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GELLER, JEAN HARRY
  ASHRAM (SIKH) COMMUNITIES AND
  SELF-ACTUALIZATION.

  UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY,
  PH.D., 1976

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ASHRAM (SIKH) COMMUNITIES AND
SELF-ACTUALIZATION

———————————

A Dissertation

Presented to the

Graduate Faculty of the

School of Human Behavior

United States International University

———————————

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in Human Behavior

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by

Jean Harry Geller

San Diego, 1976

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Jean Harry Geller

Approved by:

<u>Dorothy L. Harris</u>   <u>January 4, 1977</u>
        Chairman   Date

<u>Nelson Kelley, Ph.D</u>

<u>W. Ray Rucker</u>

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THE PROBLEM AND ITS RESEARCH

Interest in Sikh communes and adherence to its precepts have

grown considerably in the United States during the past six years.

During that period of time, over a hundred Sikh communities, or

Ashrams, have been formed in the United States and Europe. If one

had estimated the probability of such a development a decade ago, one

would have had to conclude that Sikhism could not be successfully

transplanted to the West. The Sikh religious community in India and

Pakistan is comparatively small--fewer than six million souls--with a

warlike tradition dating back to the seventeenth century. Its religious

precepts are not greatly different from Hinduism (Archer, 1971).

Unlikely as it may be, however, Sikhism has made consider-

able inroads in the West. The 3HO Foundation (Happy, Healthy, Holy),

an organization dedicated to the establishment of the traditions and

practices in the United States, was formed following the visit here six

years ago of Siri Guru Granth Sahib. His mission was to introduce the

spiritual and physical teachings of Sikhism to the people of the United

States. Because of his success, he was called back to India after three

years in the United States, given a special honorary title by the Sikh

leaders of his church, and assigned the responsibility to disseminate

the beliefs and ideas of Sikhism throughout the West. What accounts

for the modest but significant success of Sikhism in the United States?

1

One can only speculate as to the reasons, but one factor may have been the revival of interest in communal living in the United States in the 1960s. While there has not been an exact census of these groups, the New York Times in December, 1970 found some two thousand communes in existence in thirty-four of the States. At their inception, communes represented a countermovement against a fragmented, commercialized society whose institutions--from the family on up to the community--had lost vital, unifying vision. Some represented a reaction not only against the structure and meaning of society but also against the Vietnam War and the failure of the McCarthy campaign of 1968 (Hourriet, 1971). The Ashram movement, at least at its inception, may have tapped some of these dissatisfactions.

Moreover, the same period coincided with a growth of interest in Oriental religions in general. While it is difficult to measure the extent of this growth with any precision, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of books and articles about Oriental religions, visits of Eastern religious leaders, and numbers of formal adherents. In many American cities Buddhists and Sikhs are now familiar sights. This interest has been manifested not only on a popular level, but within the scientific community as well. There is now a considerable body of literature concerning the influence of transcendental meditation and other forms of Eastern mysticism written by psychologists and psychoanalysts. Meditation research has been linked to studies of the potential of bio-feedback in the treatment of high blood pressure and epilepsy (Benson and Wallace, 1972). As an adjunct to psychotherapy, some have suggested that:

> . . . meditation greatly speeds up the process of therapy,
> leads to deeper access into the psyche, and consistently gives
> better results than therapy without meditation. Its properties
> of relaxation certainly contribute to this, but in addition we
> suggest that some additional psychological properties of the
> experience of pure awareness affect the patients' ability to
> deal with highly frightening psychic material with a minimum
> of anxiety. (Bloomfield, Cain, Jaffe, and Rubottom, 1974:56).

The possibility that transcendental meditation may help curb drug abuse

has also attracted considerable interest (Benson and Wallace, 1970).

This brief summary is not meant to be exhaustive but suggestive of the

great increase in scientific interest in various aspects of Oriental

religions.

This enlargement of the frontiers of psychological research,

to include the religious experience, has taken many and diverse forms.

The form of interest in this "field" study has to do with a descriptive

investigation of the effects of religious communal experience on the

individual and his values. While the subject has never entirely been

overlooked--witness William James and Carl Jung--there has been a

major renaissance of interest in recent years. The interest has

developed even though to study the self-actualizing value experience one

must turn initially to material that appears unscientific (Maslow, 1970).

Much of the material in psychology is, by definition, subjective, and

religious materials "are data and not to be dismissed as something

divorced from the reality with which psychological science is

concerned." (Deikman, 1966:325).

The purpose of the present research was to investigate the

impact on individuals of participation in communities of American

Sikhs (Ashrams) where life is deliberately structured through daily

meditation, yoga, ceremonies, rituals, and beliefs. This study has

attempted to describe the life style of the American Sikh and to estimate whether they appear to be productive in terms of promoting the process of self-actualization of commune residents.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research hypothesis is: The background, current status, and environmental interaction within three selected Ashram (Sikh) communities tend to predispose its members toward the process of self-actualization, as delineated by Maslow.

A sustained interest has been shown in Maslow's concept of self-actualization. Maslow stated that failure to gratify an inherent need results in pathology; gratification of a basic need leads to health and growth. For example, the child deprived of love will develop neurotic behavior, but the condition may be cured by supplying adequate doses of the needed affection (Maslow, 1970).

Maslow postulated that human needs could be arranged in a hierarchy according to the following operational criteria. The higher the need, the later it emerges, both on the evolutionary scale and in the development of the individual. The higher the need, the less imperative it is for survival and the less urgent it is in subjective experience. Even though the higher needs are subjectively less imperative, their gratifi-cation has more highly desirable experiential effects. Individuals place greater values on higher rather than lower needs for gratification. The higher needs on the hierarchy require more preconditions for their emergence and also better outside conditions for their functioning. The pursuit of higher needs leads the individual to greater individualism and toward greater health. Maslow's construct of human needs apparently

has had a major influence on psychology and psychoanalysis. For

example, such industrial psychologists as McGregor (1961) and Argyris

(1957) have used Maslow's system to explain human needs in formal

organizations. Carl Rogers' client-centered therapy leans heavily

on Maslow's concepts and nomenclature for its basic structure (Meador

and Rogers, 1973). Other examples could be cited.

Maslow's highest need is "self-actualization," and its

realization should be a major objective of society:

> Finally, as we begin to know more about legitimate wants
> and needs for personal growth and self-fulfillment, that is, for
> psychological growth and health, then we should set ourselves
> the task of creating the health-fostering culture. . .Such an
> enterprise, when begun, will be the proof that psychology
> has matured enough to be fruitful, not in individual terms
> alone, but in terms of social betterment as well. (Maslow, 1965:33).

Members of the Ashram believe that they are engaged in

creating "the health-fostering culture." The extent to which they are

succeeding or failing would seem to be of interest to the wider social

community.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is depicted in Figure 1. The largest

circle (1) represents the population of all American citizens. Circle 2

represents the population of Americans who have entered or will enter

Ashram communes in the forseeable future. These people could be

assumed to be a random sample of Americans, but in actual fact they

are probably very atypical Americans. Hence, we can only generalize

our results to this group rather than to all Americans.

Circle 3 is the subset of the people in circle 2 who entered the

three Ashram communes studied in this investigation. For purposes of

our later analysis we will assume that the people who entered the

Hawaii, Louisiana, and California communes are representative of

the people in circle 2. More specifically, we are assuming that the

sixty people in circle 3 are as representative of the people in circle 2

as a random sample of sixty circle 2 people would be.

As far as the three communes studied, they are assumed to

be representative of all American Sikh communes.

Circle 4 represents the college students used for norming

the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI). As before, these individuals

are assumed to be roughly representative of the college student

population.

The attrition rate of people living in the Ashram communes is

significant. These dropouts are also shown in circle 1. The group

that drops out early and the group of members who stay in the communes

for a long period may be quite different. We can either assume that

the relevant characteristics of the continuing and dropout groups are

the same or we can generalize our results only to the mean of those

who will be staying in the U. S. Sikh commune at any given time. We

will take the latter and less restrictive approach.

On the right side of Figure 1 we use the POI and the semi-

structured interview to measure the self-actualization of all residents

of the three communes. Only the POI was administered to the college

student sample.

Circle 1 -- All Americans.

Circle 2 -- All Americans who have entered or will enter Ashram communes in the forseeable future.

Circle 3 -- People who entered the sample communes.

Circle 4 -- People in the typical college student sample.

Figure 1.   Research Design

COLLECTION OF DATA

Background

Comparatively little attention has been paid by Western scholars to the Sikh religion, but the subject has not been without its devoted scholars. There are a number of adequate histories of the Sikh religion and its beliefs, the changes in belief over time and the religious postulates over time, and the history of Sikh communities. These sources are used for the presentation of this subject in the following chapter.

Current Status
of Ashram Communities

Even less scholarly attention has been paid to the current status of the Sikh religion in the West. Occasionally, articles of interest have been carried in the Sikh press, and there have been a few articles in American newspapers. Information on current status, including the numbers of communities, their population, and length of time in existence, has been taken from these sources as well as by personal conversations with knowledgeable Ashram members.

Environmental Interaction
Within Ashram Communities

The sources of information about on-going life in Ashram communities included personal observation, discussions with Ashram members, interviews, and testing. No relevant literature was found.

The Process of
Self-Actualization

Ashram communities. Of the approximately one hundred Ashrams in the United States and Europe, only three were studied. These were the communal centers located in Pomona, California, New Orleans, Louisiana, and Honolulu, Hawaii. The three were chosen at random, the only criteria being convenience in visiting and broad geographical variation. There is no reason to believe that the three Ashrams chosen do not represent a valid cross-section of the Sikh movement in the United States.

The subjects. Subjects for the study consisted of sixty Ashram members, the total population of the three communes studied. The test subjects were divided into two equal groups: Group 1 was composed of "neophytes," those members of the group who had not yet taken the formal Sikh vows, while Group 2 was composed of those members who had taken the formal vows. Members of both groups were identified by the communes' hierarchies.

The method of procedure for identifying bonafide Ashram subjects was followed in order to ensure that only those individuals conscientiously striving to achieve the aims of the movement would be included. Any movement such as that represented by the Ashrams can be expected to attract for a time the curious, the idlers, and even those with motives to hide out for a time. Because of the relatively small population, inclusion of these categories would have distorted the results of the study. No outsider could be expected to detect the

differences between the believers and the others; identification by the communal leaders therefore seemed to be the only feasible procedure.

Only sixty interviews were obtained as seven men and one woman did not participate as they were not deemed members by the Ashram directors. Men and women who were identified as "true" Ashram members consisted of twenty-two respondents from the Honolulu Ashram, twenty respondents from the Pomona Ashram, and eighteen from the New Orleans Ashram. These Sikhs had all been residents of their respective Ashrams for a period of six months or more at the time they were interviewed.

The Procedure

The extent to which members of the communes were moving toward or achieving self-actualization was tested by means of the Personal Orientation Inventory: An Inventory for the Measurement of Self-Actualization (POI) (Shostrom, 1974). Shostrom's POI is a self-report instrument designed to assess values, attitudes, and behavior relevant to Maslow's concept of the self-actualizing person. The specific variables measured are: (1) inner support (I), the tendency of a person to act generally on and to be guided by his own principles and motives in contrast to responding to a wide variety of external pressures; and (2) time competence (Tc), the tendency of a person to live primarily in the present free of obsessions with the past or concern over future uncertainties.

The inner support variable is broken down into five facets of self-actualization in the interpersonal sphere. Each facet consists of a pair of closely related but contrasting variables. These are:

college student (freshmen) norms, which are given in percentiles, were used for this study.

