ichazo. Ichazo was a religious seeker who experimented
in a variety of traditions in a variety of countries
before starting his own in the town of Arica, Chile.
His first pupils were a group of fifty Americans (among
them John Lilly) who came to study with him for forty
days for the price of $1500 each. In 1971, the Arica
Institute opened in New York. The Montreal branch
opened in 1977 with eight teachers. It offers a series
of programs lasting from one hour to 40 days and cost-
ing from five to eight hundred dollars. The object of
the programs is "ego-reduction" based on technique/
experience, not on belief/faith. These techniques
involve personality assessment through a complex series
of enneagrams, movement exercises, meditation and role
playing, games.

est: Standing for Erhard Seminar Training, est is a per-
sonalized training in "experiencing your problem and
making it disappear." Founded in 1971 by Werner Erhard,
a student of Scientology, SMC and Mind Dynamics and a
business man, the course takes two weekends and costs
$250. It has become known for its ordeal nature: par-
ticipants pay to be harangued and insulted by trainers,
forced to sit for hours on hard chairs with few bathroom
or food breaks, vomit, faint and claim that their lives
are changed. The techniques include lectures, testimon-
ials and imagination-game playing exercises similar to
Silva Mind Control.

Shakti: Termed by members, "the spiritual science of
DNA." Shakti was a religious movement which existed in
Montreal from April to December, 1973. It was one of a
series of religious movements planned, carried out and
closed down by a central religious organization in
Crestline, California. Their founder and director is
E. J. Gold, the son of H. L. Gold, a well-known science
fiction writer in the 30's and 40's. The religious
movements have been established since 1968 under
different names, in different cities of North America,
and offer a wide, constantly shifting range of ideas,
aims and techniques. They all share the common features
of eclecticism, humour, a great variety of techniques,

built-in obsolescence, and a strong scientific and the-
atrical flavour. Underlying these movements is a core
philosophy of reincarnation, spiritual evolution and
a shamanic search for power, knowledge and conscious
control over the soul's destiny.

<u>Silva Mind Control</u>: Silva Mind Control was founded in
the late sixties by Jose Silva, a Mexican-American who
became interested in psychic phenomena. The movement
claims more than 50,000 graduates. Using scientific
assumptions about brain-wave frequencies -- beta,
alpha, theta, delta -- and associated "states of con-
sciousness," SMC offers a basic week long course for
approximately $150 which progresses from memory train-
ing, sleep, weight and habit control techniques, through
projection of consciousness, telepathy, clairvoyance,
psychic healings. The goal of the course is to make
"acting psychics" out of its students. The movement
stresses that the "greater powers" which the students
develop must be used for the "betterment of mankind."
Its adherents believe that the powers and abilities of
the human mind are limitless.

The techniques, rituals, beliefs and social organiza-
tions of these groups have their origins in three different
traditions in western culture. Stone has located them in the
encounter group-gestalt therapy tradition and indeed all of
these groups draw some techniques, particularly the role-
playing and interactional rituals from this tradition. How-
ever, there are also elements, more or less stressed depend-
ing on the group of two other traditions: the western
occult/mystical tradition and the western positive thinking/
healing tradition.

The western occult/mystical tradition is the oldest of
these in historical terms. Ellwood (1973) has noted that
since the time of Plato, this magical, eclectic and intel-
lectual tradition has been the portal for eastern influences
in western thought. In all cases leaders of such movements,

from the early Orphic cults onwards, were seen as shaman-
istic figures, wanderers, usually familiar with Asia, who
provided for their followers a secret knowledge revealed
through techniques or processes and used for personal power.
Ellwood traces this line of western thought through the
gnostic movements of the Augustinian period, the witches,
kabbalists and alchemists of the Middle Ages, the
Rosicrucians of the Renaissance, the Freemasons and the
Swedenborgians of the 18th century and the Harmonial move-
ments of the early 20th century, such as the Theosophy and
I Am movements. Among other things that these movements
have contributed to contemporary religious groups are:

1. The Gnostic, Kaballistic and Pythagorean idea of
    pre- and post-existence in a spiritual state.

2. The Spiritualist idea of talk with persons on
    the other side.

3. A monistic idea of God.

4. A Gnostic idea of events of great importance
    transpiring in the invisible spiritual world
    known only to initiates.

5. Most significantly, the Second Coming of Christ
    which Swedenborg said happened spiritually in
    1757. His emphasis on this invisible consum-
    ation must be a precursor of modern "New Age"
    and "Aquarian Age" ideas.

6. The idea of the plurality of worlds, each with
    its own spirits and angels.

7. The Renaissance idea that God's Consciousness
    is continuous with man. (Ellwood, 1973:66)

The "cult of man" groups have adopted some of these

ideas, notably Nos. 1, 6 and 7, and developed them in their own particular style (which will be discussed in greater detail later).

A peculiar American twist was given to this mystical/ occult approach by the transcendentalists of the 19th century led by Emerson. This profoundly romantic, albeit intellectual, movement focused on the idea of God's consciousness as continuous with Man's. As Emerson said:

> It is the office of a true teacher to show us what God is, not was; all men go in flocks to this saint or that poet avoiding the God who seeth in secret. They think society wiser than their soul, and know not that one soul, and their soul, is wiser than the whole world." (Gaustad, 1974:142).

The wisdom of the soul became the wisdom of the mind for the descendents of this movement, the positive-thought cults of the early 20th century. Among these were New Thought, Unity and Christian Science, whose leaders (Mary Baker Eddy, Quimby) espoused the value of positive thought:

> The mind is capable of transcending all limitations the world seems to have placed around it because the mind is ultimately sovereign, or is all that is. Mind can enjoy communication with those who have seemed to die: mind can expand through intuitions to embrace the cosmos; mind can create by its own direct force all desirable conditions of life. (Ellwood, 1973:81)

These groups also put great emphasis on the healing powers of the mind and on the fact that danger, evil and illness were all due to faulty thinking, negative idea habits.

The "cult of man" groups draw a number of themes from this particular tradition. Among the most important is the intimate connection between the body and the mind; bodily conditions are often seen as direct reflection of mental states. The optimism inherent in the notion of positive thought, and its ability to shape the world, is particularly visible in a group like Silva Mind Control, although it is shared by most groups.

Finally, as mentioned, the "cult of man" groups have roots in the encounter group movement. Bach (1973) has traced the beginnings of the human potential movement to the work of Kurt Lewin in the late forties. In the process of conducting a series of group workshops for teachers in Connecticut, he developed what were to become the touch-stones of the early movement, the concepts of feedback, group confrontation, encounter and process analysis (Bach, 1973:8).

The movement has gone through three stages since the late fifties. At first, the emphasis was on intense group confrontation in a kind of "cultural island," cut off from the normal activities of the trainees. Within this island, adherents found they had special 'change' experiences of considerable impact. The idea was that this experi-ence would generalize to increasing leadership abilities. When it was discovered that in fact the experience did not seem to generalize, an evolution in focus began. This next period witnessed a slow shift from the group emphasis to a

more individual emphasis.

> ... There was a period around the middle '50's when
> there was quite a struggle going on between east and
> west around the individual and the group emphasis ... as
> I see it now, there is much more of an individual empha-
> sis in sensitivity training now than there is in the
> original group emphasis. (Ibid.:61)

Finally, in the early sixties, Mike Murphy, a psychol-
ogy graduate student from Stanford, who had travelled extens-
ively in the east before becoming familiar with the encounter
group movement in California, decided to open a centre which
would combine these two types of knowledge. He founded
Esalen, and in the process, took the encounter group movement
even further from its original concerns with group life to
the development of the individual through group life. At
least one of the basic ideas of the Esalen system was very
similar to the general T-group theory -- a series of group
sessions without agenda, directed toward interaction and
reaction among members as the main topic. The Esalen-type
system, however, does not aim at training people for group
activity. The watchwords are personal growth, expansion of
human potentiality and encounter (Ibid.:66).

The final figure of importance to the encounter group
movement was Carl Rogers (WBSl -- counselling psychology)
who further developed the concept of the unique powers of
the individual.

> Rogers worked out the ideological implications ...
> these consisted of a deep-seated conviction that
> each person has his own intrinsic value and that
> his individuality should be respected. The

non-directive counselor, therefore, would not force his
own therapeutic convictions on the client, but would
only help him to reach his own potential. (Ibid.:67)

In sum, the encounter group movement has moved in
twenty years from group to self, and from self to trans-
cendental self. Bach has argued that the experience of
change and growth, which could be elicited from the kind of
group interaction established by the early encounter groups,
was akin to religious ecstacy as opposed to scientific
experiment. Due to this paradox, the movement has always
been plagued by a split between scientists and humanists.
At the moment it is the humanists who seem to have gained
control of the movement, and it is certainly to this branch
of the organization that the "cult of man" groups are
indebted. The influence of this tradition is still seen in
the heavily social-scientific language used by many of the
movements, notably Psychosynthesis and Arica and the ration-
alized "coursework format," for which members pay a set fee.
As noted earlier, interaction exercises, role-playing feed-
back and process evaluation are still present in some of
these groups, but as we shall see, are being used for dis-
tinctly different ends than those for which they were
originally intended.

In sum, the groups we have included as "cult of man"
groups seem a mixture of the late stages of the human
potential movement, the positive-thought movement and the
occult traditions. The point of agreement of all three of

these is that it is the human individual who is seen as sacred, as all powerful. This sacred power is seen as located deep within the individual personality. Actions in the outer world become significant, not in themselves, but due to their impact on this inner self.

We shall pick up these various ideological strands in greater detail in Chapter VI. In the next chapter, however, we will leave for a moment the ideological underpinnings which unify these "cult of man" groups and separate them from other new religious movements, and look instead at the organizational elements which make them distinct. From a Durkheimian perspective, it is these elements which are of paramount importance, for from them will flow both beliefs and rituals.

CHAPTER V

DISTINGUISHING ORGANIZATIONAL FEATURES OF "CULT OF MAN" GROUPS: A COMPARATIVE VIEW

For Durkheim, religious beliefs were "collective representations" which drew their "nature and power" largely from "the way in which the associated individuals are grouped." He argued that the source of these representations must come from something "outside them":

> Either the collective conscience floats in the void like a sort of inconceivable absolute, or it is connected with the rest of the world through the intermediary of a substratum on which, in consequence it depends. On the other hand, of what can this substratum be composed if not of the members of society as they are socially combined? (Durkheim, 1897:648)

In this chapter, we will compare some of the features of social organization of the "cult of man" movements, first to corresponding features of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement (CCR) which locates the sacred outside the individual, and secondly, the turn-of-the-century Canadian cults, whose view of the sacred is akin to the "cult of man" groups.

I <u>The "Cult of Man" and the Catholic</u>
   <u>Charismatic Renewal Movement</u>[1]

Working from the most apparent and exterior forms of
such social organization, we may detect four obvious con-
trasts between the organization of the Charismatics and the
organization of the "cult of man" groups. These are:
(a) charismatic community vs. fee-for-service coursework;
(b) community vs. individual development; (c) permanence vs.
transience; (d) total vs. partial commitment. It will be
argued in this chapter that not only do these four features
of "cult of man" groups distinguish them from a group like
the Catholic Charismatics, but may be used to make the finer
distinction between the harmonial groups, occult and healing
of the turn-of-the-century, and the contemporary "cult of man."
In this latter instance, the differences are questions of

---

[1]The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement (CCR)
originated in the U.S. in 1969; as a result, it is thought,
of the 'looser' atmosphere created by Vatican II and a
development of the Cursillo movement in the U.S. Basic-
ally a pentacostal revival, it seems at times quite distinct
from traditional Catholicism. It is, nevertheless, largely
housed in parish halls and is often led (particularly in
Quebec) by Catholic priests and nuns. Studies have also
shown that the majority of those recruited to the movement
were of Catholic faith before joining and their faith, if
anything, is strengthened by participation in the movement.
Hence a compromise is being worked out in most cases,
between traditional Catholicism and Pentacostalism.
     CCR adherents place special emphasis on the Holy
Spirit and his 'gifts'. These include glossolalia or speak-
ing in tongues, prophecy, wisdom, healing (mental and phy-
sical) teaching and several others.
     The groups in Montreal represented in this disserta-
tion are three: a small, English speaking group, a large
English speaking group, and a small French speaking group.
All three were led by Catholic priests.

degree, but they are still present.

A. Charismatic Community vs. Fee-
    For-Service Coursework

One of the things which is unique about the "cult of man" groups is their high-price coursework format. With the exception of yoga groups (who charge a minimal fee for lessons) no other new religious movements follow this procedure. There are two elements involved in this contrast: the exchange of 'fees' and the coursework structure. We will examine each of these in turn as compared to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement.

1. Fees vs. Voluntary Contributions.

It is interesting to examine the implications of charging fees as opposed to financing through voluntary contributions. While all religious groups in order to survive must develop methods to help support themselves, this has rarely in the past been done by demanding money as a criterion for participation as opposed to a responsibility of those who have already committed themselves. While some branches of the Charismatics, housed in the buildings of the Catholic churches and led by priests employed by that Catholic church, do not have any overhead and therefore do not have even ritual collection, for those with expenses this is usually the means for insuring funds. For other new religious movements, such as the monastic wing of the Zen Buddhists, the Dharma Datu, the Sri Chinmoy, which locate in

a communal centre, financing is often on the basis of a cut
of the salary of the individual members. Groups such as the
Hare Krishna or the Unification Church, whose members remove
themselves totally from the general occupational structure,
find support through soliciting funds or through group-run
work projects such as selling flowers, or opening a
restaurant.

These methods of collecting money seem haphazard and
unreliable compared to the fee-for-service method of the
"cult of man." Est charges $300 for two weekends per person,
Arica charges between $75 for an introductory weekend, and
$1500 for a 40 day workshop (cost for courses in Arica
varies somewhat depending on the location). Silva Mind
Control asks $150 for a week (five evenings and a weekend),
Psychosynthesis charges approximately $150 for ten evening
group sessions. In that way the organization seems to insure
its support, whether or not members become committed in the
long run. This seems like a sensible solution to the dilemma
of financing.

However, as Weber (1925) has documented, the relation-
ship between religion and finance is an uneasy one at best.
He argues that it is the need for economic subsistence which
is one of the major features in the routinization process
whereby the Charismatic sect, with the intense, direct
religious experience it offers, becomes compromised. Money
is "the most impersonal and abstract element that exists in

human life," Weber argues (Gerth and Mills, 1958:331). It depersonalizes any relationship it enters into. For this reason, religion (particularly the salvation religion of North American society grounded as it is in the ethic of brotherly love) has tended to shun the whole world of economics, seeing money as dirty and evil. Dealings with money are dangerous, and must be carried out with great care in order to avoid the contamination of the sacred. The solutions have been reliance on charity (as in Indian Buddhism where itinerant monks are supported by the lay population who give their money as a substitute for their participation) (Weber, 1958) or donation by members of some part of their income, either in a voluntary or ritualistic way. In either of these latter two cases, such a giving is part of the commitment process, a way in which the adherent pledges his worldly activity as at the service of the sacred and hence, to some extent, sanctifies it.

On the other hand, the "cult of man" would appear to have compromised and endangered the sacred from the moment of initiation. The sacred is 'bought'; the relationship to the leader-teacher depersonalized. We will see in the next chapter how this sort of relationship between religion and finance is only possible with the concept of the sacred held by these groups. However, for the moment, we will turn to that element of group organization linked intimately to the mode of finance: the coursework structure.

2. The coursework format vs. the Charismatic
    Community

Both the fee-for-service and the coursework format are
elements of what Weber would term 'rationalization'.
Rationalization is identified with bureaucracy, rational
efficiency, continuity of operation, speed, precision and
calculation of results (in short, all those aspects of modern
society which counter-cultural theorists have seen adherents
of new religious movements as reacting against). Yet,
rationalization of this nature has always been seen as
foreign to religion, particularly to emerging cults or sects
which places emphasis on the mystical, the ecstatic, the
direct experience of the irrational (Gerth and Mills, 1958:
331-333). The "cult of man" offers a paradoxical picture in
this respect. In some ways it fits with Weber's description
of charismatic cults. While the relationship between
teacher and trainee is a depersonalized one in some respects,
and the student is seen as buying a knowledge that will make
him the equal of the instructor, the founders of such move-
ments, such as José Silva, Werner Erhard, Oscar Ichazo,
Robert Assogioli, L. Ron Hubbard, E. J. Gold, are mysterious
and undoubtedly charismatic figures. What's more, in the
individual class the lack of hierarchy, sense of equality,
sense of being virtuosi are all features which associate
"cult of man" groups with charasmatic cults (Weber, 1925). But
the rational coursework format and the fees are crucial
differences.

Much more common in the history of new religious move-
ments and among contemporary movements are the Catholic
Charismatics who see themselves not as a class but as a com-
munity, joined not by their desire to know but by their
special knowledge. Their 'gifts' are intrinsic, not to be
bought ... their group leaders (particularly in Montreal,
where most groups are led by priests) are seen as having "all
the gifts."

The coursework vs. community organization has other
implications. In groups such as Arica, est, Silva Mind
Control and Scientology, members sit in chairs facing the
instructor; in the CCR meetings, members sit in a circle
facing each other. While the CCR group has a seminar of the
Spirit, in which the scriptures are described and discussed,
the "cult of man" groups give preset classes defined by
training manuals. While at the end of the seminars of the
spirit members may receive the Baptism of the Spirit, an
intensely emotional and mystical experience, the 'graduate'
of a class from the "cult of man" receives (in some cases
after an examination) a 'certificate'. While for the
Charismatic, the Baptism of the Spirit marks his entrance,
in one step into the community, the certificate marks for
the "cult of man" member, his release back into the world,
the dissolution of the group, unless he wants to pay another
fee and take a course at a higher level which these groups
(notably Psychosynthesis, Scientology) offer. This latter

point brings us to the next organizational feature which dis-
tinguishes "cult of man" groups: its inherent transience vs.
the permanency offered by the CCR and other such groups.

B. Transience vs. Permanence

One of the most central features of the "cult of man"
groups is their emphasis on change and on transience.
Certainly in each case there are instructors whose partici-
pation is continual over time, or at least does not have a
definite termination date. However, for the majority who
would consider themselves adherents of these movements, the
group life is formally restricted.

A group like Shakti makes nearly a fetish out of the
concept of planned obsolescence.

This group periodically shuts down its centres, sends
away their students unexpectedly, sometimes in mid-course,
changes its organizational name.

> These carefully planned, highly ritualized "turn offs"
> can be interpreted as the final lesson of the course.
> One of the "ruts" the group is attacking is of course
> preconditioned ideas of what constitutes a religious
> movement and a spiritual master ... stranding students
> can be seen as a way to make them change themselves,
> change society and not become a comfortable member of
> a clique. (Palmer, 1976:101-102)

Even in a group like Psychosynthesis, where the
interaction during group meetings is intense, and a series
of advancement courses are offered which allow adherents a
continual link to the institute over some time, each 'group'
composed of a class of people dissolves after the last

meeting. Adherents may feel a sense of loss about this, but
in general, this is seen as a part of the growth experience.
For instance, note the following interchange which took place
at the last group meeting of a Psychosynthesis group:

Lisa: It makes me sad ... I feel like I'd like to
       pack everyone a lunch to take with them.

John: I think that what we're feeling is the group
       ending which is like a death.

Laurie: I don't feel sad at all, I don't feel like
        its a death. I feel really good about it ...
        I've really gotten something out of the
        group.

Alice (group leader): Well, every end is a little
        bit like a death but it is also a beginning.
        We all have lives outside that we go on
        with. Its good to go on ... but its also
        good to recognize the sadness, to take
        responsibility for that feeling ... unless
        we recognize it, its like the ghosts of
        other members (of the group) just keep
        hanging around our lives, getting in the
        way ... this way we say goodbye and send
        them on their way ...

                           - Psychosynthesis group meeting

In this sense "cult of man" groups are historical
experiences, occupying a finite period of time. The group
dissolves and the individuals carry on.

Contrast this with the groups such as the CCR in which
the group is seen as having a life which transcends the
individual members. Members come and go, live and die, but
the body of the group remains. It is interesting to compare
the reactions of members of the Psychosynthesis group noted
above with those of a small CCR group who have been told they
ought to merge with a larger CCR group. Despite the fact

that the larger group was one all members knew, and indeed
sometimes attended, they clung to the smaller group.

> Father N: Father K. says that sometimes there is a
>   lot of tension in small groups.
>
> Leila: But when the Holy Spirit first came to the
>   disciples, they were only a small group,
>   they were only eleven and he came to them ...
>
> Father N: But I feel that if the pastor is against
>   a prayer meeting it shouldn't be held.
>
> Joan: To heck with the pastor. We've got the
>   room, we'll just lock the door and have
>   our prayer meeting (much laughter and
>   protestations). I think we've put a lot
>   of effort into these prayer meetings.
>   We're like one family now. We can't just
>   give it up.
>
> - CCR group meeting

To dissolve the group seemed unthinkable, like dis-
solving a family who were all connected by blood. For the
Psychosynthesis members and those of other "cult of man"
groups, such a dissolution was seen as desirable, a part of
individual growth.

Other structural aspects of group life also support
this contrast between transience and permanence. The meet-
ings of the CCR follow a cyclical pattern, once a week
prayer meetings, once a week mass, at the same time every
week. In addition, the CCR members participate in the yearly
cycle of Christian rituals. The meetings of the "cult of
man" groups is not cyclical, but progressive moving from
beginning to end, from introduction to conclusion in a linear
continuum. Finally, the location of group meetings also

emphasizes this contrast. The "cult of man" groups meet in secular and temporary locations such as a rented hall, or a hotel conference room. The CCR groups meet in a fixed spot, a centre, and often a room in the local parish church, which they decorate with pennants depicting the descent of the Spirit and other emblems to mark out the space as their own.

This contrast between transience on the one hand, and permanence on the other, is closely connected to the third distinction: that between community development and individual development.

C. Community Development vs. Individual Development

As in this chapter we are concerned not with the belief system of these groups but in the contrast between types of social organization, we will discuss the above dichotomy in organizational terms. This contrast is closely connected to the notion we mentioned in the previous section, i.e. that for the "cult of man" groups, the community is seen as transient, whereas in the CCR (and related groups) it is the individual who is seen as transient. This has profound implications for the type of interaction which goes on between members at group meetings.

In the "cult of man" groups, this interaction is minimal. At the extreme of a group like est, no interaction is set up or organized. Individuals do stand up to use a microphone to testify to the changes which have occurred in their lives or in their minds. The other students react to

this as an audience, by cheering. In contrast groups such
as the Charismatics, a testimonial about the changes in a
person's life are met with by enthusiasm and involvement,
encouraged by the community as a means by which members
become really part of the group, "become charismatic"
(Westley, 1977). Even a group such as Psychosynthesis,
which, as we have noted, encourages interaction, discourages
involvement which would forge the members into a group.
Contrast the two interactions below, the first having taken
place in a Charismatic group meeting, the second in a
Psychosynthesis group meeting.

a) Gary: Before everyone goes ... I'd like ... I
               don't need to be prayed over, but maybe
               we could say a prayer ... I'm taking
               swimming lessons and I'm scared of the
               water ... I'd have to go in the deep end
               this week ... Maybe everyone could pray
               so I won't be afraid.

               We form a group. Pearl does her healing
               prayer. Then Brenda asks for a special
               intention and we say a Hail Mary.

    Barbara: Why didn't you want us to pray over you?

    Gary: It didn't seem important enough.

    Barbara: Of course its important enough. Come on
               everybody. (We pray over Gary)

                                      - CCR group meeting

b) John: I feel sad to think this group is ending.
               I really enjoyed this kind of encounter.
               I wonder why in real life people don't
               communicate the way we do here. If I try
               to talk to people at work about the
               higher self people look at me like I'm
               crazy.

Jim: It seems to me that if you just act the way
         you want to, then even if some people don't
         like you others will ... you may find some
         sympathetic souls out there.

Alice (group leader): Jim, I'm hearing you trying
         to tell John what to do, and I'm hearing
         John just wanting to be sad, not wanting to
         do anything with it. Is there something
         hooking you here?

                              - Psychosynthesis group meeting

In the first instance, a member brings a difficulty
from his personal life which is used by members as a way of
involving themselves with him, bringing them closer. They
pray for him and will continue to do so (and inquire how the
swimming lessons are going) for weeks. In the second
instance, a difficulty on the part of a member is met with
advice from another member, advice which is questioned by
the group leader as insensitivity and over-identification
(to be hooked is to confuse self with the other). The
advising member is told to leave the first member to experi-
ence his sadness.

Another example of the difference between these two
groups is the sense of responsibility which they feel for
each other. When one member of the CCR sprained her ankle
leaving the meeting, three other members went home with her
and stayed a good part of the night. In contrast after
each meeting, members of the Psychosynthesis group dis-
persed individually. The watchword in this group was that
members should "take responsibility for their own actions."
A party organized for the week after classes ended was

attended by only a third of participants. It should be
stressed again that of all the "cult of man" groups, Psycho-
synthesis encourages the most interaction among members. In
est, entering students are counselled that they must not sit
next to anyone that they know.

D. <u>Partial vs. Total Involvement</u>

The preceding opposition served as an indicator of
the general nature of interaction within these two types of
groups. This opposition provides a measure of the intensity
of such interaction. As noted earlier, members of groups
such as the Charismatics, gather at least twice a week for
their prayer meetings and the regular Sunday mass. In
addition, particularly in larger groups, individual
'ministries' will meet other nights of the week. Special
dinners for couples will involve spouses who are not members
of the Charismatics. In Ann Arbor where the movement is
centred there are a number of communal living units for
members of the Charismatics (Keene, 1974). This is not
unusual for this type of Christian revival movement, or for
such eastern imports which clearly locate the sacred as out-
side the individual such as the Unification Church, the Hare
Krishna and Sri Chinmoy. Members of the "cult of man"
groups, however, do not live together in centres. They may
encourage their children or spouses to take the course (est
is particularly renowned for this) but for the most part,
the course, like all courses, is an experience which the

individual compartmentalizes from the rest of his life.
Members may use what they learned in their regular life, but
they take their knowledge out to the world, whereas members
of the Charismatics, to the extent that they continue par-
ticipation in the world, tend to bring the world into the
meeting, interpreting and reinterpreting the events of their
lives in terms of the truths of the group (Westley, 1977:931).

The initiation ritual is a nice point of comparison.
As we noted, for the "cult of man" members it involves a pay-
ment of a fee and the reception of a certificate, both
'impersonal' acts in Weber's terms. The initiation for the
Charismatics is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, a highly
emotional moment, when group members cluster around the
initiate, place their hands on his or her head and pray over
him/her, and the member often receives the gift of tongues,
or reacts with tears, to a sense of the 'inrushing of the
spirit' from which experience the initiate emerges trans-
formed, a new person (Gerlach and Hines, 1970). It is worth
noting in this connection that when members of such groups
as Silva Mind Control were asked the question, "could you
describe your present involvement with this group" they
answered uniformly that they were instructors, or had 'taken
the course' or practiced a certain technique regularly.
Members of the Catholic Charismatics asked such a question,
responded in a manner such as follows:

It is a very integral part of my life.
It is the high point of my week. It is where I go to
get my batteries recharged. I experience a deeper
sense of peace there than anywhere else. It is
being fulfilled ...

- CCR members

Participation for the "cult of man" member is defined
in terms of an action or actions and a role. For the
Charismatic the experience is considerably more holistic,
involving the identity and life experience of the member.
This is not to say that members of a "cult of man" group will
not claim that the experience changed their occupations,
friends, performance on the job, health, methods of handling
problems or approaching people, but in terms of self-
transformation, they do not express the same sort of absolute
identity shift and commitment. This is underlined by the
fact that most "cult of man" members are eclectic. They see
many different paths to truth. They may have tried other
new religious movements (yoga groups seem to be the favourite)
and they may maintain an identification with another, main-
stream religion. They don't see other groups as 'evil' or
'dangerous' although they may have their personal prefer-
ences. However, the Charismatics clearly see other groups
as dangerous. One Charismatic Renewal member confided that
the priest who led the biggest group in Montreal saw TM
members as possessed and in need of exorcism.

II <u>The Cult-Sect Dichotomy: The "Cult of Man"</u>
    <u>and Harmonial Cults</u>

    To this point in this chapter, we have noted that the
"cult of man" groups in contemporary America differ from
groups that clearly hold the sacred as lying outside the
individual in at least four respects. In terms of their
social organization, these groups emphasize a rational
coursework structure, and a fee-type financial system, as
opposed to a charity or donation system and worship service
format. Secondly, they are finite groups, emphasizing the
transience of community as opposed to the permanence of com-
munity stressed by the Charismatics. Thirdly, they empha-
size individual development as opposed to community develop-
ment and fourthly, ask, indeed demand, only partial commit-
ment of members as opposed to total commitment. Do these
differences indicate that the "cult of man" groups are
indeed something new in the history of religious movements,
peculiar to the highly specialized, diversified and tech-
nological society, as Durkheim would have predicted?

    One of the problems in answering this question is the
fact that the differences that we have outlined for our par-
ticular case correspond to some of the classic differences
between 'cult' and 'sect' which theorists in sociology of
religion, since Troeltsch, have recognized as distinct types
of religious organization. Cults have been variously
described as having an organization which is shortlived, very
loose, much more compromised in financial and ideal terms

with the dominant society than sects, with a much greater
emphasis on the individual as opposed to the community
(Yinger, 1951; Ellwood, 1973; Troeltsch, 1931; Mann, 1972).
In addition, however, cults have been in existence, at
different historical moments, since early Greek and Roman
times (in short, as far back as there are extensive docu-
ments of religious life). Granted, it has been noted
(Ellwood, 1973; Mann, 1972) that cults have an elective
affinity with cosmopolitan cultures and urban environments,
seeming to reflect the fluid, diversified and pluralistic
components always found in the social organization of such
societies. If, however, the organization of the "cult of
man" is no different from cults throughout time, then the
kind of religious evolution which Durkheim predicted would
be specific to the increasing differentiation of our
society, cannot be said to be reflected in the "cult of man."

The fact that cults per se tend to appear in cosmo-
politan and urban societies, supports Durkheim's basic
hypothesis about the relationship between religious and
social organization. However, just as the elements of
pluralism, diversification and specialization present, to
some degree, in all urban, cosmopolitan societies, have been
developed and extended to an unprecedented extent in 20th
century North American society, so if Durkheim is correct
we would expect to find in contemporary religion not only
more cults but shifts in cult organization in the direction

of becoming more extreme, more compromised financially and ideally, more individualistic, shorter lived than cults at other times.

While we do not have the data to investigate the first prediction that more cults (proportionately) exist now than in previous periods, we may determine if there has been a shift in the social organization of cults over time. While this point could be proved by comparing modern cults to early gnostic cults of the second century, it is even better proved by comparing them to groups designated as cults in turn-of-the-century America. These have the advantage of sharing the cultural milieu of North America, as well as some of the basic ideological orientations with the "cult of man" groups. As it happens, there is also particularly good data on Canadian chapters of such cults documented in Mann (1972) which help to render the comparison specific. If it is possible to document that there has been a shift in cult organization in the direction of increased rationalization, individualism, transience and partial involvement, this would suggest support for the idea that cult organization has been sensitive to the shift in social organization towards greater diversity, specialization, pluralism elements, which Durkheim predicted would be responsible for the "cult of man."

In Mann's comparative study of cult, sect and church in Alberta, he analyses data collected on ten cults. The

first five Christian Science, Unity, Church of Truth, Divine
Science, Spiritualism, he terms 'healing' or 'metaphysical'
groups, the second five, the Rosicrucians, Theosopy, Church
of New Jerusalem, I am, Consumer's Movement, he terms
'occult, esoteric or mystical'. These two types of cult
vary somewhat in terms of doctrine, but share a number of
organizational features. The cultists formed a kind of sub-
culture in Calgary society. People moved easily from one
type of cult to another (a fact which caused Mann to term
this element of the membership 'metaphysical tramps')
although this movement generally followed a pattern from
healing to occult groups and members were well known to each
other. Membership in these cults was in many cases not
recorded at all. The most that was expected seemed to be
signing a membership card (Mann, 1972:80). Mann notes that
the cults in Alberta made much greater compromises with the
secular environment than did the sects. This was manifest
both in the practical things such as wealth and happiness
which members were encouraged to seek from God, and by the
methods of evangelism used ... depending largely on highly
rationalized business and advertisement techniques (Ibid.:
142). Mann also notes that the local leaders of most groups
had a very great deal of influence and power.

