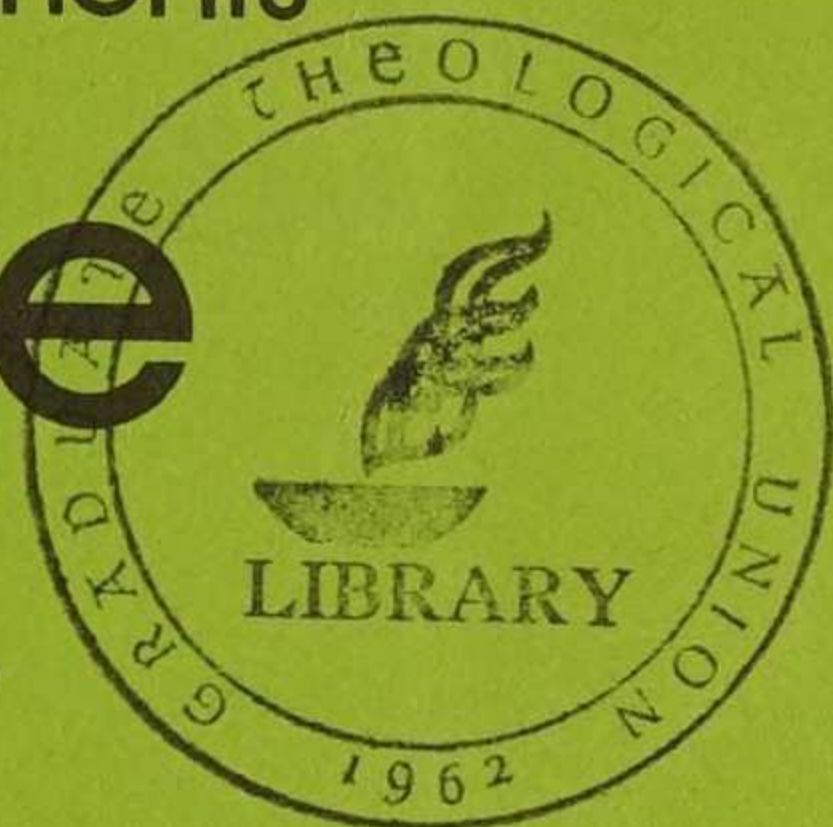


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Vol. III, issue 1/2.

July 1979.



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EDITORIAL.

Up-Date is late again! Our apologies. We were not delayed because of any lack of material. On the contrary, we are late because we have had too much to do.

Well, here at any rate comes the first issue of the year, in the middle of summer 1979. And we present the readers with a varied handful of flowers from the fields of new religiosity, blooming as it is.

In the first article Ole Riis, the sociologist from Århus, continues his "Much ado about nothing?" by looking at the responses of the institutional churches and by summarizing his discussion.

Ananda Marga is becoming more and more important, and at the same time it is one of the most ambiguous religious movements of our time. In this issue we give some instances of the discipline of the marga and bring an article by Reinhardt Hummel from Heidelberg on "World Improvement and the Ideal Society", in which he puts forward some interesting insights concerning the margiis.

The nature of AAO is changing, and we bring a description of the AAO itself in order to describe the nature of this change.

Gottfried Oosterwal of Andrews University, Michigan, gives a survey of the Children of God who are now becoming known as the Family of Love. The situation of this famous movement seems to become more and more difficult, since a considerable number of the children are growing up to a "maturity" which does not to together with the centralized father-authority of the family.

Transcendental Meditation has been seriously hit by the David of Berkeley, The Spiritual Counterfeits Project. In the last issue of Up-Date we told a story about "The Naked Emperor", and this time we can confirm that the US Court of Appeals has ruled against the TM movement. On June 7th, TM officially admitted defeat. In a phone conversation with SCP's lawyer, Julius Poppinga, official representatives of TM stated that

they would not appeal to the U.S. Supreme court. The case is now history and TM has been legally defined as a religion by the second highest court in the United States.

TM, however, does business as usual. More and more people pay for the promised levitation, but all seem as yet to remain under the law of gravitation.

A group of Danes has been to Rishikesh and visited the TM Indian headquarters. From here comes an interesting interview with the second man within the TM movement, Swami Satyananda. We publish it in this issue.

Also included is the text with "The Pledge" of the Tongil Family/Unification Church. Such texts are very important in order to see the nature of the loyalty which binds this family together.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh of Poona is becoming more and more important. The above mentioned group of Danes also went to Poona and brought back some fresh insights concerning the Bhagwan paradise. Mikkel Pade of Århus tells the story.

Finally, "The Road to Total Freedom" by prof. Roy Wallis, Belfast, is reviewed by Ole Riis.

NEWS.

The Divine Light Mission's Rome headquarters, with its fine Borromini facade, lies empty. The Children of God have also left, and in Paris this winter they announced their official dissolution. Hare Krishnas throughout Europe now doff their saffron robes on occasion and cover their shaven heads with wigs. In West Germany and France, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's high-pressure Unification Church has embarked on an amiable do-good mission of baby-sitting and visiting the old - for free.

Does this mean that the fringe cults that have plagued the United States and thrived in Europe from Brussels to Spain are losing their hold on the minds of the young?

Not at all.

"They are more dangerous than ever," says a member of the France's Association pour la Defense de la Famille et de l'Individu (ADFI), a group that fights cults largely through a public information program. Similar organizations, usually founded by parents of cult members, exist in Germany and Britain.

The danger is that the cults are now integrating into ordinary life rather than living in eccentric separate communities. Moonies in Paris, for example, are reported to be moving into small flats rather than living in communes. The aim is to escape surveillance and to infiltrate society more easily.

taken from: International Herald Tribune, Zurich, Monday May 14, 1979:

"Europe's Cults Going "Straight" to Escape Detection", by Mary Blume, Paris. (extract).

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING?

BY OLE RIIS

PART III: THE RESPONSES OF THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCHES

I shall here make a short discourse on the institutional churches' responses to the challenge of the new religious movements. I will begin by pointing to two important facts: First, the advent of the new religious movements indicates a demand for some kind of religious experience; secondly they channel this demand into movements which stand apart from the institutional churches and even the established sects and religions.

SECULARISATION

Why was this demand not channelled into the established churches and sects? Before discussing this problem, I shall have to make a short digression on the problem of secularisation. It has many meanings, but all of them are inter-related. This interrelation may be better understood, if we point to the negation of secularisation: Civitas Dei, God's Kingdom on Earth. Such a kingdom would mean that people lived in harmony, guided by a true church, which influenced all parts of life in such a way that everything was done in accordance with the divine laws.

This City of God may be negated in several ways: First, it may be made unclean by perversion of the divine laws. This could happen in connection with the institutionalisation of the Church; and many Protestant theologians have pointed to the dilution or weakening of the codex in the institutionalisation of the Christian Church in connection with Caesarian secular power from the time of Constantine. From a Catholic point of view, the Church was "true", so the alienation of land, schools, hospitals, etc. was the first real step in the direction of secularisation - a step that will lead to further weakening, because the loss of its economic base may hurt the institutional church in the

face of attacks upon its superstructure. This is exactly what happened when the church's definition of the world was severely questioned by the advent of the new sciences. The response to this attack upon the spiritual dominion of the church was, for many Protestant theologians, to accept a more limited field of genuine religious significance: the soul of the individual. But also that area came under attack from the human sciences. So these processes have brought the churches to a state of frustration.

A further attack is on its way: the churches today seem unable or unwilling to render the service expected by the powerful ones in the secular sector of society - the spiritual legitimation of power differentials in general and of the actual power of the present rulers in particular. We can see that today in Sweden and Norway where the old alliance between church and state is being broken down, and the Protestant churches are entering a new situation where they must manage on their own. In an age when religion becomes more and more like a hobby and not the sacred canopy that defines man, society and the world, the institutional churches will of course be treated as museums and cultural club activities.

The individualistic conception of religion that was developed especially in the Protestant churches closely corresponded to the individualistic concept of society of bourgeois ideology. There was a congruence between the Protestant and the bourgeois world-view. But the privatisation of religion points to an atomisation of the congregation and thus a dissolution of the original sense of "the church". This process is not unique for the church but is rather a general tendency of "mass society". The consequence, however, is more marked for the church. Its missionary power diminishes with the atomisation of the congregation. It tends more and more to become a "confirmatory" institution, in the sense that those already convinced can have their individual conviction re-affirmed in the church.

REBELS IN THE CHURCH

Now, if we imagine some of the hippies entering a (Protestant) church in the early seventies, what would happen? Some of them may know the special vocabulary and the symbols from home, and they have a very special prognosis. But many are quite estranged from the complex symbolism and ritualism of the established church. One part they can understand, however, and that is the preaching, which in many cases has been a harsh preaching against the rebellious young; O tempore, o mores, without empathy or understanding for the rebels.

One of the areas where the distance between the young and the established churches can best be seen is in musical confrontation. Rock music is very much the new generation's medium of expression. There is certainly an affinity between "Jesus Movement" music, especially in the U.S., and rock music; but apart from that the established churches have been very hesitant to use rock music as a medium of religious expression. This is the more surprising as the rock composers themselves have taken up religious themes again and again. Seatrain's "Song of Job" and the Band's "David and the Sacred Harp" are maybe the most beautiful psalms created in modern times. Sometimes the rock composers have turned to a harsh critique of the established churches and their forms of religion, as in Donovan's "Poke at the Pope", Jethro Tull's "Aqualung" and The Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil", to mention but a few. The answer from the established churches was - as far as I know - silence. I have only recently come to understand that the theologians simply did not comprehend what what was going on, did not see that they were being questioned and challenged. Today some of the rebellious young have grown up and become pastors. And they certainly understand it, as most of the members of that generation did. But the questions have stood unanswered for a decade, and the young have, of course, turned to those who were concerned to answer them.

The core of this problem may be that theologians of today discuss through the written media rather than through art, music, etc. Theologians have been hesitant to debate

the books that were important for the hippie generation, like Hesse, Tolkien, Castaneda. I doubt very much whether the average theologians know anything at all about these writers and their books. The young and the clergy of the established churches live lives which are worlds apart - so much apart that some of the old pastors **still** find it difficult to understand that the young people seem to bypass the churches. The most ignorant even confuse the hippie and marxist trend and see the generation gap in the established church as a kind of secularisation, a lack of felt religious need.

The nicely-dressed and well-mannered pharisees would probably freeze out the strange intruders - in a nice way; and the hippie-sinners would feel very unwelcome in that society. They might confess their sinfulness, but that would not result in an invitation to sit at the front. This is because the church for many conservative church-goers is their existential anchor, that which keeps them on the right course in a stormy time full of shipwrecks. To welcome the strange newcomers could lead to a change in the habits of church life, and that would mean cutting adrift from the anchor and letting the vessel follow the tide of the times.

THE CULTURAL AFFINITY OF THE YOUTH CULT AND THE NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS.

If we consider the new religious movements, some of their successes may be better understood. Contact with these movements is normally made as a simple extension of one's normal networks. There is no need (normally) to do something very unusual in the eyes of yourself and your friends in order to make contact with the religious world. And the symbols of this world are - at the outset rather close to the symbolism of the hippies. This is often a very prominent point, as the new "product" is marketed in a very conscious way, specifically for the hippie culture. The Children of God are one striking example, as are Rajneesh and other combinations of eastern mysticism and western psychology.

More important, however, is the point that the new religious movements have seemed to give direct answers to the hippies' questions, while the churches sometimes answer the questions by riddles. Christianity is, of course, full of paradoxes. And mysticism holds on at a meta-level to some kind of ordered simplicity. The hippies wanted to find themselves, and they were given that promise by the new religious movements, while the Christians wanted them first to surrender themselves.

The confrontation can be put in psychoanalytical terms: The hippies wanted to cast off super-ego controls, and find the id beneath the ego. They had rebelled against parental controls and constraints.

Most of them saw the established church as some kind of continued anal-control, while the new religious movements seemed to promise some kind of regression to the oral world and its promises of an uninhibited unification in lust of id and the universe.