The POI has been studied fairly intensively, with the I scale considered particularly valid as a measure of feelings, values, and attitudes appropriate for self-actualization. Some of the other subscales were considered less appropriate or valid by a number of researchers (Bloxom, 1972). Coan (1972) attacks the POI as a leap into the dark, charging that such theorists as Maslow, Riesman, May, and Peris may "have grossly oversimplified the problem" of self-actualization. On the other hand, the most persuasive statement on the test's validity comes from Maslow himself, who stated regarding the POI:

> In studying healthy people, self-actualizing people, etc.,
> there has been a steady move from the openly normative and the
> frankly personal, step by step, toward more and more descriptive,
> objective words, to the point where there is today a standardized
> test of self-actualization. Self-actualization can now be defined
> quite operationally, as intelligence used to be defined, i.e.,
> self-actualization is what the test tests. It correlates well
> with external variables of various kinds and keeps on
> accumulating additional correlational meanings. (Maslow, 1971:28).

Since this study attempts to measure the impact of Sikh practices in three communes on Maslow's concept of self-actualization, and since Maslow stated that self-actualization can be defined operationally as what the POI measures, the Inventory was selected for use in the research.

Direct observation and interviews. Data was also derived from direct observation and interviews. Observation was based on participation in the full range of Ashram activities. The attempt was made to experience events important to Ashram members through the participation in selected activities, including meditation exercises, group meetings,

and other social, educational, recreational, and vocational activities
taking place at the Ashram or outside the commune environment.
Values, attitudes, feelings, and personality attributes were inferred
from observable behavior and statements. This type of data was
developed in accordance with the criteria of an "observational method"
which has been described as the "selection, provocation, recording,
and encoding of that set of behaviors and settings concerning organisms
'in situ which is consistent with empirical aims." (Weick, 1968:360).
The empirical aim was to estimate the degree to which the events and
meanings observed exhibit a tendency toward the process of self-
actualization.

The descriptive data was condensed so as to describe the
principal features of Ashram life that could be considered to play a
role in the self-actualizing process. In particular, the attempt was
made to focus on those techniques, ceremonials, rituals, and beliefs
which separate the American Sikh movement from the population at
large. The role of meditation, for example, to achieve self-
actualization was described in the words of the participants themselves
and as it appeared to the observer-participant.

Descriptions of the day's activities were recorded in a journal
daily. Data were collected on the following general categories:
A. Communal Family Identifying Data, including such social and
economic facts as race, original religion, occupation and income,
school level, housing and neighborhood, cultural background, group
affiliation, and contacts with other social agencies and groups;
B. Current Social and Psychological Situation--pertinent elaboration
of identifying data, physical description of communal members, home,

neighborhood, and cultural patterns, housekeeping and living

arrangements, eating and food preparation, handling of money

discipline, recreation, members' routines and rituals, and communal

values; and C. Present Transactions--cultural description of the

communal family from the point of view of the community, including

an evaluation of identifying data, nature and degree of cultural and

subcultural conflicts in terms of differences in cultural values within

the Ashram and members' acceptance of communal values, common

goals, appropriateness of goals, success in achievement, and

willingness of members to sacrifice personal satisfaction to family

goal. An attempt was made to estimate the degree and kind of

satisfaction communal living provides to individual members.

In addition to the generalized observation along the lines

outlined above, those members who took the POI test were interviewed

intensively in a semi-structured interview. Facts and impressions

were recorded in a written journal. The attempt was made to describe

the process by which events were interpreted by the participants, and

the interpretations (meanings and values) themselves, and how the

interpretations of participants compared with Maslow's value

dimensions.

The results of the interviews were analyzed according to eight

value dimensions leading to successful self-actualization. It should be

noted that this is precisely what the POI scale attempts to do. Correla-

tions were then drawn with the results of the POI scales, thereby serving

modestly to validate that instrument.

The extent to which the POI test scores and the results of the

interviews show a greater movement toward self-actualization than the

population at large (college level normed) will indicate the extent to which the Ashram life is effective in achieving self-actualization as defined by Maslow.

Interpretation of the findings included identification of the basic themes in the American Sikh subculture, the values propagated by the Ashram members as compared to Maslow's (1968) category of values, and the method by which Ashram members demonstrate a tendency toward those self-actualizing values. The outline for the interviews is attached as Appendix G. The questions were designed to elicit information on the following dimensions of values:

1. Conflict Avoidance (Effortlessness): This value implied that commune members were willing to go ahead with their projects, even though there were conflicts which they had been unable to resolve. Thus, the value of conflict avoidance meant that in order to facilitate social harmony the commune members attempt to solve conflict. If they cannot achieve this goal, they attempt to avoid conflict through meditation and yoga exercises.

2. Participation (Aliveness): A willingness to enter into a commitment; a spontaneous reaction to relationships in an open, complete, and full manner.

3. Selflessness: The willingness of members to make sacrifices for others, including the capacity to subordinate personal interests in order to reach higher goals. The value of justice of selflessness may induce members to give of themselves more freely with no strings attached or no ulterior motive other than to support the well-being of the commune.

4.   Self-Sufficiency (Action Propensity): This value stresses the need for achievement as opposed to satisfaction with what one already has. The individual makes up his own mind rather than relying on what others tell him should be done. He has a desire to experience new sensations (especially in Yoga exercises).

5.   Truth (Honesty, Reality): Simplicity, honesty, and directness in one's relations with others. The lack of deceptiveness, manipulation, or obscurity in interpersonal interactions and in vocational as well as social pursuits.

6.   Order (Change-Orientation): A disposition to accept new ideas and flexibility and fluidity in attitudes and values. Religious beliefs and practices varied. Residents were open-minded in listening to new concepts and receptive to doing things differently or trying new things (innovative).

7.   Meaningfulness: An inclination to feel that what they did mattered; i. e., they showed a strong sense of purpose. They considered the work they performed and the religious activities they practiced significant to the welfare of the entire commune. What they accomplished--religiously, vocationally, and socially--was measured by a strong sense of self-involvement.

8.   Beauty (Rightness, Richness, Wholeness, Uniqueness): Joy, zestfulness, and optimism about life and one's involvement in its everyday activities. This value includes living life to the fullest, feeling complete and satisfied, and seeing every day and each encounter with others as something special.

SCHEDULING OF INTERVIEWS

The first phase of interviewing was carried out while this researcher was a member of the staff at the Crisis and Referral Center in Riverside, California. The Pomona Ashram was only thirty-five miles from Riverside and was selected primarily because of accessibility.

A meeting with the Ashram director was held to explain the project and set up a schedule for the interviews. Because of the busy workloads of many of the residents, it became necessary to approach either individuals or very small groups as opportunity permitted. Meetings were held with the Ashram members any time they were free from classes or work, mainly evenings and weekends. Any free time this writer had during the week was devoted to taking part in as many events and activities as was feasible. This researcher's acceptance by commune members was taken rather matter-of-factly, though not without some reservations on the part of a few members. Many of the members had fixed work schedules, which meant that they were free at the same hours on the same days. The number of weeks necessary to finish the interviewing was therefore shortened considerably. The interviews were, for the most part, conducted in the main living room of the Ashram. If that inconvenienced any members, the location was shifted to a place of their choice.

The interviews at Pomona and New Orleans covered a four month period. The interviews in Hawaii covered a six month period and presented more of a problem because of winter solstice, a time when the Sikhs were leaving Honolulu for their winter retreat in

New Mexico. The questions were composed while in California, with the intention of changing or discarding them if they proved unsatisfactory in practice. The entire population of all three Ashrams was to be interviewed. As the total number was small, it was difficult to achieve the goal of testing the entire membership, as the interviews and inventories were obtained on a voluntary basis. Some members simply forgot, were sick, too busy, or were otherwise unavailable. Seven inventories were returned to me almost four months after they were first distributed. Despite this delay, the majority of respondents were very cooperative.

There were undoubtedly some important factors which would skew the representativeness of those inventories turned in; for example, a willingness or unwillingness to answer questions on the POI. Those finally received constitute the data on which the analysis will be made. The portion of the investigation dealing with Maslow's self-actualizing value dimensions was based on the interviews. These interviews were conducted according to the aforementioned time schedule.

The POI schedule was given to the Ashram members to fill in at their convenience, after permission was given by the respective directors. The members were given the POI forms via their director. The forms were then collected from them by the director and were returned by him to this researcher.

INTERVIEW AND INVENTORY QUESTIONNAIRE
CONTENT AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

As mentioned previously, each Ashram resident received a POI questionnaire and was interviewed individually. The interview

requested introductory biographical information and covered the primary area of interest. The primary interest was the relationship, in the informant's opinion, between the Sikh lifestyle in the Ashram and eight of Maslow's value dimensions. The interview was intended as a supplement to the questionnaire responses concerning the fourteen inventory items of interest on the POI. At the same time new information of a more general nature was requested, concerning a wide range of information. This information is presented descriptively in Chapter 3.

Interviews were regarded as serving a twofold purpose. The more important purpose was to gauge the extent to which the Ashram members had achieved or were achieving self-actualization. The open-ended interviews sought to elicit the members' thoughts, feelings, wants, beliefs, identifications, demands, and expectations. A standard checklist form constructed for this study was used. Questions asked from the checklist included items from Maslow's value dimensions.

Although the questions were specific, no restrictions were made as to the types of answers. Because of the freedom allowed in the range of answers, the task of making some order out of them was somewhat of a problem. The final solution was a subjective categorization of the types of answers received to the questions. Dominant responses were arrived at on the basis of the modal frequency of several categories over others.

The checklist responses were structured by this writer and required mainly yes or no answers (though elaboration was encouraged); therefore, the answers could more easily be classed by modal

frequencies. The responses elicited from the checklist were rank ordered along with those from the inventory.

The system of ranking was based on the subjective appraisal of the interviewer and involved looking at the conditions and consequences associated with a pattern of valuing. If the members were thought to share values in all eight categories, not withholding emphasis from any category, but maintaining a flexible balance, they were considered moving closer to the self-actualization values. A more lopsided emphasis to only a few categories was viewed as equivocal. A vague and ambiguous identification with only a few categories was considered a non-self-actualizing value orientation.

A subsidiary purpose was to develop additional materials on the way of life in the Ashram. There was no attempt to prevent the conversation from flowing naturally in other directions when it appeared that useful information would be forthcoming. However, eventually the conversation was brought back to the outline. Interview notes were tape recorded and transcribed on paper.

SUMMARY

In recent years there has been a sharp upturn in interest in Oriental religions and in the achievement of what Maslow has called self-actualization. Comparatively little attention has been paid in either context to the Sikh religion, even though there has been a considerable growth in the number of Americans living in Ashrams in the past six years.

This study had a dual purpose. Perhaps the most important objective was to study and describe Ashram community life in the

United States. Insofar as can be determined, this has never been done intensively, although an occasional short newspaper article can be found. There would therefore appear to exist a real need for a detailed descriptive study of the Ashram communities.

Secondly, it would seem to be of interest to determine the extent to which Ashram members succeed in achieving a high level of self-actualization. Maslow has suggested that psychology should study means of "creating the health-fostering culture."

The plan of the study provided for four additional chapters. The following chapter discusses historical background and perspective on the Sikh religion and Maslow's theories. Chapter 3 describes the current status and environmental interaction of Ashram communities with data taken from books, articles, and personal observation and discussions. Chapter 4 presents the data from the subjects and ends with an answer to the research questions. The final chapter presents the summary and conclusions.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"Sikh" is the name accepted by a people in India who are found almost exclusively in the Punjab, and who are bound together not by tribal affiliation but by a religious bond. The term means "disciple," and is the correlative of guru, "teacher," a common noun appropriated as the title of the founder of the religion and transmitted to the nine men who succeeded him as religious heads of the faith. The fact that Sikh came to have a semi-national connotation is not an essential of the system. That semi-national significance stemmed from the circum- stances surrounding the breakup of the Moslem power in northwest India during the eighteenth century. Indeed, today the Sikhs are divided between the rival national states of India and Pakistan (Archer, 1971).