While many, if not all of these characteristics are
shared by "cult-of man" groups and cults in general, some
important differences in organization may be revealed by a

comparison of the following two accounts of group meetings

in (a) a New Thought group, and (b) a Silva Mind Control

group.

a) While the group was getting seated, an elderly woman
played a bit of Tschaikowsky, and after Miss Chew
(the leader) took her place on the platform, the
group sang two hymns, "Rock of Ages, Truth Divine"
and "Sweet Hour of Prayer." Miss Chew began with
announcements; she said that she would have office
hours daily between two and five p.m. There was to
be a meeting the next night to discuss a new
location for the church, since she (Miss Chew) was
being evicted ... After the announcements the group
repeated "I rejoice in the power of Good," twice.
Miss Chew requested that people turn in their vaca-
tion envelopes because during the past month the
church's income had ceased. (This was a service in
late August). The group then said 'Divine love'
three times and the offering was taken. A great
many one and five dollar bills appeared on the
plate. Miss Chew announced that she had just
returned from the International New Thought High-
lights conference. Among the speakers in
Milwaukee was Ernest Wilson, editor of the Los
Angeles magazine called Progress for Unity. She
said that he was a small, sunburned, genial man
with a winning smile ... another speaker at the
conference was Louise Newman, who said, "Its
great to be human! Every person should have an
ideal and climb up to it. Identify yourself with
the inner mind of God and keep saying I know and
I know that I know. You can't press clothes with
a cold iron; there must be a contact with power to
be effective." Dr. Myers, another speaker, said
that people think that all they have to do is look
at Christ and they will be healed forever.
Actually the power is within us and God in embryo
is within each of us. Therefore, we should refrain
from setting up negative inner forces ... Dr. Gregg
of Toronto told the conference that healing is our
birthright. Look for harmony and you will find
health, an inner harmony everywhere. It is easier
to say the word "well" than the word "sickness."
It is important to remember that our aim is to "get
heaven into men rather than to get men into heaven."
Miss Chew ended the service with a prayer that asked
for the opportunity to leave an imprint on those who
follow us. The knowledge of God dwells within us,

let us use it correctly. The congregation sang "I
See Abundance Everywhere" and Miss Chew said in
closing, "no vision is too great for you. Live at
peace."
    Miss Chew was an elderly woman with well-
groomed white hair. She wore a pale blue evening
gown and a corsage of roses was pinned to her dress.
She spoke quietly without emotion. She seemed to be
talking to a group of friends. Her speech was
fluent and her vocabulary and grammar were good.
She was neither intense nor emotional, just calm and
quiet. The atmosphere was relaxed and peaceful as a
result of her personality.

(Mann, 1972:59)

b) As the Silva Mind Control courses were carried on
over a week, each evening was different. They followed, how-
ever, a predictable pattern. The following is an example:

The meeting began with a talk by the leader about
"mental housecleaning," the importance of positive
thought and the use of the phrase 'cancel cancel' to
block out negative thoughts. Secondly, the leader
talked about the unused potential of the human brain.
"We can function as psychics. How or why we aren't
concerned with ... we're not concerned with the mech-
anism. What matters is that effects can be felt and
used." He continued to argue that knowing about the
potential but not using it is "in the religious sense
the largest sin." We are under moral obligation to
use it.
    After this lecture there was a question period.
People asked questions about why the brain 'levels'
on the chart (at the front of the room) were 'colour
coded' and were told the colours weren't significant.
Someone else said that they felt a kind of fear about
"going to deeper levels" and was that normal, and how
'far' should she go. She was told, "As far as you
want ... it's your mind." If frightening images come
she was told to change them with "psychic surgery."
The leader added that we were all likely as we got
more 'into' our minds, to have startingly clear images
of people and things. "We are opening ourselves up to
lots of psychic and spiritual impulses floating around."
    After the question session we did three condition-
ings. People assumed a relaxed position, eyes closed,
and the instructor read the instructions verbatim from
a manual. The conditioning was for going to sleep on
command, waking up on command and remembering dreams.

In each case the conditioning involved relaxing
"going down to level" and then mentally repeating
the formula, which the instructor read out.
　　　After the last conditioning, the meeting broke
up.　One of the other leaders told a small group
the story of having her baby by C-section without
anaesthetic, just using mind control to kill the
pain.

　It may be noted immediately that these two cults
differ in their degree of rationalization. The "New Thought"
cult employs non-rational (in Weberian terms) means of finan-
cing by collection, while the SMC group charges fees.
Secondly, while New Thought, when compared to sectarian
groups, seems to appeal on rational and intellectual terms
as opposed to emotional, it is not rational in the sense of
being bureaucratic, efficient, methodical or standardized.
On the contrary, the meetings are kept informal by avoiding
set routine.　In contrast, SMC meetings follow a pre-
programmed order, following detailed written instructions.
The only informal or spontaneous aspects were the question
and answer periods that came after each 'formula type tech-
nique' was taught and during the two coffee breaks which
took place each evening.

　It may be argued that what we see elements of in the
New Thought lecture format have been developed and refined
to a much greater degree in a group like Silva Mind Control.
This latter group not only uses business and advertising
techniques in proselytizing, but its very meetings are pre-
programmed, unvarying, and formal, to a degree equalled only
by the most routinized 'church' setting.

It can, therefore, be argued that on the rational-charismatic continuum separating sects and cults tradition-ally, contemporary cults have become even more consistently rational than those which emerged in the early part of this century.

A similar development is evident in terms of the transience-permanence continuum. While, in fact, as Mann notes, a group like New Thought and the cults of the turn-of-the-century were of indeterminate and usually short life, they were not, on the other hand, of finite and short life. Their membership simply never grew, and no effort was made to keep track of those who left. They also depended, as we have pointed out, on a rather shaky financial basis. Nevertheless, while in existence they tended to have a stable centre or church, and perhaps more importantly, a 'round' of activities including Sunday service and at least one mid-weekly meeting. Hence, the members themselves were not aware of a definite termination date for group life. Meetings provided a con-tinual weekly structure which, at least as far as they knew (since obsolescence wasn't planned) might continue indefinitely. Therefore, while the cults of the turn-of-the century were undoubtedly much more transient in character than were the sects of the same period, they were not yet formally transient experiences like contemporary "cult of man" groups. Once again along this important dimension, we find that the development has been towards more extreme 'cultic'

behavior.

There remain two other dimensions, total vs. partial
involvement and community vs. individual development. Along
these two dimensions the difference between "cult of man"
groups and turn-of-the-century cults is not as pronounced.
Some distinctions do, however, remain. For example, Mann has
pointed out the importance of the local leader for most cults.
In the above description of the meeting, the leader speaks to
the members in a friendly motherly fashion. While such links
may not give the community the kind of cohesion found in
sects, it, nevertheless, ties members together in a common
focus: their relationship to the leader. In contrast, while
members of "cult of man" groups may hold the national leader
(Erhard, Silva, Ichazo) in considerable reverence, the major-
ity never meet this leader. Their major contact with the
cult is with the individual instructor. These are seldom
invested with the kind of charisma that the national leader
is invested with, or, for that matter, that the local leader
of the turn-of-the-century cults exercised over his/her
followers. Once again, the financial dimension enters in
here. The instructor is paid in the "cult of man." He pro-
vides the student with a skill. Once the student has
mastered this skill he becomes the equal of the instructor.
For example, at the end of each section of the Silva Mind
Control course, the student is provided with a pamphlet-
manual containing the exact words and instructions which the

leader used in guiding the student through the exercise the
first time. The student is from then on able to be his or
her own instructor. Hence, it might be argued that while the
turn-of-the-century cults had no more interaction between
members than "cult of man" groups, they had considerably more
leader-follower interaction and interdependence. This, in
turn, provided a potential bond between members not present
in the "cult of man." At least in this respect the turn-of-
the-century cults put more emphasis on community development
than do "cult of man" groups.

In a separate but related manner the actual interac-
tion at group meetings also suggests more community emphasis
in turn-of-the-century cults. For instance, note that in the
New Thought meetings the group sing hymns together, repeat
affirmations ('Divine Love') together and listen to the
sermon/lecture together. Silva Mind Control members also
repeat affirmations but they do so silently and to themselves
rather than with the group. In both cases, these affirma-
tions, prayers, etc. may be for selfish and individualistic
ends and so fail to overtly develop a sense of community.
But the New Thought members at least continue to share an
outward focus as they verbalize their affirmations and sing
hymns together. The focus of ritual action in the Silva Mind
Control group is inward. Whether or not the member performs
the ritual or in what manner is known only to himself. In
this aspect as well, it would seem that the turn-of-the-century

cults, while being individualistic, were not as extreme as
the "cult of man" groups today.

Lastly, there is the question of total vs. partial
involvement in the movement. The fluidity with which Mann
noted that members came and left, groups formed and dis-
solved in Calgary, certainly suggests that the commitment to
the groups was far from total. Also, the emphasis on taking
the power tapped in the movement out to the world instead of
bringing the world into the group seems very similar to the
attitude we noted in "cult of man" groups. However, there is
one factor which seems to argue to the contrary, and that is
the composition of the membership. Mann has noted that
members, while they tended to be middle class and of comfort-
able income, were, nevertheless, in some ways socially
marginal, "poorly integrated into the community" (Mann, 1972:
42). They were disproportionately single or widowed middle-
aged women (the ratio of women to men was 6:1). They also
tended toward excessive residential mobility. The leaders of
these movements, both local and national, were also dispro-
portionately women. What this suggests is that members led
rather empty, lonely lives devoid even of the driving edge
of financial difficulty. It can be hypothesized that for
such women a cult would become a much more central experience
with fewer competing commitments or activities to challenge
the member's loyalty or (at least temporary) involvement. In
contrast, the membership of the "cult of man" today is

younger, equally divided between men and women (with a slight predominance of men in some groups) and have leaders who are disproportionately male (Stone, 1976; Tipton, 1977; Wuthnow, 1976a). For the most part, then, these are individuals who have competing time and loyalty commitments, if not to their families ("cult of man" groups have a large percentage of single, residentially mobile members as well) then at least in terms of their occupations. The distinction is slight and largely inductive.[2] It is certainly along this dimension of partial vs. total commitment that turn-of-the-century and "cult of man" groups seem to have most in common. However, the distinction is present, however slight and once again, it would seem to be the contemporary "cult of man" groups which focus most on individual development and least on total participation.

In sum, by comparing superficial organizational factors of turn-of-the-century cults and contemporary "cult of man" groups, it would appear that they do share a general "cult" orientation of being rationalized, short-lived, individualistic and pluralistic when compared to sects of the present or of the past. However, on each of these dimensions

---

[2] It is supported ideologically, however. While the turn-of-the-century cults do not reject the world as the sects do, they are, nevertheless, at great pains, according to Mann, to separate their approach to Christianity from traditional or dogmatic forms, to the extent that they are actively hostile to church and sect. Contemporary "cult of man" groups make no such distinction and so make it even easier for members to simultaneously hold a variety of loyalties.

the "cult of man" groups seem to be more extreme than the cults of the turn-of-the-century. This would seem to lend support to the notion that the cult in general is a religious form particularly sensitive to and expressive of technological. society, and that as the fluidity, diversity and specialization of the latter becomes more pronounced, so do the corresponding elements of cult organization. Mann himself suggested such an affinity, stressing that therein lay the significance of the cults in his study:

> Cultism thus in Alberta reflected in accentuated form the instabilities of urban society. In this way it probably had a social significance much greater than would seem indicated by the small numbers attached to it. Its appeal to people apparently well educated and reasonably well off economically suggest that in certain large areas of our urban society -- among that section of the population conventionally thought of as the staid middle class -- exist trouble spots only yet slightly explored. (Mann, 1972:158)

In the next chapter we will move from a discussion of the social organization of the "cult of man" to the belief system. If Durkheim is correct, it will be argued that not only should the extreme differences in organization that exist between the "cult of man" groups and a sectarian group like the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement be reflected in extremely different beliefs, but the subtle differences in cult organization discussed above should be apparent in subtly different beliefs.

CHAPTER VI

DISTINGUISHING BELIEFS OF THE "CULT OF MAN": A COMPARATIVE VIEW

In this chapter we will turn from an examination of the social structure of new religious movements to a comparison of the beliefs held by these movements. As noted, our original selection of the "cult of man" groups was on the basis of the conception of the sacred held by such groups: the "cult of man" groups all locate the sacred within as opposed to outside of the individual. We noted in the last chapter that groups having this conception of the sacred differed from those groups which located the sacred outside the individual along four important organizational dimensions. In this chapter we will examine the belief systems of the "cult of man" in slightly more detail, focusing in particular upon those elements of belief which seem to correspond to, or flow from, the distinctive elements of social structure which we examined in the last chapter.

Once again, as a control, we will compare these beliefs to the belief systems of (a) the CCR movement, which contrasts with the "cult of man" groups on all social structure dimensions, and (b) with turn-of-the-century cults which, while sharing with the "cult of man" groups some

elements basic to 'cult' organization, are considerably less extreme in many of their features.

The argument in this chapter is as follows: if Durkheim is correct in his basic hypotheses about the relationship of belief and social structure, we would expect to find differences in the beliefs of "cult of man" and CCR groups that correspond to the already documented differences in social organization. When comparing "cult of man" groups to turn-of-the-century cults, we would expect their beliefs to be similar to the "cult of man," although less extreme, falling somewhere between the "cult of man" and the CCR as they did in organizational terms.

To summarize in advance, it will be suggested here that corresponding to the economic/organizational rationality of the "cult of man" groups, there will be a belief in the efficacy of the techniques, tools and terms of science. This attitude towards science will be seen to represent an advance in conceptual rationality over turn-of-the-century groups to match the increase in structural rationality. Secondly, the contrast between community and individual development on the organizational level will be reflected in a corresponding contrast between a belief in healing and a belief in purity. Finally, it is suggested that two contrasts, that between transience and permanence, and that between individual and partial involvement on the organization level, are reflected in a contrast between a

belief in the internal unity of the individual adherent and a sense of internal fragmentation. The rationales for these analogies between structural and conceptual oppositions will be explained individually.

Faith vs. Scientific Technology

The tension between religion and science has been discussed to the point where it has become a cliche. At the root of this tension is seen to be a conflict similar to that between economics and religion; the one drives toward rationalization, efficiency and predictability in the material world, the other sees the irrational and the unpredictable as essential aspects of the supernatural, which for religion forms the basis for all reality, natural or supernatural.

In our discussion of new religious movements, we are interested in several different aspects of science. We are first interested in the group's attitude toward the scientific perspective, i.e. the general approach of science to discovering and interpreting reality.

Secondly, we are interested in the attitude of new religious movements to scientific language, techniques and tools. If our predictions are correct, therefore, we would expect "cult of man" groups to make greater use of scientific perspectives, language, techniques and explanations than the CCR and to use them differently than the turn-of-the-century cults. In this latter exploration, we are

interested in this section (and in the subsequent chapter on
the rituals which flow from these beliefs and attitudes) to
discover the particular nature of the "cult of man's" rela-
tionship to science, which makes it different from that of
turn-of-the-century groups.

The threat science has always posed to religion lay in
its meaning system. It provided an alternate interpretation
of the world, and for many of its historical elements,which
directly contradicted those suggested by religion. Further,
it suggested that the world worked by laws comprehensible,
not incomprehensible, to man. It saw man as the Actor as
opposed to the Reactor. It therefore posed a threat to the
reality of the sacred, the mystical, which by definition,
was unpredictable and incomprehensible.

Most new religious movements, like the CCR group, come
to terms with science by compartmentalizing the two, and/or
by ranking scientific language, explanations and techniques
as hierarchically inferior to religious. Hence, a CCR
member, if ill, will certainly see a doctor and receive what
treatment is available. On the other hand, other members
will pray for the ill person, and the general consensus is
that whether the person lives or dies is not finally
dependent on the doctor, but on the decision of God. Other
issues, such as scientific ethics (euphanasia, for instance)
are generally ignored, as "not being our concern."

The Charismatics on the whole, however, are

significantly devoid of scientific perspectives, language,
techniques and explanations. They generally seem to ignore
social science as well, although they are extremely sus-
picious of field workers. In one group, many members
suggested to the field worker that she might be possessed by
the devil; in another, members balked at the term "interview,"
stating things like, "I don't give interviews, I just praise
the Lord." The two (interview and the Lord) were somehow
seen to be in opposition.

Hence, the attitude toward science and social science
in the CCR movement is to some degree one of avoidance. This
attitude contrasts markedly with that of members of "cult of
man" groups who are quite open to researchers, although they
are seen occasionally as misguided:

> When I announced my intention of writing a paper on
> them, they were amused and decided to mislead and
> confuse me, sending me off on wild goose chases and
> false scents, with the intention of undermining my
> academic stance in the hope that I would eventually
> see the futility of trying to explain a spiritual
> phenomenum in rational terms. (Palmer, 1976:4)

In contrast, the "cult of man" groups are replete with
scientific and social scientific explanations, terminology
and techniques. In many cases, copies of scientific
experiments which indicate the positive physical effects of
meditation or alpha brain waves are handed out in the first
class. Terminology from information theory and computor
science (such as cancel, encode, decode, data, program) are
used extensively to deal with human communication and thought

processes by groups like Shakti, Scientology and SMC. Shakti
calls itself "The Spiritual Science of DNA," Aricans talk
about the human brain as a meta-computor. Psychosynthesis
draws heavily on psychological and sociological terminology
talking about norms and projections. Lastly, some actual
tools such as biofeedback machines, lie detector machines,
and EEC recordings, which have been shown to be useful instru-
ments in scientific experiments, are used in these groups for
unscientific ends.

However, despite the borrowing of terminology, tool,
technique and even explanation, "cult of man" groups reject
rational thought (which certainly seems an essential ingredient
of science) and the scientific perspective. Like the CCR,
they value experience, not rational knowledge. They indeed
find systematic explanations an anathema, alien to the
sacred:

> Go easy on the explanations without demonstrations ...
> no matter what the student says about how they under-
> stand ... while a personality can learn to appreciate
> and store up information intellectually, we want to
> teach something to the Being, and the Being can learn
> only by experience. There isn't any intellect there.
> No mind there. (Gold, 1973:68)

This apparent inconsistency between perspective and
technique is better understood by examining the methods for
achieving experience in a given "cult of man" group. Take,
for example, the methods used by SMC for attaining psychic
experiences.

The entering student into the SMC course finds at the front of the classroom (where the altar stands in many turn-of-the-century cults and contemporary sects) a chart of the brain levels. It is explained to the student that "through the use of the sensitive amplifier used to record brain frequencies, the EEG, or electroencephalogram, four basic types of impulses have been classified" (SMC handout). These four types include beta, associated sense perception, alpha, associated with daydreaming, theta, associated with sleep (and it is hinted, creativity) and delta, associated with deep sleep and the state of newborn infants.

These brain waves have indeed been recognized by science. They are scientific _fact_ as is their association with certain mental activity. However, the causal connections have not been firmly established.

Nonetheless, SMC doctrine seizes these facts and then proceeds to build a fantastic edifice with these few blocks. For one thing, the brain wave frequencies are visualized spatially, not as points on a continuum, but as levels in an internal building, delta being the "deepest" level. These "levels" are given a physiological reality by SMC identification of the "delta" as the "oldest portion" of the brain (the back) and "alpha" and "beta" more recent and front levels. These older levels are also seen as "healthier." This is a belief translated from the occult ... that there exists "ancient wisdom" that if we may recapture will yield

great power.

Having, by a sort of poetic license with the term "level," created internal spaces to coincide with brain wave frequencies, these then become worlds which the adherents can reach through a series of techniques, <u>also borrowed from scientific experiment</u> (biofeedback in particular) to induce relaxation. Adherents are told through a simple count-down method (no measurement by instruments is done to determine when or if slower frequency levels are reached) they will be at a "deeper level." Once at this level, all sorts of powers are available to them, from sleep control to psychic healing. It is vaguely felt that the more complex powers, such as the psychic healing, are in fact associated with the "deepest" levels. However, it is worth noting that after the first meeting where the levels are introduced and such catch phrases as "Descent into Alpha" (meant to give an adventurous, science-fiction ring to the techniques, which are also talked about as "soloing through inner space"), the scientific terminology is dropped altogether and no effort is made to, say, identify particular levels (e.g. "now you are in theta, now you are in delta").

In analyzing this incorporation of science into doc-trine, it is interesting to note that what SMC and other "cult of man" groups do, is to abstract the <u>elements</u> from the scientific context and use them in their own context, which in itself (due to the rejection of rational knowledge)

is <u>never</u> systematic in terms of a "world view."

This represents a technological approach to science, an emphasis on science, not as a perspective, but as a "methodical attainment of a definitely given and practical end by means of an increasingly precise calculation of adequate means" (Gerth and Mills, 1958:293). Such an attitude is also a dimension of rationalization, one that is best illustrated by the role of and effect of industry in this society. In fact, the "cult of man" groups have many similarities to industry. Both are concerned with precision, efficiency and technique. Both are concerned with providing a product while making money. Both are concerned with rationality as pragmatism as opposed to rationality as cognitive system. Both are reacting to a world in which knowledge has become sufficiently fragmented to become neutralized, to become elements isolated from system in the same way (in Durkheimian terms) that social diversification isolates individuals from one another until they appear to have nothing in common. Both business and cult put these pieces back together again in their own arrangement, although the "cult of man" groups reject the development of explanations which would make "sense" out of the new arrangement. In this sense, the rejection of rational systematic thought can hardly be termed irrational. Coupled as it is with the emphasis on technology and pragmatic results, it expresses in fact a predominate attitude of technological society in

which industry and bureaucracy defines the framework.

Returning to the question of the relationship between belief and organization in these two groups (the CCR and the "cult of man" groups) it seems clear that the different attitude towards science held by these two groups is related to their economic organization (as it, in turn, reflects secular organization in general). The CCR rejects both on some levels -- subordinating scientific perspectives and techniques to religious ones and disassociating themselves from secular structures and rational economic organization. On the other hand, the "cult of man" group use of science, while ignoring the scientific perspective (science as a world view) concentrates on scientific techniques, tools and terms as the most pragmatic and efficient way to attain their own irrational ends. Similarly, as we noted in the last chapter, they use highly technical/rational methods of financing, advertising and course organization.

Hence, a comparison of belief and organization in these two types of groups seems to suggest that the attitude toward science reflects the degree of rationalism in the economic structure and meeting format. A review of the attitude toward science held by the turn-of-the-century cults suggests that as there are degrees of compromise between religious and economic structure (noted in the last chapter) so there are also degrees of accommodation to science.

The turn-of-the-century cults, while accepting science

in general, in fact focus on quite different aspects of
science than do the "cult of man" groups. While they seem
as a body to hold the credo that "Science and Religion are a
a unity" (Mann, 1972:62) they do not have the same kind of
saturation with terminology or techniques. The occult groups
have their own elaborate terminology, but little of it
resembles scientific or social scientific language. Mann
notes the occult groups use such words as aura, vibration,
transmigration, guru and hermetic and quotes the following
passage as exemplary of this esoteric vocabulary:

> On the word "charge" bring the hands down to your sides
> with dynamic energy but be perfectly relaxed. Visual-
> ize and feel the GREAT COSMIC STREAMS OF GOLDEN LIGHT
> SUBSTANCE blazing down through you from great BEAMS
> ABOVE you. This is actually taking place, streaming
> like an avalanche through your body, hands and feet,
> flooding into the gas belts below the earth's sur-
> face. (Mann, 1972:60)

Similarly, the healing techniques of the healing
groups (one of the central techniques of the turn-of-the-
century groups) seems to be not a backup to, but rather an
alternative to scientific/medical treatment. Finally, none
of these groups used scientific inventions, such as biofeed-
back machines, to aid them in their pursuits.

On what then is their claim that "science and religion
are one united" based? The source of this statement seems to
be twofold. On the one hand, it reflects the groups' com-
mitment to being intellectual. Both healing and occult
groups at the turn of the century rejected any sort of
emotionalism (as represented by the sects of that period).

Instead, they represented themselves as rational, calm and committed to the accumulation and application of a systematic knowledge (Ellwood, 1973; Mann, 1972; Whitehead, 1975). To this extent their identification with science was correct. What they were committed to was science as a perspective, science as a rational world view. In this sense, they shared with science a rationality, defined as "the kind of rationalization the systematic thinker performs on the image of the world: an increasing theoretical mastery of reality by means of increasingly precise and abstract concepts" (Gerth and Mills, 1958:293). Accordingly, they rejected disdainfully the shows of emotion/irrationality of the "born again" Christian. Finally, they shared with science a practical orientation (as many magical groups do):

> It was claimed that God's love enabled people to make and keep friends. Sermons provided positive suggestions on how to become socially acceptable .... It is significant that cultists were encouraged to seek from God such practical things as prosperity, success, poise, happiness and inner peace. (Mann, 1972:63)

The turn-of-the-century cults differed from science in their definition of empirical reality. The occultists and, to a lesser extent, the healing groups felt that not only the physical but the metaphysical world was governed by laws that were discoverable and susceptible to manipulation by man (sometimes with the help of supernatural figures). They felt that such understanding (and eventually such power) was to be gleaned by systematic study:

> Unity and New Thought teachings on the utilization of
> spiritual laws for the attainment of human perfection
> were positively accommodated to the progressive out-
> look of middle class people. This doctrine ascribed
> infinite powers of improvement to spiritually
> enlightened man. Particularly among the occult
> groups the doctrine of perfectibility embraced the
> goal of becoming a genuine metaphysician by the
> acquisition of ever greater esoteric knowledge.
> (Mann, 1972:65)

Hence, while both science and the turn-of-the-century
groups put man in the same perspective, (the actor in, as
opposed to the reactor to, his environment), the environment
itself was defined differently.

This stance put the turn-of-the-century cults in a
curiously vulnerable position. By accepting the scientific
perspective they were open to being proved wrong by science.
Hence, a good deal of energy was directed to a kind of com-
petitive attitude toward science. If within the cosmology
of the particular group a systematic explanation could be
found for phenomena which defied scientific explanation, the
cultist felt he had scored a victory. Similarly, if scien-
tific discoveries or evidence could be used to make a case
for some element of metaphysical reality (say, life after
death) great mileage was exacted by the cult from this data.
However, science could also find a physical explanation for
what the cultist had claimed as a metaphysical reality.
Hence, the attitude toward science was ambivalent. This was
particularly true of the healing groups who were offering an
alternative, not a backup as in the case of the CCR, to
scientific healing. This competitive attitude was underlined

by demanding that members of the Christian Science not patronize the medical/scientific practitioners, using only Christian Science practitioners.

It is evident that this ambivalent attitude towards science and scientists is related to the general attitude to the secular world. As such it is intimately linked to the economic and formal organization of these groups.

The turn-of-the-century groups attempted to master the spiritual world by the accumulation of systematic knowledge, but very few members even claim to have the experience of mastery (Ellwood, 1973). Their system, while paying lip-service to rationality is not efficient or precise in terms of results. Similarly, while attempting mass marketing in advertising, the cults individual chapters or programs were not standardized enough to package and sell. Too much was left to the (irrational) discretion of the individual 'lecturer'. Finally, their sources of financing were neither systematic nor reliable. This approach to the economy may fit their orientation to the spiritual world, as the scientific perspective fits their goal of understanding and manipulation. But neither their organization nor their doctrine were geared to the level of efficiency, precision, predictability of goal attainment present in "cult of man" groups.

In sum, we have indicated in this section that in all three groups the attitude towards science seems directly

expressive of the economic organization of the group (when
the latter is viewed as a measure of rationalisation). CCR
ignores or subordinates both the positivistic orientations
of science and the secular economy. The "cult of man" groups
incorporate the pragmatic or technical aspects of science in
their doctrines and make use of economic rationalism in
equally pragmatic ways. The cults of the turn of the cen-
tury fall somewhere in between these two extremes. They
adopt the perspective of science and some of the elements of
mass marketing and course-work format, but they fail to
develop either doctrine or organization to the kind of prag-
matic extremes which insures predictable and precise results.

Healing and Purification

In this section we will turn to the beliefs which may
be seen to flow from the "cult of man" groups' emphasis on
individual as opposed to community development. The spe-
cific doctrine which we will focus on is that of purification
and that of healing. The purification concern may be seen to
reflect the experience of having the sacred within each
individual, but also reflects the separation of the
individual from the group. Essentially, purification
involves the separation of elements. All "cult of man"
groups show concern about purification.

In contrast, groups such as the CCR which clearly
locate the sacred outside of the self seem to have very
little concern with purification. Rather, most such groups

exhibit, to a greater or lesser extent, a concern with heal-
ing. It will be argued in this section that healing, in con-
trast with purification, reflects a desire to join together
into larger wholes. It is a belief which is therefore
likely to be found in a group which emphasizes the importance
of community over individual. It is interesting to note that
none of the "cult of man" groups show similar concerns with
healing, with the exception of the Silva Mind Control group,
which we will discuss in some detail later in this section.
Even Psychosynthesis, which ostensibly comes from a thera-
peutic tradition, pays little attention to concepts of heal-
ing while centrally concerned with purification.

Healing and Community

For the members of the CCR the ritual of healing, both
in terms of memory healing and physical healing, is very
important to members. The gift of healing is highly valued,
and is granted to some lay members as well as clergy. Never-
theless, the healing power is seen to flow directly from God,
it is not the responsibility of the healer:

> If we imagine the faucet as the person healing, the
> Spring as God and the water as the gift, then we
> can say that no one ever thanks the faucet for
> having given him water. (Sauve, 1974:80)

Healings do not occur at every meeting, but are
usually requested by a member. If the healing is a mental
one, the healer will put his or her hand on the head of the
kneeling member, while other members of the group gather

around laying their hands also on the head of the ill person or each other, making a kind of human chain. The healer then recapitulates the significant events of the patient's life, asking at each stage that the Lord "heal these wounds." If the healing is a physical wound, the healer puts his or her hand on or near the afflicted area.

Most members of the CCR, if they have not had a physical healing have had a memory healing (which the leader of the Montreal group indicated was the more "important" of the two). Members describe the experience as follows:

> In the retreat with Father K. someone asked me if I wanted to be prayed over and I said yes. I spoke with one of his nuns first about my memories and then went to Father K. He said my person had been abused at the age of five and that I needed to forgive my mother and father. I had never thought of this before. I had been too ashamed to tell them. In the healing the Father took me in his arms. The Father blotted the pain and the negative effect it had had in my life. My innocence was restored to me and it set me free.
>
> - CCR member

> I had a hard childhood. I had no mother. I cried in bed about it and was jealous of others who had a mother. I went through the experience of memory healing. I walked with God and forgave everyone who had hurt me. I remembered even things that I had forgotten. It was very beautiful. I felt very good after.
>
> - CCR member

> The whole community heals. Ever since the memory healing I have felt free. The sense of a block removed ...
>
> - CCR member

> I was on retreat. During mass everyone stands around the altar. All of a sudden Sister G. said "someone is sick." I was having heart trouble ... I couldn't speak but I put up my hand. I was sitting and she

was standing beside me. She put her hand on me ... so
did others ... in about four minutes praying over me
the pulse went right back to normal. This is a charis-
matic gift. When you are in the group you can feel the
pain of someone else.

- CCR member

In all these descriptions there runs the theme of
unity. To be healed is to forgive, to forgive those around
you from whom you have been cut off. In healing you are
joined with lost memories, lost people and literally, the
people of the charismatic community itself. This latter is
both physical and spiritual. The members of a charismatic
community can "feel" each other's pain. They reach out to
touch and hold one another in order to heal that pain.
Finally, there is a sense of a block removed, of being joined
to God and to the sacred.

It is important to note as well, that the healings
which people experience in the community are seen as
dependent on the community. If a member leaves the community,
it is believed he is likely to fall sick again:

> People, of course, talk about what has happened to them
> and tend to bring others with similar problems to the
> prayer meeting. These visitors then ask for some sort
> of prayer for the healing of memories. They then leave
> the prayer meeting to return to the environment where
> these memories were conceived and nurtured. As a
> result, they are no better off than when they first
> came to the prayer meeting. (Sauve, 1974:54)

Hence, healing is an experience and a belief which
supports community. It sees sickness in terms of being cut
off from others, either by failing to forgive, by refusing
to open the self to God, by leaving the community. With

healing comes a new wholeness, and that wholeness is repre-
sented by a feeling of being joined to parts of the self and
to other people formerly neglected. In this sense, it may
be seen that the belief in healing flows from and supports
the emphasis on community development rather directly.

For this reason, it is particularly striking that the
"cult of man" groups place little or no emphasis on healing.
While the Charismatics view body and soul as something to be
cured, the "cult of man" groups seem to see both as some-
thing to be protected. In fact, it is difficult to find
reference to illness in "cult of man" literature, with the
exception of Silva Mind Control groups, which we will dis-
cuss in detail later. However, when illness is mentioned,
it is seen to hinge on internal imbalances, or neglect of
the self by the self:

> Normally, the imbalance of the instincts creates deep
> states of tension and anxiety which are reflected in
> our physical body, in our emotional temperament, in
> our personal idiosyncracies ... this entire complex
> produces in us what we call our personality, an
> arbitrary and unpredictable manifestation of the
> instinctual imbalance ... personality is our ill-
> ness, and we see the world through the anguish of
> that sickness.
>
> - Arica pamphlet

> Illness comes from disharmony with your own being. If
> I feel sick I take it as a sign. Sickness is the soul
> guiding itself ... we learn to grow through what
> happens to the personality. Sickness could be pre-
> vented if we knew our needs.
>
> - Psychosynthesis member

In order to prevent such disharmony, such imbalance,
"cult of man" groups suggest self-purification:

If we clearly answer our vital and instinctive ques-
tions, our psyche becomes purified and we see the
world exactly as it is. This is the healthy and
essential view, in other words, our natural and
essential state. The Arica system uses methods for
physical cleaning which returns natural balance to
the body ...

<div align="right">- Arica pamphlet</div>

Tonight we are going to talk about mental houseclean-
ing. The importance of changing negative to positive
thinking. The biggest step tonight is to introduce
the phrase 'cancel cancel' as a standard part of the
vocabulary. As soon as you hear something negative
you say cancel, cancel. We don't talk about problems,
but about negative and positive thinking.

<div align="right">- Silva Mind Control lecture</div>

What we're talking about is what it feels like if you
don't deal with your own energy, if you sit on it.
It's like backed up plumbing. Yetch! Your higher
self can't communicate if the plumbing is backed up ...