But there is another very important feature of the new religious movements: The most successful ones make very efficient use of group pressures on their neophytes. One is seldom left to oneself, but is offered integration with the happy elect who have seen the light. Moreover these people seem to make contact in a personally committed way and not as salesmen, wearing the mask of interest which goes with their role. No, these people seem really concerned about you - in the contact phase, at least. This is, of course, very flattering, in our strange world, where so few offer a really personal caring relationship. Thus there is an offer both of some kind of answers to questions and of a reference-group. The latter feature is of vast importance, for your doubts are modified when you observe that your friends seem to carry on in spite of the problems. Group coherence is a value of immense importance. In order to be integrated into the group, however, you must validate its cultural base, i.e. the cult. So for the sake of the group, you may muddle through in spite of your doubts; and when your doubts are challenged by outsiders, you will try to defend the group position all the more and even try to convert others. For conversion is a point of

CONCLUSIONS:

We shall now try to tie the many loose strings of this discussion together. I think the right point of departure for such a venture may be the fact that an economic surplus has been established which has given the middle class of the developed countries the possibility of living the life of leisure class. This has been due to the historical development of capitalism, and the international development of labour. A by-product of this development, however, has been the disintegration of the bourgeois ideology. Economic development gave satiety but not satisfaction. The system brought forward by the spokesman of economic liberalism did not liberate man, but incarcerated him in an iron cage of role-masks, bureaucratic norms and impersonal routines. Positivist science did not emerge as Prometheus, but as a technocratic gaoler.

This was at least the general image of "The Establishment" which the new age-group from the middle class rebelled against. The rebellion of this age-group came forward because the parental generation could not integrate it in its own normative setting. One of the major reasons for this was simply that the parental generation itself was losing its belief in the bourgeois ideology. Another reason was the weakening capacity of the socialising institutions to maintain and perpetuate themselves, a fact particularly true of the core family, as such an institution.

The youth rebellion was, however, not a sudden break-away from earlier trends. It descended from earlier movements, e.g. the "Ban-the-Bomb" and anti-Vietnam movements of the sixties, and as a cult, some of its roots go back to bohemian culture of the 50's and even further back to the galliards, the youth rebels of the middle ages.

The youth rebellion had many facets, and after a while split up into two major factions. On the one hand we have the materialistically oriented rebels, who turned marxist, on the other we have idealistically oriented ones who turned to the new religious movements. In both cases a new view of the world is found - but the more so in the new religious movements.

One should not ask why the young did not go to the churches, but rather why the churches did not make an effort to relate to the young.

One reason is the fundamental traditionalism of the established churches. Their long-established cultural values make a costly inheritance, since they stand in the way of modernization and innovation. More important probably is the lack of self-confidence within the established churches. The scope of religious issues has been narrowed by secularisation, and the churches role as a confirmatory agent of the societal establishment has been weakened. The established churches have become forums for a certain nostalgia. When the established churches raise their voices to criticize society, the critiques offered are mostly retrospective. All in all, the established churches could hardly open up for the young without letting in potential conflicts with the traditional leadership and with the supporters from the petit-bourgeoisie. The dilemma of the relationship to the young thus parallels the problems of relating to the working class.

Should we then forecast the petrification of the established churches into their own tombstones? Perhaps not, but the longer the confrontation with contemporary problems is avoided, the sharper the demands for reform become. There is much need for a church as a niche in a reified society, where people can relate to one another as I-You, not I-It. There is much need for a church, as a magnetic needle, pointing to ultimate values, for those who see life as meaningless. But this indicates also a need for a church that is a critically active collective body, attacking the processes underlying alienation.

We can today see some first steps in such a direction being taken by some outstanding theologians. But we can also see a revival at the lay level of a depoliticisation of the church. For many that seek authoritative guidance in these murky times, fundamentalism is a preferred solution. For those who seek an outlet for suppressed emotional needs, the charismatic movement seems a ready answer. The fundamentalist and the charismatic tendency have more affinity to the new religious movements, while some committed theologians are closer to the marxists. It is doubtful whether these three directions and traditional theology can remain under the same organisational roof. A confrontation is lurking on the horizon. Yet it is not just a question for an analytical forecast which of these tendencies will put its mark on the future Church. The answer depends on us.

APPENDIX

MY GOD

People - what have you done
locked Him in His golden cage
made Him bend to your religion
Him resurrected from the grave.
He is the God of nothing
if that's all that you can see.
You are the God of everything.
He's a part of you and me.
So lean upon Him gently
and Don't call on Him to save you
from your social graces
and the sins you wish to waive.
The bloody Church of England
in chains of history
requests your earthly presence at
the vicarage for tea.
And the graven image you-know-who
he's got him fixed
with His plastic crucifix
confuses me as to who and where and why
as to how He gets His kicks.
Confessing to the endless sin
the endless whining sounds.
You'll be praying till next Thursday to
ALL the Gods that you can count.

WIND UP

When I was young, they packed me off to school
and taught me how not to play the game.
I didn't mind if they groomed me for success
or if they said that I was just a fool.
So I left there in the morning with their God tucked underneath my arm
their half-assed smiles and the book of rules.
So I asked this God a question and by way of firm reply,
He said - I'm not the kind you have to wind up on Sundays.

So to my old headmaster (and to anyone who cares);
 before I'm through I'd like to say my prayers
 I don't believe you: you got the whole damn thing all wrong
 He's not the kind you have to wind up on Sundays.
 Well you can excommunicate me on my way to Sunday school
 and have all the bishops harmonize these lines
 how do you dare to tell me that I'm my Father's son
 when that was just an accident of Birth.
 I'd rather look around me - compose a better song
 'cos that's the honest measure of my worth.
 In your pomp and all your glory you're a poorer man than me,
 as you lick the boots of death born out of fear.

Ian Anderson, 1971.

from: Jethro Tull: Aqualung, 1971. Chrysalis ILPS 9145.
 Ian Anderson Music/ Chrysalis Music.

You gotta believe in something
 If you don't you will be lost.
 You gotta believe in someone
 No matter the cost. ..

Stephen Stills, 1977.

from: Crosby, Stills & Nash: CSN, 1977. Atlantic SD 19104.
 Gold Hill Music. Inc. (ASCAP)

I'm flying in Winchester Cathedral.
 All religion has to have its day.
 Expression on the face of the Saviour
 Made me say
 I can't stay.

Open up the gates of the church and let me out of here!
 Too many people have lied in the name of Christ
 For anyone to heed the call.
 So many people have died in the name of Christ
 That I can't believe it all. ..

Graham Nash, 1977.

from: Crosby, Stills & Nash: CSN, 1977. Atlantic SD 19104.
 Thin Ice Music (ASCAP).

ANANDA MARGA

Eight acts of self-immolation of young Ananda Margiis, i.e. members of the Ananda Marga movement, have made the public aware of this world-wide movement, headed for a number of years by the imprisoned Sri Ananda Murti, who is now free - on bail - in Patna, India. Concerning the acts of self-immolations we bring the last statement of Didi Asitiima Brci, one of the eight Ananda Margiis.

The body of margiis is kept together first of all by a fanatic loyalty to their lord and master, but this loyalty is made flesh by means of a daily discipline expressed through the 16 points. We first publish a presentation of those points and then a copy of the monthly report which all disciples have to fill in each day, thereby checking his or her strict adherence to the discipline. We do not have this report in its english form and therefore we publish it in the German version, which we have received from one of the former members.

LAST STATEMENT OF DIDI ASITIIMA BRCI

THE TRUTH WILL FINALLY DISCOVER RIGHTEOUSNESS AND REMOVE IGNORANCE OF HUMANITY. VICTORY WILL BE YOURS!

The motive of this action is purely to express my love to humanity and my belief that only non-compromising struggle against immorality with a one-pointed mind towards our very goal of life, the infinite realm of love and peace, will ever bring the establishment of a real happy human society. What I have watched and experienced daily around me is not acceptable in any means and let a strong desire grow within me to help with personal effort to burn the very roots and seeds of corruption, exploitation and injustice.

Throughout the history great spiritual and religious personalities have been persecuted and imprisoned. Christ has been crucified, Krsna and Ramakrsna have been in prison, Mohammed the Muslim leader has been persecuted. And with these persons also their attached movements have been persecuted, became martyrs.

So also the founder of ANANDA MARGA, P.R. Sarkar, a great spiritualist, humanist and philosopher has become the victim of immoral authorities; imprisoned under fabricated charges in 1971 in India, poisoned in Patna jail Feb. '73 and got sentenced to life imprisonment under the corrupt circumstances during the emergency under Indira Gandhi. ANANDA MARGA, His organisation had been banned and thousands of members imprisoned without charges or orders and have undergone horrible tortures out of the purpose to remove the whole movement and slander its high image all over the world.

I believe that the two Americans, V. Sheppard and S. Dwyer, are victims like all other members of Ananda Marga, who have got implicated in cases under false charges in several countries. Personally I doubt if the trial has gone through without arbitrary and bribery.

I wish that the respective higher authorities may consider to grant a re-trial uninfluenced and without any pressure.

Nobody knew anything about my desire for this self-sacrifice, it is a completely individual action, not known by anybody. With this action I would like to awake international attention and moral support towards ANANDA MARGA, a spiritual, humanitarian movement, which

stands for self-realisation and service and upliftment of society.

WHEN IMMORALITY IS DOMINATING ALL CORNERS OF THIS PLANET,
WHEN RIGHTEOUS HUMAN BEINGS BECOME VICTIMS OF ARBITRARY
MISUSE, MAYBE THE SACRIFICE OF ONE INNOCENT HUMAN LIFE
WILL BURN THE SEEDS AND ROOTS OF CORRUPTION, EXPLOITATION
AND INJUSTICE - THE CAUSES OF THE SUFFERING AND DEGRADATION
OF MANKIND.

sd/ - Didi Asitiima Brci

June 13, 1978

From: Mahima, July/August 1978.

WHAT ARE THE 16 POINTS AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

The 16 Points are for the body and the mind. First the body is composed of a complex system of glands which are important in maintaining the physical health and mental stability. When the biochemical activity of these glands is not functioning properly, the body becomes ill or the mind becomes confused. Many of these glands are responsible for different kinds of feelings like anxiety, fear, hope, anger, compassion, etc. So it is clear that through proper habits which are conducive to the proper functioning of the glands, the body can be made healthy and the mind become calm.

The first eight points of the 16 Points are guidelines for physical activity and through this they have an effect on the mental state. These can be termed as psycho-physical.

Points 9 through 16 can be termed as psycho-spiritual. They begin with control over the psychic conditions with the specific purpose of directing the mind toward the spiritual goal. So by this psycho-physical and psycho-spiritual activity the entire body and mind can be brought under control so that we can fully achieve our purpose in this cosmological order. For our purpose is to attain happiness in a state of unity and the 16 Points will help us to attain that through a pro-

per physical and mental activity directed towards the spiritual goal.

The 16 Points are not rituals but a science of body and mind. It is a science that any one can follow. The 16 Points have been found to help with curing many illnesses and generally improving health. For in the society today people are suffering from a variety of illnesses, physical, psychic and spiritual, due to a large extent from the spread of false and harmful ideals and practices. The 16 Points however, are a practical approach to life. The reader is invited to try any of the points separately and see if it contributes to their physical and mental well-being.

Article from the 16 Points
booklet edited by:
Ac. Ma'ya'tiita Brc.

from: Rasaliila,
March 1977.