While the religion was founded and developed by a series of ten gurus, the beginnings of the Sikh faith are attributed by them to a man named Kabir who was regarded as a reincarnation of deity. His birth date is variously given as from 1398 to 1500. He is said to have been miraculously conceived and born in or near Benares, to have grown up a religious reformer, and to have composed hymns which are received among the sacred writings of the Sikhs. His revolt was against all distinctions of caste and religion, against the Purans and Shastras of Hinduism, and against the assumptions of the Brahmans and Moslems.

It is claimed that a number of sects developed from his teachings, the last of which was the Sikh (Macauliffe, Vol. I, 1909).

Apart from this distant (and possibly mythical) founder, Sikhism was largely the work of Guru Nanak (1469-1538). A number of accounts of his life and teachings are among the sacred works of the Sikhs. According to these accounts, his father was an accountant, and his birth was accompanied by magical portents. At the age of five, he began to meditate on "heavenly themes," and he began to excel in intellectual matters as soon as he went to school. His early life is replete with minor and major miracles; at one time, for example, a cobra spread its hood and shielded him from the sun. According to Sikh historians, from very early adolescence Nanak reached conclusions regarding the two principal religions of his country and composed verses castigating both Hinduism and the Moslem faiths. During his late adolescence, he retired for three days into the wilderness, during which time he thought he had a vision of the Creator, drank nectar in the Presence, and was pronounced the true Guru. On his return, he uttered a cryptic sentence condemning Hindus and Moslems, and then took up the life of a wanderer and religious teacher and began to make converts. He found the themes for his sayings in the daily life about him; a question, a chance saying, or an experience giving him the text for a discourse in verse. Manifesting a complete disregard for rank or dignity, he rebuked and taught with equal ardor, severity, or gentleness all who met or listened to him. He addressed on equal terms ascetics, fakirs, thugs, Brahmans, nobles, princes, and kings, all of whom are said to have acknowledged the divine source of his teachings. He overcame the temptation of the devil who tried to buy him with the

riches of the earth from the accomplishment of his religious mission. He is also said to have traveled through middle and south India, and to have reached Mecca and Medina (Macauliffe, Vol. I, 1909).

During Nanak's life the organization of the Sikh church began by the founding of societies. The Guru's hymns and poetry were committed to memory by the faithful and formed the first sacred scriptures. At the end of his life he inaugurated the practice followed by all but the last of his successors and appointed his successor. Just before his death Moslems and Hindus contested for the honor of disposing of his remains, but in the morning the corpse had disappeared, constituting his supreme miracle (Macauliffe, Vol. I, 1909). (The parallels with Christianity do not need to be belabored.)

The name of the second Guru, Angad, embodies the theory respecting the person of the Guru. Chosen by Nanak, he was originally named Lahina, but this was changed to a word which included the word for "body." The idea was that the Guru of the moment was the embodiment of the first Guru, and that all of the Gurus were not ten but one, the spirit of the first descending to the second. A consequence of this belief is that all the compositions of the Gurus carry the pen name Nanak (Macauliffe, Vol. I, 1909).

Angad was notable as the inventor of the Gurmukhi script in which some of the sacred writings of the Sikhs were written. He also abandoned the wandering way of life, settling at a place called Khadur. His leadership was also marked by the first schism of the movement, as some of the believers chose the oldest son of Nanak as Guru. This schismatic group received the name of Udasis (solitaries).

The third Guru, Amardas, made great strides towards the institutionalization of the religion. He inaugurated the institution of the common kitchen in order to abolish caste distinctions. He also started the custom for all Sikhs to visit the Guru three times a year for instruction in religion, and took other measures to place the religion on a more formal and regulated basis. There was also an attempted schism during his reign when Datu, the son of Angad, attempted to set himself up as the Guru but was spurned by the Sikhs (Archer, 1971).

Ramdas, the brother-in-law of Amardas, was the fourth Guru, and it was he who built the original lake temple at Amritsar which has been the headquarters of Sikhism ever since. It was also during this period (1574-1581) that the practice began of sending missionaries outside of the immediate Punjab to disseminate the faith. The youngest son of Ramdas became the fifth Guru; Arjan completed the building of the temple and began the creation of the city of Kartarpur. When his oldest brother attempted to seize the leadership, another schism was created, this time giving rise to the Mina sect. Because there was a tendency to abandon the unity of faith and practice, Arjan conceived and carried through the collection of the body of scriptures called the Adi ("first") Granth, which was completed around 1601, around fifty years after the death of the first Guru. He also wrote an epic poem, the Sukhmani, and other mystical works. When he refused an order by the emperor Jahangir to expunge from the Granth all passages at variance with orthodox Muslem belief, Arjan was tortured to death (Macauliffe, Vol. I, 1909).

The son of Arjan, Har Gobind, became the sixth Guru. Since the office had now been passed down from father to son three times, it appeared to have become an hereditary choice. Possibly because of continued pressure from the Moslems, Har Gobind was the first Guru to organize the Sikhs into a military brotherhood. He was himself imprisoned for a period of ten years by the Sultans, but he managed to weld the Sikhs together into a cohesive military unit with a regional base into the Punjab (Macauliffe, Vol. II, 1909).

The following three gurus were not significant. Har Rai was a son of Har Gobind, and Har Krishan was the son of the former. Har Krishan was installed as Guru at the age of five, and died at eight of smallpox, but he managed before his death to indicate the village where his successor would be found. This was Tegh Bahadur, the youngest son of Har Gobind; who was executed for his refusal to assept Islam (Macauliffe, Vol. II, 1909).

The tenth and final Guru was Gobind Singh (1666-75-1708), who was of great importance in the history of Sikhism. During his entire reign he was engaged in fighting with the Moslems and with the hill rajahs. It was he who built the originally pacifist religious movement into a powerful political and military force. He abolished for the Sikhs the Hindu custom of cutting the hair and shaving the head, instituting in its place a fivefold baptism with water stirred by a sword. After this ceremony, each Sikh took the name Singh (lion). He also forbade marriage with Moslems, confirmed the tithe as a substitute for free-will offerings, completed and modernized the Granth, and finally refused to name a successor, telling the Sikhs to obey the Granth as

the visible body of the Guru. This decision left religious direction in the hands of the official reader of the Granth (Macauliffe, Vol. II, 1909).

After the death of Gobind Singh, the history of the Sikhs becomes largely a temporal one. As Moslem power crumbled in the area, there emerged a series of Sikh confederacies in the Punjab under elected leaders. The leader Ranjit Singh utilized Sikh military fanaticism and religious zeal to create a kingdom with Lahore as the capital, and extended the realm to the border of British rule. The Sikhs then fought a long series of battles with the British; after being beaten definitively they entered the British Indian Army in great numbers, forming his most loyal elements (Ganda Singh, n. d.).

SOME ASPECTS OF THE SIKH RELIGION

The religious tenets of the Sikhs are exhibited in the Adi Granth or Granth Sahib, consisting of poetic utterances of the Gurus and of some Indian saints whose sayings the Gurus approved. According to common conceptions, the Gurus were incarnations of deity and the book is therefore divinely inspired. In its present arrangement, the Granth serves the purposes of a Bible and a liturgy. It is in six parts: (1) an introduction by Nanak; (2) extracts from two of the "rags" (musical measures to which the hymns were sung or chanted) used in devotions at eventide; (3) a devotional chapter composed of extracts from one of the rags; (4) a chapter of extracts from three of the rags used as a prayer before retiring; (5) the Granth proper, of compositions in meter arranged under thirty-one rags; and (6) a concluding portion by various authors, including Indian saints and fakirs. The Adi Granth (original Granth) is so called to differentiate it

from the later Granth of the tenth Guru. It is fairly lengthy; one translation runs to 715 pages.

Sikh Theology

The basis of Sikh theology is a belief in a personal God, the omnipotent Creator of the universe, a Being beyond time. God reveals himself in his own creation and man is called to respond to divine self-revelation by leading an integrated balanced life of meditation and activity. "If man responds, he progressively grows into the likeness of God and ultimately into an ineffable union with the Timeless One. If he refuses he follows a path of spiritual death. . ." (Sethi, 1972:7).

By "spiritual growth" is meant the development of man's ability to live "truthfully" and to devote his efforts to the good of others in society. This is expressed in Sikhism as sach (truth) and seva (selfless service) (Talib, 1970).

Salvation for Sikhs lies in understanding the nature of the "divine truth." To achieve this understanding the Sikh is encouraged to follow a path of training (or discipleship) that leads to growing inward spiritual perception and the expression and integration of this awareness through selfless service. In order to grow in inward spiritual perception, meditation is necessary. Guru Nanak told the faithful to meditate on the name of God and "you shall be saved." To reach the other goal of selfless service, the adherent should develop an attitude that devotes one's enlightenment for the love of creation. Spiritual growth can be measured by a parallel growth both in inner religious development and outer selfless service of mankind.

According to the teachings of the Gurus, evil is created by man himself when he acts in a manner contrary to his spiritual growth. The remedy for the elimination of evil lies in greater spiritual understanding. People who commit evil are mentally, morally, and spiritually ill, and they need proper diagnosis and cure. The Adi Granth states:

> [Once] I forgot the Master and took to the enjoyment of
> pleasure,
> Then disease arose in the body--a pain of separation and
> a certain pang of hunger.
> A doctor was called for a remedy; he took [my] hand and
> felt the pulse; the stupid doctor did not know the trouble
> was in the mind!
> He is a real doctor who first diagnoses the disease and
> then administers such a remedy as will radically cure
> the disease.
> Without the true Guru [my] disease will never go. (Sethi, 1972:9).

The Sikh Ethical System

Few of the world's philosophers, Payne wrote,

> . . . have laid down a more exalted moral code than is to
> be found in the pages of the Granth Sahib. Purity of life is set
> forth as the highest object of human endeavor. . . loyalty,
> chastity, honesty, justice, mercy, and temperance are among
> the virtues on which vital stress is laid. (Payne, 1915:7).

According to Nanak, morality is the very basis of spiritual advancement, for one advances to the latter by practicing the former. Guru Nanak stressed that the moral and spiritual progress of man must develop through deeds and not through the escape from life which is asceticism. Sikh ethics are based on the principles of the oneness of God, the brotherhood of man, and selfless service. The nature of God has already been stressed. The brotherhood of man, in the view of the first Gurus, was manifested as a form of protest against the Indian caste system. Moral progress lies in recognizing that "other human beings are as human as oneself," and this includes not only equality of

all men before God but also equality of the sexes. In the Indian ascetic

tradition, women are regarded as temptresses bound to hinder the

progress towards sainthood. Guru Nanak, however, took a surprisingly

modern point of view:

> It is by woman, the condemned one, that we are conceived,
> and from her that we are born; it is with her that we are
> betrothed and married.
> It is woman we befriend, and she who keeps the race going.
> When one woman dies, another is sought for; and it is with
> her that we get established in society;
> Why should we call her evil from whom great men are born?
> It is also from woman that women are born; there is nobody
> who is not born of woman.
> Nanak, only the one true God is independent of woman.
>   (Kohli, 1966:107-108).

The "brotherhood of man" also resulted in the abolition of the

class society, at least in principle. The priesthood class was abolished;

any Sikh can function as a priest and any five Sikhs can conduct the

ceremony of baptism. Mixed congregations where the disciples, no

matter what their social status, could get together in equality and

harmony were another leveling function. The institution of the free

community kitchen where all, without any distinction of caste, creed,

or status, sat and ate together, operated in the same manner. (Sethi,

1972).

> Nanak also glorified the dignity of labor.