<div align="right">- Psychosynthesis member</div>

From these quotes it is obvious that purification is

an internal matter, involving internal reordering, getting

in touch with inner Being, re-establishing balances. There

is no reference made to other people, past or present in

this re-ordering. It is a private matter. In fact, rela-

tions with other people are often seen as activating the

personality, causing the imbalance. The symptoms of

imbalance are "habits, hidden fears, physical, emotional and

mental tensions, anxiety, susceptibility, sickness, addic-

tion, cruelty, erotomania, allergies, phobias and in extreme

cases, psychosis" (Arica pamphlet). In a group such as

Psychosynthesis, any emotion displayed in interaction is

described as getting "hooked." The idea of purification is

to separate the emotions and the inner self from the outer

personality which interacts with others, as opposed to iden-
tifying with that personality which can lead to confusion of
self with others, hence the term "hooking."

From this analysis, it would seem that purification
beliefs and attitudes to the body are centrally concerned
with the problem of separation, of cleansing. For adherents
of "cult of man" groups this belief supports the individual-
ist structure of group life not only because the process is
seen as internal and private but because contamination
occurs in faulty interaction with other people and things in
the outside world. Hence, it discourages the development of
community and reinforces the existing individualistic
structure.

It is interesting, in this light to examine the one
example of a healing ritual present in any of the "cult of
man" groups: the psychic healing exercise which ends the
Silva Mind Control course. Throughout the course, Silva
Mind Control members are told that they can prevent their
own ill health by mind control, "positive thought" and
repeating such phrases as "I will never learn to contract,
either mentally or physically, the disease known as cancer."
At the end of the course they are told they can also learn
to cure other people by mind control. They simply get a
picture of the ill person on their "mental screen" by doing
their relaxation techniques. They scan the person mentally
to diagnose the illness, then they imagine the illness cured

and send the person on their way (mentally).

When comparing this ritual to that of the CCR, two interesting points emerge. The first is that the healing goes on entirely within the person's mind. During the training, the healer works with a "orientologist" who supplies him with the name and age of the person to be healed and who tells him when he has made the correct diagnosis, but no one but the healer sees the sick person, his or her disease or his or her cure. Related to this, and more important, the SMC students are told specifically that "we do not perform psychic investigation of a person when that person is present" and "we do not give our own name to be worked as a case while we are present." For the students in the class, this means that the cases that they do are people they have never heard of and never seen. This, according to the SMC beliefs, is one of the proofs that psychic healing goes on: the person healing is able to visualize, diagnose and cure a person he has never seen, and most likely never will. The connections between people, particularly between members of the group is practically non-existent, as is any confrontation with the physical reality of disease. The sick people appear as parts of the internal world of the healer which he "bathes in white light" and sends away. Little effort is made by members even to check if a cure "in the world" was in fact effected. Hence, it could be argued that for all intents and purposes this "healing" ritual is in fact another

type of purification in which elements present within the individual are cleansed and separated out, with little reference to the real relationships between people evident in the charismatic healing ritual, or indeed in most accepted healing rituals, medical or religious.

In sum, then, when comparing the CCR groups with the "cult of man" movements, we find very different approaches to the physical and mental "health." The former is curative, the latter preventive. The former sees the problems as stemming from the individual cutting himself off from others, failing to forgive, failing to open himself to God. The latter sees the problem in terms of internal imbalances and contaminations, stemming from the confusion of inner and outer self, of self and others. The answer is reuniting with the community in the former case; in the latter, it is avoiding getting hooked by others in the community and looking inward to re-establish balance.

If we consider the turn-of-the-century groups in the light of this opposition, there appears to be a split between groups. Mann has noted that there were two kinds of groups: the healing groups and the occult groups. Of the two, the healing groups became the more established in the course of time. Groups such as Christian Science which endured, became more sect-like in terms of their demands for total commitment of their members. Their healing ritual is interesting in the light of the contrast between the SMC and the CCR rituals.

While there was no physical contact between patient and
healer, nonetheless, they are usually in the same room. It
is a private interaction involving only patient and healer
(not the community at large) but involves the healer tuning
into the mind of the patient, becoming one with him and so
healing him. This ritual provides a fascinating combination
of the two extremes we discussed earlier. Like SMC, the
healing is mental, involving the ability of the healer to
somehow join himself mentally with his patient. Like SMC,
all illness is seen as due to negative thought or idea
habits. Unlike SMC, but like the CCR, this negative thinking
is seen as involving a cutting off of the self from God.
Like CCR, the correction of this condition involves the
patient voluntarily opening himself to another member of the
community. The ritual hence falls midway between the two
oppositions of purification and healing. It also reflects
the group organization of the turn-of-the-century healing
cults: the relationship between members was not as strong as
the sects past and present but between leader and follower,
the links were much stronger than in the "cult of man"
groups.

On the other hand, the occult groups made little or no
reference to healing. Most of these groups, however, had
elements of gnosticism (like many of the "cult of man"
groups) and so were centrally concerned with the contamina-
tion which could result from interaction with the people and

things of the external world:

> ... the objective and purpose of the efforts of the
> Gnostic is to establish an effective conscious con-
> tact with this ultimate Source of Power and Life,
> which resides constantly at the very back of our con-
> sciousness and therefore is always available. This
> unobstructed contact can only be established when the
> dominion of the rulers is broken, that is, when man
> is no longer subject to the attachments and fascina-
> tions of the lower world of sense perceptions,
> emotions and analytical reason, but having trans-
> cended the latter, has put on the 'vesture of light'
> and thus has accomplished what modern analytical
> psychology calls total integration. (Ellwood, 1973:118)

What is interesting is that organizationally the occult groups were more loosely organized than the healing groups, putting less emphasis on community than the latter. This fact seems to support our general theory, as does the fact, pointed out by Mann, that the drift of membership over time was away from the healing groups and towards the occult groups (seldom did members of the occult groups go to the healing groups). It may be suggested that the looser, more individualistic structure and doctrine of the occult groups became more reflective of the organization of the larger society as the differentiation and specialization, which marks our society, continued to advance.

In closing this discussion of the healing and purifi-cation beliefs and their relation to social structure, it is interesting to note, in passing the case of Scientology. Scientology presents a particularly instructive case because it is a group which has existed for a comparatively long time and only in its later phases of development has come to

clearly identify the sacred as within the individual. It provides an example of a single group in which the belief system has evolved to fit changes in the organizational structure in the predicted manner. A brief review of this process may hence provide longitudinal data that supplements the cross-sectional data we have reviewed.

Scientology has one of the longer histories of any of the current cults. It was established in or around 1949, under the name Dianetics. Between then and the mid-nineteen fifties, it proliferated as a number of loosely connected groups centered around auditors who were trained by the Foundation and its founder-leader, L. Ron Hubbard. The fees were minimal and along with the actual organization of the individual group, left largely to the discretion of the individual leader. The doctrine was a systematic view of the human mind which drew a great deal from Freudian analysis (Wallis, 1977). The aim of the group was to treat individuals therapeutically to rid them of 'engrams' acquired through traumas in their youth and to which they were still reacting, which were programming their current responses. The treatment was a lengthy therapeutic process with an auditor to search back through the patients' past and root out these engrams through a series of systematically developed diagnostic and analytic techniques. The result was a 'clear' patient, one who used the 'analytic' as opposed to the 'reactive' mind to make decisions. The clear

patient was also free of physical and mental illness.

> The purpose of Dianetic therapy, therefore, was to gain
> access to and locate engrams, and 'erase' them from the
> reactive mind, thus eradicating their effects in the
> form of psychosomatic illness, emotional tension or
> lowered capability. (Wallis, 1977:23)

Adherents who had experienced this treatment, spoke of
improved health and well-being. The theory also included a
series of levels or dynamics, the highest of which was "the
urge toward survival as a part of or ward of a Supreme
Being (Wallis, 1977:39).

In the early fifties, due to organizational difficul-
ties, Dianetics underwent the change to become Scientology.
This change involved both the organization and the beliefs of
the movement. Organizationally, Scientology represented the
bureaucratization of the movement. "Boards of Directors,
ill-regulated and salaried staffs, and irreverent wives were
things of the past" (Whitehead, 1975:580). Scientology
became centralized and standardized. The loose structure was
replaced by a well-defined coursework format, with set fees
for each course. The groups were turned into classes from
which one graduated. What was taught in the courses was pre-
programmed, and auditors could not practice independently
(Wallis, 1977; Malko, 1971; Whitehead, 1975).

The changes which the beliefs underwent were of con-
siderable interest to the subject of this thesis. In the
first place, the systematic and positivist orientation of
Dianetics was abandoned:

Accordingly, he (L. Ron Hubbard) openly reversed his
position on the material nature of the psyche and
began to develop a set of ideas that would account
not only for past lives and the wild assortment of
incidents which people found in their earlier life-
times, but also for the whole range of uncanny phen-
omena which have hitherto been relegated to the
realm of the supernatural. (Whitehead, 1975:580-81)

In accordance with this acceptance of uncanny phen-

omena, Scientology departed from Dianetics in that it posited

that humans had within themselves the potential to become

'Operating Thetans' -- i.e. divine. With this notion the con-

ception of 'clear' shifted slightly. It was no longer a state

of having been healed of past engrams; instead it became the

state of developing more of this inner potential. Accord-

ingly, auditing became less important and less lengthy.

While the emphasis on positivism diminished, Scientology

became more preoccupied with technology. The E-Meter, a

sensory device, was introduced into the auditing process to

speed up the detection of problem areas in the personality.

As well, an increased emphasis was placed on the technology

of communication, on being able to type or class other people

and on being able to communicate like a machine with utmost

technical proficiency. Inherent in this seemed to be a

desire to avoid contamination in interpersonal relations.

One graduate of the communications course expressed this as

follows:

I am no longer afraid of causing an unwanted effect on
another being. This Grade has cleared out such a lot
of garbage I knew was there, but I never could put my

finger on, and so was therefore the effect of it. I
feel great knowing that it is gone. (Wallis, 1977:
120)

This brief summary of the development of Scientology
is meant to indicate that as the structure of a single
group changed from irrational to rational, its use of
science changed from empirical system to technological
device. Its image of the sacred moved from without to within
and its emphasis moved from a kind of patient-client healing
therapy reminiscent of Christian Science, to an emphasis on
purity of relations, of inner state and of individual power.

The Integrated Self vs. the "Cast of Thousands"

Closely related to the previous belief dimension is
a feature conspicuous because of its presence in the "cult
of man" groups and its absence elsewhere. This is the belief
in internal fragmentation or the "cast of thousands" -- a
belief quite opposite from that held by the CCR and reflect-
ing, it may be argued, both the partiality and the trans-
ience of the "cult of man" organization.

One of the elements of most pentacostal and sect-like
groups, which the CCR imitates, is the experience of being
'born again' as a whole new person. The experience, as
described by the initiates, is one of self-discovery, of
feeling whole, 'filled' with the Spirit, doubts and confusion
washed away (Gerlach and Hines, 1970). Members of the
Montreal CCR groups described their reactions to the Baptism
of the Spirit which marked their official entry into the

group as follows:

> It was like a rebirth. There was tremendous love. I
> was a new person. It changed things -- it really
> happened. It was as if I met God.
>
> — CCR member

> Something wonderful happened. I was emptied of sin --
> I had an awareness of who I was. It was like a beam
> of light. The first thing was the depth of awareness
> of my own self -- it caused a lot of pain. Joy came
> slowly as I was emptied of sin. The joy was the real-
> ization of the darkness that the Lord had brought me
> out of.
>
> — CCR member

> It was at a retreat. The experience was a dissolving...
> the hardnesses were softened. I cried a lot -- it was
> like a washing. I felt heat. I felt love from all
> the people who were praying over me and I felt love
> for them.
>
> — CCR member

There is a sense of homecoming, rebirth, awakening in
all these descriptions that seems to describe a person
'coming to himself' in the presence of God. It was identity
forming: a new person in a new relationship, but a wholer,
more integrated person than before. The 'I was lost but now
I'm found' theme is so common to this type of group that it
has become another cliché.

In contrast, the training received in the "cult of
man" groups hinges on an interesting phenomenon: the recog-
nition by members that within them dwells not one but a
multitude of different people and/or personalities.

Psychosynthesis, for instance, talks about the number
of sub-personalities. In addition to the Higher Self and
the personality which acts in the world, there is a great

splintering of self of which the student gradually becomes aware. These sub-personalities are seen as being at war with each other, in need of another presence which is judge and mediator:

> All of us have a large number of what might be called sub-personalities. These are aspects of ourselves which emerge in different situations, called forth by the varying roles we play in life and these are often quite inconsistent with one another. When we say "I" it is rarely the voice of the true Self speaking but rather one of the sub-personalities. These partial aspects of ourselves have a way of making decisions and promises which commit the whole person, and we may find ourselves in conflict when one of the sub-personalities refuses to honor a commitment made by a contradictory one, leaving us in a state of inner civil war.
>
> — Psychosynthesis handbook

It is interesting to note that these sub-personalities are permanent fixtures of the interior landscape. The goal of Psychosynthesis is not to eliminate them but to balance them.

Groups like est and Silva Mind Control have other sorts of internal landscapes. In the case of SMC, these are a male and a female which materialize in the internal imaginary 'lab' which the student has created. These guides will thereafter be available at all times for consultation on psychic matters. In addition, due to the abilities of the SMC member to bring any other existing person into his or her 'lab' and so project them on the 'mental' screen, there is a sense which members have of being continually in tune with internal millions:

> ... There are an awful lot of sick people floating
> around out there in need of help and the psychic
> might get the wrong person altogether on the screen.
> Fine tuning only comes with practice. If you get
> the wrong person don't worry ... just heal that
> person and send him on his way ...
>
> - Silva Mind Control - instructor

This sense of a floating sea of people directly con-
nected to the internal world of the student is very promin-
ent in the literature of Shakti and Arica. Both these groups
are very concerned with past lives of members. One of the
aims of Shakti is to eliminate the blocks in Consciousness
so that the individual can become aware of all the past
selves that have inhabited his or her body, as well as all
the bodies the present 'soul' has inhabited which is termed
"total recall of the entire Being-history." Arica, too,
seeks moments at 'Higher Levels' when they are mentally
united with others' present and past selves, as well as their
own. At level +6 (a very high level) Arica members are not
only linked to their two spirit guides (Lilly, 1972:214) but
to other people past and present:

> At a certain point of the trip in Chile, I was doing
> an ego reduction with another man. He had found a
> bit of my ego and I went up quite automatically into
> Satori +6 while holding in +4 and +12. The part of
> me in +6 took a look around and saw that part of him
> was peaking into +6 but that he didn't know it. I
> came back down and reported this to him, including
> one sentence on having met him before in a previous
> life. He apparently wasn't aware of the part of him-
> self that went into +6. He became extremely angry
> upon hearing me talk about previous lives in which
> his self-metaprogrammer does not believe; he broke
> off our contact. (Lilly, 1972:216)

> I realized that all Essences are connected to one
> another on level 6 and are in communication whether
> one's self knows this or not.   They also share past
> histories of each self.   (Ibid.:214)

For Arica members as well, reaching the higher levels
of consciousness means becoming aware of an internal "cast of
thousands".

This sense of internal diversity is one of the most
interesting aspects of the beliefs of the "cult of man" move-
ments.   Ellwood (1973) has pointed out that occult groups
often present members with spirit helpers.   However, in
general, these helpers locate themselves outside the individ-
ual.   For example, the Theosophists posited the existence of
a group of Masters, "those great mediating figures who repre-
sent individuals much more highly evolved than the ordinary
person."   Much of the Theosophist training is to develop psy-
chic and occult powers which will help them contact these
masters and use their powers.   However, the Masters remain
outside entities that the Theosophist may visit in spirit.
Similarly, the Spiritualists have a series of Levels in their
cosmology.   At each level dwell different spirits, astral
entities, angels, angel loved ones, invisible friends,
messengers, spirit helpers, guides (in descending order).
Not all spiritualists can tune into these levels; for most,
they can only contact these higher beings through the medium.
The medium himself may contact these entities only if they so will.
The spirits have an existence and a will outside the medium
(even though they make their appearance through the mind of

the medium) (Zaretsky, I, 1975:209). Hence, unlike Arica,
this cast of thousands (a) is not available to everyone;
(b) is not an inherent part of the internal landscape of
the individual, available to be tuned into any time the
individual chooses. For the turn-of-the-century cults, the
individual was not seen as a collection of spirits or per-
sonalities.

Once again this belief seems to share elements of both
the contemporary "cult of man" groups and the sect. The
spiritual world is heavily populated and it is possible for
the human individual to tune in to this plurality but the
plurality does not exist within the individual. Like the CCR
members, the individual is visited by the supernatural. The
turn-of-the-century cults retain at least some autonomy of
action in the spirits and some of the sense of the integra-
tion of self that marks the charismatic experience.

While the relationship is not as direct as in the
previous two cases, it may be argued that this contrast
between internal integration and internal diversity on the
belief level corresponds to the organizational dimension of
total versus partial identification. The way in which the
sect demands total identification, to the extent that even
friendships with people outside the cult tend to wither away,
also produces a very strong and unified reference group for
identity formation. On the other hand, the kind of com-
promises which the "cult of man" makes with the secular world

and secular values, the way in which the individual takes his
knowledge gained in the cult back out into the world instead
of bringing the world for reinterpretation by the cult, means
that the "cult of man" member still faces the problem of
establishing identity in terms of a number of competing
reference systems. Note in the above quote about Psychosyn-
thesis that the sub-personalities are seen as 'called forth
by the varying roles we play in life'. The belief in the
cast of thousands may well flow from the experience of par-
tial identification which the organization of the movement
(and of the technological society which it mirrors) encour-
ages. Similarly, the belief in the ability of the leader in
the turn-of-the-century occult groups to at least contact the
myriad of spiritual beings in the universe, seems to flow
from the organization which stresses the leader-disciple
relation. The beliefs of the turn-of-the-century groups seem
to suggest that the boundaries are fluid, but they haven't
disappeared. Similarly, their organization, while fluid,
seemed, as we noted in the last chapter, to maintain more
commitment than the "cult of man" groups. If nothing else,
the membership did not seem to have as many competing alle-
giances as the "cult of man" members. This issue will be
dealt with in greater detail in the next chapter.

    The above beliefs may also be seen to flow from the
permanent-transient opposition which we discussed in organ-
izational terms. This opposition can be seen as inextricably

linked to both the community vs. individual development and the total vs. partial identification aspects of group organization. In other words, the transient nature of group life, formally limited by the coursework structure, seems by definition to result in an emphasis on individual development and on partial identification. Similarly, the cast of thousands' belief is not only a way of expressing an identity based on pluralistic social organization but also an identity based on a continuously shifting social organization.

More specifically, the transience-permanence opposition seems linked to a certain aspect of the cast of thousands' belief: the degree to which the past and/or future personalities of the individual member are seen to be present in the internal landscape of that individual as active figures to which he ought to be able to relate. This, of course, implies at least some support of the notion of reincarnation. A firm belief in the resurrection of the soul as found in the CCR mitigates against the notion of the multiplicity of selves. However, the interest in reincarnation is given a special twist in the instance of the "cult of man" groups which believe in it. Many of the turn-of-the-century cults, while believing in reincarnation, did not attempt to recapture an awareness of these selves simultaneous with this present existence. The eastern groups who support the notion of reincarnation, see it often as a condition to escape, not to reclaim and experience. But the "cult of man" groups

which search out their own past and future personalities in
their present selves see such simultaneous awareness as con-
trol, overcoming the forgetfulness of death. And the notion
is most highly developed in the "cult of man" group which
places greatest emphasis on organizational transience:
Shakti.

As we noted in the previous chapter, Shakti often dis-
solves groups in mid-course and then sets up shop under a new
name. E. Gold, the leader of the group, is also intensely
preoccupied with the past and future lives of members, of the
problem of death and rebirth under a different form. In his
latest book, the American Book of the Dead, Gold describes
in detail the problems of the transition from death to
rebirth, in order that these can be subject to the control of
the individual. This interest can be seen as an extension of
the Shakti desire to 'unfold the soul' so that the individual
can become conscious during Between World Flights, able to
choose the next body, eliminate "massive memory blackouts"
which cause the individual to forget its previous lives
(Palmer, 1975:64). The exercises developed in Shakti are all
orientated (like Gold's book) to "the formation of a Being
able to 'consciously Determine and Direct the Genetic Code
Module Package'," able in other words, to remember his or her
past lives and the transition from one to another. This
developed belief system quite clearly is related to the con-
tinual process of death and rebirth of the group organization

itself, in other words, the transience of the group. The
'cast of thousands' as a collection of past and future iden-
tities, seems also to reflect transience vs. permanence.
Shakti's latest offering is a correspondence course in the
art of dying.

In conclusion, we have tried in this chapter to
describe some features of the belief systems of the "cult of
man" which separate these groups both from other new
religious movements of the sect variety and turn-of-the-
century cults. In addition, we have attempted to demon-
strate that these beliefs are directly related to the organ-
izational elements of group life which distinguished these
groups from others. These relationships are summarized in
Table 2.

We have tried to show that the emphasis on scientific
technology reflects a rationalized economic organization,
that the emphasis on purification reflects the individual-
istic style of the organization and that the belief in
internal fragmentation reflects the pluralism of this cult
organization. Finally, we have noted that while no specific
belief alone seems to represent the transient nature of
group life, elements of this transience appear to be
reflected in the clear emphasis on the idea of the internal
"cast of thousands" (particularly when members of this cast,
as they often are, are representatives of past lives). We
have noted that such beliefs differ to the point of direct

opposition to those held by the CCR who also occupy the
opposing position on the organizational continuum. Finally,
we have suggested that the cults of the turn-of-the-century
which fall somewhere in the middle on the organizational
continuum, also hold beliefs which seem a mixture of these
opposing views and which in turn seem nicely to reflect their
own unique organization.

- Insert Table 2 about here -

In the next chapter we will leave the comparative
framework we have used in the past two chapters and take a
closer look at the "cult of man" groups alone, at the way
their organization and beliefs reflect not only each other,
but the larger social structure of which they are a part.
We will also examine the way in which the beliefs described
in this chapter are all aspects of that central belief, which
Durkheim suggested was expressive of the diversification and
specialization of the modern world: the location of the
sacred within the human individual.

Table 2

Hypothesized relationship between the Character of Social
Organization and Corresponding Beliefs in "Cult of Man,"
turn-of-the-century and Charismatic Renewal groups

	Character of Social Organization	Corresponding Belief
"Cult of Man"	rationalized economic structure: fee for coursework	emphasis on science as technology
	emphasis on individual development	corner with contamination and purity
	partial involvement of members transient community life	internal cast of thousands past personalities important
turn-of-the century cults	structure semi-rational-ized advertising pseudo lecture format failure to use methods to secure continuity of group	acceptance of science as an orientation, failure to 'use' technology to achieve ends
	leader-disciple relation-ship	concern with healing on a one-to-one basis; healer-client
	membership with few competing involvements although total commit-ment not demanded	internal sense of unity except for 'mediums' - leaders able to contact casts of spiritual helpers
	groups short-lived but not deliberately term-inated	-individual's own past personalities exist but don't figure in cast
Catholic Charis-matic Renewal	structure irrational	science subordinated to religious means and ends
	group links very important	concern with healing of each other, all members participate in ritual
	total commitment demanded	internal unity individual not seen as having had previous lives
	group life seen as infinite	or personalities but in attempting to attain "eternal life."

CHAPTER VII

BEHIND THE FACES: POLLUTION FEARS AND THE NOTION OF
THE SACRED IN "CULT OF MAN" GROUPS

In this chapter we will return to a consideration of
the central and identifying feature of the "cult of man"
groups: their definition of the sacred as lying within the
individual. We will begin with a more detailed description
of the notion of the sacred which the groups hold. We will
then attempt an interpretation of the appeal of these beliefs
and by implication, the relationship of the belief system of
the "cult of man" groups and the larger North American social
structure from which members are drawn and which shape the
experience of these members.

One feature of religious experience which Durkheim
fails to develop in his discussion of the "cult of man," but
which he discusses at some length in Elementary Forms is the
sacred/profane dichotomy. In primitive religion, Durkheim
saw this opposition as central:

> ... two classes which embrace all that exists but which
> radically exclude each other. Sacred things are those
> which the interdictions protect and isolate; profane
> things, those to which the interdictions are applied
> and which must remain at a distance from the first.
> Religious beliefs are the representations which express
> the nature of sacred things and the relations which
> they sustain, either with each other or with profane
> things. Finally, rites are the rules of conduct which
> prescribe how men should behave in relation to sacred
> things. (Durkheim, 1961:56)

In discussing the "cult of man," Durkheim makes refer-
ence to this sacred/profane split, only indirectly, by
suggesting that the human individual (idealized) will be
"invested with that mysterious property which creates an
empty space around holy objects which keeps them from profane
contacts and draws them from ordinary life" (Durkheim, 1969:
21). He, elsewhere, makes it clear that it is not the
'individual personality' which will be worshipped or held
sacred, however. Rather, it is the qualities of idealized
humanity in each person. Where these qualities will be
located so that a space is drawn around them which separates
them from the profane contacts (which one must assume
includes the individual personality) Durkheim does not make
clear.

In the previous chapter in which we examined some of
the central beliefs of the "cult of man" groups, however, the
location and relationship of sacred to profane has become
somewhat clearer. It is as if the line dividing the two lies
within the individual human being. Indeed, it is his 'outer'
personality which is associated with the profane and his
inner 'Being' wherein he is joined to all humanity in his
perfection and limitless potential which contains the sacred.

The most immediate and obvious effect of having sacred
and profane coexistent in the same body is an intense concern
with the problem of contamination. Durkheim suggested that
the relationship of sacred and profane are governed in both

positive and negative ways. Positive rituals allowed for intercourse between sacred and profane; negative prevented contamination.

When sacred and profane are so spatially intimate, the emphasis is inevitably negative; the prevention of contamination becomes all-important. This has been true in the past of gnostic movements (to which the "cult of man" groups have been compared) (Ellwood, 1973). Past gnostic movements, however, which shared this trait of seeing Man as both sacred and profane, believed Man was a spark of light or divinity encapsulated in a profane envelope of flesh which tied him to this world. The sacred element of Man was associated with his powers for rational and intellectual thought, whereas the profane was his instinctual nature, including his physical body (Ellwood, 1973; Brown, 1975). Great pains were then taken to subdue the body and develop the intellect in order that the former would not contaminate the latter.

In contrast, the "cult of man" groups have almost reversed the labelling of most gnostic groups. For them, the profane is the rational mind and the sacred is the deeper instinctual nature and the body. One obvious explanation for this reversal is the fact that the outer material world, which is also held to be profane, has become increasingly less natural, more artificial, technological, man-made and 'disenchanted'. It could be argued that for gnostic-type movements (those which locate both sacred and profane within

the individual) the aspect of the human make-up which is most similar to the outer world and the order of that world is seen as profane, while that which seems 'not of this world' is seen as the location of the sacred. Hence for the "cult of man" drawing its support from the dwellers of large cosmopolitan cities in which most, if not all 'natural' processes and things have been replaced by man-made artifacts and technology, the rational conscious mind which built this world and the 'personality' that operates in it are seen as profane whereas the deeper instincts and flesh and blood body become the sacred.

> For archaic man, and for most religion through the ages, nature has been real, but not in itself sacred. It has been rather the "enemy," identified with primordial chaos, which man subdues to create the sacred as ordered human society -- the city with the temple in its midst.
> Now, however, in a return to a new form of cosmic religion nature has become the sacred and the city the profane. It was not actually likely that the "secular city" would become the sacred, for the sacred is always that which is hidden, inaccessible, rare ... (Ellwood, 1973:303)

Unlike the gnostic groups, therefore, the "cult of man" movements are not physical ascetics. They are not trying to subdue the body or the instincts to protect the rational mind. Instead, as we will see in subsequent chapters on ritual, they aim to subdue the latter to protect the former. They aim to keep body and being 'pure' from the contamination of the machine world and all its 'wastes'.

The notion of purity, which we described in the last chapter, articulates in the most direct manner the problem of

possible contamination which the proximity of sacred and pro-
fane in the individual creates. As we noted, this last
notion involves both a private dimension of self-purification
(one maintains a space around the sacred by a careful
balancing and neutralizing of profane elements which other-
wise run riot and take over the individual) and an inter-
actional dimension (in which one carefully detaches the Inner
Self from participation in contaminating interactions with
others). It is both these dimensions which have undoubtedly
been the source of the theories labelling the "cult of man"
groups among all new religious movements as narcissistic and
individualistic.

However, if Durkheim is correct,the location of the
sacred within the individual is not only a result of "having
nothing in common" (i.e. an expression of societal special-
ization and diversity) but also an expression of what people
still have in common: their essential humanity. The atti-
tude toward the sacred found in these groups should therefore
tell us something not only about the members as individuals
but about members as part of a larger social group.

We will now turn to a more precise examination of the
attitude toward the sacred, which seems to be a central pre-
occupation with the prevention of pollution and/or contamin-
ation. While this seems on the surface to suggest a fear of
interpersonal contacts as one source of contamination, on the
other hand, there is evidence in the advertising literature

and in the statements of members themselves of an intense
longing for interpersonal contacts. It seems that the
members suffer from contradictory impulses: to seek out and
to avoid intimate contact. In this sense 'ideal of commu-
nity' which some theorists have identified and the
'privatism' mentioned by others are both experienced by the
members themselves.

In order to understand how these seemingly contrary
positions relate in the group belief system, and what they
reflect about social relations we will, in the remainder of
this chapter, take a closer look at pollution fears in "cult
of man" groups and what they communicate about the members'
experience in society at large.

The Hunger for Close Encounters

Researchers who have studied the "cult of man" groups,
leaders of the groups and members themselves, all admit that
one of the main drives for joining the movements is to meet
new people or to improve the existing relations. A survey
of est participants indicated that 79.9% of participants
joined with the expectation that they would be able to have
"better relationships with family and friends" (Ornstein,
1975) and Wallis (1977) notes that for recruits to Scientol-
ogy, "problems of interpersonal relations were prominent
sources of motivation to seek help" (Wallis, 1977:170). The
groups themselves are obviously aware of this appeal and play
up to it in their advertising. Scientology terms itself:

the keys to understanding the human mind and human
nature. With them you have the Vital Knowledge
necessary to understanding others, handling them
and establishing sane, growing relationships.
(Wallis, 1977:162)

Silva Mind Control suggests it will improve your
business and personal relationships. Arica offers a special
course on Understanding the Couple, claiming that "Beyond the
failure of the conventional couple, a whole new style of
relationship opens up based on honesty, respect and love:
the evolutionary couple" (Arica pamphlet).

The leaders of the groups often freely admit that
initially the group provides a kind of Lonely Hearts Club:
"People come here looking for companionship. They tend to
latch onto that as a first way of setting up an environment"
(Palmer, 1976:37). Est is acknowledged to be a good place
to meet eligible people of the opposite sex (Greene, 1976;
Bry, 1976).

Finally, the members themselves describe their attrac-
tion to the group in terms of a longing to somehow get closer
to people.

I joined Psychosynthesis because I didn't feel like I
was giving or getting love ... my needs weren't being
met and I know I wasn't meeting other people's needs,
which was sad because I wanted to. I wanted to find
out what was blocking me.

                              - Psychosynthesis member

I took the est training because I am really nervous
about my job and I wanted to get over that. Some of
my friends had taken it and they appeared to have
gotten a lot out of it. Besides, they would all sit
around and talk and laugh about their experiences in

a language that seemed to leave me out a little. I
figured I would go out and get the training and then
I could really be with them and experience what they
were experiencing.

                                        - est member

I leafed through the book (on Arica) and saw that it
was underlined and thought that maybe I could get to
know more about the girl by reading it. So I
borrowed it.

                                        - Arica member

The sense of being blocked, excluded from normal
interchange with other people characterizes many of the
testimonies of members. There seems to be a "barrier to
trust," something keeping the member from the kind of contact
he would like to have. He is in search of some "key of
understanding," which, as in the last quote, will somehow
open himself or other people so that an interchange and/or
relationship might develop.

According to the beliefs of the "cult of man" groups,
the block which keeps people from "experiencing life" being
"in tune with the world" or "meeting other people," is that
'profane' part of ourselves, the 'personality' or 'ego', the
outer aspect with which we habitually interrelate. Silva
Mind Control terms it the 'beta mind'; est, Arica call it
the 'ego', Psychosynthesis and Shakti call it the 'person-
ality', but leaders, literature and members all identify it
as the source of the difficulty in getting 'close' to other
people and to life in general.

The problem with the 'ego', as seen by these groups,
is that it is a machine or robot, reacting and acting purely

mechanically to people and situations. It is built out of

societal norms, old traumas, old behavior patterns.

> Unfortunately, most people never have a chance to
> develop their instincts. The society which teaches
> us skills we need in order to survive also con-
> ditions us to behavior patterns which cover our
> instincts so that instead of feeling in tune with
> the world we feel afraid in it, imitating others
> and deceiving ourselves.
>
> — Arica pamphlet

It continues through the routines and daily games, "our acts"

which keep our instinctual or essential selves from develop-

ing and growing with which we deceive ourselves and others.

The 'ego' is hence seen as a tyrant which runs a house it

doesn't own.

> Gold (E. J. Gold, the group founder of Shakti) sees the
> divine essence as a seed that must be worked on in order
> to grow. The reason so few people grow a soul is that
> they are so caught up in their routines and daily games.
> There are blockages, nerve disorders in the body which
> stop growth. So what Shakti was trying to do was to
> shock people out of their routines, their conditioned
> beliefs, patterns, responses, so they could have a good
> look at themselves, at what they were doing ... Ego is
> repressed in order to give Being a chance to grow ....
>
> — Shakti member

> After the training, I began to realize what an "act" I
> was running. I claimed to be such a private person
> because I was really afraid to admit that I needed other
> people. At the time it was more important for me to be
> cool and sophisticated, without ever letting anyone get
> too close. Now, I understand that this 'privacy number'
> is an excuse to prevent myself from being in touch with
> what is going on. It's a barrier to experiencing life.
>
> — est member

Finally, the problem is created by the ego-quality of

rational and analytic thought, which sees life as a history,

a series of events, which attempts always to interpret or

explain.