WORLD IMPROVEMENT AND THE IDEAL SOCIETY

-SOME REFLECTIONS ON INDIAN MEDITATION MOVEMENTS IN THE WEST

BY REINHARDT HUMMEL

(translation of an article in German in Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, Vol. XXX, 1978, no.3, pp. 129-152)

EXCERPT: ANANDA MARGA

"Ananda Marga¹⁾ Pracharak Sangha" (=AM) was founded in Bihar in 1955 by the West Bengali Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, called Anandamurti. From the very beginning it pursued two goals, namely, along with individual renewal through spiritual practices, the liberation and purification of society. In a memorandum (available to the author in a mimeographed German translation) the British lawyer William T. Wells, who had gone to India in connection with the detention of P.R. Sarkar and the legal proceedings instituted against him, has provided some details on what happened before. Wells points out that Sarkar, by occupation a railway accountant, was a relative of "netaji" Subhas Chandra Bose who, unlike Gandhi, advocated violent liberation of India from British colonial rule and who lost his life in World War II in somewhat unclear circumstances. During his student days Sarkar lived in Bose's home and dedicated one of his books to him.²⁾

The creation of a number of branch organizations after 1955 gives an indication of the range of Sarkar's interests, whom his followers, the "Margis" or "Babalovers", call Baba. In 1958, "Renaissance Universal" was founded, "a branch organization for cultural renewal on the basis of morals and spiritual inspiration". In 1962 we have the "Seva Dharma Mission", "an order of yoga monks (and later nuns) who have given up their private life in order to dedicate themselves entirely to the service of mankind"; in 1966, the "Education, Relief and Welfare Section (ERAWS)", which carried out a series of emergency programs, and finally - no exact date of foundation is ever mentioned - the controversial "Voluntary Social Service (V.S.S.)", which has been suspected of being a paramilitary organization. In 1967, a chain of events began th

eventually led to Anandamurti's arrest and legal proceedings against him. His hunger strike (since 1973), a temporary ban on AM for being a "rightist religious organization" under the 1975 emergency laws and, in November 1976, Anandamurti's conviction - events that need not be described in detail here.

Reimar Lenz³⁾ remarks correctly: "From the very beginning the Indian Communists have persecuted Ananda Marga as being an ideologically competing cadre organization." It might be added that the Congress Party which is sworn to secularism has no sympathy either for any political activities whatever that are grounded in religion.

The basis of the synopsis of meditation and social commitment in AM is found in the integral philosophy of Indian tantrism. "Both the practice and the theory of Ananda Marga yoga are based on the old intuitive science of tantra yoga... The word tantra describes ... the spiritual path that leads to expansion of the self and ends upon reaching "moksha", the final liberation. It begins with the body, then becomes a psycho-spiritual process and ends in "awareness of the self", as one of the publicity brochures with the title "Ananda Marga Yoga" puts it. Tantra means that the human being becomes whole, that the psychological, mental and spiritual aspects of his being reach a balance. Veneration of Shakti is unknown in AM; the frequent association of tantrism and veneration of female deities is absent as is the stress on the union of male and female principles. Kundalini yoga is practised, but as a technical aspect takes second place to the emotional aspect of devotion to "parampurusa", whose concrete form is devotion to the guru. Thus bhakti as the path to union with the deity is put above jnana and karma, wisdom and activity⁴⁾.

Anandamurti loves to describe God as the "Great Magician" whose magical powers the yogi comes to share.⁵⁾

Thus for him the integral philosophy of Tantra, the absolutist doctrine of Vedanta and the emotionality of bhakti form a unity which is also outwardly expressed in the co-existence of kundalini yoga, joint kirtan and dance.

Striking in Anandamurti's description of the tantric sadhana is its uncommonly aggressive tone and the smooth transition from inner spiritual struggle to outward political struggle.

"Hence, Tantra is not only a struggle, it is an all-out battle, both external and internal simultaneously ... As part of the external fight one has to develop vigorous control over worldly conduct and expression, while in the internal fight one has to arouse and elevate his kundalini against crude thoughts with all the stamina of his intuition.

The well-controlled ascent of the kundalini brings uncommon wisdom and vigor in Tantrikas. This blending of such a wisdom and vigor adorns a sadhaka with an attractive personality, sharp intelligence and undparalleled spirit. Only such Tantrikas can provide sound leadership in social and national life. ... In Worldly affairs, the personalities with vigor and vitality developed through Tantra Sadhana meet success everywhere. The inspired leaders of mankind throughout history have knowingly or unknowingly followed Tantrik principles."⁶⁾

Most of the time Anandamurti designates the perfect tantrikas (who as his disciples observe the technique he taught them and who are devoted to him) as sadvipras, i.e., true brahmans. However, by this is not meant caste membership by birth but by acquired spiritual qualification. The magazine Sadvipra of September 1976 defines the sadvipra as a spiritual leader and progressive thinker and sees his special task to be acceleration of the speed of progress which in itself cannot be checked but which can be speeded up.

Anandamurti has devised a diagram of the development of society, which he calls "social cycle" (samaja chakra) or "evolution" (kranti). It is the basis of AM's ideology which he calls PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory). The rise of mankind leads from the sudras not directly to the vaisyas but by way of the ksatriyas to the vipras, the "intellectuals", and only in the fourth stage to the vaisyas, i.e. into capitalism. Anandamurti uses anarchic colours to describe the original "sudra time". According to him, it is characterized by the absence of civilization, society and family. Then from the slowly emerging leadership class of the sudras came the hereditary warrior class. Later the intellectuals (vipras), whom they had neglected, seized power only to lose

it eventually to the protesting bourgeoisie (vaisyas), which to this day corrupts the other classes with the material wealth and keeps them dependant.⁷⁾

Anandamurti interprets this picture of society adapted to the Indian caste system by means of dialectic materialism: Thesis and antithesis produce synthesis which, however, cannot stand its ground but brings forth a new antithesis. In this dialectic process the sadvipras have two specific tasks. In the transitional stage they help to develop the anti-thesis, and once the new synthesis has emerged, they are a stabilizing factor. "Sadvipras will encourage and accelerate anti-thetical movement against prevalent barbarity, injustice and exploitation. In the phase of synthesis, they will take the leadership of the society in their own hands. The synthetic Age of Sadvipras can be maintained if there is adjustment with time, place and person. The society will be governed by the sadvipras..."⁸⁾

It becomes clear that there is tension between Anandamurti's belief in the power of a spiritual elite and the determinism of his social cycle. Although, in accordance with the traditional Indian view of life, he believes in the endlessness of the life process and in the continuous repetition of the four-stage social cycle, he would still like to see it arrested in favour of a paradisaical final state; but unlike Marxism, he needs a deus ex machina, that is, his sadvipras.

All this can be more easily understood once we become aware of the position which Anandamurti himself occupies in the social cycle. On the one hand, he is confronted in the Indian context with ruling vaisyas, i.e., capitalists, who are in crisis and in his view dominate and corrupt all realms of life, whereas he and many other members of the former ruling class of vipras hold modest positions such as railway employees, in which they are devoid of influence. At the same time, an antithesis to the capitalist rule has developed in the form of the Communist Parties particularly strong in West Bengal, which attempt to come to power.

Faced with the choice between vaisya rule and "sudra revolution",⁹⁾ he opts for the latter. But "sudra revolution" as such would be nothing but a transition point before the wheel of the social cycle comes full circle again. Anandamurti does not believe that the Communist Party can find a durable solution of the problems. For this reason the sadvipras must take over the leadership of society. Only they can provide a solution.¹⁰⁾ The partisan polemics against both capitalism and Communism found repeatedly and the specific political dispute with Communism which we have mentioned confirm the judgment that the situation in India, in particular in West Bengal, is the backdrop for his system.

If we take a closer look at the type of political struggle the sadvipras must undergo we are struck by a certain tension between their spiritual nature and the fighting methods recommended. The sadvipra is simultaneously a yogi and a warrior, or, in the words of Reimar Lenz,¹¹⁾ "yogi and police-inspector." Anandamurti writes: "He is an active participant (in the struggle, ed.) who sees that no person or class is allowed to exploit the rest. For this he may have to resort to physical force. The sadvipra will have to strike at the source of the power which is tending toward exploitation. In case the ksatriyas become the exploitaters, the sadvipra may have to resort to physical force. When the intellectual or vipra class is dominating, he will have to bring about a revolution in the intellectual field. When the vaishyras are dominating, the sadvipra may have to contest and win elections ..."¹²⁾ Thus the sadvipra is "an intellectual, warrior, capitalist and laborer in one and the same body, ..." ¹³⁾ The picture unmistakably, probably intentionally takes on superhuman traits. The tantric is in his way superman. The notion that by means of education the physical hunger of the masses can be transformed into intellectual hunger so as to satisfy people's needs¹⁴⁾ also points in this direction.

What is aimed at in the creation of a worldwide federation, or, rather, a global family where social and religious contradictions have ceased to exist ¹⁵⁾. To this end Anandamurti recommends the institution of "revolutionary marriage",

marriage beyond social, national and caste boundaries, as was previously advocated by Mahatma Gandhi. If he belongs to one of the three highest castes, the Indian sadvipra at his initiation, or more precisely at the first of seven initiations, loses his caste membership and expresses this by cutting the caste string. Anandamurti has always considered that, to safeguard an orderly state of society, a world government consisting of sadvipras must eventually be set up.¹⁶⁾

The motives that led to Anandamurti's concept of society are quite heterogenous. Marxist dialectics is closely linked to the traditionally Indian cyclic notion of time, and the Marxist concept of class struggle to the Indian caste system. The belief that the welfare of society depends solely on the quality of leadership, is wholly archaic.

It is not surprising that Anandamurti, who defended nothing but his own elitist concept of leadership, was crushed between the millstones of the large political interest blocs. In Kenya too, AM's activity in favour of the poor and against the corruption of the powerful was punished by a ban on the organization. In the West, AM's activity in society was in any case restricted from the beginning to various forms of social work. Yet we must not be misled into thinking that AM only intends to complement meditative inwardness by some socio-political commitment. In its original form Anandamurti's doctrine aims at nothing less than the creation of an ideal society under the leadership of a meditation elite which has developed superhuman faculties by means of tantric yoga.

Notes:

- 1) On AM: R. Lenz, "Karunananda. Yogi in Berlin, Missionar für Ananda Marga", Lutherische Monatshefte 1973, pp. 112-14. M. Mildemberger, "Ananda Marga - Weg zur Glückseligkeit", Materialdienst der EZW (Stuttgart) 38/1975, pp. 306-11. - AM publishes a number of magazines; the most important of them is called Sadvipra.
- 2) Wells, p. 3.
- 3) Lenz, Meditation, p. 115.
- 4) Baba's Grace, pp 80f. (1973-edition)
- 5) ibid., pp 17f. (1973-edition)
- 6) The Great Universe, pp 42f. (1973-edition)
- 7) The Great Universe, pp. 65f., 94

- 8) Ibid., p. 238. (1973-edition)
- 9) Ibid., p. 97.
- 10) Ibid., p. 36.
- 11) Lenz, Meditation, p. 115.
- 12) The Great Universe, p. 87 (1973-edition)
- 13) Ibid., p. 89. (1973-edition)
- 14) Ibid, p. 61.
- 15) Ibid., pp. 21f., 62.
- 16) Wells, p. 3.

NB: This article has been translated from German which means that some of the citations have been translated from English to German for the German publication of the article. A re-translation to English has been done for the publication of the article in Up-Date. However, original quotes have been found concerning most of the above mentioned notes, but concerning "The Great Universe" and "Baba's Grace" we have found the original quotes in editions of the books from 1973, and therefore the number of the pages for these citations are given, according to these editions, and not the editions which have been used by the author.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE AAO?

by Karl Iro, ZEG, Berlin.