> A Sikh will enter the temple and clean the shoes of other
> devotees--some even arrange to shine them. He will prepare
> the food in the community kitchen, clean utensils, scrub floors,
> or do any other odd jobs. For one job there are a dozen
> volunteers, each outwitting the other--all vying to serve the
> Guru through serving His men. (Sethi, 1972:11-12).

Honest work is considered sacred, and dignity of labor becomes part

of the religion (Sethi, 1972).

From the foregoing it follows that the Sikh is trained in the principles of selfless service and cooperative living. Sikhs must contribute a tithe to the community and work together. Moreover, Sikhs must band together in times of danger or crisis. Rulers must be held accountable for their actions.

THE SIKH WAY OF LIFE

From the outset, the thrust of Sikhism was "evangelical," in the sense that it was designed to appeal to the widest possible audience. The sacred works were written in the vernacular, not in Sanskrit, and missionary activity was undertaken from the outset.

Sikhism also preaches involvement with the world in all ways. One adherent has described the principles of Sikhism in the following terms:

> Rejection of magic mantras, miracles, incarnations, special revelations, and a sacred language; and the acceptance of monotheism, the reality of the world, the equality of women, the need of social service, and adoration of God through repeating His name, and service to mankind. (Sethi, 1972:27).

Greenlees has summarized Sikh teachings as follows:

> It is a life of active effort toward world upliftment under the Guru's guidance, so that all souls may attain the final Goal. It insists on human equality, and rejects caste and race prejudice, the use of images for the Spiritual God, and all external show of piety--insisting on absolute sincerity and persevering action for the love of God. (Greenlees, 1958:36).

There are elements of a number of religious precepts from other world faiths in the Sikh creed. The distinctive feature, as presently practiced, is that Sikhism weds Oriental mysticism to a more typically Western full involvement in the real world. Inner development

is important not as an end in itself--although it is nevertheless
essential--but as the means of improving the general society.

The individual must first substitute his ego consciousness
with wah consciousness. Wah means the general power or force that
controls the world, the eternal truth which is changeless, and a
psychological awareness in which there is joy, wisdom, and power.
Wah is a natural state for man, for there is in every man's heart a
longing and a love for the good and the pure. What stands in the way
of achievement of the wah state is haumai, or self-centeredness.
(Sethi, 1972).

The process of transformation from haumai-consciousness to
wah-consciousness is difficult but it can be carried out in sequential
steps. One guru has identified forty variables as involved in the
transition: (1) recognition of one's duty; (2) moral courage; (3) medi-
tation for good things; (4) material satisfaction; (5) harmony of senses;
(6) higher level of spiritual ideal; (7) right techniques of living;
(8) purity of mind; (9) selfless service of mankind; (10) simplicity
and absence of deceit; (11) farsightedness; (12) recognition of life as
play, not a problem; (13) equality of human beings; (14) sacrifice of
egocentric attributes; (15) recognition of reality about oneself; (16)
spiritual contentment; (17) virtuous living; (18) discrimination; (19)
acceptance of truthful living; (20) oneness in thought, word, and deed;
(21) acceptance; (22) salvation from human weakness emanating from
anger, greed, attachment, sex, and pride; (23) right inspiration; (24)
study of Guru's words; (25) love of truth; (26) understanding of nature's
laws; (27) balance of worldly desires and lack of discrimination;

(28) thankfulness; (29) understanding of worldly, illusory fire (maya); (30) recognition of inner light; (31) discipline of speech; (32) daily progress in spiritual evolution; (33) recognition of one's nature; (34) mystical experience; (35) recognition of life's real goal; (36) constant hearing of truth; (37) recognition of all humanity as one; (38) awareness; (39) commitment to truth; and (40) attainment (Sethi, 1972).

In this transformation, meditation can play an important role, but the Gurus asked: "Meditation towards what end?" The Sikh is supposed to seek an altered state of consciousness in which "it is not time that matters nor the comforts nor the experiences" but "the process of turning Guru-ward and God-ward itself." (Sethi, 1972:11-12). Meditation is an awakening to the innermost reality of being achieved through developing sensitivity and awareness. As long as the illusion of the "I" remains, the true state of mystical consciousness has not been attained (Sethi, 1972).

> For where the "I" is not, there is He, and there is [then] bliss. . .The Sikh must utilize his mystical consciousness for serving others recognizing the "whole creation as friends," for the noble goal of evolving a creative community. . .Those who perceive the Name of God in every breath, they drive out evil from their own hearts and regard the whole of creation as friends. (Sethi, 1972:69).

Chapter 3

ASHRAM COMMUNITIES: CURRENT STATUS AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION

Typical Daily Behavior

Two of the most important aspects of Ashram life are

sadhana (spiritual practice) and pangat (taking meals together). Both

are activities which bring all members of the commune together in a

formal manner, and the activities constitute the heart of Sikh teachings.

Every morning, the sangat (congregation of members) met

for a three- or four-hour session of exercises, chanting, and medita-

tion. Awakening time varied slightly in each of the three Ashrams

studied, with the average being 3:00 A.M. A major part of this

morning session was devoted to the practice of Kundalini yoga, a

discipline which combines techniques of other yogas, and includes

various types of exercises, breath control, chanting, and meditation.

The purposes of sadhana are to cleanse the body and to elevate the

mind. The chants are taken from the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, the

sacred writings of the Sikhs. Throughout all the exercises, breathing

techniques, chants, and mental energy-focusing techniques, the name

of God, in the form of the mantras Sat Nam or Wahe Guru, is

constantly uttered or kept in the forefront of consciousness. This

practice is meant to keep the purpose of sadhana clear as bringing the

viewer to a closer relationship with God. It also serves to further

solidify relationships between members of the commune.

In the three Ashrams studied, only one member did not

participate fully in these morning ceremonies, and that was because

he was a part-time movie theater manager and taxi driver with

fluctuating and inconvenient hours.

After sadhana, members went about their collective or

individual businesses. Many members of the Ashrams studied were

students at local colleges and held part-time jobs; a few had full-time

employment. A considerable number of the part-time jobs involved

giving outsiders Kundalini yoga lessons for remuneration. All members

of the Ashrams also participated in communal housekeeping and money-

making projects. In the Ashrams studied, only two individuals did not

fit into this general pattern: (1) a pregnant woman who spent all her time

in the Ashram, and (2) a full-time Ashram employee.

As indicated in the previous chapter, Sikhs glorify the dignity

of labor, but none of the Ashrams studied had satisfactorily solved the

problem of what work to engage in. All members were expected to

contribute financially to the Ashram, at least through the payment of

rent. Since a sense of community is believed to be fostered by

communal work, however, the ideal solution is seen as the development

of a viable Ashram business. The members of an Ashram in

Washington, D. C., for example, operate a moderately successful

vegetarian restaurant, and other communities operate a variety of

small businesses in which members work (Guru Sewak Singh, 1975).

None of the Ashrams surveyed had yet reached such a self-sufficient stage.

The Hawaii Ashram did engage in part-time farming as a source of

food and funds and hoped to expand this activity still further.

Members of the Ashrams returned for the preparation and communal consumption of the evening meal, the second great source of comradeship. Wherever possible, all meals were taken together, but outside employment limited the possibilities. In one of the Ashrams, members unable to eat all their meals together had lunches made up for them. Sikhs practice vegetarianism, but this does not mean that meals must be dull. Curries are frequently cooked, and considerable thought and effort goes into the preparation of pangat.

One Ashram leader stated that members were always on the lookout for reasons to have some sort of celebration, usually taking the form of feasts. Birthdays were celebrated in an elaborate manner, with a birthday cake or desserts served after the evening meal. These were periods for assessing the spiritual growth of the past year. About once a month, Ashrams in an area got together for a service called Gurdwara, or the Guru's temple, at which spiritual songs as well as traditional Indian hymns from the Granth Sahib were sung. The service ended with prayers, prasad (a blessed sweetmeat), and a hukam, or word for the day, also from the Granth Sahib. Afterwards, the members always shared a meal together. It was also part of the Ashram lifestyle to attend bi-annual gatherings at the time of the winter and summer solstices. Members of the California Ashram met in Florida in December of 1973, and in New Mexico in June of 1974, to camp out for a few days. During these retreats, long-term Ashram members were given the opportunity to organize events and to participate in yoga sessions.

Because of the early risings, bedtime was usually around ten or eleven o'clock. Four or five hours of sleep do not seem much

for people who have been working hard all day, and neophytes apparently had difficulty in keeping up initially. One Ashram leader encouraged the newcomers to go to bed even earlier, and to take naps when they could. Very soon, according to Ashram members, an adjustment is made. Sleep becomes briefer but more intense, and energy is also revitalized by the yoga exercises.

Ashrams are usually very musical places. Sikh music includes work songs, marching songs, heroic songs, love songs, devotional songs, and songs designed to bring laughter. As one Ashram leader put it, "Without music, washing the dishes is a chore." (Guru Sewak Singh, 1975).

The routine outlined above took place seven days a week, with some modifications on Sunday since members usually do not work on "the outside" on that day. In some Ashrams, regular house meetings were held on Sunday mornings right after sadhana. These meetings were a time for planning, organizing activities, mutual criticism, and the bestowing of praise. The meetings were open ended, starting with discussion of logistical problems and turning eventually to more spiritual matters. If a member of the Ashram had been disruptive in some way, criticism would be voiced openly and the member would be told that he had to change his ways.

None of the Ashrams studied were very well-to-do, and living accommodations were fairly Spartan. Everyone had to share a room with one or more persons, with the married couples of course having their own quarters. While property is not held in common, there would simply not be room for any great amount of personal possessions.

It needs to be emphasized that life in an Ashram is an extremely Spartan proposition. There was observed a great deal of hard physical and mental work involved in being an American Sikh, very little opportunity to sleep or relax, and little of what passes for diversion in the normal society. Occasionally, members would view a special film or television program, but radio or stereo listening was rare. Reading material included newspapers and news periodicals, but was primarily Sikh literature.

Sikhs in the communes also wore distinctive clothing. Initially, this requirement was not levied on the members, but several years ago Siri Guru Granth Sahib decided that 3HO (Happy, Health, and Holy Organization) members should become more visible if they were to inspire and teach others. Both men and women now tie up their hair and cover it with turbans, and the men grow beards. Both dress in white clothing in a special style of narrow pants and long overshirt adopted from India for both sexes. This style of dress also forces the adherent to abandon his past image preferences, and thereby become more humble. This practice also tends to separate the "believer" from the remainder of the population, and thereby to reinforce group cohesiveness. Sikh dress must not only be worn in the Ashram but in the outside world as well.

Sikhism in the United States is not a one day affair, therefore, but a type of life carried on day after day for as long as the member remains in the Ashram. Its adherents nevertheless appear to find it spiritually and humanly rewarding.

Demographic Characteristics

The Ashrams studied were all relatively small, with about twenty members each. The total membership at the time of the research was: New Orleans, 21; Pomona, 25; and Honolulu, 22. (Not all of the residents were used as subjects.) The major limiting factor in the size of communes appeared to be living space, since all three rented houses which could not comfortably accommodate many more people. Problems of coordination and interpersonal relations also appeared to place an upper limit on the extent to which any single Ashram could grow. The leader of a Massachusetts Ashram, for example, indicated that a sensible upper limit to his Ashram's population was twenty, although at one time there were twenty-five members (Gurcharan Kaur Singh, 1975).

Members were mainly young adults, as shown in Table 1. The median age for single males was 21, and for married males 26.5; for single females, the median age was 20, and 26.5 for married females. Ages ranged from 18 to 37. There were ten married couples, most of whom met through the 3HO movement and had married under its rituals. Accordingly, there were also a few very young children in the Ashrams, although they were not included in the membership totals. Men outnumbered women by a ratio of 39 to 29.