> Its usually the ego that does the talking about per-
> sonal history. If put aside, it won't get in the way
> and more attention is focused on what else is going
> on.
>
> - Shakti member

> -- an ego is a point of view attempting to cause its
> own survival. So its purpose is to dominate every-
> thing and everybody ... thinking you know is an actual
> . barrier to experience.
>
> - Werner Erhard, est founder

> ... rational thought paralyzes everything. Reality
> doesn't happen that way. In reality everything flows.
> This means that your reason is not matching reality.
> When that happens you enter the endless process of the
> chattering of the mind that in Arica we know as
> dokosis or the strength of the imagination so out of
> control that it forms opinions about anything and
> everything.
>
> - Oscar Ichazo, Arica founder

Hence, the personality or ego is seen as an accumula-

tion of roles or 'acts' or sub-personalities, made up in turn

of preconceptions, old anxieties, patterns, responses,

behavior patterns with which we attempt to deal with the

world and relate to others. We pin our conception of reality

onto reality and therefore fail to see what is real or essen-

tial, either in ourselves or in others. The result, according

to "cult of man" groups, is that we are isolated, lonely,

hungering after contact which we prevent ourselves from

having.

From this image of the personality and interpersonal

relations, it is easy to understand why some theorists would

believe these groups to be counterculture and compensatory.

What seems to be described is alienated individuals hungering

for close community and joining a movement which addresses
itself to the problem and provides such a community. People
who feel the impersonality and technology of modern life,
drop the roles for more 'real', impulsive relationships.
However, the description does not end here. In equal pro-
portion to the amount of hunger for personal contacts, there
is found in members and in the literature of groups, a fear
of such contacts bordering on the pathological.

The Fear of Close Encounters

Members talk incessantly of being unable to trust
others, of longing to be closer but fearing to do so, of
needing "less protection":

> I feel I've got to be careful ... don't feel ... less
> protection, I'd like to have less protection .... I'd
> like to sit close but I don't have the guts .... I'd
> like to sit closer .... The last two or three times
> (meetings) the group was dead ... everyone was care-
> ful what to say ... I'm careful what I say. I've
> chickened out. There's been times I wanted to say
> things, wonder if it would be helpful and don't say
> it ... now that I'm talking about it I feel sadness.
>
> - Psychosynthesis member

In the above quote, it is interesting to note, a
double fear is felt: there is a fear both for the self, "I
need less protection," and a fear for others: "I'm careful
what I say ... wonder if it would be helpful." What is
feared is not precisely named although it seems to have some-
thing to do with "feeling" and with "saying" and with phy-
sical proximity (although this may be purely metaphoric in
the above quote). The fear may be better understood by

looking closer at its two aspects: the danger to self and the danger to others.

The danger to self seems to come from being 'drained' and from being 'controlled'. Both seem to be aspects of involvement with others. One member of Arica noted that he felt relieved when he met other Aricans for the first time:

> I really liked the Arica people. With the people at the Coop (where the member had worked) there was a lot of random energy ... I felt like I was being sucked dry ... trying to organize things. With the Aricans the energy didn't dissipate.
> - Arica member

Another fear was that of letting another individual get too close, for fear they would take you over. For example, in one of the healing exercises in a Silva Mind Control group, the healing psychic, Maria, doing her first case, got the picture of a sick woman "on her mental screen." She was supposed to merely diagnose the woman's health problem and "send her on her way." Instead, she became very upset because the woman in her mind would not "tell me what was wrong." She began to cry uncontrollably. Her 'orientologist,' who also happened to be the group instructor, became very agitated. He kept telling her "Turn down the emotional volume! Remember it's your mind, Maria. You are in control." Maria persisted in weeping. She didn't feel in control at all.

While in this case it was an imagined woman (at least one no one but Maria could see) that got control of her mind,

this danger is felt by groups to be present in interaction
with others even when these 'others' are physically embodied.

> What we choose to think about energizes those thoughts.
> If I'm not making that choice other people can manipu-
> late me ... they make it for me ... you can use some
> levels of energy to manipulate others, to take away
> their free will. That happens all the time with mental
> energies ...
>
> - Psychosynthesis member

In addition to others being able to manipulate and
drain the self, the self is seen as able to exude a kind of
poison which can contaminate others. This is expressed most
vividly in reference to that most intimate relationship of
the mother and unborn child:

> We are charging that kid that is inside the mother all
> the time with the negativity that is around. From the
> very beginning. Because there is nothing that really
> absorbs more than the fetus ... it's absorbing all the
> time ... all ... absolutely all ... the lacks that the
> parents have. Suppose a baby can be charged negatively
> inside the womb, because of the blood of the mother.
> If the mother is in the passions ... the blood of the
> baby is going to be charged by passion. It comes to
> the world already suffering ... because the child is
> like a sponge ...
>
> - Arica leader

This ability to contaminate others goes beyond the
mother-baby relationship, however. It comes from being "off
centre" from looking to the outside for what can only be
found inside, from being 'in ego' as opposed to being 'in
essence'. In 'ego' the individual exudes dangers:

> Generally such people (people out of touch with their
> Higher Selves) see the power as outside themselves and
> with others. They feel their needs are not being met
> because of others. And of course their needs
> aren't being met because in such a state you repel

<u>exactly what you want</u>. <u>You put out such negativity</u>
<u>that you repel what you want</u>. (Emphasis mine)
                              - Psychosynthesis leader

In summary, the adherents of these movements see them-
selves as dangerous and endangered. The danger seems to be
in the form of 'energy' but it is energy when mixed with
'attachment' -- passions or feelings and linked to the per-
sonality. Only by detachment and 'disidentification' can an
individual avoid this danger to himself and to others.

> We are dominated by everything with which our self is
> identified. We can dominate and control everything
> from which we disidentify ourselves ...
>
>   - Shakti member

> These are the groundrules: Share from our own experi-
> ence, don't generalize, use the word 'I'. Don't dump
> on another person, don't unload all your stuff on
> them. This is called owning our own projections. Our
> subpersonalities get hooked ... this is different from
> sharing from centre. In an interchange if we get an
> emotional charge, that energy is ours and not the other
> person's. In subpersonality you identify with your
> feelings. We can also share from centre however. Then
> we aren't attached to it, we are simply observing.
> There is no charge on it.
>   - Psychosynthesis group leader

We are now in a better position to understand the
Psychosynthesis member who claimed he needed 'less protec-
tion'. It is the rule of such groups that in order to
develop one must share: "The process in this group is
unfolding: each one of us has the responsibility to share
where we are." The individual member is also hungry to 'get
closer to people'. However, he is told explicitly that if
he doesn't share from 'centre', if he relates from person-
ality or ego, if he identifies or gets attached, he is not

only in danger but he is dangerous. So the adherent tells himself 'don't feel' and simply can't find the courage to share. For it is not only what the group tells him about the dangers, the doctrine expresses dangers he already feels. Ironically, the ego which is felt to form a barrier against close encounters, on the one hand, is a porous, leaky substance which conducts contamination, transforms 'sacred' energy into poison, and fails to protect the individual from being drained and/or manipulated, on the other.

In the remainder of this chapter, an attempt will be made to determine more precisely what such fears express about the relationship of individual and society. Are they part of the desire for "better" or "closer" relations or another expression of narcissism and the desire to escape community? Why should such fears be expressed and what do they imply about our society?

One of the most interesting aspects of such fears are their primitive "contagion" quality. It is as if the individual is seen as porous or leaky absorbing and transmitting dangerous substances. Such fears, while not part of accepted modern vocabulary, are recognizable as "pollution" beliefs -- a phenomenon which has been extensively studied and documented in other tribes and cultures. Some of the most interesting theories concerning such beliefs have been developed by the social anthropologist, Mary Douglas. Her theory is that such fears are important clues to the nature

of social organization, norms and values of primitive
societies. In addition, she feels that as such fears are
universal they may be used to examine the relationship between
order and disorder, society and individual, in whatever con-
text they appear. Douglas has a commitment to developing
conceptual systems applicable to both sociological and
anthropological data. In carrying out this commitment, she
consistently works with Durkheim's concepts about the rela-
tion of religion and society, as well as her own, and her
theories dovetail with our concerns in this chapter (Douglas,
1966, 1978).

Pollution Beliefs and Boundary Confusion: Douglas' Theory of Purity and Danger

In _Purity and Danger_ (1966), Douglas sought to demon-
strate that pollution and dirt, while differing in substance
for primitives and ourselves, do not differ in function.
Dirt or pollution, she states, is simply "matter out of
place." Any society's organization depends upon the estab-
lishment of an intricate set of distinctions -- of boundaries
and lines which divide individuals, groups and classes from
each other and define the parameters of a given society.
These distinctions are governed by rules for social behavior
and determine right from wrong, order from disorder. It is
as if from the continuum of experience social order is estab-
lished by process of selectivity -- social reality carved out
by ignoring some aspects of experience and highlighting

others. The ignored experience forms the dark interstices
between the social categories and allow these categories to
be visible. When these lines and categories are clear,
matter is "in place." When the margins or lines separating
dark and light become blurred, we may say that pollution has
occurred.

This 'matter out of place' can be both symbolic and
real. For instance, Douglas describes how our notions of
domestic dirt have more to do with our systems of order than
with the reality of germs. Kitchen utensils in the bathroom,
or a toothbrush on the livingroom coffee table are seen as
'dirty', provoking a feeling of discomfort and even mild
danger, whereas they merely represent 'matter out of place'.
On the other hand, there are many situations in which the
matter out of place is invisible and/or symbolic. For
instance, people are seen as dangerous if in fact they trans-
gress the symbolic and sociological order of a society. This
is particularly true of transgressions which are not covered
by the moral codes or enforced by firm sanctions.

> People think of their own social environment as con-
> sisting of other people joined together or separated
> by lines which must be respected. Some of the lines
> are protected by firm physical sanctions .... But
> whenever the lines are precarious we find pollution
> ideas come to their support. (Douglas, 1966:165)

By crossing these lines a person becomes symbolically 'matter
out of place'. Those people passing from one group or cate-
gory to another because of marriage, death, birth, puberty,
etc. and are therefore temporarily marginal, are seen as

possible sources of pollution.

> Danger lies in transitional states, simply because
> transition is neither one state nor the next, it is
> undefinable. The person who must pass from one to
> another is himself in danger and emanates danger to
> others. The danger is controlled by ritual which
> precisely separates him from his old status, segre-
> gates him for a time and then publicly declares his
> entry to a new status. (Douglas, 1966:116)

Hence, when examining pollution beliefs from Douglas' view-

point, it is important to bear in mind that:

1. Pollution beliefs center on situations or things
    which threaten the social boundaries defined by
    a society.

2. People who are in themselves polluting are often
    those occupying the interstices between social
    categories, (marginal in Mary Douglas' terminology).

3. Pollution is dangerous both to the polluter and
    the polluted. (Another way of saying that
    marginal people are seen as both dangerous and
    endangered).

These points do not exhaust Douglas' notion of the attributes

of pollution, but they are particularly relevant to the "cult

of man" beliefs that we have been exploring. It is evident,

for instance, that the boundary seen as threatened is that

separating not one group from another but one individual from

another. This suggests that it is the lines or rules govern-

ing the relation and separation of individual that are

experienced as unclear, poorly defined or in jeopardy. It

also suggests, in the sense that each individual is seen as

dangerous and endangered, that adherents are like people

passing through a "rite de passage," somehow in transition,

or stateless.

This last suggestion, however, seems an inadequate explanation of the fears of "cult of man" adherents for two reasons. Firstly, such groups are formed neither of deviants nor of those undergoing a prolonged 'rite of passage' in any traditional sense. Most members are adult by any measurement and certainly not deviant in any overt sense. They are middle to upper middle class, in their late twenties with well defined occupational roles (Smith, 1975; Stone, 1976; Wallis, 1977). There is no indication that at the end of training members attain any status in the wider social sense that they didn't have before. Despite the fact that trainees are supposed to be "progressing" towards developing their full potential and goals are clearly labelled and described by the individual group, the experience seems to be one of endless process.

Secondly, and more importantly perhaps, adherents of such "transpersonal" training groups do not see only other members as dangerous and endangered; they see all people to be in this state. For such individuals, society appears to be made up of a collection of people all in transitional states.

This seems an impossible and confusing image in the context of the anthropological notions of transition and transgression in the small, stable society of the primitive tribe. In order to interpret the contemporary fears of the members, we need a modern equivalent to describe the relation

of individual and social order, purity and danger. Such an
equivalent is to be found in a socio-psychological theory of
Erving Goffman.

A Socio-Psychological Alternative:
Goffman's 'Face-Work'

One of the best descriptions of the rules and lines
separating and defining individuals is presented by Goffman's
work on "face-work" (Goffman, 1967:5-46). "Face-work" as a
concept fits nicely into Mary Douglas' discussion of social
lines and categories because it contains both a notion of
inner identity (which may be seen as stemming from a sense of
belonging to a group) and a notion of surface interaction,
defined by social rules or etiquette.

In the latter context, Goffman defines face as "an
image of self delineated in terms of approved social attri-
butes" (Ibid.:5). It is not something located in the
individual but constructed in the flow of social interaction
existing between individuals. People are dependent on others
to support, verify and acknowledge their 'face'. If proper
'face' is maintained participants are seldom conscious of
the process of face-work, but if 'face' is questioned or
destroyed, it can cause embarrassment and hurt; people in
fact become emotionally attached to a given image and feel
destroyed if it is destroyed. Hence, people who do not know
how to support or save other people's 'face' are seen as
dangerous. Similarly, people who participate in situations

without proper 'face' -- the ready line expected of people in certain situations, they are "out of face." They are in the "wrong face" when they adopt a line which they cannot sustain. Such people are also a threat because others are then obliged either to witness his "loss of face" or to "give face" -- i.e. "arrange for another to take a better line than he might otherwise be able to take."

It is evident that much of this kind of interaction is carried on in a formal context, having to do with social skills, etiquette and public behavior. In this sense what Goffman is describing is the intricate rules of give and take which allow people to relate to each other.

But for Goffman, the concept of 'face' also has a deeper connotation of identity as formed in a vital, particular relationship to another person. Goffman argues that when we say that someone is involved in or committed to someone else, we really mean that that person is involved and committed to maintaining the other's 'face'. It is as if in the process of intimacy the two parties decide upon, construct elaborate and maintain identities that are then dependent upon and grounded in that particular relationship. The participants come to count upon these identities as real and attach deep emotions to them. It is in this sense that the 'sacred' nature of face that Goffman describes becomes apparent. Situations in which this aspect of face must be negotiated are experienced as questions of survival and

therefore of considerable peril.

In sum, face-work involves social interaction, both of a public and an intimate nature. It describes and determines the relationship between self and others. It is a fragile and contextual process, particularly vulnerable to rapid social change (Yai-fai Ho, 1975) and yet expressive of it. We have coined the term "facelessness" to describe the result of the breakdown of the process of face-work.

Returning to Mary Douglas' notion of the relationship between social 'state' and pollution, it may be argued that primitive state and modern face are equivalent on many points. Moving from face to face is imbued with all the dangers associated with moving from state to state in primitive tribes. Both are images with which the individual identifies, composed of a role, a line, or attitude adopted by the individual playing a role and requiring the support of other people to maintain. State seems a more permanent, face a more ephemeral term for this image and indeed it would seem that in stable societies the image is more solid and long-lasting. In a stable society, one's identity is relatively changeless. The role one plays, the image one has, the people one knows, remain fairly constant -- identity is not being continually tested and the rules for its maintenance are fairly well understood by all participants in a given situation. In these societies, an individual is required to change this image only a few times -- and these

were generally marked by "rites de passages" -- one leaves

childhood and becomes an adult, one changes from single to

married, to parent, etc. Rites of passage are partly cre-

ated to deal with the danger those in transition present to

others and to themselves.

'Face', however, with its ephemeral implications, is

much better suited for our society. Increasingly, it may be

argued, criteria for public and private face-work are becom-

ing obscure. Each new contact we make requires anew the

establishment of 'face'. This requires arriving at a con-

sensus and an understanding.

> If a person is to employ his repertoire of face-saving
> practices, obviously he must first become aware of the
> interpretations that others may have placed upon his
> acts and the interpretations that he ought to place on
> theirs. (Goffman, 1967:13)

While in a stable society, participants in a given

interaction can be expected to understand the rules; people

in a highly fluid society can be less relied upon to know

the appropriate context.

This sort of contemporary difficulty can perhaps be

illustrated by the effects of changing dress codes. While

in the past dress codes were linked first to class, and

within class to activity, today's more relaxed codes have

paradoxically resulted in dress becoming much more important

as an indicator of the 'face' of the dresser, both in a

public and private sense.

> When street clothes and stage costume come
> to be seen as having something to do with the body,
> they will also come to appear to have something to
> do with the character of the person wearing them.
> At that point this rule for marking oneself in a
> public milieu will go wierdly out of control: read-
> ing "more" into the appearance of strangers, men and
> women will have less of a sense of order in their
> perceptions of strangers. (Sennett, 1977:72)

Today, when dress is divorced not only from class dis-
tinctions but from distinctions of location (public vs.
private) and occasion, it is even more loaded in terms of
what it expresses about the 'inner' identity or 'sacred' face
and even less attached to social interaction in which both
parties are aware of the signals. This can perhaps be best
illustrated by the following anecdote:

A young woman meets a young man at a lecture. She is
introduced by a mutual friend and while very drawn to him
does not have long to talk. The next week the man calls and
asks her to a concert. She wants to impress him and is
therefore in some consternation about how to dress. The
event is no guide as she could wear anything from blue jeans
to an evening dress. She is aware, however, that whatever
she chooses will broadcast a great deal of information about
her 'lifestyle' and personal orientation. Her solution to
the dilemma is clever: she dresses in a conservative skirt
and blouse and sits down to wait. When the young man arrives
at the door dressed in blue jeans, she asks him to come in a
moment; she has just come home from work, she explains, and
will run up and change.

In this particular occurrence, interactional face-work was made considerably more difficult by the breakdown in the normative system as dress-codes. As a result, the young woman had to take extra measures to prevent possible loss of face and exposure which she would have felt if she had made the wrong choice. Everyday contacts can become considerably more dangerous and fraught with tension.

To complicate this situation, modern society presents us with a situation in which we are expected to play not one role but many, at times contradictory and/or competing. Each one of these roles requires a different 'face' and involve us in often quite different groups. With the breakdown between public and private (Sennett, 1977) and the general erosion of interactional codes, however, these competing roles may easily be confused. People who confuse contexts, who overlap competing roles, are both dangerous and endangered, dangerous not only because they might cause others to lose 'face' but because they may be perceived as 'two-faced', holding simultaneously identities supportive and undermining of the other's 'face'.

With a clear internal sense of identity, such a variety of 'roles' may be easily mastered, but the roles themselves can no longer 'yield' a sense of identity. They are too transient, mobility too common, class and social barriers too easily penetrated (Luckmann and Berger, 1964; Wallis, 1977) and in addition, an awareness of roles as

'socially constructed', an awareness introduced into our culture but increasingly more popularized produces a kind of self-consciousness which makes identification difficult (Turner, 1976; Eister, 1972).

Even more important than the breakdown in the norms governing day-to-day interaction, is the threat to the deeper, more 'sacred' sense of face represented by the increasingly transient nature of personal commitments.

Weigert and Hastings (1977) have discussed this threat in terms of the increasing specialization of the family into the sole societal vehicle for identity construction and maintenance. While the family has assumed greater and greater responsibility in this area, it is paradoxically less able to fulfill it. The family was always, by nature, transient; the identities it formed and supported dissolved inevitably by time and death. However, with the family growing continually smaller and the divorce rate rising, the potential for identity loss grows. In the meantime, as other institutions have evolved, rationalized and specialized, there is less and less capacity in society as a whole to support and legitimize identity loss.

Viewed in Goffman's terms, it may be said that prolonged support for another's 'face' implies commitment to that 'face', emotional and otherwise. One becomes attached to and comes to rely upon the other's image which one helps maintain. In situations where relationships cannot be counted upon to

remain stable, such involvement becomes dangerous -- support
for one's own face may be suddenly withdrawn, leaving one
emotionally exposed and at the mercy of unmasked passion.
Or the image, to which one has devoted energy in maintain-
ing and has become attached to, may disappear leaving one
drained and cheated.

In response to these uncertainties and complications
of modern face-work, face-work becomes perilous and 'faces'
seem thin and insubstantial and the desire is to abandon the
whole process both in terms of norms of social conduct and
in terms of identity (Turner, 1976; Weigert and Hastings,
1977). However, and this is the beauty of Goffman's concept
of face -- as the masks become more and more ephemeral,
people paradoxically do not feel more "open," closer to
others -- more authentic. This is because face-work is
necessary for relationships to exist. According to Goffman,
the definition of involvement is commitment to facework. In
order for people to relate, they must in fact be separate
entities -- the margins both keep people separate and allow
them to be close.

In summary, we have suggested that the ambivalence
which the "cult of man" members experience concerning close
personal relations reflects the experience which members
have of being "between states," perpetually in a state of
identity flux or ambivalence which in primitive tribes was
associated only with passing through a rite de passage or with

those who have somehow slipped outside of the categories that
define social beings and their interactions. As the members
are not deviants or initiates in any traditional sense in
terms of the larger culture and as they see not only them-
selves but all individuals as dangerous and endangered, we
have attempted to explain their fears in terms of a modern
equivalent to "statelessness" which we have termed, after
Goffman, "facelessness." This is the fear of interaction
based on the breakdown of interactional codes which define
social interchange and the identity forming groups which
provide the deeper sense of identification. Such a fear is
highly ambivalent. It produces a sense of being endangered
by precisely the thing most desired. Loneliness grows
greater to the extent that relations are feared.

While such an explanation seems to fit the phenomena
described, providing a solution to the seeming paradox of
privatism and hunger for community present in the belief
systems of these groups, it in turn raises an important
question. If in fact the above is an accurate description of
the experience of members in the society at large, why is it
that all people are not attracted to "cult of man" groups?
We may presume that in our highly diverse society the kinds
of strains we have described are not distributed evenly and
would not therefore produce the same anxieties in everyone. We
must look, therefore, for particular characteristics in the
individuals who join these movements which would make them

more susceptible to the experience of 'facelessness'.

This question would be best answered in terms of large scale survey data on these groups which is, unfortunately, not available. However, one survey study on est has produced some interesting data in this context. This survey indicated that the mean age of est members was 35.11 years. 31.8% had no religious beliefs before joining the group. Over half (53.7%) had no children at all. 68% were single (as opposed to 50% of the general population) (Ornstein, 1975). This general picture of being unattached in terms of family or religion is supported by Stone's profile of human potential groups in general:

> Some of the life-style characteristics that appear to go along with participation in human potential groups are never having married, a recent change of address, and a tendency to join groups and try out new experiences. (Stone, 1976:107)

The composite picture suggests that members of these groups are even more likely than normal to experience 'facelessness' due to the breakdown of identity-forming groups and the subsequent transience of relationships.

Whether members of these movements are also more affected than average by the breakdown of interactional codes is more difficult to determine. However, it should be noted that these groups direct their advertising campaigns at two distinct occupational groups. The first are salesmen or small businessmen. This is particularly true of groups such as Silva Mind Control and est who make their pitch to salesmen

suggesting that their programs will improve their members'
business and sales capacities. The second occupational group
appealed to by groups like Psychosynthesis and Arica are the
helping professions: counsellors, social workers, ministers,
teachers, etc. Psychosynthesis groups in particular see
their programs as not only producing psychosynthesis in the
students but training them in turn to counsel and help others.

It is impossible without a breakdown in terms of pre-
cise occupation to know if in fact it is these occupations
which are attracted to the "cult of man" groups. The two,
however, have an interesting feature in common. They are both
what might be termed "high empathy" professions. By this is
meant that they are professions which depend for their
success on the ability of the individual to 'tune in' quickly
and adequately to the identity of strangers or near strangers.
Such occupational groups are more likely than average to be
affected by the breakdown in interactional codes which make
it easy to 'type' other people and so interact with them.
For instance, fifty years ago if a man and a woman were
approaching a door together both would expect the man to open
the door. Today, if a man and a woman who don't know each
other well approach the door this issue is not at all clear.
Whether the man opens the door or waits for the woman to do
so or vice versa will expose considerable information about
personal orientation, without either person knowing how that
information will be received by the other. This is a minor

occurrence and one which in normal circumstances can be dis-
missed. But if in fact one or the other is trying to make a
sale and the impression created can determine the success of
his/her effort, such interactions become important.

In this context, one of the most outstanding demo-
graphic features of the est sample (and of human potential
members in general according to Stone) as compared to the
general population is that although they have a much higher
level of education (40% have had graduate or professional
training after college compared to 17% of the general popu-
lation) their mean income is the same as the general popula-
tion (Ornstein, 1975). Presuming that education is gener-
ally correlated with higher earning, it seems that adherents
are not succeeding at their jobs as well as might be
expected. In addition, the discrepancy between income and
education might well create a status inconsistency which has
been seen as "unfavourable for the consistency and stability
of the self" -- that inner 'sacred' sense of face (Luckmann
and Berger, 1964:335).

From the above description of the known attributes of
"cult of man" members, a relative deprivation or compensa-
tory argument could seem to be made. The members seem to be
to some degree both socially and economically dislocated, if
not deprived. However, for such an interpretation to be
valid, it would also have to follow that the group itself
provided the social bonds lacking, or the philosophical

justification for economic deprivation. "Cult of man" groups
do neither. As has been pointed out repeatedly in earlier
chapters, such groups are extremely transitory. What com-
munity they offer is finite, fragile and short-lived. Nor do
the groups reject the value system of the society at large.
The "trainings" are orientated not so much towards providing
alternate goals and values to those of the secular world, but
towards finding better ways of achieving these goals.
Success in economic activities and interpersonal relations
figure heavily in members testimonials as to the merits of
the "trainings" (Wallis, 1977; Stone, 1976; Tipton, 1977).
It would seem that, as Durkheim suggested, these groups act
to express and affirm the condition of "facelessness," as
opposed to trying to counteract it. Recognition of "face-
lessness" is the basis of a new way of life.

> Often a crisis in life deprives a person of the function
> or role with which he has identified; an athlete's body
> is maimed; a lover's beloved departs; a worker is fired
> or retires. Then the process of disidentification is
> forced on one and a solution can only come by a process
> of death and rebirth in which the person enters into a
> broader identity ...
>
> — Roberto Assagioli, Psychosynthesis leader

In the next chapters, we will discuss at some length
the rituals which are built on this recognition of faceless-
ness. Here, we would like to give just one example of the
way in which the activities of the "cult of man" members seem
to embody the dilemma of interpersonal relations in a "face-
less" world.

A vivid expression of the way that intimacy seems to recede, the more it is pursued, is provided by the norm of direct eye contact which is held by all "cult of man" groups. This norm directs adherents to never simply glance at someone to whom they are talking, but instead, to gaze steadily and deeply into the eyes, even if that person is completely unknown. The idea behind this is that if 'real', intimate or 'authentic' contact is to be made, a superficial glance will not suffice. Considerable pressure is exerted to get members to overcome their nervousness at deep eye contact. All "cult of man" groups have rituals designed as a practice of prolonged staring into the eyes of randomnly selected partners. It is implied that people who are unwilling to do this, are somehow shifty, superficial, dishonest, and not truly interested in getting close to others, but rather involved in their own egos or 'acts'.

Social psychologists, such as Goffman and Simmel have studied at some length the implications of eye contacts. Human beings in all societies have an elaborate code of eye contacts. Variations in terms of the length of contact, the directness of contact, the distance at time of contact, form an entire code of social distance and intimacy. The avoidance of eye contact is equally important, and in many cases, people who are not socially 'open' to each other are formally forbidden from any kind of prolonged eye contact. Some social undesirables are given a non-person status by ritual

'not-seeing' (Goffman, 1963:84). At the opposite extreme is
the sense of absolute union which is sought by the "cult of
man" member and which is commonly recognized as one of the
powerful consequences of direct, prolonged eye contact.

> Of the special sense organs the eye has a uniquely socio-
> logical function. The union and interaction of individ-
> uals is based upon mutual glances. This is perhaps the
> most direct and purest reciprocity which exists anywhere
> ... so tenacious and subtle is this union that it can
> only be maintained by the shortest and straightest line
> between the eyes and even the smallest deviation from it,
> the slightest glance aside, completely destroys the
> unique character of this union. (Simmel, in Goffman,
> 1963:93)

However, as Goffman points out, the power and socio-
logical meaning of the stare depends largely on its relation-
ship to other kinds of eye-contacts. "The more clearly
individuals are obliged to refrain from staring directly at
others, the more effectively will they be able to attach
special significance to a stare" (Goffman, 1963:95). If all
taboos against staring are removed, and indeed all nuances of
glance forcibly eliminated, the prolonged stare in fact
becomes meaningless. If all people are public, the invasion
of privacy associated with staring is impossible. But it was
precisely the sense of invasion of privacy which created the
sense of unusual and intimate contact. As with dress and
language, once the vocabulary of glance is eliminated, there
can be no visual conversation and with no conversation, no
creation of face, which as we mentioned, is an aspect not of
the individuals but of their interaction. Without face,
there can be no involvement and without involvement, no real

sense of intimacy or contact. Intimacy or closeness, hence, seems a by-product of the interaction based on manipulation of separations and distinctions. If pursued as an end in itself, it seems like the proverbial will 'o the wisp, to retreat as its pursuer advances.

This brings us to our concluding point. When Durkheim suggested that the "cult of man" would be a result of the diversity and specialization of society which would produce a sense in individuals of having "nothing in common" with other individuals, he was making an implicit comparison with his notion of primitive society in which the religion expressed what people had in common. In the unilineal kinship system which he explored in Elementary Forms of Religious Life, the things which people had in common were viewed as twofold. Most basically, they had in common their kinship group, linked by blood and symbolized by the totem. They also shared the rules and rituals which governed their individual relationship to the 'sacred' phenomena.

While Durkheim did not spell out in detail what having "nothing in common" would mean, we may, from this comparison, presume that it would represent a disintegration of both these systems: the groups with which a person identified and the rules and rituals which governed interaction. In fact, as we have discussed at some length, such a disintegration has been recognized by social scientists as being a by-product of diversity and specialization of the modern technological

world. Diversity and specialization would hence seem con-
ducive to creating a sense of universal "facelessness" akin
to the primitive feeling of "statelessness" when people
seemed adrift, outside of the boundaries which governed and
ordered those societies. Statelessness is in turn (accord-
ing to Douglas) linked to pollution fears, fears of inter-
personal contamination, because stateless people are 'matter
out of place'. And the belief which most strongly highlights
the problem of contamination, of the sacred by the profane, is
the one that locates them in the closest proximity: within
the single human individual. Hence, the notion of the
sacredness of the human individual with the accompanying pre-
occupation with pollution and contamination, is a vivid
symbolic expression of the social experience of "having
nothing in common."

Another way of expressing this is using Douglas'
notion that the human body is the symbol of society (Douglas,
1978). If the major problem in that society is the break-
down of social boundaries separating individuals with result-
ing interpersonal contamination, this can be symbolized by a
body in which sacred and profane are both equally present
and in danger of contaminating one another because the "dis-
tinction" is not clear. The sacred-profane distinction is
the most fundamental and universal, according to Durkheim.
Only in a situation of great diversity do both the sacred
and the profane come to be represented in terms of the

individual.   And the danger of contamination, which such
intimacy of sacred and profane is bound to create, is sym-
bolic of the danger of interpersonal confusion which occurs
when diversity and specialization breaks down notions of
social boundaries and rules.

It goes further, however. Durkheim suggests that the
"cult of man" will not only be a reflection of "having
nothing in common," it will also be an expression of what
men still have in common. It will not only acknowledge in
its beliefs and rituals the breakdown of the bonds uniting
men, it will also proclaim new ones. The "cult of man" would
still act to empower, to motivate and restrict its members
out of the recognition and reaffirmation of their common
humanity.

In this chapter, we have discussed the way in which
the central conception of the sacred as lying within the
single individual is linked inextricably to a preoccupation
with personal and interpersonal contamination. Thus, despite
avowals on the part of the groups that they are providing a
chance to get closer to the world and other people, members
and literature express a terror of interpersonal encounters.
This terror we have interpreted as expressing the problems
involved in having "nothing in common" in terms of identity
and interaction. In the next chapter, we will discuss what,
in the view of the groups and of Durkheim himself, is the
positive aspects of this experience: the chance to "enter

into a broader identity," that of a member of humanity ideal-
ized. In exploring these new bonds, this new sense of having
something in common, we will look at the rituals of the "cult
of man" groups for it is in rituals which, "are the rules of
conduct which prescribe how men should behave in relation to
sacred things" and which should therefore embody the new
bonds which the "cult of man" groups offer their members.

SECTION III

RITUALS IN THE "CULT OF MAN"

Ritual has been largely ignored in the sociology of
religion, having come to be defined as an empty form of
action divorced from the internal moods and motivations of
the actor. As has been pointed out by social anthropolo-
gists, this leaves sociologists with no terminology to deal
with "symbolic action (outward, ritual behavior) which
correctly expresses the actor's internal state" (Douglas,
1973:20). This inarticulateness is particularly frustrating
when attempting to study emerging forms of religious life
where the ritual behavior is not only heartfelt by the
individual who performs it, but also highly expressive of
the group which aids in directing and shaping that behavior.
Even when ritual is merely empty conformity, it still pre-
sents a problem of the relation of symbols to social life.
But when the conformity is genuine, ritual offers an arena
for exploring the relations between the individual and the
group, the group and the symbol system in which it finds
expression (Douglas, 1973:21).