Normally we print in English, but in the case of the following article we have found it appropriate to keep the German version, partly because the AAO is mainly found on the European scene, partly because of the nature of the statement, written as it is by one of the leading figures in the former AAO in the very peculiar style of the "AAO".

die ehemaligen mitglieder der aao berlin haben sich zu einem "zentrum für emotionelle gestaltung" (ZEG) zusammengeschlossen. in der gruppe leben jetzt 30 personen, psychologen, studenten, lehrer, handwerker, künstler und pädagogen.

die gruppe will im rahmen des ZEG kultur vermitteln und fördern, kein kulturhaus im alten sinne, sondern ein ort an dem man lernen kann, sich und seine emotionen künstlerisch und in der kommunikation mit anderen zu gestalten und dadurch individualität und kreativität zu entwickeln.

es finden regelmäßig kurse statt: theaterworkshops, selbsterfahrungsworkshops, mal- und zeichenkurse, kinderspielnachmittage, rednerkurse, seminare über kunst, sexualität, kindererziehung und geschichte.

außerdem veranstaltet die gruppe ab oktober wöchentliche vorträge, in denen sie über die entwicklung des ZEG informiert.

auskunft über ZEG:

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was aus der aao geworden ist

das experiment der aao ist ausgelaufen, die aao als organisation existiert nicht mehr. sie ist nicht gescheitert, es ist kein zerfall oder gar ein zurückschalten, sondern vielmehr wurde seit der auflösung der zentralistisch gesteuerten organisation in diesem jahr ein starker schritt nach vorne getan. sämtliche gruppen sind autonom geworden, das gemeinschaftseigentum wurde aufgelöst, privateigentum eingeführt, keine gemeinsame arbeit und produktion mehr, geblieben von den ehemali- gen aa-prinzipien sind die gemeinsame sexualität und die gemeinsame selbstdarstellung. alle gruppen sind bescheidener in der beurteilung der kleinfamilie gegenüber geworden, die strenge ideologie der aa-prinzipien ist einer realeren einstellung zur wirklichkeit gewichen.

wie hat das experiment der aao begonnen?

damals, 1970, sind wir entstanden aus der aufbruchstimmung der 60er jahre, dem konglomerat von neuen gedanken, die diese zeit prägte. studentenbewegung, revoltieren, kampf dem establishment, sozialismus verwirklichen, antiautoritär sein, dagegen sein, drop out, sei hippie, sexwelle, frauenemanzipation, wilhelm reich, aktionismus, nur nicht als normalbürger enden, endlich ein neues leben beginnen. die 60er jahre brachten viele versuche und ansätze hervor, doch ihre basis war unrealistisch. protest allein genügt eben nicht, man muß was neues machen. dabei tauchen reale probleme auf, die es zu überwinden gilt. wir begannen damals als wg in der wiener praterstraße. was uns jedoch von den anderen gruppen dieser zeit unterschied, war, daß wir die utopie der linken ideale in der praxis zu verwirklichen begannen. dadurch konnten wir auch erst ihren irrealen charakter erkennen und uns davon entfernen.

1973 begannen wir mit freier sexualität und gemeinschaftseigentum, alles gehört allen, gleichheit für alle, verzicht auf konsum, komfort, individualität im äußeren, keine mode, kein fernsehen, kein luxus. keine privatzimmer, keine besitzsexualität, gemeinsames

schlafen, keine privatkleider, keine kneipen, alles gemeinsam bis zu den unterhosen, kein privatgeld, wir fühlten uns revolutionär, die leute waren schockiert, wenn wir mit unseren selbstgenähten kleidern und den kurzgeschorenen haaren auf der straße gingen. wenn sie uns besuchten und wir ihre existenz kritisierten, waren sie betroffen. ja, wir machten alles anders. damals wunderten wir uns über die gesellschaftliche diskriminierung, der wir ausgesetzt waren und den mangel an anerkennung. heute ist klar: wir waren einfach zu anders, im auftreten zu radikal, psychopathen und kaputte leute fühlten sich davon angezogen. die, die die anpassung in der gesellschaft nicht geschafft haben, hofften hier ein sorgenloses leben führen zu können. jeder konnte einziehen, wir gaben jedem eine chance. durch die schwierigkeiten, die diese leute in der gruppe bekamen, rückte automatisch die therapie in den vordergrund des gruppenlebens, sie war einfach notwendig.

wir begannen mit aktionsanalysen, die sich zur selbstdarstellung entwickelten. es ging um das öffentlich - und damit bewußtmachen der krankheit, der wahnsinn muß herauskommen, wer bin ich, auseinandersetzung mit der kindheit, den eltern, infantil sein, regression zum baby, eine neue kindheit erleben, ein neuer mensch werden. wir waren mit begeisterung dabei, aufbruchstimmung, eine schöpferische explosion, sich verändern, aber nicht auf dem papier oder in büchern, sondern bei sich selbst beginnen. das ist die neue freiheit. wir waren romantisch und unrealistisch. der friedrichshof war unser paradies, eine insel glücklicher kinder, keine lohnarbeit mehr, keinen chef, studenten werden handwerker, eigene hühner, schweinezucht, gemüseanbau. wir wollten alles verändern, am besten gleich die ganze welt. die weltweite aa-gesellschaft funktioniert ohne geld, ohne kapitalistische wirtschaftsprinzipien, nur das notwendigste produzieren. wir waren unreal, idealistisch, aber wir fühlten uns ungeheuer mutig, mit existentielllem einsatz dabei, fortschrittlich und revolutionär.

die unverblühten angriffe gegen alles, was kleinfamiliär war, und überhaupt unsere neue lebenspraxis rief

sehr viel neid und haß bei anderen hervor, frühere freunde wurden plötzlich zu erbitterten feinden, immer wieder negativ verzerrte darstellungen über uns, die linken bekämpften uns, weil wir links waren und machten, wovon sie träumten. mal war es kaiser otto und seine arbeitssklaven, oder wir waren überhaupt gleich faschisten, verrückte, und gehörten verboten. die heftige kritik, auf die die aao von allen seiten, ob von links oder von rechts stieß, war jedoch im gesamten ungerechtfertigt, denn es wurde übersehen, daß es sich hier um ein gesellschaftliches experiment handelt, das ständig in entwicklung begriffen ist, und das den keim zur veränderung in sich trägt. die aao ist zum glück nicht durch revolutionäre gewalt entstanden, sondern war ein experiment auf freiwilliger basis.

von 1973 bis 1977 hatten wir gemeinschaftseigentum in der gruppe, das war damals ein großer fortschritt, es bedeutete die überwindung der persönlichen besitzfixierung, weg vom privaten materiellen denken, alles in einen topf werfen, wer wenig hat, ist nicht schlechter als der, der viel hat. das war ein wichtiger schritt, große projekte wurden möglich, der ökonomische zusammenhalt schweißte die gruppe auch emotionell zusammen.

in der selbstdarstellung ging es früher darum, die eigenen schwierigkeiten künstlerisch umsetzen zu lernen, die hemmungen zu verlieren, mit der gruppe in kommunikation zu treten. die selbstdarstellung hat in der gruppe ein schnelles tempo der entwicklung gebracht, wir begannen mit kursen, damals kommunelehrgänge genannt, und binnen kurzer zeit bildeten sich nach unserem vorbild in mehreren deutschen städten gruppen, die aao mit internationalem gemeinschaftseigentum war entstanden.

durch die wachsende größe wurde der ökonomische überblick immer schwieriger, mehr organisation wurde notwendig. niemand sollte "draußen" arbeiten müssen, wir gründeten eigene betriebe, die uns gemeinsam gehörten, ohne lohn. alle wurden von der gruppe versorgt, ein kleiner sozialistischer wohlfahrtsstaat, der einen immer aufwendigeren verwaltungsapparat notwendig machte, um das gemeinschaftseigentum von 500 leuten verwalten zu können. mit

verblüffender schnelligkeit schoß eine bürokratie aus dem boden, telexe, zentrale verwaltung; das büroteam regelt und organisiert, internationales organisationsbüro, ein dschungel von nur noch von fachleuten verstandenen abkürzungen zur information per telex entwickelt sich, gelder werden hin- und hergeschickt, wo sie gerade am notwendigsten gebraucht werden. es waren die auswüchse des gemeinschaftseigentums, das in größerem maßstab nur zentral organisiert werden kann und einen funktionärs- und beamtenstab notwendig macht. die nachteile des gemeinschaftseigentums wurden spätestens 1977 spürbar: der einzelne sank zur verwalteten person ab, eine beziehungslosigkeit zu materiel- len dingen entstand, niemand fühlte sich im grunde verantwortlich, nichts gehörte einem ja persönlich, keine eigeninitiative. jeder hatte seinen arbeitsplatz in der gruppe, aber was der einzelne eigentlich bringen muß, damit wir uns erhalten können, was das leben in der gruppe kostet, dafür gab es keinen maßstab; da wir in vielen bereichen nicht genügend ausgebildet waren, brauchten wir für die arbeit oft die doppelte oder dreifache zeit.

anfang 1978 führten wir wieder das privateigentum ein, erwachsen werden, selbstverantwortung, jeder muß sich selbst erhalten, sonst sind wir nicht lebensfähig, besser als arzt in einem krankenhaus arbeiten, als in der gruppe für die transportfirma zu arbeiten. wir haben den traum vom kommunismus überwunden, es war ein tolles experiment, radikal durchprobiert. das neue privateigentum und die löhne hatten eine sehr positive wirkung, wir gewannen eine realistische einstellung zur wirklichkeit. es geht jetzt darum, verantwortung für sich selbst zu übernehmen, nicht versorgt zu werden.

dieser schritt bedeutet das ende des zentralismus, reprivatisierung der ökonomischen bereiche, kosten und rentabilität werden durchsichtig, frühere berufe werden wieder aufgenommen, ausbildungen zuende geführt. die aao als internationale organisation löst sich auf, die gruppen werden autonom und verwalten sich selbständig. was uns zusammenhält, ist die ge-

meinsame lebenspraxis. man kann sich wieder ohne schlechtes gewissen einen kaffee kaufen, die kleidung, der haarschnitt haben sich geändert.

die revolution kann keine äußerliche sein, sondern geschieht nur bei einem selbst. dieses neue privateigentum funktioniert in der gruppe jedoch nur auf der basis der tiefen beziehungen der einzelnen zueinander. wer zum beispiel plötzlich auf die idee kommt, sein geld mit unnützer konsumgütern hinauszuerwerfen, der zeigt damit nur, daß er auf ersatzbefriedigung angewiesen ist, weil seine beziehungen und kontakte in der gruppe nicht stimmen. er spürt es dann selbst und wird entweder versuchen, seine schwierigkeiten zu überwinden, oder er zieht von selbst aus, weil er sich eben in einer gruppe nicht wohl fühlt.

jetzt, nach 5 jahren ununterbrochener entwicklung tritt das ein, was auf jede revolution unweigerlich folgt, die normalisierung, die annäherung an die wirklichkeit, doch unterscheidet sich unsere revolution grundsätzlich von den geschichtlichen katastrophen, die als revolutionen bezeichnet werden. unsere revolution ist eine bewußtseinsrevolution der experimentellen gesellschaftsgestaltung. wir glauben, nur durch die lebenspraxis einer autonomen gruppe mit freier sexualität wird verhindert, daß privateigentum zum kapitalistischen monster wird. ohne die direkte lebenspraxis, durch denken allein, wären wir nie zu diesem ergebnis gekommen.

der komfort in den gruppen steigt sehr schnell, es ist so als ob wir die entwicklung des menschen aus der horde, aus der gemeinsamen höhle über das privateigentum zur geldwirtschaft hin, bis zur eigenen wohnung wiedererlebt hätten, ohne dabei aber auf die vorteile des gruppenlebens verzichten zu müssen. es zeigt sich immer mehr, daß die aufspaltung der gruppensexualität in familiensexualität, verbunden mit dem privateigentum, die krise herbeigeführt hat, in der sich die menschheit heute befindet. der kapitalismus, wie er heute existiert, ist ein übel, aber nicht die wurzel. wer nur den kapitalismus wegräumt oder bekämpft, stürzt uns nur noch in eine schlimmere katastrophe in der der mensch alles verliert, was er sich trotz kapitalistischer ausbeutung im laufe der geschichte errungen

THE CHILDREN OF GOD

BY GOTTFRIED OOSTERWAL

1. Stories about the Children of God (COG) continue to make headlines in the press and the media. "Parents Fight Cults to Save Children," reads one of those recent headlines. "Freedom of Religion Suppressed," read another. There are stories of brainwashings and deprogramming, reports of kidnapping and rescue missions, but also testimonies of communal happiness and "festivals of love."

From a wandering band of about fifty young disciples in 1968, the COG have grown to a "Family of Love" of nearly 9,000 members today (1978), including nearly 4,000 adults. From a loose assortment of society-dropouts in California, the movement developed into a rigidly structured communion of believers with "homes" ("colonies") in 73 countries of the world.

And though defections are on the increase, so is their membership and geographic expansion, especially in Europe and South America.