Membership appeared to be reasonably homogeneous. In terms of previous religious affiliation, 42 were Protestant, 17 were Catholic, and 9 were Jewish. The educational distribution was: college degree, 15; some college education, 24; high school education, 29; and less than a high school diploma, 0. By occupation, there were

Table 1

SEX AND MARITAL STATUS
OF ASHRAM MEMBERS

Sex and Marital Status	N	Median Age	Age Range
Males			
Single	29	21	18 - 32
Married	10	25.5	23 - 37
TOTAL MALES	39	21	19 - 37
Females			
Single	19	20	18 - 32
Married	10	26.5	20 - 34
TOTAL FEMALES	29	21	18 - 34
TOTAL POPULATION	68	21	18 - 37

Source of figures from personal census.

28 white-collar workers, 32 blue-collar workers, and 8 unemployed.
All were Caucasian.

There was also a background of difficulties of adjustment. A
majority of the Ashram members came from broken homes. Most
reported a history of drug abuse, ranging from moderate to heavy
experiences with marijuana and drugs. Only one respondent reported
any arrest record, although one other reported a prolonged battle with
the Selective Service System. There was little political activity,
either mainstream or "radical." Most of the members were separated
from the family household by the age of twenty, and their geographical
mobility was extensive.

There also appeared to be a common thread of experience with
yoga which lead eventually to membership in an Ashram. At the time
of this research, Kundalini yoga courses were offered in perhaps one
hundred sites across the United States, including colleges, community
centers, and Ashrams. These were largely skill training sessions,
through which the student learned how to stretch his body, manipulate
the body to affect the mental self, and calm the mind through meditation.
Some students went on to the more difficult Tantric yoga sessions, and
eventually became Ashram leaders themselves. In all cases, however,
before someone asked to live in an Ashram he had already received
considerable training in yoga, had a fairly clear idea of what was
involved in terms of difficulties and rewards, and knew and was known
by other members of the Ashram. The operation of this recruitment
system also worked to maintain the homogeneity of the 3HO movement.
Even so, the "drop out" rate was about 20 percent for each Ashram per
year. This does not mean that the members who left dropped out of the

movement entirely; some undoubtedly joined an Ashram in another community, although no data was developed on this aspect of the question.

In summary, the members of the Ashrams studied comprised a relatively homogeneous group in terms of background and demographic variables. The Ashrams were each about four years old.

Relations With
 The Outside World

The development of the 3HO movement in the United States has taken place entirely in the current decade. Today there are approximately 120 Ashrams in the United States. In addition, centers in other parts of the Western world have been established in such places as Mexico City, London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Paris, Rome, and also in Japan. Members of individual Ashrams feel that they are part of a close and growing family, whose communication is maintained by the solstice gatherings, regional newsletters, and by a quarterly magazine, Beads of Truth, published in Los Angeles, California.

Here and there Ashrams have been recognized by the local communities as of social utility. For example, in Tucson, Arizona, the Ashram is nationally recognized and state funded as a hard drug detoxification and rehabilitation center. In San Rafael, California the Ashram is recognized as a referral center for petty drug abuse, and a prisoner from Vacaville State Penitentiary was paroled to its care. (The former prisoner was said to be progressing well, and was holding a full-time landscaping job.)

Increasingly, the Sikhs are being recognized in formal, legal ways. Many of the Ashram members are legal ministers of Sikh

Dharma, entitled to counsel and perform marriages. In the San Francisco Bar area of California, an American Sikh is currently chairman for the Meeting Of The Ways organization. Many of the Ashram members are accredited teachers who are paid professionally. Ashrams innovate programs to teach in areas where yoga has been practically unknown. For example, the Pomona, California center recently succeeded in cooperatively establishing a federally funded summer program in Yosemite National Park. In some areas, free food kitchens have been established, serving dinner once a week.

In a few short years, therefore, 3HO centers have gradually achieved a respectable status in the wider community. At the same time, there are some factors that seem to have served to maintain the cohesiveness of the Ashram itself.

According to the leader of the New Orleans Ashram, new 3HO members are encouraged to make a clean break with the past. Requests for trips to visit friends or home will usually be refused during the initial weeks and months. Listening to music associated with the past, wearing hair down rather than up, visiting old friends, or simply escaping into reclusion are actively discouraged.

Wearing the distinctive style of dress which has already been described also serves to set Sikhs apart. Even when a member goes into town to teach or to work, his separateness is highlighted by the white turban, white clothes, and beard. The member may cross the geographical barrier from Ashram to town, but a psychological barrier is still present as long as he wears the distinctive white clothing. One leader stated that, so accoutered, old friends would think twice before

offering an Ashram member some marijuana, and the member would find it difficult to accept (Guru Sewak Singh, 1975).

Members develop a sense of "apartness." The "outside world" is commonly referred to as "out there," usually in a derogatory or pitying sense. The general feeling seems to be that most contemporaries in the "outside world" are trapped in a cruel and energy-draining environment. Boredom and mental depression were considered by Ashram members to be common states "out there," while in the Ashram boredom and depression were very rare.

Language also played a part in the establishment of separate boundaries. The Ashram had its own special vocabulary peculiar to yogic practice and to the specific problems faced by the community. Moreover, it was not unusual to hear words and phrases such as: "sacrifice," "graceful," "God-conscious," "living up to your infinite potential," "righteousness," "surrender your ego," and others. Mantras like Sat Nam and Wahe Guru also interlaced everyday speech. There was also an avoidance of crude or cruel language.

Another factor was the extent of sacrifice that was required to live according to Sikh precepts in an Ashram. The sheer physical difficulty of life has already been emphasized. One student of utopian communities has pointed out that:

> Sacrifice operates on the basis of a simple principle of cognitive consistency theories: The more it "costs" a person to do something, the move valuable he will consider it, in order to justify the psychic "expense" and remain internally consistent. (Kanter, 1972:76).

This factor would seem to operate among Ashram members just as it does in monasteries or in other utopian communities. Of course, Ashram members would reject this explanation, explaining that the

"sacrifices" are worthwhile in that they are a necessary method of achieving personal growth.

A sense of communion and separateness was also fostered by communal work. Even in the case of the three Ashrams being studied where communal businesses had not yet been established, members engaged in a large number of projects as a group. Cleaning, maintaining, and improving the home, preparing meals, and organizing activities were on-going communal projects. In addition, members worked on a wide variety of tasks together, ranging from the drawing of posters to the planting and care of communal gardens.

Of all relations with the "outside world" that with parents and relatives was seen by this observer as probably the most difficult. One female member stated that when parents first hear of the yoga, they have little information and are for the most part neutral. Moving into an Ashram strikes them as a much more ominous step. Parents may feel that their children are being taken advantage of and that the yoga is part of a scheme to collect money and glory for someone. Even if this suspicion is not present, there is still the fear that their children have moved beyond the sphere of their influence into an alien and incomprehensible religious mode. On such major holidays as Christmas, the fact that the neophyte Sikh prefers to remain with the Ashram family seems to confirm the worst fears of the blood relatives. When the girl refused to go home on her birthday, her father in effect "read her out" of the family. According to an Ashram leader, it is only after a year or two have passed, and the parents see that their child is healthy and happy, that a reconciliation can be effected.

One of the elements about the 3HO movement that parents find particularly difficult to understand is the influence on their children of Sidi Guru Granth Sahib, the founder of the movement in the United States, who is known familiarly to his followers as "Yogi G" or "Yogiji." In the Orient, it is understood that there are four teachers in life: the mother, the father, the environment, and the spiritual teacher. In the United States, a spiritual teacher who exercises such great influence on their children is seen by parents as a threat to their influence.

Painful as the split with parents can be over a strange and different life style, it was mitigated somewhat in the case of the Ashram members studied by the alienation that had already taken place with parents. Moreover, Ashram members before their conversion frequently were heavily into drugs, and parents may have felt that any change was for the better. However, this is what the Ashram members said; no parents were interviewed.

Interpersonal Relations
In The Ashram

There were subtle interpersonal relationships inside the communal family, but the question of governance is relatively clear-cut. The 3HO organization is directed by Yogiji, who has trained all of the Ashram directors in the United States. Without his sanction, no one could aspire to found and lead an Ashram. The Ashram leader, in his turn, decides who may or may not become a member of the family, and there is no recourse but to accept his decision. The Ashram is, therefore, a form of theocracy.

Since anyone who enters an Ashram is also free to leave at any time, the style of leadership exercised by the leader, or principal teacher, needs to be fairly sophisticated. Some insight into the leadership problem was gained by interviews with both leaders and members.

A house leader stated that although he had a right to eject anyone from the community, he had never done so. Members were sometimes criticized for not "keeping up." Not "keeping up" primarily meant allowing one's ego to foster a sense of separateness rather than developing identity with the group. Members may be asked to go to another Ashram where conditions might be more conducive to their spiritual growth, or may simply be expelled from the community until they develop the consciousness to return in the kind of humility that allows growth.

If an Ashram leader were to misuse his authority, the probability is high that his commune would crumble about him. The Ashram leader stated that he therefore attempts to keep his role as subtle as possible. He attempts to establish conditions under which other members can exercise their leadership potential. Much of the responsibility for running the Ashram was delegated to people who are ready to develop. The management of the building, garden, and financial affairs, and the teaching of classes were all tasks that affected the welfare of the community and which involved considerable autonomy and creativity. The members understood that the leader had the final say, but that he would rather have members learn by their mistakes than by his direction.

While the leader had responsibility for his Ashram, he also realized that there are regional directors and ultimately Yogiji above

him. This hierarchical structure was regarded as a powerful factor mitigating against the generation of personality cults in the individual Ashrams.

The heads of Ashrams also understood that they were not the originators of the teachings being practiced, and all of them were students once themselves. Yogiji taught them everything they practiced, but even Yogiji had teachers, and his teachers had teachers, and so on back to the original source. This understanding also made for humility and a more democratic leadership style than might otherwise have been the case.

At the same time, the Ashram leader was more experienced in the practices and beliefs of Sikhism and therefore served as teacher and guardian of the faith in those realms. In the area of spiritual belief and religious practices, the leader was expected to be authoritarian. The successful Ashram leader, therefore, needed to be democratic in the temporal realm and authoritarian in matters of faith and religious practice.

Members did not appear to resent leadership styles in the Ashram. When a student of Sikhism moved in, he basically agreed to experience what 3HO had to offer according to its own terms. It would not make sense for a neophyte to alter Sikhism's methods at the outset of his experience. Those who were unsuited to the way of life left; those who found that it met their needs remained. In the three Ashrams studied, leadership styles were similar. Members were given considerable opportunity to manage communal affairs, but the leader kept close control of matters of religious practices and acted as chief spokesman for the Ashram vis-a-vis the outside community.

Apart from the problem of governance, the question of money and private property was perceived as at least potentially troublesome. In many utopian communes property is held in common; but this was not the case with the Sikhs. Each member retained his own property on entering an Ashram. At the same time, each member was expected to contribute his fair share for rent and other expenses. The fact that some members were able to earn substantially more than others tended to create a feeling of separateness which ran counter to the ideals of the organization. Ashrams usually solve this problem by starting communal businesses, although none of the Ashrams studied had yet been able to take this step.

Members also pointed out that there were forces in the Ashram that tended to lessen the distinctions made by money. If a member is in genuine need, others will contribute. Rent is waived in cases of sickness and other individual problems, but the other members must then make up the difference. When there are group projects that require fairly large capital outlays, the relatively affluent members of the Ashram can be expected to finance them. Those who truly identify with the Ashram and who are the most imbued with the ideal of service will be the first to contribute.