In addition to this general consideration, it seems
that the issue of ritual is particularly relevant to "cult
of man" groups. It was noted in the last chapter, that for

- 160 -

primitive tribes, individuals going through a change of state (and therefore dangerous and endangered) were protected by carefully constructed rituals (Douglas, 1966). Perhaps because of the sensation which members have of being continually in flux, the "cult of man" groups are notable for the variety and number of ritual techniques in which they train members. In some cases, the groups see themselves as in the business of ritual creation:

> At Arica, we teach the art of creating rituals and ceremonies, liturgies for the new spiritual consciousness.
>
> - Arica leader

Durkheim, in his discussion of <u>Elementary Forms of the Religious Life</u>, devoted a large section to rituals. He saw rituals as divided essentially into two groups which he termed the 'negative' and the 'positive' cult. He saw both as being concerned with governing the relationship between sacred and profane, society and the individual. The negative cult concerns taboos and interdictions, keeping the sacred and profane separate so as to prevent contamination. The positive cult, on the other hand, governs the intercourse between sacred and profane. The two are inseparable, however, for unless the profane is somehow 'purified', interaction with the sacred is impossible.

In the next chapters, we will take a closer look at the specific rituals in the specific groups we have been exploring. These rituals appear to fall into three groups.

On the one hand, there are the purification rituals which clearly fall into the negative cult and flow from the beliefs about pollution we have discussed. On the other, there are the transformational rituals, which are positive rituals of power and which seem closely linked to the 'cast of thousands' beliefs. Somewhere in the middle are the rituals which seem to flow from the faith in rational technology of science. These rituals provide the best 'skill testing' arena as well as sharing some aspects of both the positive and negative cults. It should be noted that in any one of the six groups in our "cult of man" sample, the emphasis on one type of ritual may be greater or less, but that samples of all three types exist in each group. In addition, a given ritual may fulfill all three functions.

We will discuss each type of ritual in a separate chapter, concluding with a chapter discussing the privatistic aspects of rituals and the internalization of rituals which in primitive religions were external and public.

CHAPTER VIII

RITUALS OF PURIFICATION

The rituals of purification fall into three categories
in "cult of man" groups, corresponding to three steps in the
process of separating sacred from profane. These three steps
may be termed Disassociation, Reorganization and Fortifica-
tion.

1. Rituals of Disassociation

One of the first messages which the "cult of man"
groups seem to want to get across to new members or trainees
is that "you are not what or who you think you are." How-
ever, in accordance with the anti-rational and anti-
explanatory bias we have outlined in an earlier chapter,
this message is not communicated in intellectual terms but,
rather experientially, in the form of ritual.

In some of these groups this first step in the purifi-
cation process is handled in a brutal manner. The idea is
that adherents will only let go of their preconceptions and
of their notion of who they are through some kind of severe
jolt, which shakes them from their complacent sense of
identity and/or their ability to understand.

One of the best known examples of the more severe or

"jolting" disassociation rituals is the est Tirade. Est
begins their "training" with some fairly established tech-
niques of undermining personal identity, such as confisca-
tion of belongings, limitations on personal freedoms for
food and bathroom breaks (Goffman, 1961,1967) and failure to
give explanations (questions concerning the reason for the
limitations are met invariably by the answer "because it
works"). After establishing these limitations in the intro-
duction to the weekend, an instructor enters to begin the
first ritual of The Tirade.

> He wasted no time in getting down to business. There
> were no introductions, no preliminaries, no niceties.
> He glowered at us and announced that we were all ass-
> holes .... A woman in front of me began to shake.
>   "You are an asshole," he repeated loudly. "You
> are a machine. Your life doesn't work. You're an
> asshole because you pretend it does." He paced from
> one end of the platform to the other, punctuating
> each staccato statement with a thrust of his arm.
> (Bry, 1976:72)

For estians, this initial experience of being told
that you are not what you seem, is then acted out by the
students themselves in other rituals. One of the most
striking of these is the Danger Process. In this process
students are seated in four long rows facing the stage. One
row at a time is randomly called to the front to stand on
the stage and face the audience. They are then told to make
eye contact with someone still seated in the audience. This
proves extremely traumatic for many, partially no doubt
because of the stated significance of this ritual act.

> The trainees at the front of the room look out into
> the sea of faces and begin to smile. The trainer
> starts screaming, "Cut your act. Quit smiling. It's
> costing you your life." Most of the smiles quickly
> vanish. A few diehards start to laugh. The trainer
> and other est staff march up to these people. The
> trainer screams, est staff do nothing but stand in
> front of a trainee and look directly in the eyes.
> Women start to cry. Men clench their fists and
> tense up. The staring continues on the part of the
> est staff. The trainer is yelling, "Let it all come
> up. Cut your 'act' and see what you've been doing to
> your life. You'd rather be right than alive. You're
> all goddamned fucking machines. Complete assholes.
> Nothing in your life works for you and you wonder why.
> Look what you are doing to yourselves. Standing up
> here smiling, for Christ sake. What's so goddamn
> funny? The fact that you're pissing your life away?
> (Greene, 1976:68-69)

The stated purpose of this process is, ironically, to learn

to "be with someone."

These two rituals, the verbal assault on identity and

the staring confrontation, are present in some form in all

the other "cult of man" groups. Scientology is equally vio-

lent in its attack, using a ritual called 'Bull-baiting'

which involves people pairing off, one student "baiting" the

other by haranguing him or her, insulting, attacking and

exposing all weaknesses in a manner as merciless as possible.

Scientology also stages the staring ritual (which they term

Confrontation) in pairs ... the two people staring into each

other's eyes without moving for as long as possible (Malko,

1971:123).

Shakti's ritual, while equally extreme, is more

subtle. It is called the Turn-off. Periodically, students

who have been working with the group in exercises, rituals

or meetings, are simply told harshly to go away, that they

are "stupid, lazy, unimaginative." This can be very dis-
orientating to the student who is attempting to enter into
a kind of disciple-leader relationship with the group
(Palmer, 1976:110).

The other three groups, Arica, Psychosynthesis and
Silva Mind Control, are somewhat gentler but no less firm
in their attempts to produce disassociation in their
students.

Psychosynthesis introduces early the notion of sub-
personalities and has a ritual called "Disidentification and
Self-Identification" which involves a meditation on four
different aphorisms, one referring to the mind, one to the
emotions, one to the body and one to the social roles, but
all following the same pattern:

> I have emotions, but my self is not my emotions. I
> experience an endless variety of emotional states,
> frequently contradictory and always changing. My
> feelings may swing from love to hatred, from calm to
> anxiety, from joy to sorrow, and yet my essence --
> my true self -- does not change. At times my emo-
> tions seem to control me, to take me over, but I can
> learn to direct and integrate them. Though a wave
> of fear or anger may threaten to submerge me, these
> temporary states will pass in time. I can rise above
> my negative feelings if I refuse to identify with
> them and do not allow them power over me. I can
> observe and understand my emotions, and gradually
> learn to direct and harmonize them. I have emotions,
> but my self is not my emotions.
>
> - Psychosynthesis Instruction Manual

Silva Mind Control also uses affirmations and medita-
tion. The group introduces early the term "cancel cancel,"
a verbal charm used to ward off "negative thinking." In

the group's relaxation exercises, members repeat such phrases as "The only difference between a genius and an ordinary person is that a genius uses more of his mind and in a different way. You are now learning to use your mind in a different way." The emphasis here is on creating an awareness in the individual that not only is he different than he appears, but that he is more than he appears.

Finally, Arica introduces a personality typing system to members' lives. Students are typed and grouped in terms of their primary fixation, such as planning, vengeance, indolence. Once grouped with others apparently of this same type, students must self-consciously act out this fixation. This has the effect of alienating the student from his customary behavior and roles which he has thought of as his identity.

The effect of all these rituals, whether severe or less severe, is to create the initial gap ... the awareness that the self that acts in the world is somehow an artificial self, that true self is an inner and yet unknown quantity. In Durkheimian terms, therefore, we may say that the first step has been taken to separate the sacred from the profane, in the form of making adherents aware that in fact there are differences between inner and outer self ... that outer self is somehow inferior or negative and that their personal problems have arisen in part from their confusion of the different parts of themselves and the

resulting contamination or destruction of their inner 'true nature'.

At this point, however, the realization is vague and the adherents' notion of themselves yet unstructured ... it has merely been disturbed. The next step in the purification process is to begin a more detailed organization of this new inner space.

2. Rituals of Reorganization

One of the unusual things about all "cult of man" groups is their tendency to create an elaborate internal map in which psychic dimensions are viewed spatially. This is not so strange when reviewed in the present context of the attempt to separate sacred from profane. In all religions space is an important variable in establishing this dichotomy (Durkheim, 1961; Eliade, 1968). In the Christian faith, for example, the whole interior of the church is considered sacred space, but within that space elaborate distinctions are made between more or less sacred spots. In Durkheimian terms, the church is sacred because it represents the gathering place of the community (the true source of the experience of the sacred). It is interesting that when the sacred becomes internalized in the individual human being, the elaborate spatial divisions are made internally in the symbolic space of the inner human psyche.

Of all the groups Arica has what is the most complex set of distinctions. It is a point of pride with the leaders.

> The Arica Theory says there is a psychic territory
> that can be measured exactly ... we now know that
> territory completely. We are not any longer in
> idealism. We know with precision and detail every-
> thing that is inside. We mean all. It is the first
> time this territory has been measured and with this
> we know all the possibilities for a human being.
> That is why we speak of a scientific method for
> spiritual realization, for making the journey with
> precise calculation, and for reducing the time of
> necessary work. (Ichazo, 1976:33)

To this end Arica establishes not only a series of levels of consciousness to be attained, but these are further grouped into nine "domains of consciousness" which include four scales having nine steps each. A variety of rituals, individual and group, including chanting, meditation, physical exercise and interaction techniques are used to induce the experience of these different spatial locations (Lilly, 1972; Smith, 1975).

Psychosynthesis comes closest to Arica in terms of the number and complexities of divisions. They provide members with a chart of the relationship of different aspects, from personality to Higher Self which exist within each individual. They also have a notion of levels or stages through which the individual must travel to reach the Higher Self, although these are not as complex or as carefully defined as in Arica. In the "Who Am I" ritual, the subject is instructed to conceptualize himself as a series of concentric circles and to visualize the various layers in succession. He starts with the outermost layer and proceeds toward the centre. He is told that there are a definite but

limited number of steps in the process and that this number
varies with the individual.

Most subjects appear to go through from 10 to 15
layers. Another similarity (which we will discuss in greater
detail in the next chapter) is that the outer layers, which
Psychosynthesis leaders claim symbolize the individual's
conflicts and defenses on the personal level, is often
visualized in terms of machinery. The inner layers, on the
other hand, which are seen as symbolic of the "supracon-
scious and the transpersonal self" are typically represented
by individuals as a sun, or fountain in which the self
merges.

Silva Mind Control, as we noted in an earlier chapter,
divides the internal levels into four: beta, alpha, delta
and theta, although they randomly talk about going "deeper
and deeper" in the relaxation exercises (which depend on
taking deep breaths and "counting down" from one to three and
then from ten to one), and on going "deeper than you have
ever gone before ... to deeper, healthier levels of mind,"
which suggests uncharted areas.

Shakti, Scientology and est are not as precise about
the different compartments of the inner space. Shakti
believes that the nervous system and internal organization
form pathways along which the "Being" may grow. To this end
they spend considerable time in what is termed the "White
Room Training" consisting of some "intellectual" work and

"drawing geometrical diagrams." Est uses various meditation
exercises, particularly one called the "Truth Process." This
process begins with a relaxation or meditation exercise in
which the individual concentrates on each part of the body
in turn, following the instructions to "locate a space in
your right foot," etc. He will then concentrate on some one
problem that seems to be bothering him and "recreate the
experience in a safe place." If the process gets too heavy
the individual is supposed to "go to the beach" an imaginary
spot of relaxation. Once "the truth" has been uncovered or
experienced, it too is henceforth seen as a location in the
spatial sense, a location deep within as opposed to the sur-
face which is termed the "act" or "number."

> People are used to reacting in social settings and
> running their "numbers" on the people with whom
> they speak. Conversation with est graduates begins
> at an entirely different level. If an est graduate
> asks another how he is, he means it ... and the
> answer comes from Truth.
> - est graduate

In addition, est divides the mind into three levels of
pain, 'pain level no. 1, 2, 3' to explain how people get cut
off from reality and react in a preprogrammed machine-like
way. Part of the Truth Process is to strip away these three
levels to get at what is "real."

What reorganization rituals appear to do, therefore,
is to begin a restructuring of the internal environment or
identity. In all cases this involves some further detailing
of the notion of surface vs. deep, artificial self vs. real

self, profane vs. sacred. The rituals are meant to help
adherents experience the nuances of the split between things
as they seem and things as they are and begin to create a
new identity to replace the one disturbed by disassociation
rituals. In Douglas' terms, it is also the beginning of the
construction of the lines and boundaries which create order
and prevent pollution. In this latter context, it is
interesting to note that those groups which have the most
complex and detailed reorganization schemes are those with
the most intense pollution fears, i.e. Arica and Psycho-
synthesis. It would appear that the greater the fear of
pollution, the more the need for boundaries and lines to
order all space. However, all these groups, as we have
noted, have pollution fears and all make some attempt at
creating or naming through ritual the internal lines which
separate the sacred from the profane. Finally, all groups
describe ritually an innermost "holy of holies" and spend
some time at fortifying and strengthening the barriers which
separate this spot from all others.

3. Rituals of Fortification

One of the most notable rituals shared by all "cult
of man" groups is the construction of an inner 'safe place'.
This ritual usually occurs towards the end of the training
and it is an elaborate and imaginative one. The ritual in
Arica (where the spot is termed the 'psychic space') est
(the 'safe place') and Silva Mind Control (the 'lab') are

all very similar.

In Silva Mind Control, the ritual construction of the
lab occurs in the last weekend of the course and takes up
the better part of the afternoon. Some of the rituals lead-
ing up to the course have made use of the "mental screen" of
the mind to practice precise, imaginative visualization. Now
this ritual training is used to construct something that
adherents can "take with them" when they graduate from the
course: the internal laboratory."

As is the case with all the visualization exercises,
this ritual begins by the relaxation, countdown technique.
The construction then proceeds as follows:

> Having counted down to level and assuming a relaxed
> state (most students were lying on the floor at this
> point) we were told that we were about to perform
> the most complicated exercise of the day: the lab.
> We were to choose any spot we wanted "from the bottom
> of the ocean to the top of a mountain, from a planet
> to a drop of water" in which to construct a room. In
> it, on shelves, we were to place any medicines and
> diagnostic tools we might need to diagnose and cure
> illness ... these could be real herbs or medicines or
> imaginary ones ... but we were to visualize them pre-
> cisely. We were to furnish the room ... placing doors
> and windows where we wanted. But we were to leave the
> south wall blank. We were to have a table with a
> clock that measured off not only hours and days but
> even years and centuries, and that could go both back-
> ward and forward. We were given time to visualize
> each one of these things carefully. We were to have
> a control panel on the table which had a volume and
> intensity control. We were to have two files, one for
> male data and one for female data. And we each
> received two counsellors, one male and one female ...
> which were presented to us one at a time through a
> secret, sliding door in the wall. These counsellors
> were there to help us with our diagnosing and problem
> solving. We were told that the south wall was to be

our "screen" on which we could project our "cases" or
those people who were ill and meant to be diagnosed.
                            - fieldnotes, Silva Mind Control meeting

Students in Silva Mind Control are told that they can

go to their lab any time they have a problem to solve,

although the emphasis is on the lab as a laboratory for

performing psychic healings. In contrast, the "safe place"

or "centre" of est is not specifically designated for non-

medical healing but "to deal with all that has been experi-

enced and that will be experienced in the future."

> Basically it is a room, structure or house which con-
> tains everything which the trainee would need to sur-
> vive and live happily. That means the trainee would
> have his favourite books and records and other
> inanimate objects. In his imagination, the trainee
> starts with the foundation, literally builds this
> structure with his hands. The trainer guides the
> trainees in terms of the centre so that it contains
> some very specific items. Among them is a special
> television screen and most important, a door, which
> the trainee operates and which allows people in and
> out of the centre. (Greene, 1976:91-92)

Arica's 'psychic space' is also used as a private spot

for solving problems with the help of two guides and for

"clarification of our psychic powers."

Psychosynthesis, while not creating a room in such

great detail, does have its adherents create a Temple of

Peace. The students, in a relaxed meditative state, are

taken on an imaginary journey up a mountain, which they are

asked to envision in detail (vegetation, landscape, smells,

sounds, the feel of the air as they climb). At the top of

this mountain is a Temple of Peace. It has two rooms in it:

a kind of antechamber, called the Hall of Peace. It is here
that adherents receive final purification:

> Let the peace and silence here fill each cell of your
> body. Let it permeate your heart and your mind.
> Drink deeply of the silence, and feel it wash away
> all your cares and agitation. Take whatever time you
> need to be completely filled with peace and silence.
> Know that you can return to this inner place of peace
> and silence whenever you wish. And now we will pre-
> pare ourselves to make our way to the inner sanctuary.
>
> - Psychosynthesis Instruction Sheet

After this purification the students are instructed
to enter into the inner sanctuary, the "Sanctuary of the
Sun." This corresponds with the innermost level described
in the Who Am I exercise, but here we have it more firmly
circumscribed by the walls of a room. Within this room
adherents are asked to visualize a shaft of light coming from
a 'spiritual' sun, into which the individual merges, feels
warmed and energized, and up which the individual ascends
until he is drawn into the "heart of the sun." As he ascends
he is asked to visualize the other members of the group
ascending their own "shaft of light and that you will come
together again in the sun." This sun is described as a
'home', as a place "of great peace and joy and love where
you really belong, where you can realize the best within
you." It is also the place where the individual is joined
to the divine in all other members of the group:

> As you approach the Heart of the Sun, be aware of the
> other group members who are there with you. Experi-
> ence them as divine beings in search of their own
> light and try to meet them at this level.
>
> - Psychosynthesis Instruction Sheet

It is finally the spot where the Source of Wisdom
dwells, a kind of oracle of which the individual can ask any
question and receive an answer. The ritual ends by taking
the adherents on the return journey back to earth where they
are asked to "feel that you are sharing with others what you
have received by allowing the energy to flow forth from you
in this way. You can make the gesture of Benediction phy-
sically if you so desire." Adherents are told to feel that
they can return to this place "whenever they wish."

It is worth noting, in passing the emphasis on con-
nection with others in these inner sanctuaries. Psycho-
synthesis gives the most vivid examples of this but the other
three groups all have entrances through which anyone and
everyone with whom an individual wants to deal or heal may
be summoned. In this place, or at this level, they see them-
selves as psychically connected to everyone. Considering
again the Psychosynthesis example, it is fascinating to note
how this supports Durkheim's basic tenet that the "cult of
man" will produce the assertion that what men have in common
is their humanity, idealized, and that this will be held
sacred. We will pursue this point later in an ensuing
chapter. For the moment we return to our exploration of
these rituals in terms of their implications for the
"negative" cult and the process of purification which is of
central concern to these groups.

We have noted that the purification process begins

with a jolt which disassociates the individual from his
normal personality or profane self. It proceeds with a
restructuring of the inner space in terms of compartments
and/or levels, through which the individual may journey to
the sacred centre, his true Essence. In the rituals we have
just discussed, which we have termed the Fortification
rituals, the individual arrives at the sacred centre and he
imaginatively constructs a temple, lab, space, or house,
which has walls and furnishing which is the dwelling place
of the sacred. Here, the individual is told he can feel
safe, i.e. he is no longer dangerous and endangered because
indeed a firm barrier in the shape of carefully imagined
walls has been constructed to prevent pollution, to keep the
sacred from contamination by the profane. This barrier
clearly works as a fortification and a separation. The con-
struction of this fortress is therefore the final step in
the purification process.

In sum, we have discussed a series of three kinds of
rituals which seem to make up the purification process in
the "cult of man" groups. This is the negative cult, those
rituals which act to separate the sacred from the profane.
Before, however, turning to the other kinds of rituals, the
"positive" cult, we need to examine one other element of the
purification process, the problem of preventing inter-
personal contamination. In the last chapter, we noted that
pollution is feared both within the individual, in the event

of mixing the profane and sacred parts but also generalized
to interpersonal relations, where the personalities or pro-
fane "passions" of others are seen as dangerous and
endangering. The individual may feel that he has found a
safe place at the end of the training. But how is he pre-
vented from endangering others?

4. Interpersonal Purification:
    The Mirror Effect

     In this section of this chapter, we intend to depart
from our comparative perspective to look at the specific
group process of a specific development group in Psycho-
synthesis, in order to explore the way in which the problem
of pollution, of merging and confusing of boundaries is dealt
with in this context. In our analysis to this point, we have
looked at three steps in the purification process of the
individual. These rituals are linked to each other and
follow in the described manner. However, each is only one
element of the ritual life. In some groups, such as Silva
Mind Control, the training process includes all three of
these elements in the prescribed order. However, in groups
like Psychosynthesis and Arica where the process of estab-
lishing, clarifying and fortifying internal boundaries is
seen to be a lengthy one, the steps of the purification pro-
cess may span several "trainings." As we have noted, it is
also these two groups which offer the most complex system of
internal mapping and which are most concerned with the

problem of interpersonal pollution. This may be due to the exceptional amount of interaction which occurs in these groups. Whatever the cause, they make particularly good cases for studying how interpersonal purification is achieved or attempted.

A close look at the fieldnotes of ten consecutive meetings of one "training" group at Psychosynthesis (spanning the life of this particular group) reveals an interesting reversal of the individual purification process. Although the terms must be interpreted slightly differently it seems that the group moves from the fortification of barriers to the elaboration of space to a final disassociation.

In the first meeting of this particular Psychosynthesis group, the theme, if there was one, was the need for trust. This involved considerable discussion of barriers and the necessity of barriers and the fear of "getting hurt." The leader discussed the fact that every person had their own armour "in some its the intellect, in some its the emotions." She then delivered her somewhat ambiguous remark, quoted in an earlier chapter, that in fact it was every person's 'responsibility' to share, i.e. to overcome the barrier, but that didn't mean that people should "unload their stuff" on other people. Then, one male member of the group reasserted the need for the barrier: "I would like to be with people right now and not feel like I have to fight

them but right now I do feel I have to fight them." He
challenged the group in general to a wrestling match. One
of the other young men responded and they began to wrestle.
The second man was clearly the better wrestler and won
easily. Then ensued the following verbal exchange:

Jack: It felt really good to me. He's stronger than
me but it felt good when I realized that he
wasn't going to hurt me. A clean fight always
feels good, but a dirty fight doesn't. I feel
fine. I feel initiated.

Bill: I felt it was a terrific cleansing force. I
feel incredibly clean.
- Psychosynthesis fieldnotes

The group leader summed it up by the aphorism: "Trust
is knowing your boundaries."

It is clear that this meeting was about reaffirming
and fortifying boundaries. They were verbally recognized and
the separateness of individuals symbolically acted out by a
fight. When both men realized that it was going to be a
'clean' fight (a nice term from the point of view of Douglas'
theories for an orderly fight which progresses according to
rules) both men felt cleansed and purified, and, interest-
ingly enough, initiated. It was as if the lines had been
drawn and respected and therefore interaction could begin.

In ensuing meetings this interaction grew more and
more intense, and as predicted in the first meeting, this
involved the breakdown of barriers. It also involved an
ordering of the group space. For instance, in the second
meeting, there was considerable use of feeding and eating

imagery, and the idea that some people were going to feed
and some to eat. There was also recognition that some people
shared easily while some were very withdrawn. In short,
roles were recognized.

The space of the room began to be ordered as well.
People sat in a circle around the edges of the room and some-
one who wanted to "act out" their emotional state would have
to go into the middle. This centre was also referred to in
gastronomic terms as the 'pot' as in "does anyone have any-
thing to throw into the pot" (a statement the leader
repeatedly made in order to encourage people to share).
There was a sacrificial/communal aspect to the people who
went into the centre to share. It was talked about as a
dangerous act and something that someone did "for the group."
People would come very 'undone' and emotional in the middle,
while the others would sit around in silence, except for the
leader who would continue to guide and question. (One is
tempted to use the term 'grill': there are symbolic over-
tones of cannibalism similar to the Christian communion
service in these rituals, as the "sharing" individual goes
into the pot physically and unloads). After the first three
cases of people 'acting out' (which included the fight and
two cases of tearful confessions in the middle) there were
instances on two consecutive weekly meetings of people sym-
bolically breaking down barriers. In each of these cases,
a woman (overtly claiming to be trying to work out problems

of a feeling of oppression on the one hand, and strength
testing on the other) got into the middle surrounded by the
pillows. The woman would then fight her way out of this
circle of pillows and physically tussle with other members
of the group.

At the same time, a lot of physical interaction
between group members began. At quieter moments, group
members would lie in a circle with their feet touching and
think of images such as the petals of a flower or the spokes
of a wheel. At other times, they would stand with their
arms around each other in a circle and suggest they were like
parts of the sea anemone.

What seems to be happening both in terms of the rit-
uals and in terms of the images is that members are seeing
themselves as separate but connected. Barriers are broken
down (in terms of the pillows) but fights ensue (we are still
separate). The images are of separate aspects of a single
organism. This is a transitory state similar to that
reorganization stage of the purification process of the
individual. The distinctions are recognized but melt.

Such a sense of coming together, of becoming a part
of a group, of interrelatedness is the expected pattern in
most groups and would seem to reflect the express desire to
feel "closer" to people. Close, but not too close. The
theme of "not unloading" of not getting hooked, or "reowning
projections" was reiterated as a commentary on group

interaction (by the group leader) and in discrete rituals in the group process. Nonetheless, this caution alone was not enough to counteract the growing involvement.

Then, in the last two meetings, an unexpected twist occurred. In the second to last meeting, the leader announced that the meeting would be spent discussing the 'norms' of the group, those unwritten laws which members were all acting out. Otherwise, she explained, we stop growing; become crystal- lized. The message was clear, "Things are not as they seem." Members were not going to be allowed to merge into blissful unawareness of group life. There was considerable resistance on the part of individual members to this discussion, but the leader won out. Suddenly, the group interaction which had seemed so 'real' and 'meaningful' was seen as an 'act' which must be disrupted if the individual members were to continue growing.

In the last meeting this disassociation was acted out. The group was dissolved ... a new gap created between the real self and the self that had acted in the group. In the inter- action in the last session of the group this shift was very marked. The leader began a movement exercise (no talking) to the music of Bolero. The individuals linked up into chains spontaneously moving to the music. Then as the music seemed to get more pronounced, the movement becomes increasingly hostile and aggressive. Instead of swinging arms back and forth, people began to strike and hit each other with their joined hands. They began to push people around and throw

pillows on top of them. Even after the music had stopped,
some individuals kept hitting each other with pillows. The
leader's comment was: "Wow, look at all these dynamics com-
ing out." People talked about meeting for a party the next
week but enthusiasm was low. Peopled talked about what they
"got out of the group." The meeting and the group ended.

In summary, the process of purification seemed to take
place in three steps, but like a mirror image of the individ-
ual process. Initially, barriers were acknowledged and
fortified. People felt pure, but they were anxious to be ..
closer. As they became closer, pollution anxieties were
evident, but the boundaries were seen as joining them into a
system instead of merely separating them. Then as the
individuals appeared to be merging into the group, the leader
introduced the "jolt" that things were not as they seemed; this
wasn't real. Sure enough in the next meeting the system seemed
to run amuck, the interconnecting parts broke down and new
"dynamics" emerged. And the group broke up altogether.

Whether a similar pattern exists in all Psychosyn-
thesis groups or whether it is duplicated in other "cult of
man" groups, such as Arica, cannot be established without
more detailed fieldnotes. However, there is a kind of sym-
bolic logic about the above group process which makes one
suspect that such dynamics are far from uncommon.

What the Psychosynthesis member takes away from the
group is only his or her own growth, the extent to which he

or she has achieved the internal reorganization and purifica-
tion described in the individual process. His or her inter-
action with others may have helped him or her to reclaim pro-
jections, to achieve or recognize different internal levels.
The degree to which he or she will feel comfortable leaving
the intense interaction of the group will, to a large extent,
depend on the degree to which he or she has developed a
"safe," internal place which allows for a sense of self-
sufficiency as well as a sense, on a psychic or mystical
plane of being connected to all humanity. If such internal
progress has not been made, then the individual will feel
compelled to return to the group, to take another course,
work on more rituals to gain an internal sense of safety. In
this sense, the entire group process may be seen as a ritual
of disassociation, recapitulating the disassociation experi-
enced in the larger society of recurrent loss of identity
groups and breakdown of rules. The individual comes to the
group to practice over and over again, until he can handle it,
the experience of being disassociated and cut adrift. Mastery
of this experience depends on success at the internal order-
ing and fortifying rituals. This is perhaps most poignantly
expressed by the Shakti ritual of the Mala Training:

> Mala and Lama, or Instructor and Student are isolated
> in separate rooms of the starship or hermitage,
> linked via intercom and video. They converse. Lama
> answers questions, performs tasks. Communication is
> cut off slowly, one way. Eventually Lama is left
> alone in a white, bare room.

> The goal of this technique is for the student to
> internalize his instructor, to be his own authority.
> To discover self, apart from senses, relationships.
> (Palmer, 1976:83)

The only way to prevent interpersonal contamination, it would seem, is to eliminate attempts at interacting on the profane level, to withdraw to the inner reaches where there is safety and mystic reunion, to continue the external contact only as an impersonal machine.

In the next chapters, which examine the rituals of the "positive cult" which govern the interaction between sacred and profane, we will explore the felt advantages or powers that accrue from this rather dismal picture of the possibilities of interpersonal interaction.

CHAPTER IX

THE PERSONALITY AS MACHINE:
RITUALS OF MANIPULATION

This chapter will address itself to those rituals
which flow from the compromise between faith and science,
and the resulting belief in technology, precision and
efficiency discussed in Chapters V and VI. In those chap-
ters, we suggested that the problem of compromising the
secular and the sacred, whether in terms of science and
religion or in terms of economic organization, has his-
torically proved difficult for new religious movements. It
was suggested that the "cult of man" groups' apparent
ability to effect such a compromise was grounded in their
unique view of the sacred. As the line separating sacred
and profane lay within each individual as opposed to at the
periphery of the group or around consecrated ground, elements
of profane society could be admitted into the group structure
and beliefs without fear of contamination. In short, the
problem of purity in the "cult of man" groups is an individ-
ual as opposed to group problem.

The problem is handled, as discussed in Chapters VII
and VIII, by disidentification with the outer 'profane' self.
Emotional involvement and attachment is withdrawn from the

outer personality and relocated in the inner Self. The outer
personality, empty of passion, is viewed as part and parcel
of the profane, outer world, and like that world, is viewed
as mechanical, rationalized, artificial and inanimate. As
with the sectarians, "cult of man" adherents are "in this
world but not of it," but for them "this world" includes
their own outer selves or personalities. This is nicely
illustrated by the following comment made by a Psychosyn-
thesis leader when discussing the ritual of the Levels (see
Chapter VIII): "It is a sad comment on our society, that
the outer layer of the self is frequently an image of
machinery ... beneath this layer ... a naked man, who is
jailed, as it were by the machines."

The choice of machine images to express the outer
self/outer world is prevalent in all "cult of man" groups.
This seems to some extent to be a reflection of, and reaction
to, the concrete, machine-run world of the modern urban
environment from which most members are recruited. The other
source of such images seems to be, ironically, the social
sciences. Glock (1976) has noted that the crisis in the
sixties was in part due to the fact that the popularization
of the social sciences led people to feel that reality was
shaped neither by God nor the individual alone, but by a
convergence of a number of social, psychological, biological
and economic factors, impossible to sort out or control.
Eister (1975) has suggested that the effect of the social

sciences has been to create a normative dislocation through
producing a widespread awareness of the relativity of all
norms. Both these theorists, and others who have discussed
the relationship of science and religion in the seventies,
have viewed the new religious movements as an alternative to
this demoralizing situation.

Durkheim, on the other hand, foresaw the relationship
quite differently. As discussed in the first chapter of this
dissertation, Durkheim expected that as the social sciences
gathered interpretive power, they would eventually take over
the representational aspect of religion which had functioned
to explain society to its members. The relationship would be
an uneasy one, faith tending to "anticipate science and com-
plete it prematurely" and science tending to criticize and
control faith, but the relationship would continue to exist.

In "cult of man" groups, the awareness of society
as acting on the individual instead of he acting on it, has
produced an image of social interaction as mechanized and
artificial, social responses and roles as prepatterned and
predictable. It is all an "act" which has nothing to do with
the real self, but which, nonetheless, imprisons us and rules
that self, and in which our personality plays a role. The
famous est maxim that "you would rather be right than alive"
expresses the inanimate, 'dead' quality of such preprogrammed
performances.