Who are these Children of God, or this "Family of Love," as they call themselves now? The story of the new religious movements is to a large extent the story of their founders and leaders. This is particularly true for the founder and leader of the COG, David Brandt Berg, "God's mouthpiece," as his followers call him. "He is our prophet, Moses and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel all in one, the king of God's nation on earth." With his Mo-letters (from Moses, the name he says God Himself has given him), Berg rules his kingdom absolutely and exerts total control over the "family's" life, from the way people dress to what they eat to how often they may have sex and with whom. The Children of God, though they call themselves disciples of Jesus Christ, are first and foremost "servants of King David." His prophecies and special revelations determine their lifestyle and beliefs, their relationships

with others, and their goal in life. They are, in fact, the very principle by which they live, the only true criterion also, by which the Bible is interpreted.

2. In his book, Survival, the True Story of Moses and the Children of God, David Berg says of himself: "During the first years of my life" --he was born on February 18, 1919, in Melrose, Oakland, California-- "there was little to indicate that greater things were about to happen, except some strange prophecies." By these he means: "It was said that I would achieve many great things and several of these are already fulfilled There were prophecies claiming that I would become like Moses, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and even David in the task set before me by God."

Berg's family was poor, all the time living in old cars, tents, and caravans, while travelling as itinerant missionaries through the U.S. and Canada. David, bright, and a real bookworm, was a rather sensitive and somewhat dreamy child, who "loved to be alone," spending "hours and days in studying the beauty and miracles in God's nature and in listening to His silent voice, which explained what I saw." The poverty, prayer, and prophecy in his home left an indelible impression on him. They are still the hallmark of the Children of God.

In 1941, shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, David is drafted for military service. He is soon dismissed, however, "as completely unfit" for any form of service because of a serious heart trouble. In fact, David was so ill when he left the army that doctors expected him to die at any moment. "I earnestly prayed to God," David would write later. And "when I finally promised God to serve Him truthfully all my life if He would save my heart, I was cured immediately like an answer to prayer." He immediately rose from his deathbed, against the wishes of his family, and began a full-time career as an evangelist. Ordained by the "Christian and Missionary Alliance," Berg first worked in Valley Farm, Arizona, where he raised a whole new church. Berg looks back at these experiences with rather mixed emotions. There were tensions in his church: racial tensions between Mexicans, Indians, and white Southerners; tensions between the rich and the poor,

the educated and the uneducated. Berg's "radical preaching" --Christ chose the poor of this earth-- and his "policy of integration" --we are all one in Jesus Christ-- brought him into conflict with the leaders of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He dropped out of that organization with feelings of bitterness and contempt for all institutionalized religion and clerical structures. Here he was: a preacher, with a lot of zeal, but without much training; a family of four children, but no place to live and without income or support from anyone. For even a large number of his own parishioners had turned against him after his church had fired him. This experience, and his strong conviction that "the clerical system was ineffective, contrary to the Bible and politically corrupt," made him turn against the church.

"I got so enraged, bitter and sick with the whole hypocritical church system," Berg writes, "that I nearly became a communist."

3. The G.I. Bill made it possible for him to go to college, where he "mainly studied socialism and communism." He soon realized, however, that "the so-called altruistic aims of these political systems never could be reached without the love of God in the hearts of men, which we find in the genuine communism of the first church, and which was only effective through the power of the Spirit of God!" Berg also came to the conclusion, however, that a "democratic system of government will never be able to produce a perfect rule, complete peace on earth, a just economy, a healthy ecology, God-fearing education or a just religion." This will be accomplished only when Jesus returns to establish His kingdom under the authoritative government of "King Jesus." Berg became convinced that the Second Coming of Christ is very near. The signs of His coming abound everywhere: the waves of secularism and ungodliness, the increase in crime and hypocrisy and greed, the rise of ungodly totalitarian systems of government, and the inability of the churches and of organized religion to help people to cope with these satanic influences and powers, and to prepare them for the soon coming of Christ. Berg felt a call from God to do something about this situation: to warn the churches, denounce the evil structures, proclaim a new message of hope and love, and to call the honest children of God out of the confusion of this world to prepare them for a new world to come.

Between the late 1940's and 1968, when the movement started, Berg claims to have received several special revelations that prepared him for his mission. These started with the "Key of David," a reference to Revelation 3:7,8: "The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut; I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name." Berg heard in these words a clear call to his special mission, and a rejection of the churches who in practice and in thought had denied the name of God. In 1952 he received the "Call of Ezekiel," and in 1962 the "Message of Jeremiah." In this latter revelation, Berg claims that God has given him "the last warning message" to a doomed nation and the prophetic calling to prepare a special people to meet its soon coming Lord.

About the same time, Berg's mother, the former radio evangelist Virginia Brandt Berg, also received some special revelations concerning the last-day events, especially about the confusion in the world that would precede the coming of Christ. In 1966 she prophesied that her son had been favored with "the understanding of Daniel," a reference to the prophetic-historical events mentioned in this Old Testament book, and to the times in which they would be fulfilled (the 2,300 days, the 70 weeks, the 3.5 months, etc.).

In 1968, at the urging of his mother, David Berg moved to Huntington Beach, California, to start his work among hippies, drug freaks, and other drop-outs from society. In Berg's own words: "The Jesus revolution started with a gang of wild, red radicals from some of the lowest strata of human society, our time's most despised generation."

4. Berg won a following: first slowly, then swelling to a real movement which centers in the apocalyptic message of the soon coming of Christ, the end of the world, the evils of our present materialistic, individual-oriented society, the degeneration of the conventional churches, and the call to become separate from these decadent structures and organizations to form a new Family of Love. To that end, the new believers had to "forsake all" and follow "God's chosen vessel," David Berg,

God's prophet for this time. After having received a revelation that California would soon slide into the ocean as a result of a great earthquake, Berg left the state with a group of about fifty followers. For several months they travelled across the United States and Canada, as Berg's parents once did before, witnessing to their new-found faith and demonstrating their new fellowship of love. It was during this period that the followers of Berg began to call themselves Children of God, a name first used by a journalist and then adopted by them.

In 1969, already, the Children of God held their first congress. It took place in Laurentide, near Montreal, where the group became organized into a well-structured religious communion, with bishops and elders, ministers and shepherds. Berg himself adopted the name "Moses David" --Mo, for short-- and became the great prophet-king-shepherd of the rapidly expanding movement.

In a way, the success of the movement is still a bit puzzling. The young people attracted to the organization literally have to "forsake all": their job, their studies, their home, their parents, their relatives, their friends. They live together in communes-- "colonies" was the word used until it was recently changed to "homes"-- and hand over all their worldly possessions to the elders and bishops. When a young person joins the COG, he or she signs the statement: "I promise to give all my goods and income, let you open my mail, obey rules and officers." That statement is part of a much larger application form, in which the COG describe themselves as "revolutionary Christian nomads," who are "bypassing the hopeless, unresponsive, older generation and church people and bringing "new-time religion" to a new "now generation"!" The statement continues: "We have declared war of the Spirit on the system's godless schools, Christian churches, and heartless Mammon! We long to return to the Truth, Love, Peace and Beauty of our ancients in dress, customs, appearance, and the simple Life of True Happiness in God and love for our fellow man!" This total surrender of their possessions and personhood has led to strongly polarized reactions: on the one hand, the "FREECOG," the "Parents' Committee to Free Our Sons and Daughters from the Children of God," which claims that their children have been brainwashed and are kept in physical and mental "slavery." On the other hand, a group emerged which calls itself "THANKCOG," consisting

of parents and others who praise the COG for what they have done for their sons and daughters. "From a junky and dope addict," writes one father, "they have made my son a child of God." "Formerly depressed and withdrawn, selfish and suicidal," writes another parent, "my daughter turned into a happy, beautiful, joyful gal."

Initially, this praise came from various sources. The youngsters who were attracted by the movement --usually in their late teens and early twenties-- came from the fringes of the American, white, middle-class society: dope addicts, loners, runaways, etc. In the COG they became "whole beings" again, with love and peace and joy in their hearts. In these early years of their existence, the COG were in the forefront of the Jesus Movement. TV evangelist G.F. Jordan used them in his Los Angeles TV program, "Church in the Home," a smiling, happy-looking group of people. Jordan allowed the COG to live on the properties he owned in Thurber, Texas, and in Los Angeles and Coachella, California. These ranches became widely known as the Texas Soul Clinic and the American Soul Clinic. In October 1971, however, conflicts over finances and the administrative control over these properties led to a fall-out between Berg and Jordan. The Lefkowitz report --named after Louis Lefkowitz, the New York Attorney General who investigated charges against the COG-- speaks only of a controversy over finances. Berg himself explains, however, that the money Jordan earned came from contributions given to the COG and that Jordan, therefore, was not entitled to the sole ownership of the Texas and California properties. The result of the conflict was, however, that the COG were ordered off Jordan's properties to become wanderers again, setting up "colonies" wherever people let them and were willing to donate goods and money. It was at this time that the idea arose to establish regular "Christian homes" for the Children of God, not only in America, but all over the world. In 1972, already, the movement spread to England, and from there to the continent of Europe. Today the COG have some 850 "homes" in 73 countries of the world. In fact, the majority of David Berg's followers is now found outside of the United States, where the movement first began. Even Berg himself is no longer residing here, but keeps his headquarters in Europe (Italy).

5. What is it that attracts people to the COG?

Many observers think it is the aggressive witnessing of the group, and especially the "Flirty Fish" approach suggested in Berg's Mo-letter "Flirty, Flirty, Little Fishy." In this letter Moses David advises his disciples to "go to bed . . . if necessary" with potential converts or donors in an "all-out effort" to "win their souls for Jesus." It cannot be denied that "The Look of Love" --from another Mo-letter-- and other special "sexual approaches" do indeed attract a number of potential converts. But that is a partial answer only to the question: "What causes the rapid spread of the movement?" especially in light of the fact that the believers also have to give up so many (other) things. Moreover, the "sexual approach" in recruiting members is far from universal, and it occurs rather infrequently. Reports from converts tell another story: "I joined the COG because they gave me a new goal and a new meaning in life," is the answer of some. Others say: "The thing that attracted me to the COG was their love and happiness, their genuine care and their warm fellowship."

These two reasons stand out very clearly: People are finding a new meaning of life, and the warm fellowship with others.

The directives given in the Mo-letters apply to every detail of a person's life, from the brushing of teeth to the kind of clothing one should wear to one's relationships with other people. Almost nothing is left to the individual's own decision. "Mental control," some observers shout; "Nazi methods," "brainwashing." "For the first time in my life I really feel secure," others say. "I know where I am going; I know what I am living for." Rules in the "homes" are strict, indeed, and life seems rigidly ordered and regimented: wash-up time, early morning prayers, meditation, memorization of Mo-letters, breakfast, Bible reading, study and meditation, preparation for witnessing, "litnessing" (the COG's word for witnessing-fund-raising-evangelism and dispensing of literature), dinner, classes, "home" service of various kinds (cooking, cleaning, etc.), prayers and meditation.

Life progresses according to definite rules: The new convert enters as a "babe," and is given certain routines to perform. After three months one enters the stage of L.T., leadership training. And if a person does well as a leader, he can climb

up to higher ministerial positions. "Doing well" here means: excelling in handing out literature, fund-raising and witnessing, memorizing Scripture and Mo-letters, strictly obeying the rules of the home, not doubting the teachings and counsels of the elders and bishops, and bringing others into the Family of Love.

Life in the Family is a total experience. Most converts think that they have gained far more than they have given up, even if giving up means surrendering one's possessions and ambitions. For, by doing so, the COG claim that they have not only found real joy and happiness, peace and love. They have found themselves in the fellowship with others. "We are just one big family, all brothers and sisters, loving each other and caring for each other. Here I can truly be myself." It is this love and concern for others that really continue to attract the lonely and the confused, the alienated and the drop-outs. In fact, these aspects of the movement seem far more important than the COG's emphasis on the soon coming apocalypse or the destruction of the world.