Another potential problem queried by this researcher was two-person intimacy. Groups with any degree of identity of stability tend to establish limits on how much and what kinds of two-person intimacy are permissible or desirable. "Exclusive two-person bonds within a larger group, particularly sexual attachments, represent competition for members' emotional energy and loyalty." (Kanter, 1972: 86). There were ten married couples in the Ashrams studied, some

with children, and it did not appear these relationships interfered with

the homogeneity of the group. One married man, who was also a leader

of an Ashram, stated:

> It is understood that in 3HO a man's first obligation is to
> God. He has a life of service to lead. He is expected to avoid
> attachments to his wife and family that lead him toward with-
> drawing his energy from teaching and serving. Similarly, the
> wife is married to God first, her husband second. (Guru Sewak
> Singh, 1975).

The fact that all the married couples found in the Ashrams had met

each other there and had been married according to Sikh rites meant

that both parties tended to accept this general point of view.

Children were seen as creatures of God, entrusted for a time

to two parents and a community. While the biological parents had

the ultimate responsibility for the child's welfare, the entire community

shared in his upbringing, both in providing food and shelter and in

helping to educate and care for him. The Ashram child was perceived

as no one's property but everyone's responsibility. Ashram members

therefore tend to perceive children as a factor that makes for added

cohesiveness.

The fact that Ashram members work and worship together

for extended periods of time has already been noted. For the outsider,

such intensive "togetherness" might appear as too cloying and

oppressive. Ashram members interviewed did not appear to have had

this reaction. Members appeared to feel that they were engaged in a

process of becoming one with God, and that they could not reach this

goal by themselves. One Ashram teacher stated that new members

first pass through a "honeymoon" period in which they feel that they

have found a superior way of life and have conquered all their

difficulties. As time passes, they may find that the pressures and vicissitudes of Ashram life bring to the surface personality problems they may have felt they were leaving behind by living a simple and healthy existence. Some may depart at this point (about one-fifth do), but others ultimately find a more realistic and detached perspective. Many of those who do leave are disgusted with the emptiness of life "outside" and return:

> After a time the student gains the confidence that the
> eradication of the ego is in God's hands. Our only job is to
> do a good sadhana and "keep up." There is only so much one
> can do, and realizing that, one becomes more relaxed about
> progress. (Sat Anand Kaur, 1975).

Another Ashram member stated that because Sikhs in the Ashrams have so little in the way of personal territory, cooperation immediately becomes essential:

> Clashes become minimal between individuals coming
> together as strangers because their values are always
> merging. This occurs not necessarily because they happen
> to have coinciding spiritual ideals, but just as often because
> these ideals are prompted and to a certain extent imposed
> upon members. The Ashram is a school and people come to
> refine themselves, though this isn't always a conscious
> intent at the outset. (Ram Bir Singh Brooks, 1975).

Another factor may have been the support that was given to each new member as he/she faced the difficulties of life in the Ashram and the fear that progress was not being made rapidly enough. Because the other members of the commune have endured the same pains, they tended to be strongly supportive of the neophyte. As a neophyte achieved a more satisfactory balance in his personal life, he would be grateful to those who helped him when he was "down," and supportive of those who entered the Ashram after him.

Formal and
 Informal Commitments

Upon joining the American Sikh movement, the neophyte

makes both informal and formal commitments. The informal commit-

ment is to follow the Sikh way of life. A Sikh is a person who rises

every day before dawn. He does not take Sundays off because this is

his life and not his job. He does not cut or shave any hair from head

or body in order to live as God created him. He must make his living

by honest labor, rather than by depending on charity or resorting to

illegal means to obtain money. He must share what he earns with his

community. He abjures drugs and alcohol, as well as the flesh of all

living things.

The second type of commitment is formal, known as the

Amrit Ceremony, or baptism into the Khalsa as begun by Guru Gobind

Singh. Here a Sikh announces his or her intention to maintain a pure

existence for the rest of life. He agrees to abide by a dress style called

the "five K's. " Kesh means the uncut hair; Kara is a steel bracelet to

"protect" the sword arm, representing the ability to stand for righteous-

ness. Kirpan is a small dagger (originally a long sword) for the same

purpose. Kachas are special underwear to encourage modesty, and

Kanga is a wooden comb worn in the hair symbolizing neatness and

tidy appearance. A Khalsa Sikh agrees to read five prayers every day

in order to fix his consciousness on his endeavors. The actual

baptismal ceremony consists of recitation of the prayers to bless a

sweet liquid called amrit, or nectar, which is sprinkled on participants

by five Khalsa members. Then it is drunk, and Khalsa doctrine is

summarized, including vegetarian diet, felicity in marriage, and

orientation toward a direct and personal relationship with God.

The Status of
Women: Marriage

The status of women represents a problem in the context of

self-actualization. Women become members in full standing of the

Ashram, and are protected by an absolute prohibition against extra-

marital sex. The teachings of Nanak regarding women's place in

society has already been explained.

By the very nature of the Sikh commitment, marriage can

only take place between Sikhs. Children are the desired product of a

marital union, but the number must be limited to what is economically

feasible. Contraceptives are banned; intercourse is recommended only

once a month, which makes practicing the rhythm method comparatively

simple. Yogiji's advice to American Sikhs is that where the man rules

in the house there is harmony, and where the woman rules there is

hell on earth. The woman's role needs to be clearly delineated, and

she will feel insecure and rebellious as long as the man is weak enough

to let her get away with her childishness, according to this view. Three

days or more of silence on the part of the husband are recommended to

make the marriage partner realize that there is no place in an Ashram

for a wilful ego. An Ashram leader, relating his own marital problems,

said:

> His steadfastness can always return a woman to calmness
> providing one thing is present, that she has given herself to
> God. Otherwise, man will never win. Men out of their supreme
> ego think they can tame a woman. A woman can never be tamed
> by a man unless she submits first. She is Shakti, a manifestation
> of the primal creative power of the universe. If she decides to

reach God in a marriage, she will let her husband mold her.
If she hasn't seen her path to God as service in marriage, she
can destroy him. (Guru Sewak Singh, 1975).

Additional material was secured in the course of a long inter-

view with a married Ashram woman whose husband was director of one

of the communes. She stated that members are taught that there are

three aspects of God: the generating aspect, the organizing aspect, and

the destroying aspect. Woman is the "O," the middle part of God,

while man is the generator and the destroyer. Man is considered as

very directive; he initiates, starts and stops things, but has little

capacity to really get organized and keep going. Woman's role is to

organize, primarily by taking care of the husband's material needs,

leaving him free to concentrate on his job. She drew an analogy with

the sun and the moon:

> The sun generates all this heat and warmth and beauty.
> This is a gorgeous thing, the sun, but it can't see itself. It
> can't appreciate itself. So there's the moon, and it sees this
> beautiful light which is the moon and it says, "Wow, how
> gorgeous it is; isn't that wonderful?" And the only way it
> gets its light is from the sun. The only way the sun can
> appreciate itself and learn who it is is through the moon.
> And that's the same relationship with a man and a woman.
> (Guru Sewak Kaur, 1975).

All of the women interviewed, including single women, subscribed to

the same point of view, although there were variations in the verbaliza-

tion. In some cases both members of a married couple held

responsible jobs and shared the housework, but the wife still felt it

necessary to be emotionally supportive of her husband.

SUMMARY

Ashram members operate within a relatively circumscribed

environment. The Ashram is like a close family, but it also is a

religious institution. Members rise very early in the morning for a three- or four-hour session of exercises, chanting, and meditation. The purpose of this institution is to bring the participant to a closer relationship with God, but it also serves to solidify relationships between members of the commune and to reinforce the authority of the Ashram leader.

Management of internal relations was a critical feature in the communal experience. The members appeared able to develop a shared reality about which they could agree. They were able to come to a common definition of communal goals or to discuss directly individual members' needs. They attempted to express and to manage a number of complex and deeply felt problems--like loneliness, privacy, competition, and aggressiveness--through the medium of tangible issues like allocation of space in the Ashram and maintenance task performance.

By practical organization they would get time to be with each other. They valued being together as an alternative to other things. They also viewed collective living as a natural expression of the Sikh values of honesty, truthfulness, equality, and sacrifice. The ritual practice of Kundalini yoga and meditation helped to solidify relationships between Ashram members.

Various problems of interpersonal relations were evident. For example, competition among individuals was not always amenable to lasting solution. The existence of rivalries, irritations, and jealousies were commonplace. The competition between sub-groups that evolved out of mutual affinity also contributed to the tensions and unresolved differences in the Ashrams.

The problem of governance lies in the fact that the powers of an absolute theocracy have to be exercised in such a manner as to enable each member to exercise his own individuality. A potential source of trouble is that property is not held in common and members earn varying amounts of money: this was not a source of conflict in the three Ashrams studied. Two-person intimacy is another potential problem which is overcome only when both parties put the interests of the community first.

The basic values of the Ashrams were based on the ideal that it should be a Sikh group which adhered to the traditional Sikh values of truth and selfless service. Frequent gatherings for ritual ceremonies, such as communal prayer, group meditation, yoga, and communal dining provided a source for fellowship. Conformity to the many rules regarding dress and behavior enhanced the individual members' feelings of "belonging," "separateness," "specialness," and "uniqueness."

Chapter 4

STATISTICAL RESULTS

Based upon an observational methodology, the previous
chapter described the environment in three Ashram communes and
discussed the effects of this environment upon the residents.

In the present chapter we attempt to test the research
hypothesis and to discover other characteristics and effects of
U. S. Ashram commune environments, via statistical analysis of
research data. The data were collected using the two instruments
described in Chapter 1, the POI and the self-actualization semi-
structured interview.

Before getting to the statistical tests of the research question,
we will perform two preliminary statistical analyses. First, we will
correlate the rank order self-actualization scores from the POI and
the interview to cross validate the instruments. Then we will test the
average self-actualization scores for the three communes to see if there
are significant differences among the communes.

Table 2 shows the paired rank order self-actualization scores
from the POI and the self-actualization semi-structured interview, for
each of the sixty people measured. From the data in Table 2 we
calculated a Spearman rank order correlation:

$$p = 1 - 6 \sum_{i=1}^{n} = \frac{(R(X_i - R(Y_i))^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

$R(X_i)$ and $R(Y_i)$ are the rank orders of the ith person, presented in Table 2, and n is the number of people tested, i.e., sixty. We found-- i.e., the correlation between the POI rank orders and the interview rank orders--to be .984, which is incredibly high.

A true correlation of zero would have indicated that there was no relationship between the POI and the interview rank orders--i.e., that the two measures of self-actualization are statistically independent. Conversely, a positive true correlation would indicate a relationship between the measures--i.e., that the POI and the interview are either (1) measuring the same variable (hopefully self-actualization) or (2) measuring correlated variables.

Above, we found the sample correlation to be .984, but can we conclude that the true correlation is greater than zero? This calls for a hypothesis test.

$$H_0: \quad p_t \leq 0$$

$$H_1: \quad p_t > 0$$

p_t is the true value of the Spearman rank order correlation between the POI and the interview rank orders.

By using tables established and tested by W. J. Conover (1971), we find that we can reject H_0, at the .01 significance level, if $p \leq .303$. Hence, our sample correlation of .984 is highly significant, or, viewed from a subjective probability perspective, we can be quite confident that the true correlation between the two orderings is positive.

Table 2

POI and Interview Rankings of
Ashram Residents

RANKS		RANKS	
$R(X_i)$	$R(Y_i)$	$R(X_i)$	$R(Y_i)$
POI	Interview	POI	Interview
1	2	31	34
2	4	32	29
3	1	33	35
4	3	34	30
5	8	35	32
6	9	36	36
7	6	37	40
8	11	38	45
9	5	39	37
10	7	40	39
11	10	41	38
12	15	42	46
13	13	43	41
14	16	44	43
15	22	45	44
16	12	46	42
17	14	47	50
18	17	48	47
19	20	49	49
20	24	50	48
21	31	51	53
22	18	52	54
23	19	53	51
24	21	54	52
25	23	55	59
26	25	56	60
27	28	57	55
28	26	58	58
29	27	59	56
30	33	60	57

n = 60

This result is a statistical proof of instrument reliability and concurrent validity. And concurrent validity is indicative of, i.e., consistent with, but not a proof of the actual validity of the instruments.