> No one ever stays with you because you are so busy
> running your goddamn 'act', you don't even have time
> to notice that life is passing you by. You're a
> perfect example of an asshole, a fucking <u>machine</u>.
>
>   - est trainer

But, true to Durkheim's notion, the "cult of man"
adherent does not seek solely to escape from this
'mechanical' situation to find refuge in a new spirituality
or by overcoming the 'programs' so that he no longer feels
mechanical. The compromise between faith and science in
group beliefs results in a faith in, not a rejection of,
technology, precision and efficiency. For the "cult of man"
groups, the machine-like nature of the outer personality, the
body, the rational mind and the social interactions in which
these parts of the self participate, are a given, irrefut-
able fact of reality. <u>The goal of the "cult of man" member
is not to interpret this reality any differently in order to
escape the machine. Instead, he or she seeks to learn to
manipulate the machine, to be the puppet master instead of
the puppet</u>.

For example, while the notion that man is a machine is
one of the first introduced to the est trainee (by way of a
jolt) it is also the last introduced, by way of 'getting it',
the point of the entire training process. On the last day of
the class, the trainer tells his trainees he is now going to
tell them "the secret of life." After a terrific build-up,
he announces that:

> Enlightenment is nothing more than realizing that you
> are a machine ... that's it, you're machines. Nothing
> but machines and you've got to accept it. Come from a
> position of being a machine. You'll work from cause,
> not from effect. (Greene, 1976:93)

The interesting thing about the machine image is in fact its dual nature: a man can only be jailed by the machines around him as long as he doesn't have his hand on the switch or isn't pushing the buttons himself. If he 'causes' the machine to run then he can use it to his own advantage.

This is illustrated by the Psychosynthesis ritual of The Robot (as distinct from the Shakti ritual of the same name which will be discussed below). The students are asked to play at being robots without expression, thought or feeling. They are then asked to feel that they are "really a human being -- trapped inside a robot." They play out this human side by moving, touching and expressing "freely." It would appear that the goal of the Psychosynthesis ritual is to "break out" of the machine except for the final instruction, "When you open your eyes, you may put on your everyday mask again. But remember that it is a mask and that there is a place within where you are pure being and pure love."

Purification rituals in the "cult of man" groups are aimed at bringing it to the attention of adherents that they are machines. Once this is accomplished, however, other rituals are orientated not towards breaking down the machine but in learning to use it efficiently and effectively. These

rituals may be broken into four groups: rituals of effi-
ciency, rituals of communication, rituals of obedience and
rituals of imitation. All four of these rituals help to
maintain the "machine" in top working condition, with the
end result that it may be manipulated to achieve the desired
ends.

Rituals of Efficiency

These rituals are extremely pragmatic and straight-
forward "techniques," developed and practiced regularly in
order to program the "machine" to perform habitual opera-
tions precisely and efficiently. The best examples of such
rituals are found in est and Silva Mind Control. An example
is the "Sleep Control" technique, taught by both groups:

> Sleep Control, a formula-type technique that you can
> use to enter normal, natural, physiologic sleep any-
> time, anywhere, without the use of drugs ... visualize
> a blackboard. Mentally have a chalk in one hand and
> an eraser in the other. Next mentally draw a large
> circle on the blackboard. Write a big X within the
> circle. Proceed to mentally erase the X from within
> the circle starting at the center, being careful not
> to erase the circle in the least. Once you erase the
> X from within the circle, to the right and outside of
> the circle, write the word deeper. Everytime you
> write the word deeper you will enter a deeper,
> healthier level of mind in the direction of normal,
> natural, healthy sleep. Next write a big number 100
> within the circle. Proceed to mentally erase the
> number 100 ... being careful not to erase the circle,
> and go over the word 'deeper' (this ritual is repeated
> over and over counting down from 100 to 1 until the
> person sleeps).
>   - Silva Mind Control Instruction Manual

Similar techniques are used to train the "machine"
self to lose or gain weight, wake up on time, control pain,

develop memory, control headaches, remember dreams, and solve
problems. Most of these, it should be noted, have to do with
aspects of the biological or physical self, which if not
properly regulated interfere with the smooth working of the
entire person.

The Arica emphasis on physical exercises is based on
this same principle. All members going through the forty-
day training are expected to exercise vigourously, daily.

> Poor physical shape means that we have not been getting
> sufficient exercise every day to keep the bio-computor
> in a controllable, quiescent, bland state at the high
> energy level. In poor physical shape, there are
> impulses not under one's control that make one rest-
> less. One moves about and does aimless kinds of
> actions with unknown desires taking the stage at
> awkward times.... One's 48 (that state of conscious-
> ness in which one is operating his human bio-computer
> completely rationally, without either positive or
> negative emotion) becomes more integrated, more
> unitized and more of one's available bio-computer is
> utilized. (Lilly, 1972:175)

Some of these, such as the problem-solving techniques,
would seem on the surface to be dealing with more complex,
less pragmatic issues. However, a look at such a ritual
suggests that 'problems' like all aspects of day to day
routine, are seen as mechanical misfunctions, which should be
corrected, not by mental problem-solving, but by mechanical
technique.

> Whenever you are ready to go to sleep, select any one
> problem you would like to solve; then get a water
> glass and fill it with water. And while you are
> drinking approximately half of the water, turn your
> eyes slightly upward and mentally say to yourself:
> "This is all I need to do to find the solution to the

> problem I have in mind." You will then put away the
> remaining half glass of water so that you may drink
> it first thing in the morning; after this you will go
> to bed and go to sleep. First thing in the morning
> drink the remaining half glass of water, turning your
> eyes slightly upward and mentally saying to yourself:
> "This is all I need to do to find the solution to the
> problem I have in mind." And this is so.
>
> - Silva Mind Control Manual

Adherents who are taught this technique are told that it is not important to determine how the problem will be solved, merely to know that it will be.

This emphasis on method, even without comprehension or reason, of course is based on the idea of the outer personality as inanimate, a machine. Machines are not given reasons, they do not need explanations. They are incapable, in addition of irrational mistakes. The rituals we will consider next, both those of communication (including those of duplication) are designed to eliminate, or at lease reduce, the margin of performance error.

Rituals of Communication

Many of the machine images used particularly for those outer personality aspects of rational thought, are borrowed from the computor. Arica talks about "metaprogramming" and the human "biocomputor" (a phrase coined by Lilly). Shakti talks about encoding and decoding, processing information. Silva Mind Control talks about "canceling" and Psychosynthesis, about "programs." The choice of the computor is undoubtedly an apt image for describing those rational thought

processes which these groups see as part of the "ego" and therefore somewhat mechanical. Secondly, it is a good image for expressing thought processes uninhibited by irrational- ities, such as human emotion, and therefore functioning efficiently as intended ('unclouded' by passions). Finally, however, it is an image which "cult of man" groups use to talk about human communication, because the computor absorbs 'raw data' in the forms of signs, words and symbols, pro- cesses this data and puts out a response also in signs, words and symbols.

It is worth noting, in passing, that the image of interpersonal relations which is created is one of 'dis- passionate' communication for the sake of conveying inform- ation, but not for conveying emotion or feeling. This view of communication seems to flow directly from the attitude noted at the end of the last chapter, that interaction coupled with emotions is dangerous, and that real contact with others is possible only on the higher more mystical levels of the Real Self. Once divorced from emotion, how- ever, interpersonal communication has one unexpected advantage. It can be precise, economic and efficient. The communications rituals in these groups are orientated toward this end. Take, for instance, the ritual in Shakti termed The Robot:

> The student plays a robot. The operator communicates
> in stylized format -- "Are you receiving me?", and
> gives commands in increments. Malfunctions in the

robot are handled by repeating a command or starting
at the beginning of the communication. (Palmer,
1976:84)

The purpose of this ritual is, among other things, "to
learn to communicate efficiently, patiently, precisely, with-
out emotive overtones." It is modelled after a Scientology
ritual called Termination, in which the student practices
"owning" a phrase, while his partner receives it, acknowledges
it and thanks him thus completing a "cycle" of communication.
In est, trainers often respond to comments with "Thank you, I
received that."

In addition, both Shakti and Scientology have rituals
which practice "processing" information. In Scientology,
this is called Dear Alice, and involves reading aloud and
paraphrasing. In Shakti, when an error is made, the page
must be repeated. Similarly, in all classes of Scientology,
if a student questions what is being taught it is presumed he
hasn't 'received' the communication, that there has been some
kind of mechanical breakdown in the process and the same
message is therefore simply repeated over and over until the
student appears to "get it."

Psychosynthesis has special Auditory Rituals for
developing acute auditory receptivity, practicing receiving
and cataloguing precisely auditory information.

Signs, of course, are not purely verbal. "Cult of
man" members also learn to receive visual information in a
precise way. As the only way that feedback can be created

in a visual situation is by imitation, these rituals focus
on people working in pairs, attempting precise duplication
of each other's activities. Shakti, Scientology, Arica,
Psychosynthesis all have a ritual similar to the one
described here:

> Two students stand facing each other. One leads and
> his partner mirrors his gestures. Two students sit
> on knees facing each other. At the snap of the
> leader's fingers, they rise simultaneously and say,
> "I I I" and sit. This is repeated with "you you
> you," and "God God God." (Palmer, 1976:83)

This last ritual underlines the double nature of most
of the manipulation rituals we have discussed in this chapter.
It seems that to be capable of machine-like behavior on the
surface, precise and efficient, is intimately connected to
the sense of inner mystical self, wherein one is joined to
everyone and to the sacred. As pointed out in the last
chapter, the explanation of this connection lies in the
internal nature of the sacred and profane split. To build an
internal holy spot and to take refuge behind its barricades,
is to vacate the outer profane personality. One does not
abandon the personality, however, but employs the complicated
equipment with which the lab is furnished (see Chapter VII)
to run the external operations by remote control. In this
sense, rituals of manipulation are part of the positive cult,
regulating the interchange between sacred and profane. In
the above ritual, the profane selves of the two students
perform mechanical mirror exercises. This enables them, how-
ever, to truly unit on the level of the sacred (hence the

repetition of the "I I I, you you you, God God God"). This
interchange, however, is only possible if the external self
is neutralized so that contamination will not occur.
Manipulation rituals in this respect are also part of the
negative cult.

A third and final kind of precise and mechanical com-
munication is the notion of being able to carry out orders
(like a robot). This aspect is separated out for specific
attention in the next set of rituals.

Rituals of Obedience

In an attitude similar to making the best of a bad
situation, "cult of man" groups feel that if the individual
is a surface machine, at least he should have all the
benefits of that machine. He should be able to perform
routine tasks absolutely precisely and without error. There
is considerable emphasis, therefore, on being able to carry
out orders. The rituals which seem orientated toward develop-
ing this ability, I have termed rituals of obedience.

Most obedience rituals consist of the minute observ-
ance of monotonous instructions. For example, on graduating
from the course, est trainees may volunteer to help out at
subsequent est trainings. This is considered advanced train-
ing for the students, particularly in learning obedience.
The volunteers are set to do over and over highly repetitive
tasks, such as lining up chairs, in an extremely precise
manner (so that a thread stretched from one end of the row to

to the other would be perfectly straight). Carrying out the

instructions is taken very seriously.

> My assignment was to cover several long, rectangu-
> lar tables with tablecloths. My instructions: each
> tablecloth was to be pinned with a square corner and
> should almost, but not quite touch the floor. Another
> mindless task. While I went through the motions I
> eavesdropped on a conversation a few feet away. A
> mistake.
> I looked up to see the person supervising the
> assistants standing alongside me. Confronting me with
> the directness characteristic of est-ers (a graduate
> can be known by his direct eye contact), he kindly but
> firmly instructed me to do the tablecloth over. "It
> touches the floor," he explained with a solemnity that
> from someone else would have indicated a critical error
> in a major undertaking. But there was no cruelty, no
> satisfaction, no judgement in his statement. It simply
> was. (Bry, 1976:101-2)

In Shakti and Scientology, the Dear Alice and the

Robot exercises also help to develop obedience. In Arica, an

exercise termed "I Hear and I Obey" combines breathing and

slow walking with repetition of the phrase "I hear and I

obey." (Women are given this ritual to perform more often

than men as Ichazo claims that they "have a hard time listen-

ing" (Lilly, 1972). In all groups such rituals develop a

sense of self-consciousness about minute interactions.

Such training in obedience and precision has its

benefits. For one thing, it is excellent practice for modern

bureaucracies. It is claimed by est, for instance, that

graduates are "in great demand on the California job market.

A number of businesses, in fact, were reported to be hiring

only est-ers" (Ibid.:105). Glowing reports of the cheerful

and thorough on-the-job performance of est graduates are

repeated gleefully.

Such training also has benefits for the internal authority structures of the groups. As much of ritual activity of "cult of man" groups is internal and private (particularly those rituals to be discussed in the next chapter) it is difficult to evaluate the performance of students. Performance is important, however, because of the problem of authority in groups where the sacred lies within each individual. This problem was noted by Durkheim in his article on "cult of man" (1969). There he suggested that its solution would be authority based on skill. This seems to be true in "cult of man" groups, particularly those like Psychosynthesis, Arica and Scientology which have an elaborate gradation of courses. Students are evaluated (ironically) not on their internal experience (which is invisible and to a degree deemed inexpressible) but on their external performance (their ability for dispassionate and exact interchanges, physical control and obedience to instructions). The logic behind this, in group terms, is that controlled external performance signals that disidentification has occurred. As this is an essential criterion for the development of the inner, sacred self, it is considered a good indicator of spiritual progress. That these external 'skills' are linked to authority patterns is witnessed by the fact that it is those people who graduate from the top level courses who are admired and who become licensed as instructors themselves

(Wallis, 1977:119-20).

Rituals of Imitation

This final category of manipulation rituals is
designed to give adherents a sense of control over their
outer selves and the world in which that outer self par-
ticipates. In the rituals of obedience, adherents learn to
follow instructions, not because obedience is a cherished
quality, but because learning to follow instructions
minutely is one way to ensure success in a technological,
bureaucratic society. Imitation rituals offer another kind
of control. By learning expertly to control the acts (or
faces) that one is required to play, one can control not
only the outer personality but the outer world. Once the
'act' is being directed by the internal self, one can use
the 'theatre' of the social environment to stage plays with
happy endings for the self. Consider the following story,
recounted by an Arica graduate:

> I began by asking him how going through Arica had
> changed his relationship to other people.
> A: Oh it's changed it a lot ... when I first met
> Aricans I thought they were kind of strange ...
> that they were overdramatic ... but that's because
> they were playing the theatre .... Aricans can
> always tell other Aricans .... but now I know how
> to play the theatre. Like the other day I went
> into the dry cleaners to get my dry cleaning and I
> saw it hanging on a hook and nobody was around and
> I thought ... 'I could just reach over and take
> this' ... so I just reached over and took it ...
> and the lady came rushing out from the side and she
> was doing this angry lady routine ... and in the
> past I would have responded to this by getting
> defensive and saying I wasn't stealing it and she
> would have probably said I was stealing it but now

> I knew how to play the theatre so I just went into my
> repentent polite young man, and that neutralized her
> angry mother so she could go back into the 'business
> woman'. You can help people by neutralizing them.
>
> - Arica interview

In the above anecdote, the Arica member experiences
a sense of power from being able to manipulate the 'act'.
This ability is largely seen as gained through a variety of
role playing techniques or rituals found in most "cult of
man" groups (SMC being the exception). Below is an example
of such a ritual drawn from Shakti and termed Daysnap.

> The student draws a role or personality from a hat
> and wears it for a specified amount of time. After
> some practice, the game is extended outside the
> centre (e.g. in a restaurant). A guide or group
> accompanies the actor to prevent his over-
> identification with the role. The goal is to be
> able to perform any role efficiently, without
> identification. (Palmer, 1976:84)

The notion that once the outer self is controlled,
the outer world is controlled, is repeated in several differ-
ent ritual contexts. The outer self and outer world <u>seem</u>
to "cause" events, but are in reality hollow, inanimate,
preprogrammed machines. The inner Self can allow these
machines to run, uncontrolled or can will itself to control
them (be "a cause"). The beginning steps are to regulate
the actions and responses of the personality self. Psycho-
synthesis has a ritual called Turning the Switch in which
adherents manipulate those emotions attached to "person-
ality" experiences by turning them on and off at will. Once,
however, the outer self has been regulated, the outer world

will fall into line, in imitation. In one of the most
astounding rituals of Scientology termed Waterloo Station,
the entire outer world is switched on and off in like
fashion.

> The goal of Waterloo Station is not to make one thing
> vanish. That phenomenon is just the start. Auditors
> have been quitting when the preclear (student) made
> somebody's hat disappear. When the pc can make the
> whole universe wink on and off at his consideration
> to know or not know it, you're getting somewhere.
> So don't stop at the hat. (Wallis, 1977:115)

Similar uses of the will or power of the inner self
to control and shape both external self and external world
are explicitly linked to machines and machine technology.
In a ritual called the Bio Cyb Theatre, Shakti members are
connected to a wide variety of bio-cybernetic (feedback)
equipment which in turn controls audiovisual equipment
(lights, mood) and puts on a one-man sound and light show
simply by controlling his nervous system (sweat, heat,
blood, brain waves, etc.) (Palmer, 1976:82). The message of
this ritual is clear. If the machine-self is controlled, so
will the outer, artificial world of sound and light of which
it is a part.

In conclusion, we have considered four kinds of
manipulation rituals. These rituals deal with the control of
the outer profane personality and may be seen to flow from
the commitment to technology and the compromise with the

rational secular world which characterizes "cult of man" groups. These groups accept and admit a world which is technologized, concerned with pragmatic efficiency and bureaucratic skills and which seems to run without the control of the individual human being. Success in such a world depends upon versatile and skillful performance of these programs, and yet, due to over-identification or emotional involvement with the "program," the individual may become confused and threatened, unable to perform a given "program" correctly or change programs. In short, he may fail to receive, encode, decode or correctly process the necessary information and may bungle the job. Purification rituals remove the "real Self" from such threats. Manipulation rituals teach careful processing techniques so that the threatening situations may be handled without error.

Finally, it is worth noting the advantages of this split view of the self. While the sectarian religious believer must shun worldly pursuits in order to dwell in the sacred, the "cult of man" member needs only to withdraw to his inner Self, leaving his body and outer personality to continue worldly activity without danger. This has the result of not only solving economic difficulties and of teaching adherents to survive successfully in a technological world and its bureaucracies, assuming and dropping "faces" at will, but also of giving them a sense of mystical power which can be used to shape and reshape the self and the world.

In Chapter X we will turn to a discussion of those specific rituals which serve to encourage and develop a sense of power, mastery and control, of which the rituals of manipulation discussed in this chapter are only an intimation.

CHAPTER X

INSIDE THE CONTROL ROOM:
RITUALS OF TRANSFORMATION

To date in this section, we have examined two distinct
but related kinds of rituals. In Chapter VIII we examined
rituals of purification. In these (negative) rituals the
sacred was carefully separated from the profane. This
involved a jolt which made adherents perceive a discrepancy
between outer personality and inner Self, followed by clear
demarcations of internal boundaries and the fortification of
the sacred Self by creation of an inner, psychic sanctuary
or lab. This involved a withdrawal of identification and/or
emotion from the outer personality.

In Chapter IX, we discussed those rituals dealing with
this outer personality, now empty of Self. We noted that it
was symbolized as a machine which could act to imprison the
Self if not properly controlled. Rituals were examined which
acted to control this machine, to get it to perform accurately
and efficiently at the command of the inner Self.

In the present chapter, we will examine a final set of
rituals which we have chosen to call rituals of transforma-
tion. These deal with the inner, sacred Self and it's
potential, once separated from the outer profane personality.

These are clearly 'positive' rituals in Durkheim's termin-
ology, not only because they serve to allow for interaction
between sacred Self and profane world, but also because they
serve to empower and motivate adherents. Adherents may come
to "cult of man" groups because they need protection (purif-
ication) or to master routine behavior in the world (manipu-
lation) but it is in the rituals of transformation that
adherents find experiences of power and ecstasy which are
the reward for the control involved in purification and
manipulation rituals.

> While studying with intention in the privacy of my
> bedroom, I heard a noise in the adjoining den. I
> looked around to 'see' what it was, and behold, I
> looked right through the wall into the next room
> as though no wall was there. When your intention
> is very strong you can do what you intend to do.
> Wow! ... I love it -- like Superman.
>   - Scientology adherent from
>   (Wallis, 1976:121)

While the above experience, with its paranormal
implications, is one of the more extreme instances of the
powers which adherents feel accrue from transformational
rituals, the ecstatic response is similar in all such rit-
uals. Such ecstasy stems from the ability to transcend the
normal boundaries or limitations which most human beings
experience. This ability is achieved in, broadly, two
categories of transformational rituals: those which train
adherents to transcend the mortal limitations of their own
bodies, and those which allow them to enter into other
substances. These two categories of rituals express the

same message about the inner, sacred Self. If the outer per-
sonality is frozen and restricted like a robot machine, the
inner Self is a fluid and unrestricted substance which may
move and transform at will.

Transcending the Limitations

All "cult of man" groups have rituals which, working
through the imagination or guided imagery, train the adher-
ents to leave their own bodies, to travel to places which
they could not physically go. In Scientology, this is called
'exteriorizing' and the goal of the ritual is to get the
adherent (called the 'preclear') to "give up the self-imposed
need to be in the body" (Wallis, 1976:114).

> Ask preclear to be three feet behind his head. If
> stable there, have him be in various pleasant
> places until any feeling of scarcity of viewpoints
> is resolved. Then have him be in several undesir-
> able places, then several pleasant places; then
> have him be in a slightly dangerous place, then in
> more dangerous places until he can sit in the centre
> of the Sun.
> - Scientology Instruction Manual from
> (Wallis, 1976:114)

Once outside the body, the person can travel where he
or she wills. In most of these groups there is a kind of
astral travel exercise where the members are guided on space
voyages. In est, this is called space travel (a ritual
exercise that takes several hours of intense imaginative
visualization); in Scientology, it is called the Grand Tour.
In Psychosynthesis and Silva Mind Control, guided imagery
exercises involve the individual floating above the earth and

looking down at the earth.

> The group leader told us to close our eyes and see
> where we were internally. Then we were to imagine
> we were outside the earth looking down at the
> earth, seeing where it was in the solar system, in
> the galaxy, in the universe. Then we were to move
> closer to the earth and see its colours and hear
> its sounds. Then we were to imagine that the earth
> were a person and see the qualities it had and see
> its characteristics and see where it was going and
> what it needed. And we should look into ourselves
> and our relationship with this person and what we
> had to give it. Then we were to come out slowly.
>
> - Psychosynthesis fieldnotes

It is worth noting, in passing, the subjective nature
of these experiences. In a group like Scientology, adherents
are told simply to locate themselves outside their bodies.
In the Psychosynthesis exercise (one of those termed by the
group 'guided imagery exercises') adherents are specifically
instructed to 'imagine' that they are travelling in space.
However, having performed the ritual, members discuss "what
they experienced," meaning their private, personal imagin-
ings and <u>this experience is seen as real</u> by all concerned.
In other words, the images which the adherent received during
the ritual are taken as messages from the Higher Self, as
having a reality within the context of that Higher Self, and
therefore as a guide to understanding the 'real' unlimited
potential of that Higher Self. Being able to imagine being
outside the earth is therefore seen as having the potential
to <u>be</u> outside the earth, a potential which is in turn seen as
a reality of the Higher Self. Most members of a group like
Psychosynthesis perceive things like astral travel (outside

of group context of ritual) as being real human possibilities,
and so the line between subjective and objective reality is
further blurred. As an Arica leader put it:

> In the province of the mind, what I believe to be true
> is true, or becomes true within certain limits to be
> found experientially and experimentally. These limits
> are further beliefs to be transcended. (Lilly, 1972:210)

Once outside the body, "cult of man" adherents find
that not only can they travel through space, but through
time. Arica members talk of visiting past lives and a Silva
Mind Control graduate describes the following voyage experi-
enced during one of the group's visualization rituals:

> On the last day of the course during a 'conditioning'
> I heard drums rolling like an army on the march. I
> was above the army and I could see the army. It had
> pipers and drummers and they were marching through
> the fields in off white uniforms, some on horses.
> In the fields in the distance guns were pointed ...
> then I saw some old barn full of Scotsmen, dancing
> and playing. I was annoyed and switched to a city
> with cheering crowds. I think it was the Crimean
> War.
>   - Silva Mind Control graduate

Having left the body and experienced travel through
space and time, "cult of man" adherents are also ritually
trained in entering matter other than their own bodies.

Re-entering Matter

A variety of rituals exist in "cult of man" groups to
train adherents to enter plants, animals, metals and other
people. The assumption behind this is that as the external,
outer Self is machine-like and inanimate, its form is irre-
levant. It has nothing to do with Self. The inner Self can

therefore use it and discard it, assuming other forms as it chooses. To enter other forms is at once to experience the difference between outer and inner reality and to recognize the artificiality of the former.

On the second to last day of class, Silva Mind Control graduates are presented with four cylinders of metal: a copper cylinder, a steel cylinder, a brass cylinder and a lead cylinder. Holding these cubes to their foreheads, adherents are asked to project themselves into the metals. Up to this point, 'to project' has meant to imagine on the internal 'mental screen'. Now, however, it is used to mean 'enter into' as well as 'get a picture of'.

> We were told to enter into each cylinder in turn,
> gauging it for temperature, light, consistency and
> sound and smell. After the conditioning, people
> were asked what they had experienced. One woman
> said that the steel cube had appeared to her like
> a walk-in refrigerator. Another said that the
> inside of the brass was like the inside of a tuba
> and a third said that the inside of the steel was
> a silver room with rainbow lights at the corners.
> Someone remarked that the cubes seemed as big as
> whole rooms. The woman who had experienced the
> walk-in refrigerator was told that many people
> experienced steel as the coldest metal. The
> instructor said this was very useful ... now when-
> ever this woman put her hand on a piece of metal
> and thought of a walk-in refrigerator she could be
> sure that the metal was steel.
>
> - Silva Mind Control fieldnotes

Note, from the above sequence of events, that an experience which might possibly have been interpreted as 'purely imaginative' by adherents is made real by the fact that they are told that what the mind-in-alpha (or inner

Self) tells about the inside of the cylinder is real and this information can be used in future to understand the world.

Silva Mind Control has similar exercises for entering into and exploring plants and animals. As in the case above, this involves a detailed guided tour of the various systems within the plant and/or animal form. Scientology and est also have adherents 'experience' such diverse objects as lemons, strawberries, wood, a rock ("now find a rock; be inside of it; be outside of it"). Psychosynthesis members "become" blossoming rosebuds.

In a somewhat different but related manner, Psychosynthesis has a number of guided imagery rituals in which members are asked to either pretend that they 'are' a certain kind of animal, by assuming the outer gestures and expressions of the animal or, conversely, to imagine that an animal exists within them as in the following case:

> Steve had never talked much up to this point in the meetings, but today he began to complain about his inner feelings of unexpressed intolerance. The leader asked him to provide an image and Steve, closing his eyes and concentrating, said that he imaged a wolf, with his mouth open. He made the corresponding face. The leader asked him to speak as the wolf and to say why the mouth was open. Steve said it was because he (the wolf) was hungry. That he (the wolf) wanted people to watch out because he would bite. That the wolf was intolerant and didn't like people and if people could see the angry wolf they wouldn't like him either. The leader said that animals often appeared to communicate things about the self.

- Psychosynthesis fieldnotes

It is important to note that in most transformational

rituals in "cult of man" groups, this sort of inside/out con-
fusion occurs. <u>The adherent enters into the plant, animal or
mineral by allowing the image of the plant, animal or mineral
to enter into him</u>. This is particularly vivid in the case of
those rituals dealing with the individual entering another
person.

The best example of this is undoubtedly drawn from the
healing ritual in Silva Mind Control. Leading up to this
ritual, members are given a booklet with the various human
organ systems illustrated in medical textbook forms. For the
ritual itself, the member projects the image of a sick person
on his or her "mental screen" (composing one wall of the
laboratory to which the adherent retires mentally to perform
the healing ritual). Once the image of the sick person has
been projected on this internal screen, the adherent proceeds
to 'scan' the image, entering into the various systems
(digestive, nervous, cardiovascular) and travelling through
them to detect the parts which are malfunctioning.

While the healing ritual is performed on people whom
the adherent doesn't know, the skills attained by the
adherent in performing the ritual are used on people with
whom the adherent is familiar. For example, one SMC graduate
who confessed that he had always been very shy, explained how
he felt more confidence in his office and with a girl to whom
he had felt attracted. He explained that some of the other
men in his office thought her stuck-up, and at times

unpleasant but, after 'projecting' her on his own mental
screen, he had seen that she was very unhappy. He 'under-
stood' her and was no longer afraid of her.

This ability to get inside others is also expressed
in terms of telepathy:

> Yesterday I was walking down the main street. A woman
> ahead of me coming in the opposite direction was cough-
> ing badly. I put across to her -- telepathically --
> 'are you OK?' When she got beside me she beamed and
> said "yes, that is a lot better now, thank you." Well?
> The secret is in the OT (Operating Thetan) Courses --
> come and get it too.
> - Scientology graduate
> (Wallis, 1977:121)

At the end of the est training, adherents use new-
found telepathic and clairvoyant abilities to describe the
personality of persons they have never met by somehow
"tuning in" to their minds. We noted in Chapter VIII how,
in the Temple of the Sun ritual, the Psychosynthesis adher-
ent meets the other members of the group at the end of his
internal voyage to the centre of his own Self. Arica and
est use their internal 'psychic' spaces as places into which
they may bring other people, and may in turn 'get inside'
them. Even rituals like chanting are interpreted in Arica
as a means of merging with other people.

> This time (in chanting) it was the whole group and I
> was tuned into everybody. Everybody was me. I was
> everybody ... like a baby in a womb. (Lilly, 1972:193)

It is interesting to note, in passing, the relation-
ship between these kinds of rituals and the belief in the
"cast of thousands" discussed in Chapter VI. This belief,

reflecting as it does a sense of internal fragmentation, may
be said to rest on the awareness of the adherent of a multi-
tude of different voices, roles and identities within, which
war for supremacy. One of the first steps in the purifica-
tion process, as noted in Chapter VIII, is to separate the
"real Self" from these shadow voices and identities.
Stripped of emotion and attachment, these become part of the
"other," that which is not Self. At the risk of reduction-
ism, one could argue that the vivid sense of relating in an
inner psychic place, to "other" people, may stem from a
renewed relationship with parts of the self, which, stripped
of their threat as possible identities, are seen as other
people who may be brought into the inner sanctuary to be
examined, analyzed, healed and dismissed without risk of
contamination. Such relationships clearly mark rituals as
part of the 'positive' cult, governing the interaction
between sacred and profane:

> This centre (the psychic, 'safe place') is the
> equivalent of the training room, i.e. it is a safe
> place. The trainee can always go there in his
> imagination and work out situations with which he
> is having difficulty dealing. In addition, he can
> bring other people down into his center and talk
> to them without having fear of being reprimanded
> or that the information will be held against him.
> (Greene, 1976:92)

It is interesting to note that Silva Mind Control uses
the term "projecting" to describe the experience of bringing
the image of the unknown patient into the 'lab'. This term,
borrowed from psychology, suggests that these patients are

in fact parts of the self that the adherent visualizes.
Psychosynthesis makes this point more explicit in their dis-
cussion of "reowning projections," i.e. recognizing that in
reacting emotionally to others, one is really reacting to a
projected part of the self. Silva Mind Control's pun on the
word, to describe as well the projection of an image on a
screen as in the case of film is significant in itself.
What both groups then do is to deal with projections intern-
ally by objectification so that they become in the one case
photographic, three-dimensional images, and in the other,
characters in an internal cast.[1]

    This process has a number of benefits. The "real self"
is protected from threats of competing identities, external
relationships with others are protected from the dangers of
uncontrolled emotional interchanges, and the relationships
between "real self" and the internal character-images not
only have all the intensity of external interpersonal rela-
tions, but give rise to a sense of psychic power and control.
While this explanation must be regarded as speculative, it
does offer insight into one puzzling feature of the Silva

---

[1]This would appear to be an excellent example of what
Durkheim thought of as faith anticipating science and forcing
early closure. The concept of "projection" is used in Psycho-
synthesis in its correct psychological manner. It is then,
however, reified and projections become distinct personal-
ities with names (such as "The Analyst," "The Bystander") who
are manipulated imaginatively to make them speak, interact
and walk in and out of doors.

Mind Control healing ritual. If in fact the internal pro-
jection carried on in the ritual gives adherents a covert
opportunity to objectify, symbolize and 'heal' parts of the
self, it is understandable that the ritual is overtly per-
formed, not on friends but only on unknown strangers whose
real bodily image cannot complicate or impinge on the pro-
cess of psychological 'projection'.

This kind of psychological interpretation can, of
course, be carried too far. What is important is that the
internal "cast of thousands" can be seen to express a situ-
ation in which identity is confused, and also provide an
arena for the development of the sense of psychic power, of
being able to enter into and/or incorporate a vast number of
individual personalities. This sense duplicates, on an
interpersonal level, the rituals which train adherents to
enter plants, minerals, animals and outer space.

In sum, then, transformational rituals in "cult of man"
groups teach adherents to transcend the limitations of their
external "mechanical" selves, to travel freely through time
and space, to enter other forms at will.

What is even more interesting is that this sense of
breaking through planes, or barriers, of transformative
ability, is not unique to "cult of man" adherents. It has
been attributed, cross-culturally and historically to
shamans. This has been noted about some of these groups and
attributed to western man's need for a spiritual path or

"sadhana" (Ellwood, 1973) or the dawning of a new mythic con-
sciousness (Larsen, 1977). The comparison, however, has been
general, not detailed, and has failed to produce any kind of
sociological analysis, having been derived, in general, from
the "counterculture" theory of new religious movements. The
parallel, however, between shamanic myth and "cult of man"
group rituals is striking and deserves closer attention. In
the remainder of this paper we will compare the powers of
"cult of man" adherents specifically to those of shamans, and
discuss why such an association should occur in these groups.