6. In no way is this an underestimation of the role of their theology. For the COG's fundamentalistic-Biblicistic system of belief really is the creative center of the movement. The Bible and the Mo-letters are the food they live by. "They are God's love letters to us," the believers say. The form of the Biblical love letter is the King James Version. All other versions are rejected. Their own literature explains why: "The King James Version was translated by fundamentalists at a time when heretics were burnt at the stake and the English language was most beautiful and pure, the time of Elizabeth I and Shakespeare. The KJV has become the most used in the world today and sells more than all the other translations taken together . . . it has stood the trial of time. Furthermore, the KJV has no copyright as most of the later translations have, which shows that it was not translated for mercenary reasons." Moses David even refers to the Dead Sea Scrolls and claims "they demonstrate also that the KJV is a unique, almost supernaturally precise translation." But the best reason to use the KJV is that it works! According to the Children, a passage read in this version is more apt to bring fruits than the same passage read in a modern translation. For "the KJV was inspired. This Bible is Jesus on paper."

What the Bible really teaches is explained, however, in the Mo-letters. To the COG these are in fact "the Bible of our generation, as Moses is the prophet of this generation." The letters are printed in the same manner as older editions of the Bible, in verses which are numbered. The opening phrases repeat the form and style used by the apostle Paul, which enhance the authoritative character of the Mo-letters even further. But these phrases are merely accidental, we are told. For the real authority of the Mo-letters lies in the fact that they are "inspired." God Himself has revealed the messages they contain to Moses, by visions, dreams, or "supernatural impressions of the mind." Many of these letters are meant for the general public. These are the ones that are sold in the streets, or busses, in airports and other places. Others are for "new members only," or for top leaders, or even for members of the Berg family only. When some of these Mo-letters, intended for leaders or members only, fell into the hands of the "Systemites," as the COG call the "outsiders," the movement became quite embarrassed sometimes, no matter what kind of explanation was offered. One of these was the "Flirty, Flirty, Little Fishy" letter, which rather explicitly teaches the believers how to attract new converts through the sexual approach. "His letters are blatantly pornographic, complete with sketches and diagrams. We didn't even want to reproduce them in our report," an investigator for the attorney general's office in New York commented. More recent examples are the Mo-letters on marriage and reorganization. From the first we learn that polygamy is recommended, a teaching Moses himself has been practicing for years now. "Trial marriages," the letter further states, are preferable to formal legal marriages to determine if the relationships will work.

From the Mo-letter on reorganization we learn that as of February 18, 1978 (Mo's birthday!), all ministers, shepherds, elders, bishops, and archbishops have been dismissed. From that day on, the "homes" will be led by "servants" and "handmaids," who will report directly to "king and queen counselorships," a sort of regional headquarters. Declared Berg: "The King is taking back the reins of government and we are going back to a direct dictatorship!"

Whether this will hinder or advance the work of the COG is hard to tell. As long as the message of the soon coming of Christ,

the end of the world, and the evils of modern society, churches, and governments are giving people a new goal to live for, and as long as the "homes" of the "Family of Love" continue to absorb the lonely and the confused, the alienated and the drop-outs, this movement will continue to exist. Unless, of course, other Christian churches will rediscover their mission as giving fellowship to the lonely, a new identity to the downtrodden, and a new certainty to live by.

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U.S. COURT OF APPEALS RULES AGAINST TM MOVEMENT

(SPIRITUAL COUNTERFEITS PROJECT,
FEBRUARY 6, 1979)

On February 2, the United States Court of Appeals for the third circuit, sitting in Philadelphia, affirmed a lower court's ruling that had declared Transcendental Meditation (TM) to be religious in nature.

The U.S. District Court in New Jersey, Judge Meanor presiding, had delivered the original decision in the case Malnak versus Maharishi Mahesh Yogi on October 19, 1977. In his 80-page opinion, Judge Meanor had ruled that the teaching of TM and SCI ("Science of Creative Intelligence," TM philosophy) in the public schools violated the establishment clause of the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution. That is, the principle of "separation of church and state" had been violated, since taxpayers' money had been used to support the religious teachings and practices of the TM movement.

The defeated Maharishi and his TM movement argued that Judge Meanor did not have all the facts straight, so they proceeded to take the case to the U.S. Court of Appeals in Philadelphia.

When oral arguments were heard before the Court of Appeals on December 11, 1978, counsel for the TM movement advanced the argument that TM and SCI should be permitted entrance into the public schools as a "true science."

The Court directly questioned this concept. The presiding judge quoted the following from TM's ceremony of initiation.

"Guru in the glory of Brahma, Guru in the glory of Vishnu,
Guru in the glory of the great Lord Shiva, Guru in the
glory of the personified transcendental fulness of Brahman,
to Him, to Shri Guru Dev adorned with glory, I bow down."

The judge then asked, "What's scientific about that?" Instead of responding directly, Maharishi's lawyer referred to an affidavit which stated that such ceremonies were some-

times used for "secular" occasions in India. The court later remarked that the effect of that affidavit was to "take a cow and put a sign on it that says "horse"!"

There were no further proceedings until the Court of Appeals panel, consisting of three judges, gave its ruling on February 2. In addition to the Court's judgment upholding the lower court's decision against TM, a 34-page concurring opinion was given by one of the judges. The concurring opinion discusses some of the legal questions involved in this case regarding the definition of religion, and declares that TM is a "religion" (not merely religious in nature).

If Maharishi and the TM people decide to pursue the matter further, they will have to ask the U.S. Supreme Court for permission to bring an appeal there. The message from the courts, however, has been clear: TM is religious.

Federal, state, and local officials can be expected to heed the courts' judgments and refuse any requests by the TM people to use taxpayers' dollars for TM programs.

The original plaintiffs in this action were a group of New Jersey parents and taxpayers, together with the Spiritual Counterfeits Project, an organization based in Berkeley, California. All of these parties were represented on the appeal. Additional defendants before the lower court included the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the New Jersey Department of Education, and the several local school boards. None of these governmental defendants joined with Maharishi's TM movement in his appeal.

Counsel for the respondents (the original plaintiffs) was Julius B. Poppinga of the Newark, New Jersey lawfirm of McCarter and English.

Copies of the lower court's opinion, which analyzed the TM program in detail, are available from the Spiritual Counterfeits Project, Box 4308, Berkeley, California 94704.

TM AND RELIGION: TM HAS NOW GOT AN ORDER OF MONKS!

BY JOHANNES AAGAARD

During January this year a group of theological students and teachers from the University of Aarhus, Denmark, went to India to study Religion and Society. As part of that study they went to Rishikesh, the holy town at the feet of Himalaya and at the banks of Ganges. Among the many guru-ashramas at this spot Transcendental Meditation is also represented. They call their center a university.

The Danish group, however, found no university, but a real guru-center with lingam-worship at at least two places and with a new TM order of Monks. The group had an intensive interview with some of the monks and learned that Maharishi two years ago collected close to one hundred monks and settled them in Rishikesh. The reason for this move is not clear, but it is probably one of the ways by which TM is winning confidence in India.

During the stay at the ashram the group was received by the master swami Satyananda, who - according to the monks is considered number two in the TM hierarchy, second only to Maharishi himself. The interview was not planned, but came as a surprise and ended abruptly. It is printed on the basis of a tape-recording. The group tried to get information about the TM-swamis, but in vain. The Master would not discuss the matter. He only engaged in a discussion on the relation between the mantras/ the puja and the understanding of them. He certainly managed to represent himself in a very ambiguous way on these issues.

INTERVIEW WITH SWAMI SATYANANDA,
TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION, RISHIKESH.

S: Satyananda.

I: Interviewer.

S: What are your questions?

I: Well, we are a group of students from the university of Aarhus in Denmark, we are in India to study the relationship between religion and society, religion and social life, religion and community life, and obviously, what we know best in the west also Transcendental Meditation as one of the expressions of this attitude to life. We were just engaged in a discussion with your people in the reception. We were learning that Transcendental Meditation has got an order of monks in the last two years. We didn't know about that and we were talking about the nature of this order of swamis. So we should like to ask you about this order of swamis.

S: I think the best thing would have been for you to go to Maharishi in Switzerland to get first hand replies to all this, because basically, we don't deal with religion.

I: You don't deal with religion?

S: No. We deal with Transcendental Meditation, which is a mental practice, and that mental practice, by experience and by scientific experiments all over the world has been found to be helping man physically and mentally. So when one regularly practices this meditation, all his physical tensions and distresses and mental fatigue and distresses they are all removed, and he is found to be a much better and more creative and happy man and successful man - than before.

I: You see - that Transcendental Meditation we know from Denmark also, but -

S: - and that is it -

I: - but you also deal with religion.

S: No, we don't deal with religion at all - if we were to deal with religion then our sphere of activity would be very limited. Religion means a particular group of people following a particular religion. But we don't deal with them. We deal with all people of all religions.

I: I understood that. That is why I asked why TM has got monks then.

S: Monks - they are here by their own initiative. We don't prepare monks. But if monks come to us to learn Transcendental Meditation, we teach them. We teach meditation to everybody without any distinction.

I: Are the monks playing any special role in the ashram?

S: They - they can't play a special role as such, only those monks whom we have trained as teachers of Transcendental Meditation. They are going about and teaching meditation. This is all the role that they play. And they have an important role, because, by virtue of the fact that they are - have adopted a monk's life they get more time for meditation - and when they are practicing meditation - the radiations that they throw out - that is now scientifically proved - that the radiations that they throw about has a very healthy, harmonious effect even upon those who are not meditating. So - as monks only they may not be good, but when they start practicing meditation they become very useful units of society.

I: The point where our discussion stopped was on mantra. I asked your people about mantras.

S: Knowledge is infinite. Knowledge is infinite. And we deal with infinite knowledge. We don't confine to this or that boundry. And mantras as we use are just combinations of syllables, combinations of the alphabet. which have life-producing, life-supporting influence.

I: Yes, but let me be frank and put a question: I was initiated once in TM and I got a mantra which I later on learned from Sir John Woodroffe's books meant Saraswati:
AIM - I got.

S: Right - now you got a mantra, but did you know the meaning?

I: Not at that time.

S: That is all. There the story ends. Every word may have some meaning in some language somewhere. That is not our concern. But the person who was giving the mantra did not know the meaning, and he never insisted that you should know the meaning. Only the repetition of it, expiriencing it had that physiological, sociological, and mental effect. Had the meaning any importance?

- I: But then I had a friend within TM and I asked him, and he had got two more mantras, so that his mantras runs SRI AIM NAMA - and I think that means "I worship the most honourable Saraswati" -
- S: How can you worship by repeating a mantra whose meaning and form you don't know?
- I: No, but if it has got a meaning -
- S: It has - for whom who knows. Suppose you had this mantra OM AIM NAMA, and you were doing as the teacher taught you, but you didn't know the meaning. Where was the worship of Saraswati?
- I: Well, it depends, you see, it is said by TM that the puja (the TM initiation) is working even if you don't know it, don't understand its meaning.
- S: It is not puja that is working. Puja doesn't work. It is the practice - innocent practice - of the meditator which works.
- I: But why then puja?
- S: Puja is no puja. What puja? Did you do any puja?
- I: The ritual which I participated in when I was initiated.
- S: No. You never did any puja. And for the period you were practicing meditation you never did any puja.
- I: I got only my mantra after the puja.
- S: But who did the puja? The teacher. Not you.
- I: But I had to bring the gifts.
- S: Surely. You have to follow the discipline that is laid down by the master for learning the technique. If I go to Denmark to learn some technological things, I have to follow the discipline of the university and curriculum.
- I: That is right -
- S: That is our curriculum. That is our method.
- I: My point was that I told my TM teacher: I do not understand what is said during the puja. And then my teacher said that it still works, without my understanding.
- S: It works - not for you - it works for the teacher, and you did not know the meaning.
- I: Okay. It works for the teacher, but is it because he knows what it means?
- S: Yes. He has been taught. He has been trained for three months. And he knows everything - how it works. And if you had become a teacher you would have known it - how it works.