Table 3 presents the results of analysis of variance of each scale of the POI. As the right hand column indicates, none of the differences are statistically significant, indicating that the average self-actualization scores of the potential residents of the three communes are remarkably similar. The second preliminary result is obtained from an analysis of variance test of the following hypothesis set:

$$H_0: \qquad \mu_H = \mu_L = \mu_C$$

$$H_1: \qquad \sim (\mu_H = \mu_L = \mu_C)$$

μ_H, μ_L, and μ_C are the true average scores of residents of the Hawaii, Louisiana, and California communes, respectively.

The μ s are not the average scores of all the people living in the communes at the time the studies were conducted. These would be Xs in our case, because we sampled the whole population of each commune. Rather, the μ s are the true average scores which would result from measuring the people in these communes at any time now or in the forseeable future.

H_1 simply says that all true averages are not, i.e., $\sim$, the same; it does not say that all true averages are different from each other. In other words, it does not say that $\mu_H \neq \mu_L \neq \mu_C$.

When we performed a Kruskal-Wallis test (Conover, 1971:256) (analogous to an analysis of variance test in parametric statistics) on the interview rank orders, we tested the following hypotheses:

Table 3

POI Scale Means Among The Three Different Communes --
Hawaii, Louisiana, and California

POI Scale	Symbol	Hawaii	Louisa.	Calif.	F-Value	Prob. Value
Time Ratio	T_I/T_C	0.25	0.23	0.23	0.0613	0.9406
Support Ratio	O/I	0.50	0.47	0.46	0.3868	0.6810
Self-Actualizing Value	SAV	20.41	21.22	21.70	1.4593	0.2409
Existentiality	Ex	18.50	18.94	19.25	0.2735	0.7617
Feeling Reactivity	FR	14.55	14.67	15.20	0.3046	0.7386
Spontaneity	S	15.05	12.83	12.10	0.4603	0.6334
Self-Regard	SR	12.91	12.44	13.40	1.0883	0.3437
Self-Acceptance	SA	15.00	13.78	14.35	0.9094	0.4085
Nature of Man	Nc	12.64	13.06	13.60	1.5363	0.2240
Synergy	Sy	9.36	7.44	7.45	0.6491	0.5263
Acceptance of Aggression	A	15.09	14.72	15.70	0.6293	0.5366
Capacity for Intimate Contact	C	17.86	18.22	18.65	0.4524	0.6383

$n_H = 22$ $n_L = 18$ $n_C = 20$ N = 60

$$H_0: \quad E(X) = E(Y) = E(Z)$$

$$H_1: \quad \curvearrowleft (E(X) = E(Y) = E(Z))$$

E(X), E(Y), and E(Z) are the true average rank orders of Hawaii, Louisiana, and California communes, respectively.

The rank orders are listed in Table 4, where 60 is the most self-actualization and 1 is the least. Note that the sample average rank orders are very close: 32.4, 29.1, and 30.0. This apparent closeness is confirmed by the Kruskal-Wallis test, which indicated that we cannot reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level. In other words, like the analysis of variance test, the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that we have not proven (statistically) that the three communes are different in the level of self-actualization attained by their residents, either now or in the forseeable future.

Table 5 contains the first results which directly impinge upon the research hypothesis. This table reports the following hypothesis test:

$$H_0: \quad \mu_A \leq \mu_S$$

$$H_1: \quad \mu_A > \mu_S$$

for each dimension of the POI. μ_A is the true mean for American Ashram communes and μ_S is the true mean for U. S. college students.

As the last column of Table 5 shows, $\overline{X}_A$ is significantly greater than $\overline{X}_S$ for only five of the twelve dimensions. In fact, if we tested the hypothesis $\mu_A < \mu_S$, we would have accepted it for five of the twelve dimensions also. This means that there is no apparent

Table 4

Self-Actualization Rank Orders For Residents
of Three Different Communes

California	Louisiana	Hawaii
55	58	43
52	33	35
44	34	40
30	29	47
36	18	60
48	12	51
14	50	1
19	46	9
8	23	4
41	2	28
32	20	7
57	42	45
27	5	6
10	22	31
54	17	26
3	15	11
25	59	21
39	38	56
16		13
37		53
		24
		49
$\sum$ =647	$\sum$ =523	$\sum$ = 660
n = 20	n = 18	n = 22
$\bar{X}$ =32.4	$\bar{Y}$ =29.1	$\bar{Z}$ = 30.0

Table 5

POI Scale Means and Standard Deviations of Typical College Students (Standard Scores)
and All Ashram Residents, the Mean Differences, T-Values, and
One-Tailed Probability Values

POI Scale	Symbol	NORMAL (Std. Score) $\overline{X}_S$ Mean	S.D.	ALL ASHRAM MEMBERS $\overline{X}_A$ Mean	S.D.	Mean Diff. $\overline{X}_A$-$\overline{X}_S$	T-Value	One-Tailed Prob. Val.
Time Ratio	Ti/Tc	.125	---	.239	-----	.114	4.22	0.000 **
Support Ratio	O/I	.333	---	.480	-----	.147	6.82	0.000 **
Self-Actualizing Value	SAV	20.2	3.0	21.083	2.499	.883	2.74	0.004 **
Existentiality	Ex	21.8	5.1	18.883	3.268	-2.917	-6.91	0.999
Feeling Reactivity	FR	15.7	3.3	14.800	2.815	-0.900	-2.48	0.992
Spontaneity	S	11.6	3.0	13.400	10.283	1.800	1.36	0.090
Self-Regard	SR	12.0	2.7	12.933	1.999	.933	3.62	0.000 **
Self-Acceptance	SA	17.1	4.0	14.417	2.860	-2.683	-7.27	0.999
Nature of Man	Nc	12.4	1.9	13.083	1.797	.683	2.95	0.002 **
Synergy	Sy	7.3	1.2	8.150	6.240	.850	1.06	0.148
Acceptance of Aggression	A	16.6	3.7	15.183	2.709	-1.417	-4.05	0.999
Capacity for Intimate Contact	C	18.8	4.6	18.233	2.651	-0.567	-1.66	0.950

** Significant at the .01 confidence level   N = 60

overall tendency on the part of Ashram residents to be more self-actualized than the student population. Hence, if we assume that the self-actualization level of students is representative of the self-actualization level of the U. S. population, the research hypothesis:

> The background, current status, and environmental
>
> interaction within three selected Ashram (Sikh)
>
> communities tend to predispose its members toward
>
> the process of self-actualization, as delineated by Maslow,

is not supported.

Now let us analyze the dimensions in Table 5 in greater detail. On the self-actualizing value scale Ashram residents scored significantly higher than the college-normed group. The high score suggests that Ashram residents hold and live by values of self-actualizing people. (See Appendix B.)

On the Time Competence and Support ratio scales, which measure the degree to which one is "present"-oriented, Ashram residents scored significantly higher than the student group. This suggests that the Ashram group as a whole is present-oriented, living more freely in the here-and-now. The high score also indicates that they are able to integrate the past and future to the present in meaningful continuity. They appear less burdened by guilt, regrets, and resentments from the past than the student group, and their aspirations are tied meaningfully to present working goals.

The significantly high score on the Support ratio scale suggests that as a group the Ashram residents tended to be inner-directed and

secondarily other-directed in life decisions. As a group they are less dependent on looking to each other's view for support in important decisions.

The high scores on the Nature of Man scale reflect more of a philosophical orientation than do some of the other scales. This is characterized by a positive and meaningful awareness which is held by self-actualized people. It must be emphasized that this is a philosophical orientation rather than one of applicability.

It is clear from the statistical evidence that Ashram residents had significantly lower scores on Feeling Reactivity, Spontaneity, Self-Acceptance, Synergy, and Acceptance of Aggression scales than the college group. A review of these scales (see Appendix B) suggests that Ashram residents tended to be generally insensitive or deny their own needs and feelings, especially in the area of aggression. Negative attributes seemed to be avoided or denied by the Ashram group. This may be validated by the Ashram resident's high score on Self Regard, but significantly low score in Acceptance of Aggression.

These scores appear to be consistent with the information obtained through observation and the open-ended interview. It suggests that nearly all of the Ashram members saw man as essentially good. The focus was always on the positive and the ability to express that quality was evident. At the same time, an avoidance of the acceptance of personal weaknesses or feelings of aggression was also clearly observable. The need to appear positive, aware, and in a good light seemed to be one of the clearest patterns of the group as a whole.

If the treatment has its effect in a brief period soon after the neophyte enters the commune, the neophyte would have become self-

actualized before we had time to measure them. Therefore, for the neophyte-member comparison to give us information about the research question, we must assume Ashram communes do not have a "step function effect" on the self-actualization of their neophytes.

Under this assumption, we get another check on the research question by testing the following hypotheses:

$$H_0: \quad \mu_{Me} \leq \mu_{Ne}$$

$$H_1: \quad \mu_{Me} > \mu_{Ne},$$

where μ_{Me} is the true mean of members of the American Ashram communes and μ_{Ne} is the true mean of neophytes in American Ashram communes. The alternative hypothesis is consistent with the research hypothesis.

Table 6 shows the results of this hypothesis test for the POI. As can be seen from the last column of the table, the mean differences are statistically significant for only one of the fourteen POI dimensions. Not only that, but the T-value column shows that eight mean differences are in favor of the neophytes and only six are in favor of the members. Hence, again, the research hypothesis is not supported.

Comparing the self-actualization of members and neophytes, as measured by the semi-structured interview, we obtain a similar result.

$$H_0: \quad E(X) \leq E(Y)$$

$$H_1: \quad E(X) > E(Y)$$

Table 6

Means, Standard Deviations, Mean Differences, T-Values, and One-Tailed Probability
Values of Members and Neophytes

POI Scale	Symbol	MEMBERS		NEOPHYTES		T-Value $\mu_{Me} - \mu_{Ne}$	One-Tailed Prob. Val.
		Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.		
Time Competence	TC	18.886	2.610	18.600	3.428	0.35	0.364
Time Ratio	Ti/TC	0.228	0.194	0.255	0.232	-0.48	0.684
Inner-Directed	I	84.771	9.849	84.440	8.535	0.14	0.445
Support Ratio	O/I	0.473	0.171	0.490	0.164	-0.40	0.655
Self-Actualizing Value	SAV	21.200	2.699	20.920	2.235	0.44	0.332
Existentiality	Ex	18.600	3.136	19.280	3.470	-0.78	0.780
Feeling Reactivity	FR	14.570	2.811	15.120	2.848	-0.74	0.769
Spontaneity	S	14.514	13.276	11.840	2.427	1.16	0.126
Self-Regard	SR	13.114	1.859	12.680	2.193	0.80	0.213
Self-Acceptance	SA	14.143	2.635	14.800	3.175	-0.85	0.800
Nature of Man	Nc	13.457	1.442	12.560	2.123	1.83	0.037
Synergy	Sy	7.429	1.092	9.160	9.603	-0.90	0.811
Acceptance of Aggression	A	15.114	2.698	15.280	2.777	-0.23	0.591
Capacity for Intimate Contact	C	18.029	2.640	18.520	2.694	-0.70	0.757

$N_M = 35$ $N_N = 25$ $N = 60$

As can be seen from Table 7, the average of member rank orders (where 60 is the most self-actualized and 1 is the least) is 30.0 and the average of neophyte rank orders is 31.2. This means that in our sample neophytes do tend to be more self-actualized than members. Hence, a Mann-Whiting test (Conover, 1971) of the above hypothesis has no possibility of rejecting the hypothesis.