The Genesis of the Shaman

A number of anthropologists have noted that a calling
to a shamanic vocation is often heralded by the ability
remarkably similar to that discussed in Chapter X to "break
the planes." Among shamans this is interpreted as signify-
ing the desire and ability to leave the body:

> What is the meaning of all these shamanic myths of
> ascent to Heaven and magical flight, or of the power
> to become invisible and incombustible? They all
> express a break with the universe of daily life.
> The break from plane to plane effected by flight or
> ascent similarly signifies an act of transcendence.
> Flight proves that one has transcended the human
> condition, has risen above it, by transmuting it
> through an excess of spirituality. (Eliade, 1958:
> 101)

For shamans, such powers of transcendence are, how-
ever, dependent on the successful completion of an initia-
tion process, involving a symbolic death and rebirth marked
by certain distinguishing characteristics. These include:

(1) the summons, often marked by illness, trance or extreme
disorientation, and heralded by the appearance of animals or
snakes; (2) some kind of torture or dismemberment of the
initiate (at times including cannibalism imagery); (3) the
scraping away of the flesh until the body is reduced to the
skeleton; (4) the substitution of viscera and the renewal of
blood (including the incorporation of some 'sky' metal such
as quartz or pearl into the body); (5) an encounter with
spirits or demons who impart knowledge to the initiate, and
(6) the aforementioned ascent into Heaven heralding the
ability to transcend limitations (Eliade, 1958; Eliade, 1972;
Larsen, 1977).

The rituals in "cult of man" movements do not, of
course, duplicate these shamanic rituals exactly, but there
is enough similarity between the two to be worth examining
in greater detail. Once into the movement, the average
adherent is expected to go through the kind of death and
rebirth which is symbolized by the first three features of
shamanic initiation (dismemberment, scraping away of flesh
and substitution of viscera). In general, this may be seen
as a psychic as opposed to physical phenomenon in "cult of
man" groups. One may interpret the kind of tearing jolts
described in Chapter VIII (purification rituals), the sub-
sequent sense of inner fragmentation, the stripping away of
the layers (as in the Psychosynthesis ritual of the Levels,
or est's 'pain levels') to get at the real, the 'truth', the

skeleton of the self as a kind of death by dismemberment.
Once the old notion of self is destroyed, another is rebuilt,
from the inside out, symbolized by the construction of the
inner laboratory (and the careful, architectural mapping out
of inner space, so that everything is 'clear'). Ellwood has
noted, in groups like Scientology, what he considers the
metaphorical version of replacing the internal viscera with
quartz or crystal:

> The goal of occultists and initiates today is a new
> self of crystalline lucidity, permanence and lumin-
> osity. The groups they belong to believe it is
> possible for man to have states as different from
> his present condition as rock is from flesh, and
> much better able to withstand the viscissitudes of
> the world. (Ellwood, 1973:157)

By psychological analogy, therefore, one may say that
"cult of man" groups act out the death and rebirth of the
primitive shaman: stripping away of old self and building
up a new "clear" powerful being.

However, the similarity is not solely metaphorical.
"Cult of man" groups do use actual images of animal heralds,
dismemberment, stripping of the physical self and incorpora-
tion of new viscera uncannily similar to those used in
shamanic myth. For example, Psychosynthesis uses a great
deal of animal imagery to herald the awakening of higher
powers:

> For me, the biggest thing was the Will ... it changed
> my whole life. I wasn't in touch with my Will ... I
> thought the power was with other people ... I didn't
> realize I could do whatever I chose to do. As I
> began to get in touch with Will, it came out in all

sorts of ways. I began to get all kinds of snake
images, but I was afraid of snakes, I didn't know
what they meant. Then I went on a boat trip and
one morning we were anchored near shore and I got
up early in the morning and went for a swim. I
was standing on the shore, naked, feeling wonderful,
washing my hair when I saw this little black head
bobbing through the water. It was a snake. I was
terrified and then I looked in the water to the
right and there was curled up another red snake
and I looked and there was a yellow snake on the
other side. About this time crazy things started
to happen. A wooden motor boat with no windows
went by and then I was divebombed by this little
plane, which swooped down on me and landed on the
island. I said to myself I can do one of two
things ... I can faint, or I can swim to my boat
... so I plunged in and swam through the snakes.
      I can tell you that was the hardest thing I
have ever done ... it was a powerful experience ...
and then I remembered that about three weeks before
that I had got an image ... in an exercise (Psycho-
synthesis) about what I needed in order to become
what I wanted. I got this image of three snakes,
the one in the middle was straight up and down and
the ones on the sides curled around it until it
made the symbol of healing. Boy, your Higher Self
has ways of telling you and if you don't listen
things get arranged so you can't ignore it.

                              - Psychosynthesis member

     This anecdote has a distinct "mythic" quality, not

only in the image of the three snakes, but in the image of

the diving plane, and the strange boat without windows. The

adherent saw in the experience a powerful message which had

been given to her before in the form of an image visualized

in a Psychosynthesis exercise. The goal of the exercise had

been self-development, and the adherent had misunderstood and

ignored the image as it seemed obscure. Events then occurred

which forced her not only to understand the message but to

act on it: to use her inner power or her Will. In this

manner, the primitive shaman may aspire to become a "Man of
Power" and may practice for the vocation, but when the call-
ing comes, "it comes suddenly and totally other than one's
expectations":

> The vision may come in the form of a great owl which
> brutally knocks one bleeding into the snow, leaving
> no doubt that the spirit is totally other than one-
> self; or a fierce walrus, a wolverine or a snake.
> And sometimes the call may come in the form of an
> omen, a series of events, the import of which a
> mythically unattuned mind might pass right by.
> (Larsen, 1977:79)

For shamans, the stage following the summons or call
is the death by torture and dismemberment. This stage, too
can be found represented in graphic terms in some "cult of
man" groups. For instance, Shakti uses numerous images of
cannibalism (which are also associated in shamanic myth with
the early stages of torture and dismemberment) talking of
eating and being eaten. Shakti leader, E. J. Gold, pub-
lished a colouring book entitled "A Child's Guide to
Transubstantiation" and including the following sentiments,
among others:

> I have a pet chicken named Harry when he dies
> I am going to eat him, yum.

> When you are eaten by someone then you are
> suddenly inside everybody and you can see every-
> where at once. (Palmer, 1976:56)

A Shakti member also produced the following anecdote
to express the experience of 'ego' destruction:

> A sailor on a transatlantic journey was suffering
> from a case of the clap. He went to a doctor at the
> next port who said, "There's nothing I can do. It

will have to be cut off." He waited two weeks to con-
sult another doctor at the next port who gave the same
advice. Refusing to accept it, he waited until he was
home in acute pain, the member swollen and turning all
colours of the rainbow. He found the top specialist
in V. D. in the city and said, "Please doctor, don't
tell me to cut it off!" The doctor took one look and
replied, "You don't have to cut it off. In another
couple of days it will fall off by itself". (Palmer,
1976:57)

This is dismemberment with a vengeance. The moral of

the story is that the outer self or ego must be shed: if you

don't cut it off it will fall off by itself.

Contained in this story and in the notion of cannibal-

ism are a number of shamanic features. The story of dis-

memberment reveals the shamanic sense of vocation: unless

the outer self is discarded it will cause tremendous pain

and anguish.

The "Child's Guide to Transubstantiation, on the other

hand, illustrates how to eat and be eaten is linked to the

powers subsequently attained by shamans, of being able to be

in all things and people. This casts a new light on the

Psychosynthesis ritual of "acting out in the centre" (Chapter

VIII) and the use of cannibalistic terms by members them-

selves when discussing the ritual. The person who "acted

out" did so in order to 'grow', to develop his or her own

inner potential (or psychic powers). In order to realize

that potential, however (which included the ability to

incorporate and enter into others in a psychic sense), he or

she needed to ritually climb into 'the pot' and 'feed' the

group with his/her emotions and psychic self. Then he/she

was "inside everybody" and could "see everything at once."

In addition to their metaphoric dismemberment of parts of the psychic self, therefore, "cult of man" adherents actually use images of physical dismemberment and cannibalism. Similarly, while Psychosynthesis may talk of stripping away the psychic layers, in the Silva Mind Control healing ritual and in the exercises leading up to it, students imaginatively strip away physical skin, muscle and nervous tissue to reveal the human skeleton (of their own and others' bodies) and sort through the viscera, replacing any parts that are malfunctioning. Once again, this ritual refers quite graphically to the physical self in terms similar to the shamanic myth.

The shamanic image of replacing the internal viscera with crystal or quartz is echoed not only in the elaborate internal architecture constructed by Aricans (whose 'psychic space' is a glass pyramid), but also in the Silva Mind Control ritual of projecting metals. Bearing in mind the description of the steel cylinder as "a silver room with rainbow lights at the corners," consider the following qualities of the mythical shamanic crystals:

> The initiatory operations proper always include the
> renewal of the organs and viscera, the cleaning of
> the bones, and the insertion of magical substances
> -- quartz, crystals or pearl shell, or "spirit
> snakes." Quartz is connected with the "sky world
> and with the rainbow"; pearl is similarly "connected
> with the rainbow serpent" that is, in sum, the sky.
> The sky symbolism goes along with the ecstatic
> ascents to Heaven. (Eliade, 1958:99)

The silver and rainbow quality of the metal, as well as its hardness and its connection with the powers of transformation, suggest that the SMC ritual parallels the replacement of the viscera in shamanic initiation.

Finally, the "cult of man" trainees receive spirit helpers to instruct them in their new powers. As noted earlier, Silva Mind Control graduates receive two 'spirit guides' to help them solve problems in the lab. For Arica, these guides have names: they are the 'angels' Thelmo and Ulmo. In Psychosynthesis, the voice of the Higher Self speaks in the image of a wise old man or woman, or from the center of the sun. This voice can be relied upon as a guide and helpmate and will answer any question.

With the help of these guides the "cult of man" adherent "ascends into the Heavens," as characteristic of the final stage of shamanic initiation in the rituals of leaving the body and astral travel, discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

In sum, "cult of man" members experience many of the features of shamanic initiation, <u>in the same terms as those used in the myth</u>. They experience 'calling' often in the form of an animal-herald, dismemberment, stripping to the bone and replacement of viscera both by analogy (in terms of the corresponding psychological imagery) and in terms of the symbolism of physical death and rebirth used by shamans. The "cult of man" member receives aid while going through this

process, in the form of helping spirits, and he attains transformative powers similar to those received by shamans.

This similarity between "cult of man" groups and shamans is all the more interesting as it appears unconscious on the part of the "cult of man" groups. The leaders and members of these movements do not self-consciously identify themselves as Shamans, as, for example, do contemporary witches and Satanists. They do not see themselves as workers of magic, so much as 'self-realized' human beings.

If such imagery is not self-consciously employed, there remains to attempt some explanation about why it has been so systematically adopted by "cult of man" groups. What is it about shamanic myth and symbol that is so appealing to these groups, or, conversely, what aspect of group experience does the imagery express?

"The shaman is a man who can die and return to life many times," notes Eliade (1958). The unifying feature in all the mythic powers of the shaman and of "cult of man" members is the ability to cross boundaries: those of life and death, time and space, and physical bodies, animate and inanimate. If we analyze this in social-structural terms, as Douglas would have us do, it suggests that the shaman is someone able not only to move in and out of social categories (through social boundaries) at will, but also to exist in the interstices without dangers. He may, in other words,

be 'faceless' without danger, and assume any 'face' he
chooses at will.

It is interesting in this context, to note what
Douglas has to say about shamans (Douglas, 1966:114-136).
She notes that in any society there are two kinds of power.
The first is the power linked to the social structure and
attached to those in positions of legitimate authority which
she terms the power of 'form'. The second is power existing
in the margins, outside of the lines which distinguish and
demarcate social order. This is the power of "formlessness,"
disorder and chaos, and represents danger to the order. This
is one of the reasons, as we noted in Chapter VIII, that
people in transitional states are thought of as dangerous and
endangered; they dwell in the "formless" regions between
social categories or social states.

For Douglas, several classes of people other than
initiates, have access to the power of the formlessness.
Among them are witches, sick men and shamans. She distin-
guishes between witches and shamans because witchcraft is
attributed to those who exist perpetually in the margins,
playing ambiguous and interstitial social roles. Shamans,
however, have <u>access both to "formlessness" and its power
and to legitimate authority</u>. For Douglas, the relationship
between the sick man and the shaman is that both enter into
"disordered regions of the mind" which are symbolic of the
"disordered regions of society." Unlike the sick man,

however, the shaman returns from those regions to occupy a
position of honour and power <u>within</u> the social order.

> The man who comes back from these inaccessible regions
> (of the mind or of society) brings with him a power
> unavailable to those who have stayed in the control of
> themselves and of society. (Douglas, 1966:115)

What's more, Douglas suggests that shamanism and
sorcery abound in those societies which have a weakened sense
of order where the difference between legitimate and illegit-
imate authority isn't clear, and where, therefore, legitimate
authority is somewhat "up for grabs." This is because
sorcery is not an innate quality necessarily, but something
that can be acquired through training and is therefore
potentially available to everyone. Of course, in such a
society, the order is weak and easily penetrated (Douglas,
1966:130).

If we return to our "cult of man" data with Douglas'
theories in mind, we have a potential explanation for the
appeal of shamanic imagery. In Chapter VII, we identified
the "cult of man" member as someone who felt 'faceless',
permanently endangered, between categories, moving from one
insubstantial 'face' to another. This was attributed to the
necessity of changing social categories and/or 'form' fre-
quently. The "cult of man" adherent was defined as continu-
ally required to move from 'form' to 'formlessness' to new
'form', from 'face' to 'facelessness' to new 'face', with
resulting sense of danger and contamination. Fear results
from the <u>transition</u>, from the loss of 'form' and ensuing

identity crisis on the one hand, to the resumption of form
and the fear of failure on the other. In Chapter IX we noted
how manipulation rituals help to reduce the latter fear,
giving adherents a sense of access to the power of 'form'.
Transformational rituals, on the other hand, reduce the
former fear, giving adherents a sense of access to the power
of 'formlessness'.

In this context, it is easier to understand the
excitement which adherents find in transformational rituals.
It is the excitement of being able to ride the liquid wave
of reality, becoming a skilled amphibian. Adherents may
still experience the world and people in it as in continual
transition, but now, instead of drowning and becoming lost
in this dangerous flux, the transformational rituals provide
(at least by suggestion) mastery of this condition, similar
to the shaman's mastery. One still 'dies and is born again'
continually to different identities but one is "at cause" in
choosing the identity. In a magical transformation, one can
become what and whom one pleases (a mystical seventies ver-
sion of the old North American utilitarian individualism).
This knowledge is coupled with a sense of triumph for "cult
of man" adherents; they are in control, they have seized the
reins. They are, indeed, "empowered."

The feeling of seizing power is not strictly limited
to the magical and the psychic. Mastery of 'formlessness'
seems to lead to increased mastery of 'form', generalizing to

everyday life and the social order to which the adherents belong. As noted in this chapter, getting inside another person can signify to the "cult of man" adherent anything from psychic healing at a distance to "casing out" the pretty girl in the office; transcending bodily limitations can range from astral travel to checking out the noise in the next room by looking <u>through</u> the wall instead of around it. In addition, there is some indication that the "cult of man" adherents do not distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate power but see sorcery in the most prosaic of occupations and "legitimate" authority as up for grabs

> The energy itself is completely value free. It's like the Force in Star Wars ... you can use it for negative and positive reasons. I'm very judgemental ... I feel that people shouldn't use it for material gain, but who says it's evil? People in the stock market use it for intuition ... to control the flow of money and how to use it. They use it to get what they want.
>
> - Psychosynthesis member

> The politicians don't have the power ... they are run by multinational corporations ... they're just playing a game. I wouldn't distinguish between politicians and mafia, or police and criminals. They're all playing the same game ... whether you're a cop or a criminal depends largely on which side of the track you are brought up on ... it's just power.
>
> - Arica member

It is impossible without more systematic interview data to determine how widespread in "cult of man" groups (and elsewhere) is the kind of cynicism expressed in the above two

quotes. If in fact they are representative, they indicate, again, that the "cult of man" adherents' experience of social reality is one of confusion of form and formlessness: confused social order and power up for grabs. It is such a situation, precisely, which Douglas suggests the shamanic myth reflects.

Not to push the comparison too far, it seems necessary at this point to mention the differences between shamans and "cult of man" adherents. Shamans are isolated individuals whereas the "cult of man" is a group. The shaman is recognized by the wider society as holding a valuable occupational role merely by being a shaman, whereas most "cult of man" adherents hold roles unrelated to their "shamanic" abilities. Finally, the shaman uses his powers on behalf of the community. He leaves his body to bring gifts to the gods from the community, communicates with a dead soul for the community, brings back the soul of a sick man who has wandered (Eliade, 1958). The "cult of man" adherent performs these operations on his outer self on behalf of his Inner Self. For these groups the shamanic imagery seems to have less to do with becoming "men of power," manipulating their outer environment as the primitive shaman did, and more to do with the fact that such imagery is highly expressive of the experience of continual flux, moving from 'form' to 'formlessness'. "Cult of man" adherents group together because this is a common experience for them, not an idiosyncratic one as in the case of the primitive shaman.

In conclusion, it would be reasonable to suggest that
the rituals of transformation, which we have discussed in
this chapter, represent the positive or empowering aspects
of a social experience of 'facelessness' discussed in Chapter
VII. If one exists in a world where lines are vague and
inadequate, one experiences terror and contamination; pro-
tection and control are necessary. One may also, however,
become a master of flux, or transformation, of the ephemeral
image. In short, one may become like a shaman who dies and
is reborn, whose insides are crystal clear but who possesses
multiple faces. Besides reducing fear (by providing a
chameleon-like protective covering) and inducing ecstasy,
becoming such a master also has the power to produce a much
needed sense of continuity and identity. For, as Eliade has
pointed out, part and parcel of the shaman's transformational
ability is the ability to "remember" various forms, experi-
ences and existences.

> He has succeeded in integrating into consciousness a
> considerable number of experiences that for the pro-
> fane world are reserved for dreams, madness and post-
> mortem states. (Eliade, 1958:102)

We may now understand the emphasis on memory in "cult
of man" groups: Shakti's insistence that the individual
learn to "eliminate the blackout between lives," est's
emphasis on digging down through the pain levels to remember
forgotten segments of this life, Silva Mind Control's
elaborate rituals for developing and maintaining memory.
Rituals of transformation (coupled as they are with the

emphasis on memory) allow the individual to express the fragmentation of self, the sense of boundlessness while simultaneously tying together these fragments in a Higher Self, who sees and remembers. Thus held together, the individual can continue to operate in a fragmented, complex and diverse world.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION: THE QUESTION OF ETHICS

In this dissertation, we have made use of Emile Durkheim's hypotheses about religion in modern society to explore and analyze new religious movements from a fresh perspective. Combining Durkheim's view of the religion of the past and of the future and bringing this to bear on the present has hopefully produced a number of insights into the beliefs, organization and ritual of the contemporary groups we labelled "cult of man" groups.

First and foremost, what this dissertation has tried to indicate is that groups holding the human individual sacred are present in contemporary society (in the form of 'transpersonal trainings') and that Durkheim's theories of religion, far from being inapplicable to modern religion, are valuable in understanding and documenting the unique character of these movements.

In Chapters V and VI we noted that, true to Durkheim's basic postulate about religion, the elements of belief in "cult of man" groups reflect elements of the social organization of those groups. Combined, they present a picture of religious life distinct from contemporary groups which locate

the sacred <u>outside</u> the individual, as well as from the
harmonial groups of the early 1900's which, while sharing
the basic 'cult' organization of the "cult of man," are less
extreme in these features. In short, the particular notion
of the sacred held by "cult of man" groups, that it is the
ideal human individual that is sacred, <u>does</u> seem related to
the diversity and complexity of modern life, as Durkheim
suggested it would be.

In Chapter VII, we examined this connection more
closely. Using Douglas' notion of pollution and threats to
boundaries to analyze the fears of interpersonal contamina-
tion present in these groups, it was suggested that these
fears reflect a sense of 'facelessness' which in turn
reflects the personal and social flux individual adherents of
"cult of man" groups experience in their urban, bureaucratic
environment. It was also indicated that, due to their par-
ticular occupations and lifestyles, "cult of man" adherents
are more likely than normal to be exposed to the instabil-
ities and confusions of modern life.

In the ensuing section on ritual, we took a closer
look at the details of "cult of man" trainings, again using
Durkheim's notion that ritual acts overtly to regulate rela-
tions between the sacred and the profane and covertly to
regulate relations between the individual and society. It
was noted that rituals in the "cult of man" were divided into
two categories as in primitive religion: negative

(discouraging and controlling relations) and positive
(encouraging and shaping relations). It was in the ritual
context that the most unique features of the "cult of man"
groups became apparent. It appeared that as the sacred was
located within the individual, rituals became privatistic,
concerned with regulating of the relationship of outer and
inner self. In short, ritual continued to perform the same
function that Durkheim suggested it had in the past, but in
the context of a new definition of the sacred which Durkheim
had predicted would express the society of the future.

In addition, however, the rituals in the "cult of man"
reinforce the picture of modern society drawn in the chapter
on beliefs. The rituals are orientated to regulating rela-
tions in a world in which both individual and society are
continually in a state of flux. The negative rituals, the
aim of which in primitive society is the protection of the
sacred, take the form of purification rituals in "cult of man"
groups, demanding great emotional control and interactional
precision in interpersonal relationships. The positive
rituals, the aim of which is the shaping of the interaction
between sacred and profane, take the form of transformational
rituals in "cult of man" groups, giving the adherents a sense
of mastery of the flux and of intimate connection to all
other people on an inner, psychic level.

In summary, then, the beliefs of groups like Psycho-
synthesis, est and Silva Mind Control concerning the sacred,

and the relationship of these beliefs to the group organiza-
tion, rituals and the larger social system correspond to the
individual elements of the "cult of man" as Durkheim
described it. The individual human being (idealized) is held
sacred, and this belief does seem to be expressive of the
complexity and diversity of modern life, conducive to making
people feel they have "nothing in common." Adherents do
feel that what they have in common is their sacred humanity,
and join together to be empowered and motivated by this inner
union. In addition, such groups are heavily reliant on
social science and science to explain society to them; their
'representation' of society is largely expressive.

Nevertheless, we should not overlook the fact that in
at least one regard -- respect for the rights of others --
contemporary "cult of man" groups diverge from Durkheim's
ideal. When Durkheim devised his theory about the future of
religion, he was concerned centrally with the problem of
maintaining order and social solidarity in a society in which
individualism would become increasingly pronounced due to
specialization and diversity in the social system. He felt
that commitment and motivation would be available in such a
society only through a religion of the individual. Such a
religion would create a space around the individual similar to
the space created around all sacred objects. Infringement on
the individual's rights or person would be received by the
others in that society with the kind of passionate

indignation traditionally associated with a profanation of the sacred.

This kind of concern with the rights of others is conspicuously absent in "cult of man" groups. It is not that they preach disregard or lack of concern for others. In fact, many are concerned with helping others to reach or realize their inner potential. But due to the split between outer and inner self, adherents feel that outer behavior has little to do with the sacred, inner self. When asked, for example, what they would do if witness to a physical or emotional attack of one individual on another, a typical response was:

> I would ask the abusing person if they wanted feedback. If they said no, I wouldn't interfere. The person isn't ready, doesn't want help ... so I'd wait. If the violence was physical I wouldn't interfere unless I felt centered enough at that point ... my goal would not be to stop it ... but I'd ask the person 'do you want to keep doing this'?
> - Psychosynthesis interview

In short, it appears that the space separating the holy which Durkheim envisioned as <u>around</u> each individual for contemporary "cult of man" adherents exists <u>within</u> each individual, separating inner from outer self. It is the inner Self which is revered, and this inner Self finds little or no expression in outer behavior. In addition, the sacred inner Self exists within <u>all</u> individuals, abuser and the abused alike, and is worth equal respect wherever it is found. In the above quote, it is the <u>abuser</u> who concerns the speaker.

The abuser seems to be out of control and hence his inner Self is in danger. The abused, presumably, may still be in control, i.e. unattached or disidentified with the outer events, and is so not a source of worry. Outer behavior is only a symptom of the inner state ... it is not in itself a source of concern. After all, for "cult of man" adherents, abuser and abused are in fact indistinguishable, both parts of the outer artificial reality.

Does such an anti-interventionist policy belie a narcissistic preoccupation with self? Not necessarily. For there is some evidence in all these groups of a kind of service ethic. "Cult of man" adherents may not intervene on the behalf of the outer personality, but they do seem to exhibit some concern with intervention on behalf of the inner, sacred nature. This is done in two ways: by exemplary behavior which makes manifest the high degree of inner spiritual development and by helping those who request it to learn to develop their own inner potential.

In the first instance are cases like the highly publicized est anti-hunger campaign and the image of the ideal human being held up for Psychosynthesis members to admire.

> The sign of the ideal person in psychosynthesis terms is the person engaged in active service ... he's not necessarily famous, but humanitarian. PS suggests people like Schweitzer and Ghandi .... This kind of person has balanced fully their emotions; mind and body are balanced. Once balance is achieved in the personality, then the Higher Self can enter.
>
> - Psychosynthesis member

Here, again, the actions in the world appear to be valued largely in terms of what they symbolize about the state of development of the Higher Self, but the action (no matter why motivated) is 'exemplary' in its selfless service to others. By transforming the self, the "cult of man" adherent believes one can transform the world.

How many adherents actually engage in such 'exemplary' service and to what extent is questionable and would provide a fruitful area for further research. Also questionable is the "cult of man" adherents' desire to help others to realize this potential. It would seem most adherents who become deeply involved in the trainings eventually become trainers themselves, but concrete data on this issue is also required.

What remains clear, however, is that while this attitude to their fellow humans' worldly rights almost certainly represents a departure from Durkheim's image of his "cult of man," these groups do seem to encourage a commitment to that larger social system and so help to maintain order. The identification of the outer self as a machine is compatible with the mechanical, controlled world of the modern bureaucracy. The emphasis on 'tuning up' this machine, on improving its efficient and rational operation, increasing its precision and decreasing its affect would all appear to create a kind of elective affinity between "cult of man" groups and the highly rationalized order of a bureaucratic, technological society. While members may not be 'attached'

to this outer system any more than they are, ideally 'attached' to their outer personalities, they, nevertheless, confirm it by their action and their philosophy.

In the last analysis, it is difficult to dismiss these groups as either disintegrative or narcissistic. Whether, on the other hand, they offer solutions to any of our existing social problems, is questionable and awaits the test of time and further research.

In sum, this dissertation has tried to demonstrate that in that aspect which Durkheim saw as most central to modern religion, its expressive potential, the "cult of man" groups succeed brilliantly. In the beliefs and rituals of these groups, we have seen an acute sensitivity to personal and cultural flux, to the complexity and diversity of the modern society. In their shamanic attitude to this flux, the feeling that one may capitalize on it, as opposed to escaping it or trying to diminish it, these individuals are expressing their potential not only as individuals but as virtuosi members of a modern social system characterized by rapid and continual change. In such expression we may find as much cause for optimism as for pessimism. As Bellah has put it so well:

> It is the chief characteristic of the more recent
> modern phase that culture and personality themselves
> have to be viewed as endlessly revisable. This has
> been characterized as a collapse of meaning and a
> failure of moral standards. It remains to be seen
> whether the freedom modern society implies at the
> cultural and personal as well as the social level

can be stably institutionalized in large-scale
societies. Yet the very situation which has been
characterized as one of collapse of meaning can
also, and I would argue more fruitfully, be viewed
as one offering unprecedented opportunities for
creative innovation in every sphere of human action.
(Bellah, 1970:44)

The members of the groups themselves claim that the
transformation of society depends upon the transformation of
the individual in it. On closer examination of groups which
this dissertation has tried to provide, this catch phrase
may be interpreted somewhat less simplistically. If the
transformation of the individual implies a fluidity, an
ability to handle change and diversity, a versatility and
adaptability, as has been suggested in the body of this
dissertation, then the survival of those same qualities of
our modern, individualistic society may well depend on the
transformation of the individual.

<u>REFERENCES</u>

Adler, N. 1975. "Ritual, Release and Orientation." In
    <u>Religious Movements in Contemporary America</u>. I.
    Zaretsky and M. Leone (eds.). Princeton, N. J.:
    Princeton University Press: 283-297.

Anthony, D. and R. Robbins. 1975. "The Meyer Baba Movement."
    In <u>Religious Movements in Contemporary America</u>. I.
    Zaretsky and M. Leone (eds.). Princeton, N. J.:
    Princeton University Press: 479-511.

 1978. "A Typology of Non-Traditional Religious Move-
    ments in America." Unpublished manuscript.

Bach, K. W. 1973. <u>Beyond Words</u>. Baltimore, Maryland:
    Penguin Books.

Bellah, R. 1970. <u>Beyond Belief</u>. New York: Harper and Row.

Berger, P. 1970. "Between System and Horde." In <u>Movement
    and Revolution</u>. P. Berger and R. Neuhaus (eds.). New
    York: Doubleday.

 1973. <u>The Homeless Mind</u>. New York: Vintage Books.

Bird, F. 1978. "Charisma and Ritual in New Religious Move-
    ments." In <u>Understanding the New Religions</u>. Edited by
    J. Needleman and George Baker. New York: Seabury
    Press.

Brown, Peter. 1975. <u>Augustine of Hippo</u>. Berkeley,
    California: University of California Press.

Bry, A. 1976. <u>60 Hours That Transform Your Life: Est</u>. New
    York: Harper and Row.

Douglas, M. 1966. <u>Purity and Danger</u>. London: Routledge
    and Kegan.

 1978. <u>Natural Symbols</u>. New York: Penguin Books.

Durkheim, Emile. 1897. "Labriola, Antonia. Essais sur la
    conception materialiste de l'histoire," RP XLIV:
    645-51 (as trans. in S. Lukes, 1975, <u>Emile Durkheim</u>.
    London: Penguin Books: 231).

Durkheim, Émile. 1899. "Da la definition des phénomènes religieux." L'Année sociologique, vol. 11: 1-28.

    1919. "Contribution to F. Abauzit et al. Le sentiment religieux a l'heure actuelle." Paris: Vrin (as quoted in S. Lukes, 1975, Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work. Great Britain: Peregrine Press: 519).

    1951. (1897). Suicide: A Study in Sociology. Translated by J. A. Spaulding and G. Simpson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press of Glencoe.

    1953. (1924). "Sociology and Philosophy." Translation of 1924 by J. A. Spaulding and G. Simpson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press of Glencoe.

    1961. (1913). Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. New York: Collier Books.

    1969. (1898). "Individualism and the Intellectuals." Translation of 1898 article by S. and J. Lukes with note, in Political Studies, XVII: 14-30.

Eister, A. 1975. "Cultural Crisis and New Religious Movements." In Religious Movements in Contemporary America. I. Zaretsky and M. Leone (eds.). Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press: 612-27.

Eliade, Mircea. 1958. Rites and Symbols of Initiation. New York: Harper Torchbooks.

    1968. The Sacred and the Profane. New York: Harper and Row.

    1972. Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press. Bollingen Series.

Ellwood, R. S. 1973. Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Fenn, R. 1972. "A New Sociology of Religion." In JSSR, vol. 11, No. 1, March: 16-32.

Gaustad, E. S. 1974. A Religious History of America. New York: Harper and Row.

Gerlach and Hines. 1970. People, Power and Change. New York: Bobbs-Merrill.

Gerth, H. H. and C. Wright Mills (eds.). 1958. <u>From Max Weber</u>. New York: Oxford University Press.

Glock, C. and R. Bellah. 1976. <u>The New Religious Consciousness</u>. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Goffman, E. 1961. <u>Asylums</u>. New York: Anchor Books.

Goffman, E. 1963. <u>Behavior in Public Places</u>. New York: The Free Press.

1967. <u>Interaction Ritual</u>. New York: Doubleday.

Gold, E. J. 1973. <u>The Shakti Handbook</u>, P. O. Box 1556, Crestline, California. Core Group Publication.

Greene, W. 1976. <u>est 4 days to Make Your Life Work</u>. Markham, Ontario: Pocket Books.

Harrison, M. I. 1974. "Sources of Recruitment to Catholic Pentacostal Movement." <u>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</u>, 13: 49-64.

Ichazo, Oscar. 1976. <u>The Human Process for Enlightenment and Freedom</u>. New York: Arica Institute.

Johnson, Benton. 1963. "Church and Sect." <u>American Sociological Review</u>, 28, No. 4 (August 1963): 539-49.

Johnson, G. 1976. "The Hare Krishna in San Francisco." In C. Glock and R. Bellah, <u>The New Religious Consciousness</u>. Berkeley, California: University of California Press: 31-51.

Judah, J. Stillson. 1967. <u>The History and Philosophy of Metaphysical Movements in America</u>. Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Keene, R. C. 1974. "Formal Organization and Charisma in a Catholic Pentacostal Community." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan.

Larsen, Stephen. 1977. <u>The Shaman's Doorway: Opening the Mythic Imagination to Contemporary Consciousness</u>. New York: Harper Colophon Books.

Lasch, C. 1975. "The Emotions of Family Life." <u>New York Review of Books</u>, vol. 22, 19 (November): 37-42.

Lifton, R. J. 1969. "Protean Man." In Religious Situation.
    Donald R. Cutler (ed.). Boston: Beacon Press, Inc.,
    1969: 812-28.