- I: Well - then he will also know the meaning of the mantra?
- S: Surely.
- I: But when he knows the meaning of the mantra will it not for him be a formular of worship?
- S: It may be for him anything. It is not your concern. Your concern is when you were given the mantra you did not know the meaning. And you were not required to do any puja. And it worked for you.
- I: But when I got my apples and my flowers back - didn't I get it back as prasad? as a part of the sacrificial offering?
- S: Yes.
- I: But then it is a part of an offering.
- S: You are free to throw it back or you are free to take it.
- I: Oh yes.
- S: Did he force you to take it?
- I: No no no.
- S: Then - there the story ends. Because you brought it to get it back just as you do it everywhere. You couldn't keep it. But you were not asked to worship it or eat it. You were free to do whatever you liked.
- I: Yes, but I have to bring it - and it was put on the altar.
- S: Surely, that is the procedure which one has to follow when he wants to learn TM.
- I: Yes, and that is why I wonder. I am accustomed to understand or try to understand everything.
- S: Had you not read Woodroffe or had you not listened to that friend of yours, then you would have just done things without knowing the meaning and the form.
- I: Exactly. But I am trained never to do a thing without knowing the meaning.
- S: What?
- I: -it is my upbringing -
- S: Why did you do it then?
- I: Because I was fascinated by the possibility of its working.
- S: About tree million people are fascinated by the effect of it - not because of the meaning and the form.
- I: But isn't it a natural thing to ask about the meaning?
- S: No no. It is sheer ignorance.
- I: Pardon?

S: Sheer ignorance! Why should you ask for something which is not applied in the technique?

I: But if I became a teacher I would get that knowledge.

S: You will get it for your intellectual satisfaction. Not because it works in that fashion.

I: But you said that the puja works for the teacher because he knew it? and the mantra worked because he knew it.

S: No no no. Mantra works because of that combination of the words or of the alphabet.

In an attempt to interpret the ambiguity one can conclude

1. That swami Satyananda accepts the unity of the puja-ritual and the mantras. They are to be understood in the same way.
2. That he first of all emphasizes the effect of the vibration of the ritual and the mantras. This "objective" effect is the basis.
3. That he then speaks about an effect for the persons involved. This is connected with the problem of worship. He denies that effect, in so far as the persons involved do not understand the meaning. But this logically implies that the persons who do know the meaning are engaged in actual worship according to the content of the ritual and the mantras.
4. That this must mean that TM teachers and leaders are personally engaged in worship on the basis of the ritual and the nature of the mantras. This has to be the understanding of TM itself.
5. Then the rest of us can conclude that the TM teachers and leaders engage in actual worship knowingly, and that normal members are doing the same unknowingly.

The religious characteristics of The Unification Church/ The Tongil Family are expressed in a very clear-cut way in the promise which the disciples have to give in order to belong to the movement. We hereby publish for the general audience the promises/the pledge:

"MY PLEDGE."

- "1) As the center of the cosmos I will fulfill our Father's will (purpose of creation), and the responsibility given me (for self perfection). I will become a dutiful son (or daughter) and a child of goodness to attend our Father forever in the ideal world of creation (by) returning joy and glory to Him. This I pledge.
- 2) I will take upon myself completely the Will of God to give me the whole creation as my inheritance. He has given me His Word, His personality, and His heart, and is reviving me who had died, making me one with Him and His true child. To do this, our Father has persevered for 6000 years the sacrificial way of the cross. This I pledge.
- 3) As a true son (or daughter), I will follow our Father's pattern and charge bravely forward into the enemy camp until I have judged them completely with the weapons with which He has been defeating Satan for me throughout the course of history by sowing sweat for earth, tears for man, and blood for heaven as a servant but with a father's heart in order to restore His children and the universe, lost to Satan. This I pledge.
- 4) The individual, family, society, nation, world, and cosmos who are willing to attend our Father, the source of peace, happiness, freedom, and all ideals, will fulfill the ideal world of one heart in one body by restoring their original nature. To do this, I will become a true son (or daughter), returning joy and satisfaction to our Father, and as our Father's representative, I will transfer to the creation peace, happiness, freedom and all ideals in the world of the heart. This I pledge.

5) I am proud of the one Sovereignty, proud of the one people, proud of the one land, proud of the one language and culture centered upon God, proud of becoming the child of the One True Parent, proud of the family who is to inherit one tradition, proud of being a laborer who is working to establish the one world of the heart.

I will fight with my life.

I will be responsible for accomplishing my duty and mission.

This I pledge and swear."

EXPLANATIONS

A German version of this pledge was recently published in Friedrich-Wilhelm Haack's book: "Jugendreligionen. Ursachen. Trends. Reaktionen." Claudius Verlag / Verlag J. Pfeiffer, München, 1st edition 1979. The pledge appeared in the section, describing "cult" within the Unification Church with the following introduction:

"The Sunday services, in front of the "Altar" with a portrait of the "True Parents", belong to the cultic manifestations of the Unification Church. Within the framework of this arrangement, the pledge is said."

(Jugendreligionen, p. 120.
Translated from German).

The copy of the pledge which we received was accompanied by an explanation, from which we bring the following extract:

"This pledge is said the first day of every week, month, and year at 5 AM all across the world. Before it is said, three complete bows from a standing position to a fetal kneeling position are performed facing a picture of Moon. Then the pledge is said out loud in unison.

In the Unification "Church", God is "Heavenly Father", while Moon is called "Father". Note that in this "pledge to God", "Heavenly" has subtly been left out, so that in reality it becomes a pledge to Moon in place of God."

"SHOES AND MINDS ARE TO BE LEFT HERE AT THE GATE"

- A VISIT TO THE SHREE RAJNEESH ASHRAM, JAN. 1979.

BY MIKKEL PADE

Without any doubt, 17, Koregaon Park is the most well-known address in Poona, India, a town of some hundred thousands of inhabitants, about 250 km from Bombay. To the hotel-owners, taxi-drivers, and the tailors of the town, the owner of this place could be the fulfillment of prayers to Laxmi, Hindu-goddess of wealth and fortune. In just a few years they have become quite rich because of a "pilgrimage" of thousands of young Americans and West Europeans, and others, to this address: The Shree Rajneesh Ashram, 17, Koregaon Park, Poona 41101.

Together with a small group from the University of Aarhus, Denmark, I visited the ashram on the 17th and 18th January this year, and the following article is an attempt to describe the guru and his environment as well as trying to introduce some of the teachings of the movement.

There are about 200-300 disciples (sanyasins) living in the ashram, mainly the "staff" and people working in the ashram (in workshops, etc.), but in Poona, about 2,000 sanyasins are waiting to move into the ashram. By a sanyasin we were told that for an amount of £ 4,000.- he would be allowed to spend the rest of his days in the ashram (he is 20-25 years old), but still he was waiting to get in. There are plans to move the ashram from Poona and create a village, or a community at another place, and land has been given near Kashmir for that purpose by a wealthy sanyasin.

Government and officials in India, however, are not happy about the Rajneesh-movement, so they are not cooperating very well in order to provide the permissions, necessary for the project, and recently, the government denied BBC the permission to record a TV-programme about the ashram. The reason for this lack of enthusiasm from the Indian government is probably that Rajneesh is known as a "sex-guru" because of his therapies which include - especially during the higher level course - sex - or rather the emptying of your sexual demands in order that you will be released from your sexual instinct as such and instead set

free to choose whether to practice sex or not.

Not all of the participants succeeded in the intentions of these courses. There have been examples of people running away from the ashram in order not to be the object of sexual aggression from some of the others. About the presence of the sanyasins in Poona, Congressman and vice president of the Pune Cantonment Board, A.B. Ganla, said in India Today (Aug.1978):

"These people are a very bad influence. They misbehave on the streets and create a nuisance in public places."

Another reason for the negative attitude may be the "instant sannyas". Rajneesh initiates Swamis and Ma's (munks and nuns) unconditionally and almost from one day to the other:

"Nobody is ever refused, that's true, but that does not mean that all are accepted.

Only those are accepted who surrender, only those are accepted who are utterly committed, who have fallen in love with me, who can trust, and whose trust is unconditional and absolute - they are accepted. Sannyas is not denied to anybody, because sannyas is an opportunity." (Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter Apr.1979)

For orthodox hindus this may be provoking, as well as the mixture of teachings that is presented by Rajneesh, containing influences from most of the established religions and mystic traditions, as well as from western psychology, etc.

A typical day at the Rajneesh Ashram in Poona begins at 6:00 am. with the Dynamic Meditation, which normally has 5 stages:

- 1) Breathing - blindfolded, and deep, fast, chaotic breathing through the nose, using the whole body: arms, head, legs, to help the breathing happen as totally as possible - ten minutes.
- 2) Catharsis - allow your body to do whatever it wants: laugh, cry, scream, jump, move, dance, gibber - ten minutes.
- 3) HOO - remain standing, arms raised straight over the head; begin jumping up and down using the entire foot, shouting the mantra Hoo,Hoo,Hoo. Use the sound as a hammer below the navel - ten minutes.
- 4) Stop - which means stop; freeze in whatever position you find yourself in and don't move anything, within or without - 15 min.
- 5) Celebration - slowly begin dancing, moving, celebrating, being thankful to whatever is ... 15 minutes." (Sannyas 5/1976)

Like most of the Rajneesh-meditations, this one is exercised with eyes closed, and accompanied by meditation music, created especially by some sanyasins to provide the ecstatic mood in the different stages of the meditation.

At 7:45 a.m. the 2½ hours discourse by Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh starts. Both sannyasins and not-initiated people are allowed in, but because of Bhagwan's allergy 2 sannyasins examine you for smells and if any smells are detected, you must either go or you are placed in the background.

The discourses are held in Hindi one month, in English the next month and so on (in January the discourses were in Hindi), and their contents will mostly deal with subjects like Buddha, Jesus, Kabir, Zen, Sufi, Tantra, etc. It is possible to put questions to Bhagwan, but not during the lecture. Questions have to be written and delivered in boxes and a few days later they are answered. Sannyasins often use the discourses to meditate upon the presence of Bhagwan, especially when he is discoursing in Hindi. Approximately 1/5 or maybe less of the audience of about 300-400 people (the audience is much bigger when the discourses are held in English) - understand Hindi. Recently, Bhagwan Rajneesh has mentioned the possibility that only sannyasins will be allowed to go to the discourses - by now non-sannyasins are told not to pass the green line, marking how close they may come to Bhagwan. The reason for this is, according to Rajneesh "because my talk is not something ready-made, it is a response." (Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter, Apr. 1979).

After the discourse, the Sufi Dance takes place, which also contains fragments of traditional folk-dance. The first stage will be formations of people in circles, singing "Allah Hoo". Next stage will be more western, changing partners and singing:

"Oh, I was living in a world of make-believe illusion
 Oh, I was living in a world of unreality
 Oh, I was living in a world of every day confusion
 But now I'm living in the love of one big family.

And I can find no better reason
 So I don't ask the reason why
 I just spread my wings for freedom
 And I fly."

After that a more romantic stage follows where the eyes are closed and you find a partner by reaching another person's hands, then singing one verse with the eyes closed, and then repeating it with the eyes open, and then changing partners:

"Anywhere I look I can see you
 Anywhere I look I can hide
 Anywhere your eyes reflecting my eyes
 Showing thy face or protecting my lies"

The last stage will be formation of circles again, and people singing: "Oh, my Lord, my Lord".

For people being concerned about their health, a group-healing now takes place. Accompanied by a kind of afro-rythmic music, a group of sanyasins are forming a circle (Mandala) and within the circle the people wanting to receive some healing powers, sit down. The circle of sanyasins starts running and a little later the sanyasins stop and communicate their energy into the people within the Mandala while a swami in extasis provides the healing power to the Mandala in different postures.

After lunch (the vegetarian food of the ashram is excellent) you can go to the meditation tent and relax to a taped discourse from Rajneesh in English.

During the time we were in Poona, a meditation camp took place, and therefore several meditations were run daily (Meditation camps are held about 10 days every month, normally in the middle of the month).

In the afternoon the next meditation took place: the Nada-brahma meditation, lasting about one hour. First stage: Sitting with eyes closed, humming. 2nd: You move your hands in circles, directing energy outwards. 3rd: The same, but directing energy inwards. 4th: Sitting or lying down, relaxing.

After a break Kundalini Meditation takes place in 4 stages: 1) Relaxed stand, shake your body accompanied by music in "neurothic" rythms. 2) Dance the way you want and set your body free. 3) stop and remain quiet standing or sitting. 4) Music stops. Lie down and be quiet. Also Kundalini Meditation lasts one hour.

The last meditation of the day is the Nataraj Meditation, which is 40 minutes of dancing to meditation music with eyes closed.

In the evening, darshan (meeting with the guru) takes place, and during those darshans, Rajneesh initiates new sanyasins. Only sanyasins are allowed to enter. He has, according to one sanyasin, initiated 60.000-80.000 sanyasins, mostly from USA, Germany, England, Scandinavia, Italy, Switzerland, etc., but also some Indians, Japanese, Australians, and others, are among them. The sanyasins by their initiation are given a mela (garland) with a small picture of Rajneesh, and they are given a new name:

"With eyes twinkling, an aura of complete at homeness, and yet a scent of vast and unknown places, he begins....

...Hello. What about you?

I don't know. (Ronnie, an English girl, beginning to sob)

Just close your eyes, and if something happens, allow it to happen.

Ronnie immediately begins to tremble over her entire body, occasionally checking it, but then being overcome by the involuntary shaking

...allow it, don't be shy... it is your way of stating it.

After a few minutes, Ronnie collects herself and in a tearful voice tells Bhagwan that she just doesn't know how to be herself, how to relax.

Bhagwan says he can see that she is easily disturbed by small things but it is a superficial problem and one that can be helped....

And what about your sannyas? (Ronnie immediately nods her head)

...this will be your name: Ma Deva Saleela.

Deva means divine and saleela means a river; a divine river. And that you have to remember.

You are holding your energy. You are not allowing it to stream, to flow. It is as if a river has been prevented, blocked, and a dam has been created. The energy is there, throbbing, vibrating, and wants to explode, but you are holding it. Unless you release it, you will feel many troubles. Once you release it, you will be free of many troubles. Once you release it, it will take all garbage away from you.

So that's why I give you the name Deva Saleela." ... (Sannyas 2/1977).

After the initiation they have to wear orange in varieties from yellow to brown, symbolizing the flame. The orange color is the traditional color for Indian swamis.

The ashram is well organised and there is an atmosphere of relaxation. "Shoes and minds are to be left here at the gate", a sign is telling at the entrance to the meditation camp, and that is in a way what the whole thing is about: Let go. Let things happen. People are very kind and loving to each other.

There is much physical contact between the sanyasins. A world without problems while being there, but also it seems a world where the guru does the thinking for you, as an Indian sanyasin, a movie star, told in an interview:

"The master and you are within yourselves - he simply touches you, and he knows, he understands. It's a test of surrender, and surrendering yourself to the guru means doing anything and everything he asks you to. You understand that? You stop thinking for yourself: The guru does the thinking for you."

Vinod Khanna, Star Mag, India, Jan. 1979.

Not all people coming to the Rajneesh Ashram in Poona, remain there or take sanyas. And not all intend to in the first place. The environment and the atmosphere have created a tourist attraction, especially to Indian people, looking at young western people in the ochre robe making love, dancing, etc. Also some curious foreigners take a day or two in Poona - participating in the meditations and Sufi-Dances, attending a discourse, and talking to some of the sanyasins in the "smoker's temple" (just outside the ashram - within the ashram smoking is not allowed) - and then they have satisfied their curiosity.

The meditation exercise can be demanding for your body and also some times for your mind, opening up things (aggressions) suppressed. Bad stomach or headache some times appear. Little research has been done concerning the effects of this, if any, but some psychologists are quite interested in the methods.

According to the movement itself, Rajneesh is educated in psychology and philosophy, and after years of engaging in religion and religious questions he formed his own teaching, and he claims to have no tradition behind him. He was born in 1931 and has a Jain-background. About 1966 he began as an acharya (teacher). As mentioned earlier, Rajneesh lectures 2½ hours every day, and his sayings are transcribed into books and as such available as well as on tapes:

"There is no end to it.

Each year

Five million five hundred thousand words.".. (Sanyas 5/1976).

Already about 100 books by Rajneesh are distributed, but extracts from the discourses and different aspects of the movement in theory and practice are available through the two magazines "Sannyas" and "Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter".

Like many other gurus, Rajneesh is very critical of most other "masters", he claims to be enlightened and to be one with God, and many of the discourses remind you of his status. It is very common that he compares himself and his message with Jesus and Buddha. The way of attaining freedom, bliss, samadhi, release, or whatever, goes through surrendering to Bhagwan. When you have surrendered your ego, you begin your spiritual development.

"You say, "Surrender to me." Does this not show that you are full of ego?"

Sure! I am the greatest egoist you can ever find. My ego is so vast that you all are included in it. It is so vast that trees and animals and rocks are included in it. It is so vast that stars and the moon and sun are included in it. It is so vast that the past, present, and future are included in it. Hence I say to you, "Surrender to me."

Krishna says to Arjuna in the Geeta: "Sarva dharman parityajya mamekam sharanam vraj" - "Leave all your religions and come to my feet." He is also the same type of egoist as I am. Buddha says, "Come to me, and I will deliver you." He is also the same type of egoist.

And Jesus says, "I have come into the world to deliver everybody." What pure egos!

Yes, you are right, sir. I am a great egoist. But remember, my ego is inclusive of all; hence it is not an ego at all. It is so inclusive that it is empty. It is so all-inclusive that there is no sense of "I" in it."

from: Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh: Ecstasy -

The forgotten language, p. 245-246.

The lectures of Rajneesh are often inspiring and amusing, characterized by factual knowledge and extraordinary points of views. He declares his tantric inspirations openly:

"For tantra you have to use the energy of sex. Do not fight with it: transform it. Do not think in terms of enmity: be friendly to it. It is your energy. It is not evil, it is not bad. Every energy is just natural. It can be used for you, it can be used against you. You can make a block of it, a barrier, or you can make it a step. It can be used! Rightly used, it becomes friendly; wrongly used it becomes your enemy. But it is neither. Energy is just natural. As ordinary man is using sex it becomes an enemy. It destroys him; he simply dissipates in it." ...

"If you take sex naturally - with no philosophy around it, with no philosophy for or against; if you take sex as you take your hands, your eyes; if it is totally accepted as a natural thing; then only tantra will have appeal. And only then tantra can be useful for many."

from: Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh: The book of the Secrets, vol. 1, p. 30-31.

Apart from meditation Rajneesh Centres run about 25 different courses, inspired by tantra, psycho-therapy, bio-energetics, etc, and among the purposes for these dynamic courses, "brain orgasm" can be mentioned.

It seems that his way of salvation is traditionally oriental, according to "Kundalini and the Seven Bodies" (Sannyas 2/1976); escaping the wheel of Karma, becoming one with Brahman, but he differs from traditional Indian gurus by using western methods and by using active meditations instead of the renouncing attitude:

"Rajneesh holds transcendental meditation in contempt. "Nothing will happen if you repeat Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola for 20 minutes," he says."

(India Today, Aug. 1-15, 1978).

However, in one way he agrees with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi: If one per cent of the population of the world meditated, a 3rd world war could be prevented.

Contrary to Maharishi and many other contemporary Indian gurus, Rajneesh has never been outside India. "Now I don't go even outside the gate of this ashram, because there again I meet people who live in the ABC," he states in a Foundation Newsletter, but in another recent one he also talks about leaving India if the government does not accept requests concerning the project about the village near Kashmir. This situation is not new to Rajneesh. In 1974 he had to move from Bombay to Poona because of his teaching and practice.

However - life goes on in Poona, new sanyasins invest their future in the Rajneesh movement, while others prefer a world with more problems and challenges than Poona:

"Vaman Kumar, a young Indian who recently renounced his sanyas after just two weeks, says: "A few days after coming to the ashram I found that this was one big analgesic - a spiritual analgesic if you like. The free, relaxed atmosphere, devoid of any responsibility is emotionally stultifying."

(India Today, Aug. 1-15, 1978).

- anyway, the movement can be said to be one of the most controversial ones, in the new religious field today - maybe tomorrow among the most powerful ones.

"A Master has to move out to help you, to hold your hand, to shock you, to drag you into the unknown. A thousand and one things he has to do which are aggressive. That's why Masters are men."

(Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter, Jan. 1979)

THE ROAD TO TOTAL FREEDOM ..

BY OLE RIIS

Of all the neo-religious movements, Scientology is probably the one most frequently mentioned. It has nevertheless received little analysis. This is perhaps not so surprising in view of the fact that at one time thirty-three libel actions had been brought by Scientology in England alone. In addition a considerable number of researchers who have attempted to investigate the movement have been subject to break-ins, etc.

It is against this background that Roy Wallis's book, "The Road to Total Freedom", fills a large gap in the literature about neo-religious movements in the age of the mass market. It is a sociological thesis, but the book is free from the high-flown, stilted style of scientific presentations and is, on the contrary, well written and in places as exciting as a thriller.

The book presents Scientology as a highly disciplined army of crusaders using every means to combat the foe and spread the gospel of L. Ron Hubbard. The chief enemies are psychiatrists, psychologists, and communists - who have entered into a historical plot against Scientology. But all who show the least scepticism towards Scientology are potential enemies.

The success of the movement is attributed to an effective organisational plan and marketing rather than the product as such in its entirety, for that is known only to a few members of the movement. In the first phase, one is given a number of very cheap courses in a form of psychotherapy with some resemblance to psychoanalysis and hypnosis. At the same time one participates in a number of well-organised group Dynamics programmes. If one is "hooked" by the introductory courses, one is offered the next step. This is at once more expensive. But part of the amount can be paid by working for Scientology. At the next stage one is given part of the background to the movement in an artificial, scientific-sounding language. No critical questions are permitted. If one does not understand part

of the programme, that is because one has misunderstood a particular word. Misunderstanding words is an easy matter when the books are full of expressions like "Org", "ARC", "MEST", "Thetan" and many other made-up words. In the course of learning more, one is given the impression that there is yet more to be learned - at the very next stage of training. But the courses grow more expensive and the demands in the direction of commitment to the organisation are intensified. One can be required to write about all the good things Scientology has given one. One can be required to undertake active work to the movement or to write out proforma I.O.U.s. At the same time the movement alters its character in the consciousness of the member. What was originally a course in psychotherapy becomes at the higher levels a church with an idealistic world-view and a specific political programme which places efficiency higher than democracy and which sets up the charismatic führer-figure, L.R. Hubbard, as the saviour of the world. Only as one gradually works one's way up in the system does one get a glimpse of the movement's structure and aim.

It may be that one's entry into the movement had been by way of one of the many humanitarian cover organisations such as Narconon, the Society for aid to drug misusers, the Co-operative Citizens' Commission for Human Rights and so on. So it will probably come as a surprise to be set in an Org (an office of the movement) with a uniform and a hard and fast programme of work. Further, there is the constant threat of a grey arm-band if one does not go along with the plan or asks questions and the promise of a gold star if one makes a special effort. One's actions are monitored and evaluated the whole time by the Ethics-officers. They are commissars who can condemn people as "Doubtful" or "Opponents".

Even as a low-paid functionary in the system however, one does not gain a great deal of insight into its structure. It is a multinational complex, so intentionally obscure that Hubbard himself has found it necessary to set up a Sea Org which can take action anywhere any time there is a need to strengthen discipline.

Wallis's book concentrates on describing the movement itself, its history, its critics and its self-defence. From time to time the concrete items of information are set in the framework of a sociology of religion, but this by no means gives cause to say the book is overburdened with sociological theory. I could have wished for more comprehensive considerations of why a movement of this kind can arise in western mass consumer society and attract allegiance among the conservatively-inclined middle class's.

The book hints at answers, and strangely enough this is a result of Scientology's own commentary on it. Precisely because of his knowledge of the difficulties met with by his predecessors, Wallis has been astute enough to let Scientology offer corrections and commentary. At the end of the book there is a critical response by J.L. Simmons, a Sociologist and former teacher in sociology. Taking into account Scientology's own claims for the effects of the technique as such - in which an increased reading capacity and intelligence are the least of the advantages while there are broader perspectives which include the capacity for thought transfer and for changing one's appearance - it is surprising that this especially selected sociologist's commentary should be so uninspiring.

Roy Wallis: The Road to Total Freedom. A Sociological Analysis of Scientology.

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