Lilly, John. 1972. The Eye of the Cyclone. New York:
    Bantam Books.

Lofland, J. 1966. Doomsday Cult. Englewood Cliffs, New
    Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Luckmann, T. and Peter Berger. 1964. "Social Mobility and
    Personal Identity." European Journal of Sociology,
    5: 331-43.

Lukes, S. 1975. Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work. Great
    Britain: Peregrine Books.

Malko, G. 1971. Scientology, The Now Religion. New York:
    Delacarte Press.

Mann, W. E. 1972. Sect, Cult and Church In Alberta.
    Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Marin, P. 1975. "The New Narcissism." Harper's Magazine
    (October): 46-56.

Marty, Martin. 1970. "The Occult Establishment." Social
    Research 37(2): 212-230.

McGuire, M. 1975. "Toward a Sociological Interpretation of
    CCR." Review of Religious Research, 1975: 94-104.

Needlemann, J. 1970. The New Religions. New York:
    Doubleday & Co.

Nelson, G. K. 1969. Spiritualism and Society. London:
    Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Ornstein, R. 1975. A Self-Report Survey: Preliminary Study
    of Participants in Erhard Seminars Training. New York:
    est Foundation.

Orr, J. B. and F. Patrick Nicholson. 1970. The Radical
    Suburb: Soundings in Changing American Character.
    Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Palmer, S. 1976. "Shakti: The Spiritual Science of DNA."
    Unpublished Master's thesis, Concordia University,
    Montreal.

Prince, R. 1975. "Cocoon Work." In Religious Movements in Contemporary America. L Zaretsky and M. Leone (eds.). Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press: 255-274.

Rosen, P. 1976. "Psychobabble." New Times (November): 49-58.

Rozak, T. 1969. Making of a Counterculture. New York: Doubleday.

Sennett, R. 1974. The Fall of Public Man. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Slater, P. 1970. The Pursuit of Loneliness. Boston: Beacon Press.

Smith, A. 1975. Powers of the Mind. New York: Ballantine Books.

Stone, D. 1976. "The Human Potential Movement." In C. Glock and R. Bellah, eds. The New Religious Consciousness, 1976. Berkeley: University of California Press: 93-115.

Tipton, Steve. 1977. "est and Ethics: Rule-Egoism in Middle Class Culture." Paper presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, September, 1977.

Tiryakian, E. A. (ed.). 1974. On the Margin of the Visible. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Tobey, A. 1976. "The Summer Solstice of the Healthy-Happy-Holy Organization." In C. Glock and R. Bellah (eds.). The New Religious Consciousness. Berkeley: University of California Press: 5-30.

Troeltsch, Ernst. 1931. Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. New York: The MacMillan Co. Pub., 1931.

Turner, R. 1976. "The Real Self: From Institution to Impulse." American Journal of Sociology, 81, No. 5: 989-1016.

Wallis, R. 1977. The Road to Total Freedom: A Sociological Analysis of Scientology. New York: Columbia University Press.

Weber, M. 1925. Economy and Society. New York: Bedminster Press, 1968.

    1958. The Religion of India. New York: Free Press.

Weigart and Hastings. 1977. "Identity Loss, Family and
     Social Change." AJS, Vol. 82, No. 6: 1171-85.

Westley, F. 1977. "Searching For Surrender." American
     Behavioral Scientist, 20, 6: 925-40.

Whitehead, H. 1976. "Reasonably Fantastic: Some Perspec-
     tives on Science Fiction, Scientology and the Occult."
     In Religious Movements in Contemporary America. I.
     Zaretsky and M. Leone (eds.). Princeton, N. J.:
     Princeton University Press: 547-90.

Wilson, B. 1976. Contemporary Transformations of Religion.
     New York: Oxford University Press.

Wuthnow, R. 1976a. "The New Religions in a Social Context."
     In C. Glock and R. Bellah (eds.), 1976. The New
     Religious Consciousness. University of California
     Press: 267-294.

     1976b. The Consciousness Reformation. Berkeley:
          University of California Press.

Yai-fai Ho, David. 1976. "On the Concept of Face." AJS,
     Vol. 81, #4: 867-884.

Yinger, M. I. 1957. Religion, Society and the Individual.
     New York: The Macmillan Co.

Zaretsky, I. and M. P. Leone. 1975. Religious Movements in
     Contemporary America. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton
     University Press.

Zaretsky, I. I. 1975. "In the Beginning was the Word." In
     Religious Movements in Contemporary America. I. I.
     Zaretsky and M. P. Leone (eds.). Princeton:
     Princeton University Press: 166-222.

APPENDIX A

Research tools: Interview schedule and
         group survey index form

Concordia University

Interview Schedule

Contemporary Self-Development Groups
(Nov 1974)

Number for subject /8 /3/9/ 2-⌐

1. What are the <u>names</u> (is the name) of the new religious, para-religious, or human growth groups with which you are currently involved?   (see question 7b)

   (List here the one or two groups with which the subject is primarily involved. Other such groups may be listed under 7a. In relation to the questions about the aims and techniques, answer with regard to the group from whom we received the name of subject, indicating as well goals and techniques associated with other groups)

   /_/_/ 5-⌐

   /_/_/ 7-⌐

2. <u>How long</u> have you been involved as a regular participant?   /_/_/ 9-1⌐

3a. How would you <u>describe</u> your <u>present involvement</u> with this group?

3b. Do you participate in any kind of <u>group</u> <u>meetings</u>?
(indicate interval, kind of meeting-retreat, exercise
class, etc.)

                                    N = 1
                                 Some = 2
                          Frequently = 3   /_/   11

4. Do you hold any kind of <u>leadership</u> positions? No - 1
                                                          Yes - 2   /_/   12

   if so, how long:
   if so, how were you chosen (and trained, if necessary)

   any prior positions.

5. Any <u>others</u> of your immediate family also involved. If
   yes how many?   /_/   13

   B. How does your family feel about your involvement in
      this group?

   Of your 5 closest friends right now, how many involved
   in this group?   /_/   14

6. <u>How did you get involved with this group?</u> What events or factors led up to your involvement?

How did you <u>first</u> come in <u>contact</u> with the group? /__/ 15

Had <u>you heard</u> of the group prior to this time?

No - 1
Yes - 2 /__/ 16

If so, what kinds of things have you heard?

unfavourable - 1
favourable - 2
both - 3 /__/ 17

Did you <u>know anyone</u> in the <u>group</u> or who had been in the group?

How many? /__/ 18

Initially, what did you find
especially attractive about
the group?

Order
most imp. - 1
next imp. - 2 etc.
not imp. - 9

its ideas   /__/   19

its practices   /__/   20

the people involved   /__/   21

the claimed results   /__/   22

its leaders   /__/   23

other things   /__/   24

Did you at first have any
doubt about becoming
involved?

No - 1
Yes - 2   /__/   25

Did anyone try to dissuade
you from becoming involved?
Who? Why?

7a) Before *and since.* becoming involved with this group had <u>you</u> ever been involved <u>with</u> <u>any</u> <u>other</u> <u>similar</u> <u>groups</u>? What other groups and in what sequence were you involved? Explain.

Previous Groups

most recent	1.	/__/__/	26-27
	2.	/__/__/	28-29
	3.	/__/__/	30-31
Present group PRESENT GROUP	4.	/__/__/	32-33
	5.	/__/__/	34-35
	6.	/__/__/	36-37

b) This card lists a number of groups or organizations. Have you heard of any of them, know something about them, and either been involved or had friends involved in any of them?

(answer only for groups heard of)

Comments	Name of Group	Heard of N - 1 Y - 2	Have you or any friends been involved you-1 friends-2 both-3	How do you feel about group? turned off - 1 ambi- valent 2 inter- ested- 3 im- pressed 4
	Ananda Marga (01)	/__/	/__/	/__/

8a. Personally, what do you hope to realize as a result of your involvement with this group or with these groups? (To interviewer: just list specific goals associated with participation in this group or with these groups; those listed in question one; note any aims listed below as mentioned by subject).

	aims	how successful in realizing?	
		none - 1	
		not sure - 2	
		little - 3	
		very successful - 4	
	/_/_/_/	/_/	68-70
	/_/_/_/	/_/	71-73
	/_/_/_/	/_/	74-76
			12/_/_/_/
			1-4

HAVE your goals changed since becoming involved in this group? If so how?

8b. On these cards are listed some of the ways in which people have described their aims for participating in these kinds of groups. Do any of these correspond to your own goals? which of these aims have greater priority for you? How successful have you been in achieving these aims?

Words used to describe aim	Aims	priority not imp.-1 important-2 very imp.-3 most imp.-4	success in realizing 1 to 4 (see 8a)	
	Other #1 (01)	�⌟	⌟⌟	5-6
	Other #2 (02)	⌟⌟	⌟⌟	7-8

WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE EXPECTATIONS	AIMS	PRIORITY	SUCCESS	
	To be able to <u>enjoy</u> my <u>life</u> more of the time (03)	/__/	/__/	9-10
	To achieve psychic detachment (04)	/__/	/__/	11-12
	To realize the experience of community (05)	/__/	/__/	13-14
	To help usher in an <u>age of</u> peace (06)	/__/	/__/	15-16
	To <u>revitalize</u> my spiritually or religious life (07)	/__/	/__/	17-18
	To develop <u>spiritual</u> and/or <u>psychic powers</u> (08)	/__/	/__/	19-20

WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE EXPECTATIONS	AIMS	PRIORITY	SUCCESS	
	To realize some kind of special peak experience (09)	/__/	/__/	21-22
	To become an integrated, whole person (10)	/__/	/__/	23-24
	To develop a higher state of consciousness (11)	/__/	/__/	25-26

9. Do you practice any special disciplines, rituals or techniques in hopes of realizing these goals?

Comments	rituals, techniques, disciplines	priority no help - 1 some help - 2 much help - 3 the most helpful - 4	Frequency no - blank less than 1/month - 1 1/month - 2 weekly - 3 twice/ weekly - 4 daily - 5	
	Breathing Exercises	⟋_⟋	⟋_⟋	27-28
	Postures	⟋_⟋	⟋_⟋	29-30
	Adherence to certain moral principles	⟋_⟋	⟋_⟋	31-32
	Concentration of mind on objects and thoughts	⟋_⟋	⟋_⟋	33-34
	Encounter group sessions	⟋_⟋	⟋_⟋	35-36

	Priority 1-4	Frequency blank, 1-5	
Exercises using rhythmic or stylized body motions	/__/	/__/	37-38
Diet	/__/	/__/	39-40
Meditation MEDITATION	/__/	/__/	41-42
Chanting/singing	/__/	/__/	43-44
Self-awareness exercises	/__/	/__/	45-46
Hearing the experiences of others	/__/	/__/	47-48
Service to others	/__/	/__/	49-50
Prayer.	/__/	/__/	51-52
Worship/ritual	/__/	/__/	53-54
Other	/__/	/__/	55-56

9a. What is your basis for feeling these techniques, rituals and/or disciplines that will enable you to achieve the goals you named?

(1) Have you or anyone you know had experiential validation of these techniques?

(2) Has there been any kind of empirical or scientific verification of efficacy of these techniques?

(3) Philosophically, how would you justify the use of these techniques?

4. Belief statement.

10a. Have you ever experienced anything that you might describe as an altered state of consciousness?

　　　Explain

(Related to this　No - 1
　group) Yes - 2

(Not related to　Yes - 3
group)　　Don't Know - 4

60

b. Have you ever had any experiences which you think are an example of extra sensory perception?

　　Explain

No - 1
Don't Know - 2
Yes Precognition - 3
Yes Telepathy - 4
Yes Clairvoyance - 5
Yes more than 1 kind - 6

61

Has your involvement with this group or activity led you to change any life patterns or habits

LI.

(Probes)

For example, what you eat and drink

Food   /__/   62

Drink (especially alcohol)   /__/   63

Or, for example, smoking/use of drugs

Smoking   /__/   64

Drugs   /__/   65

Your relations with job or work?
          relations with parents, family   66

Your relations with your friends

                                                  /__/   67

Sexual relations

                                                  /__/   68

Any of your emotions

                                                  /__/   69

Your recreational activities

                                                  /__/   70

Reading , thinking

                                                  /__/   71

Your sleep

                                                  /__/   72

Attitudes towards money   /__/

12. General Background Information:

Now we would like to ask you some questions about your present life circumstances.

(Note below any comments associated with questions in right hand column)	A. Sex: Male - 1 Female - 2 (By observation)	73
	B. What year were you born in _____ 19/ / /	74-5
	Where were you born _____	/ / / 76 - 77
	(if alien, ask when they arrived in Quebec and Canada) _____ 19/ / /	78-9

	C. what is your present
	   marital status?
	(Interviewer may record this
	information below:)
	                married - 1
	                widowed - 2
	                divorced - 3
	               separated - 4
	                 single - 5
	                  other - 6
		80
		
		/3 / / / /
		1-4

	How long has this been your status?
	            less than 1 year - 1
	            between one & 2 - 2
	            between 2 & 5 - 3
	            between 5 & 10 - 4
	            10 or more years - 5
	      previous marriage? No-1
	                        Yes-2
		5
		
		6

	How many children have you / /	7
	Age of oldest child / / /	8-9
	Age of youngest child / / /	10-11
	D. What is your occupation? / / /	12-13
	(ask for the name or type of work defined in occupational terms rather than for the name of the company, etc.)	

D. (continued)

Are you working full or part time?   14

full - 1
part - 2

How long have you been employed at
this job? (1-9+)   (years)   /__/ 15

In what category did your yearly
income for 1973 fall? (n.b. hand
the Subject the card with income
groups)

1. less than $3000   16
2. $3000-$4900
3. $5000-$7499
4. $7500 to $9999
5. $10,000 to $14,999
6. $15,000 to $19,999
7. $20,000.

E. What are the last three regular jobs you have held? Most
recent first.

Job	time period (dates by year)	Enjoyed? No - 1 Yes - 2	
1.	/__/__/	/__/	/__/	17-2
2.	/__/__/	/__/	/__/	21-2
3.	/__/__/	/__/	/__/	25-2

[To interviewer: was employment (2) or irregular?(1)] /__/ 29
regular?

F. Are you attending school:
                    Full time - 1
                    Part time - 2   30

    Have you graduated from high school?

    How many years of education have
    you had beyond high school

                                                    | /___/ 31

G. What were the major
    occupations of your parents?

        Father: /___/ 32-33

        Mother: /___/ 34-35

G. How many years of Education
    have your parents had? (Code
    with reference to high school
    graduation)

                        Father /___/   36

                        Mother /___/   37

H. What kind of involvements have
    you had with <u>formal religious
    groups</u>: as a

           Child -   38

                             none - 1
                     once a year - 2
             several times a year - 3
                         monthly - 4
                          weekly - 5
                           daily - 6

Young Person -   1 to 6   └─┘   39

     Adult -   1 to 6   └─┘   40

Which religious groups was it?   41
                R. Catholic - 1
               Lib. Protestant- 2
               Con. Protestant- 3
                         Jew- 4
                       Other- 5
                       None- 6

Are you more or less religious
now than, say, 10 years ago? Why?   42

                         More - 1
                         Less - 2
                         N.A. - 3

What is or was the religious
preference of your Father (43)
Mother (44)?
                 R. Catholic - 1
               Lib. Protestant - 2
               Con. Protestant - 3
                       Jew - 4   └─┘ 43
                     Other - 5
                     None - 6   └─┘ 44

13a. With what other kinds of activities, groups or organizations are you currently involved?

Probes

Other groups/organizations (Nos.)

Occupational:

/__/   45

Civic & political:

/__/   46

Social:

/__/   47

Religious:

/__/   48

Recreational:

/__/   49

b. In what ways are your involvements in these other activities related to involvement in this group?

Are any of these activities integrally related?   50

None - 1
Some - 2
Most - 3

Do you meet with or see other members of this group in these other activities outside your formal participation in the group?   51

No - 1
Some - 2
Often - 3

If yes, how many

/__/   52

13c. Overall, <u>how important</u> is your involvement in this group(s) to your present way of life? Does it somehow lie behind your whole approach to life?

No - 1
Yes - 2
Don't Know - 3

14a. What do you consider were the major events of your life during the past ten or fifteen years?

no significant changes - 1
some changes - 2
some decisive changes - 3

Family relations | 54

└─┘

Personal relations | 55

└─┘

Occupation | 56

└─┘

Education | 57

└─┘

Values | 58

└─┘

Religion | 59

└─┘

Well Being | 60

└─┘

Others | 61

Not mentioned - 1
mentioned - 2

Were there periods in the past when
you can recall feeling especially
happy or at peace with the world?
(Note times & occasions).

Were you involved in any kinds of
social or political action groups?
Times and comments.

<div align="right">

never - 1   62
little - 2
much - 3

</div>

At what age did you leave home?
    (not left yet = 99)

<div align="right">

/ / /   63-64

</div>

Could you describe the kinds of
living arrangements you have
been in since you left home?

<div align="right">

65
66
67
68

</div>

Code .
  S = single
  r = roommate
  f = family
  c = part of commune

Could you describe in a general way the characteristics of
the family in which you grew up?

Probes

(a) Was there any divorce (1), sep-
aration (2), major parental conflicts
(3) or not (4)?

(b) Did your family enjoy certain
common activities together: such
as holidays, recreational activities,
religious activities, work activities?
No (1), Yes, sometimes (2), often(3)

(c) Did you often(2), sometimes (1)
never(3), talk over your feelings,
activities, ideas with your father(4),
mother(5), or both (6)?

(d) Do you still keep close contact
with your mother/father (if alive) and
with your brothers/sisters (if relevant)

(e) Did your family have any relativ-
ely regular contact with relatives?
Did your family friends with whom they
sometimes/often did things?

(f) How were important decisions made?
no pattern (1), consensus (2) discussion
and collective agreements(3), discussion
but individual decisions (4), decisions
usually made by one parent with other
parent agreeing (5) decisions made by
one parent?

(g) How were you punished as a child? How was it decided that you needed to be punished? How did you feel about these punishments?

(h) Was your family run by strict rules? How did you feel about that?

(i) As a child did you have some specific family responsibilities? such as? How were these determined? How did/do you feel about these?

14b What was your life situation like immediately prior to your becoming involved with this group? Was it any different than it is today?

Comments	(Probes)	
	At that time or shortly thereafter were there any <u>changes</u> in your residency: No - 1 Yes - 2	73
	If so, what kind?	
	<u>Family</u> and/or <u>personal relations</u> Family None - 1 Some - 2 Much - 3	74
	Pers. Rel None - 1 Some - 2 Much - 3	75
	If so, what kind?	4 / / / / 1-4
	In your careers in <u>employment</u> and/or <u>education</u> None - 1 Some - 2 Much - 3	5
	If so, what kind?	
	How were you <u>feeling</u> at this time? Happy - 1 unhappy - 2 Mixed - 3 Anxious - 4	6
	Clear sense of life's meaning/ little or no sense of life's meaning? Clear - 1 Unclear - 2 Mixed - 3	7
	How long had you felt this way?	
	Had <u>you been actively seeking to deal with the kinds of problems</u> bothering you/interesting you? No - 1 Yes - 2 Yes very - 3	8

15a. What do you consider to be your primary goals or purpose
      in life?

                                                    how successful
                                                    at realizing
                                                    (see 8a)
                    Note if any of the goals   1-4
                    listed below are here
                    mentioned
                                   /_/_/_/   /_/_/   9-11

                                   /_/_/_/   /_/_/   12-14

                                   /_/_/_/   /_/_/   15-17

b. On these cards are listed some ways in which people have identified their life goals. Do any of these listed life-goals correspond to your own? Which do you feel are more important than others?

Not imp. - 1
Important - 2
Very imp. - 3
Most imp. - 4

What words would you use to describe this goal?	Why is this goal important to you?	Goals	Priority	Success (see 9a) 1-4	
		To achieve success in my career (01)	/__/	/__/	18-19
		To find satisfaction in my work (02)	/__/	/__/	20-21
		To find satisfaction in my personal and family relationships (03)	/__/	/__/	22-23
		To become an integrated person (04)	/__/	/__/	24-25

What words would you use to describe this goal?	Why is this goal important to you?	Goals	Priority (1-4)	Success (1-4)	
		To help create a more peaceful, and a more just world (05)	／_／	／_／	26-27
		To serve God (06)	／_／	／_／	28-29
		To realize spiritual enlighten-ment (07)	／_／	／_／	30-31
		To live in tune with nature (08)	／_／	／_／	32-33
		To enjoy myself (09)	／_／	／_／	34-35
		To help others ful-fill them-selves (10)	／_／	／_／	36-37
		To reach a higher state of consciousness (11)	／_／	／_／	38-39
		Other (12)	／_／	／_／	40-41
		Other (13)	／_／	／_／	42-43

16. Why is there <u>so</u> <u>much</u> <u>suffering</u> in the world?

<div style="text-align:right">

Not a factor - 1
Don't know - 2
A factor - 3
Very imp. factor - 4

</div>

Caused by <u>social</u> <u>arrangements</u> /__/	44
People <u>are</u> <u>just</u> <u>naturally</u> <u>selfish</u> /__/	45
The <u>work</u> <u>of</u> <u>the</u> <u>devil</u> /__/	46
People <u>don't</u> <u>obey</u> <u>God</u> /__/	47
Being <u>punished</u> for what they did in a <u>previous</u> <u>life</u> /__/	48
Usually <u>bring</u> <u>suffering</u> <u>on</u> <u>themselves</u> /__/	49
They <u>haven't</u> <u>learned</u> <u>how</u> to find <u>inner</u> <u>peace</u> /__/	50
Because <u>science</u> has not found out yet what causes suffering /__/	51
<u>Just</u> <u>because</u> <u>there</u> <u>is</u> /__/	52

17A   What do you feel are the major problems facing human
       kind today? Shy?

                                            (Probe)

                                        Facing People in
                                              Canada?

                                            People in
                                             Quebec?

                                        You and your friends?

B.   Do you feel that individuals can have any measurable influence
on government or on the economy or even on the major events of one':
own life? Why?

18a. Could you describe your beliefs about <u>life after death</u>?

I don't believe in it ____
If yes, explain:

> Is what people do and think during their life related to the possible conditions of life after death?
>
> No - 1
> Yes - 2
> Don't Know - 3

62

18b. What does the word "God" mean to you?

> Don't Believe - 1
> Inclined to Disbelieve - 2
> Don't Know - 3
> Inclined to Believe - 4
> Sure of Belief - 5

63

19. What kinds of factors do you now think have the greatest influence on your life?

(Probe)

Not important	- 1
important	- 2
Very important	- 3
Don't Know	- 4

Luck	/__/	64
Upbringing	/__/	65
Changing needs and interests of the world around?	/__/	66
Will power?	/__/	67
Spiritual insights?	/__/	68
What people in power decide?	/__/	69
Friends and loved ones?	/__/	70
God or some super-natural force?	/__/	71
Endowment	/__/	72

20. [to Interviewer]

What are your overall impressions of

(a) the interview?

(b) the subject?

Interviewer number /_/_/ | 73-74

Interview locations /_/ | 75

alone - 1
with others commenting - 2 | 76

/_/

No. of interview hours
/_/ | 77

1. <u>Organizational Data</u>:   /1/ / / /
                                                                                       1-4

    1. Name and Address:

    __a. Name of Association

        b. Address in Montreal

        c. Telephone Number

        d. Local leader(s)

        e. Contact person: (name and relation to group)
            Indicate other sources of information:

        f. Address of other facilities used in Montreal or
            any rural retreats

    2. Relation of local association to larger movement:

        a. How many other groups of this movement are in
            Quebec / / Canada / /   5-6

        b. How many other groups of this movement are in
            North America? / /   7

        c. Where is the Canadian or North American centre
            for this movement?

        d. Does the parent organization do any of the
            following: (N = 1, Y = 2)

                (i)   train and/or select local leaders?   / /   8

                (ii)   collect dues from the local group?   / /   9

                (iii) keep records of local membership?   / /   10

                (iv)   initiate local members?   / /   11

                (v)   finance local activities?   / /   12

                (vi)   supply local group with audio-visual
                       media?   / /   13

                (vii) supply local group with printed media? / /   14

                (viii) no parent organization   / /   15

e. Does the parent organization have any affiliated
sub-divisions?   _/_/   16

3. History of the Association:

a. What is the local history of the group? (Be sure
to include previous addresses which the
group had in the Montreal area, as well
as names of the original founding members)

b. What role did the parent organization have in
establishing the local centre?

c. What do you know about the international history
of this association?

4. Physical Setting of the Local Centre:

a. Describe the physical setting of the local centre.
Be sure to include the following: Rooms for
devotion? Distinctive architecture? Printing
facilities? Office facilities? Living quarters?

b. Symbols and photographs displayed?

c. Is the centre owned (1) or rented? (2) At what
cost?   ⟋__⟋   17

5. Basis of Economic Support: N = 1
                                                  Y = 2
                                        primary source
                                             of funds   = 3

  a. How is the movement supported locally?

                        by donations   ⟋__⟋   18

                        sales of crafts,
                        food, literature   ⟋__⟋   19

                        employment of core
                        members   ⟋__⟋   20

                        fees for instructions   21

                                        ⟋__⟋

9. Participation:

    a. What is the total number of local
       adherents (approximately)?   /__/__/__/   22-24

    b. How many people were in the group?

                one year ago? _____

                two years ago? _____

                three years ago? _____

    c. How many of the local adherents speak
              French? (percentage)"   /__/__/   25-26

              English?   /__/__/   27-28

              Other? (Specify)   /__/__/   29-30

    d. Has the composition of the group with regard
       to language background of members changed
       over the past year or two? Explain:

                    N = 1 no change   31
                    Y = 2 more French now
                    Y = 3 more English now

e. How many of the local adherents are of what age?
   (By percentage):

   under 20 ___/_/_/   32-33

   20-30 ___/_/_/   34-35

   30-40 ___/_/_/   36-37

   40-60 ___/_/_/   38-39

   60 plus ___/_/_/   40-41

f. Has the composition of the group with regard to
   age of members changed over the past year or
   two? Explain.

   N = 1
   Y = 2 more younger
   Y = 3 more older
   Y = 4 other   42

g. Are there formal categories for membership?

   N = 1
   Y = 2   43

7. Core Members and Leadership: (core adherents defined
   thusly: full time participants and/or assuming
   leadership responsibility for training or giving
   lessons to persons other and persons who see them-
   selves as specifically qualified on the basis of
   training, experience and accomplishments):

   a. How many core members? ___/_/_/   44-45

      Nos. of these Francophones ___/_/_/   46-47

      Nos. of these women ___/_/_/   48-49

   b. How is the core membership chosen?

   c. Do the core members live together at the local
      centre?

d. What are the responsibilities of the core members?
(i.e. division of labour among leaders)

e. What financial arrangements do core members have
with the local centre?

f. What relationship do the core members have with the
general membership?

g. How many core members became core members before
coming to the Montreal area?

h. Do core or regular members wear any distinctive dress?

I. How are decisions made regarding policy and activities of group?

(Comments)

by local organization?

by core collectively?

by single leader?

by group?

8. Publicity:

What kinds of things is group doing to recruit new members?

printed material?

TV ads?

newspaper ads?

word of mouth?

other?

II. Techniques & Rituals

9. Which of the following are practiced by adherents either alone
   or with others? Indicate the frequency of these practices and
   whether they are primarily practiced collectively, privately,
   or both.

	Is this activity primarily practiced alone, collectively both?	Frequency of Practice Daily/Weekly/ Occasionally/Never
Adherence to moral codes (01)	- - - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -
chanting (02)	--------------------	--------------------
devotion of leader (03)	--------------------	--------------------
sacramental meal (04)	--------------------	--------------------
collective songs (05)	--------------------	--------------------
prayers (06)	--------------------	--------------------
speaking in tongues (07)	--------------------	--------------------
Hatha Yoga (08)	--------------------	--------------------
breathing exercises (09)	--------------------	--------------------
physical exercises (10)	--------------------	--------------------
hallucinatory drugs (11)	--------------------	--------------------
dance (12)	--------------------	--------------------
use of mantras (13)	--------------------	--------------------
testimonials (14)	--------------------	--------------------
silent meditation (15)	--------------------	--------------------
story telling (16)	--------------------	--------------------
rhythm (17)	--------------------	--------------------
massage (18)	--------------------	--------------------
dieting (19)	--------------------	--------------------
martial arts (20)	--------------------	--------------------
role playing (21)	--------------------	--------------------
encounter groups (22)	--------------------	--------------------
dream fantasy (23)	--------------------	--------------------
concentration (24)	--------------------	--------------------
sacred readings (25)	--------------------	--------------------
meditation on Mandala (26)	--------------------	--------------------
Darshan (27)	--------------------	--------------------
work (28)	--------------------	--------------------
devotion (29)	--------------------	--------------------
other (30)	--------------------	--------------------

(indicate 4 most emphasized activities)

/__/__/   /__/__/   /__/__/   /__/__/   50-57

"most"   "second   "third   "fourth
            most"   most"   most"

10. Consider the threefold typology of meditation techniques suggested by C. Naranjo and R. Ornstein in <u>On the Psychology of Meditation</u>:

    i) <u>Concentrative or absorptive meditation</u> which employs externally given symbols such as holy diagrams (YANTRAS) or verbal formulas (MANTRAS)

    ii) The <u>way of self-expression</u> in which the individual dwells upon material deriving from his own inner fantasy, and,

    iii) The <u>negative way</u> in which the meditator puts his efforts into moving away from all objects and avoiding identification with anything he can conceive of.

Do the meditation techniques taught by this particular group correspond to any of these three categories? Explain.

11. Rationale for techniques and practices:

What kinds of rationale and justification does the group offer for encouraging the particular practices which they emphasize?

(a) Do they use some kind of philosophical or metaphysical or theological rationale? Explain.

(b) Do they variously try to explain what factors within the self or in terms of the self's relation to a diety, make these practices effective? (i.e. Do they have a philosophical anthropology?) (If a and b overlap, answer them together).

(c) To what extent do they justify these practices by appealing to the experiential validation of members? What kinds of validating experiences do they point to?

(d) Do they justify the use of these practices by appealing to external or scientific verification? If yes, then what kinds of evidence do they find to be persuasive? Explain.

12. Could you describe the steps through which new members pro-
ceed on their way to becoming more active, more skilled
adherents and finally to achieving the highest goals of the
group?

   (a) To what extent does there seem to be an orderly pro-
        gression in the training or development of adherents?

   (b) What kinds of things are required to be initiates? Is
        there a class for initiates? What things are required
        of newly initiated members?

   (c) Are there intermediate courses or disciplines which more
        active or trained adherents seek to master? Is it fairly
        easy or difficult to pass through these intermediate
        stages? Describe.

   (d) What kinds of language do adherents use to describe the
        final stage of personal development? How easy or
        difficult is it to achieve this goal? Explain.

13. Do members of this association seek to achieve or experience higher or altered states of consciousness? If they do, what kinds of language do they use to describe these experiences? From their perspective, what are the signs of these kinds of experiences? Do they consider such experiences to be the primary goal of involvement in these associations or an accompaniment of other goals? Describe.

14a. Which of the following traditional religious rituals are established and regularly performed by this group?

Frequency:

Regularly/Occasionally/
Once or Twice/Never

birth celebrations	------------------------
puberty rites	------------------------
marriage ceremonies	------------------------
funeral rites	------------------------
memorial festivals for important	------------------------
historic dates, like Passover,	------------------------
Easter, birth of Buddha	------------------------
New Years festivals	------------------------
Spring festivals	------------------------
weekly collective devotion	------------------------
comments:	

14b. Are any of these "traditional" religious rituals celebrated "non-traditionally?"

15. Over the course of a week, typically what kinds of involve-
ments would adherents have with this association and its
practices? In addition to private rituals, what collective
gatherings would adherents participate in or in addition to
the collective activities, what kinds of private meditation
or exercises would individuals practice? Describe. (if
not already covered above)

III. Beliefs and Goals:

16. Goals of the Association:

Are the aims of this association primarily defined in relation
to worldly, secular values or specially defined religious ends?
In answering this question, answer these sub-questions:

(a) What terms does this association use to describe the goals
and values it seeks to realize?

(b) Which of the following goals do they consider to be important or not important; for their adherent:

Word used by Group	Goals	Relative Importance A Primary goal of association/ Secondary/not an explicit goal
	to achieve integration or centeredness of self	
	to achieve self-control	
	to achieve greater health	
	to develop psychic powers	
	to achieve an ecstatic, trance-like vision	
	to achieve an ecstatic, still-pointed mind	
	devotion to master	
	God-realization	
	Other	

(c) Does the association view itself as being religious? (If not religious, then what kinds of groups or activities would they consider to be religious?) If yes, on what basis?

(d) Does the association view itself as being a new science or a new para-science or a new therapy? Explain.

(e) Comments

17. Ideas About Present and Future:

Are there millenarian or apocalyptic elements in the belief system of this group? Do they believe in the end of the age? heralded by extraordinary events or persons?

18. Ideas about Salvation:

Since these groups are all seeking to bring some kind of special benefit to help persons overcome their present distresses, how do these associations describe both the present predicaments which must be overcome and the basis for hoping that the practices of this group will help persons to transform themselves so as to overcome these predicaments?

(a) What are the predicaments that must be overcome? (In the language of the group?)

(b) What is the basis, (described in the language of the association) or ground or source of power for the transformation of self which the group proclaims as a possibility?

9. World View:

   To what extent does this association have its own world view
   that contrasts with the dominant world view and value orien-
   tation of Canadian society (i.e. with the ideals of individual
   self-development through work and achievements) etc.