Now, turning away from the research hypothesis to other matters, we test the difference between male and female self-actualization.

$$H_0: \quad \mu_{Ma} = \mu_{Fe}$$

$$H_1: \quad \mu_{Ma} \neq \mu_{Fe}$$

The POI results are reported in Table 8. The last column of Table 8 shows that Sikh males and females are not significantly different on any POI dimension.

A contrary result is found from analysis of data from the semi-structured interview. Table 9 gives the male-female rank order data from interviews, 60 being the most self-actualized.

As shown in the table, the average male rank is 35.0 and the average female rank is 25.0. A two-tailed Mann-Whitney test tells us that male Sikhs rank significantly (probability value between .05 and .01) higher than female Sikhs on this measure of self-actualization.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we employed statistical analysis to reach the following conclusions:

Table 7

Interview Ranking By Membership

Member (X)	Neophyte (Y)
55	52
30	44
36	48
14	41
19	27
8	3
32	25
57	39
10	33
54	29
16	18
37	46
58	2
34	20
12	22
50	38
23	60
42	1
5	7
17	31
15	11
59	56
35	53
40	24
47	49
51	
9	
4	
28	
45	
6	
26	
21	
13	
43	

$\sum = 1,051$ $\sum = 779$

$n = 35$ $n = 25$

$X = 30.0$ $Y = 31.2$

Table 8

Means, Standard Deviations, T-Values, and Two-Tailed Probability Values
of Ashram Residents By Sex

POI Scale	Symbol	MALE		FEMALE		T-Value	Two-Tailed Prob. Val.
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Time Competence	TC	18.333	3.149	19.296	2.658	-1.28	0.204
Time Ratio	Ti/TC	0.251	0.229	0.225	0.185	0.48	0.630
Inner-Directed	I	84.818	10.276	84.407	8.006	0.17	0.862
Support Ratio	O/I	0.464	0.176	0.499	0.156	-0.82	0.417
Self-Actualizing Value	SAV	20.636	2.748	21.636	2.078	-1.59	0.117
Existentiality	Ex	19.182	3.405	18.519	3.118	0.79	0.435
Feeling Reactivity	FR	14.788	3.248	14.815	2.237	-0.04	0.970
Spontaneity	S	12.576	2.092	14.407	15.252	-0.62	0.541
Self-Regard	SR	12.818	1.960	13.074	2.074	-0.49	0.628
Self-Acceptance	SA	14.515	2.980	14.296	2.757	0.29	0.769
Nature of Man	Nc	12.970	2.054	13.222	1.450	-0.56	0.580
Synergy	Sy	8.546	8.408	7.667	0.961	0.60	0.555
Acceptance of Aggression	A	14.909	3.014	15.519	2.293	-0.89	0.378
Capacity for Intimate Contact	C	18.333	2.712	18.111	2.621	0.32	0.749

n_M = 33 n_F = 27   N = 60

Table 9

Interview Ranking By Sex

Male (X)	Female (Y)
55	44
52	30
36	48
19	14
8	32
41	27
57	10
54	3
25	16
39	33
37	12
58	50
34	20
29	17
18	15
46	38
23	47
2	1
42	4
5	28
22	7
59	6
43	31
35	56
40	13
60	24
51	49
9	
45	
26	
11	
21	
53	

$\sum = 1,155$ $\qquad$ $\sum = 675$

$n = 33$ $\qquad$ $n = 27$

$X = 35.0$ $\qquad$ $Y = 25.0$

1. The high correlation between the POI and semi-structured interview rank orders is consistant with the validity of these instruments.

2. An analysis of variance test and a Kruskal-Wallis test were unable to show that there are differences in the average self-actualization levels of residents in different Ashrams.

3. No support was found for the research hypothesis, either by comparing Sikhs with college students or by comparing members with neophytes.

4. A t-test of Sikh male-female differences on the POI self-actualization was non-significant. But a two-tailed Mann-Whitney test on the interview data showed Sikh males to be significantly more self-actualizing than Sikh females.

To summarize, we found that the Spearman rank order correlation between the POI and semi-structured interview rank orders to be extremely high. This is indicative of, although not proof of, the validity of these two instruments.

An analysis of variance performed on the POI data and a Kruskal-Wallis test performed on the interview data were both unable to prove statistically that there were, or in the future would be, differences in the average self-actualization levels of the Ashrams.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In order to determine the extent to which American Sikhs could be considered self-actualizing people, the POI was administered to sixty Ashram members in three communes. The subjects were divided into two groups made up of neophytes and full-fledged members who had taken the formal Sikh vows. Members of both groups were recommended by the communes' leaders, but in the cases of all three Ashrams, virtually all of the bonafide members had to be tested in order to reach this number of test subjects. Since these Ashrams were widely separated geographically and since no intervening variables that might affect that authenticity of the data could be identified, data from the subjects was assumed to be authentic for the movement as a whole.

In addition, the subjects were interviewed intensively in a semi-structured interview according to a checklist designed to determine the extent to which they approximated Maslow's ideal of the self-actualizing individual. The following dimensions of values were probed: conflict avoidance, participation, justice, self-sufficiency, truth, order, meaningfulness, and beauty. An attempt was made to determine whether rankings on the basis of such interviews would approximate those of the POI.

We found the Spearman rank order correlation between the POI and semi-structured interview rank orders to be extremely high.

This is indicative of, although not proof of, the validity of these two instruments.

An analysis of variance performed on the POI data and a Kruskal-Wallis test (Conover, 1971) performed on the interview data were both unable to prove (statistically) that there were or would be in the future differences in the average self-actualization levels of the Ashrams.

Then a hypothesis test was performed on the POI to test the similarity of self-actualization levels between Ashram Sikhs and college students. Results showed that Sikhs and students were significantly different on almost every POI dimension, but the direction of the differences was not consistant. Ashram Sikhs were significantly more self-actualizing on five dimensions and students were significantly more self-actualizing on four dimensions. Hence, the research hypothesis:

The background, current status, and environmental

interaction within the three selected Ashram (Sikh)

communities tend to predispose its members toward

the process of self-actualization as delineated by Maslow,

was not confirmed.

Another way which we tested the research hypothesis was to compare members and neophytes. Using a t-test on the POI data and a Mann-Whitney test (Conover, 1971) on the interview rank orders, we were unable to prove (statistically) that there was any difference in self-actualization between members and neophytes. Hence, again, the research hypothesis was not supported.

Finally, we tested the difference in Sikh male-female self-actualization levels. Using both POI and interview data a t-test of POI

data showed no male-female difference. But a two-tailed Mann-Whitney test of the interview data showed Sikh males to be significantly more self-actualizing than Sikh females.

One of the more prominent findings that is descriptive of the phantasmagoric Sikhs is the very low scores on the feeling reactivity and spontaneity scales of the POI. The Ashram group consistently tended to score lower than the non-Ashram sample and presented a picture of rigidity in thinking and behavior, unresponsiveness to one's own needs and feelings, intolerance of differences, and greater dependency on authority, regulations, and conventions. The high scores on the Nature of Man, Time Competence, and Capacity for Intimate Contact scales of the POI may contribute to a "spiritual" and creative potential, but there should be higher scores on existentiality, synergy, self-regard, and self-acceptance, which are relatively depressed, for self-actualization to be expected.

On the basis of the foregoing, it seems that membership in the Ashrams is not significantly connected with a high level of self-actualization. What can be discerned from the data developed in the study regarding cause and effect?

First, there is no significant difference in the self-actualizing of neophytes and full members. This finding would seem to indicate that the key factor is that self-actualizing people are not more likely to be found in American Sikh Ashrams.

Secondly, it was discovered that most Sikhs turn to yoga and communal living because of considerable difficulties in coping with the demands of the world. A majority of the Ashram members came from broken homes. Most of them reported a history of drug use, ranging

from moderate to heavy experience with marijuana, MDA, LSD, THC, peyote, and psylocibin. Only one of the subjects studied had an arrest record. They were not as a group interested in politics, either mainstream or radical. They were, however, separated from the family household by the age of twenty, and their geographical mobility was extensive. Their backgrounds were not those of self-actualizing individuals.

On the other hand, their backgrounds suggested that they were looking for something that was lacking in their lives. The common thread of experience which led eventually to membership in an Ashram was participation in a Kundalini yoga class. Opportunities to attend such classes are now fairly widespread in the United States, but were much rarer when most of the members of the Ashrams studied began to participate. They had to make an active effort to find the teachers, to enroll, and to persevere. On the whole, therefore, the Ashram members seemed to have felt a lack in their lives and were not satisfied by the other alternatives (drugs, radical political causes, the "straight" life) available to them. (It would be interesting to study the Sikhs from the standpoint of deviant groups, but this will have to await other studies.)

What is there in the Sikh way of life that attracts individuals drawn instinctively or consciously to self-actualization? Here certainties elude us but some suggestions can be offered.

There are aspects of the Sikh religion which are not unfamiliar to Westerners in general and to Americans in particular. Sikhism developed as a reaction against Moslem and Hindu control of India, and there are parallels with Christianity. Sikhism's founder, Guru Nanak,

was born with magical portents, was precocious in religious matters,
retired for three days in the wilderness, was tempted, refused, and
began to wander about preaching. Nanak's message was severely
egalitarian, and he found the themes for his teachings in the homely
daily life about him. He wrote nothing himself, but his hymns, poetry,
and sayings were committed to memory by the faithful and formed the
first sacred scriptures. The parallels with the life and mission of
Jesus are obvious.

There are important differences as well, but these were muted
when Sikhism was introduced to the West. Because of its birth in an
area of two warring religions, Sikhism developed extremely warlike
traditions and trappings quite different from the Christian admonition
to "turn the other cheek." Sikhism became in fact a military brother-
hood. Siri Guru Granth Sahib simply ignored this aspect of Sikhism
when he introduced the religion to the United States. What he stressed
were the moral teachings, yoga, and those aspects of the Sikh theology
which would be familiar to anyone living in the Judeo-Christian-Moslem
tradition. There is only one God. Purity of life is set forth as the
highest object of human endeavor, and loyalty, chastity, honesty,
justice, mercy, and temperance are among the virtues on which vital
stress is laid.

For those young Americans alienated from their families and
institutions, Sikhism offered an opportunity. Maslow has said that
"self-actualizing people are, without one single exception, involved in
a cause outside their own skin, in something outside of themselves."
(Maslow, 1971:43). Those Americans attracted to Sikhism obviously
found it a viable cause. It had no connection with their previous

unsatisfactory lives. They had a religious vocation of sorts, but they could not identify with the religion of parents from whom they were alienated. Many of those interviewed showed a period of escape into the drug culture, representing an attempt to find happiness "inside their own skins." When this failed to provide happiness, they were ripe for a cause that would take them outside of themselves.

In all cases, the American Sikhs became interested in Sikhism as a result of exposure to yoga courses. Yoga and transcendental meditation have become quite popular in the United States today, and have been studied in some detail. There is no need to consider the phenomenon at length in the context of this study except to note that the attraction of yoga and TM seems to be widespread.

American Sikhs spend a major and important part of each day practicing yoga in concentrated fashion. At a very early hour each morning each Ashram meets for sangat, a three- or four-hour session of exercises, chanting, and meditation. A major part of this session is devoted to the practice of Kundalini yoga, a discipline which combines techniques of other yogas, and includes various types of exercises, breath control, and meditation. However, the yoga and meditation exercises are kept firmly linked with religious purposes, unlike the forms being popularized today. The chants are taken from the sacred writings of the Sikhs and the name of God, in the form of the mantras Sat Nam or Wahe Guru, is constantly uttered or kept in the forefront of consciousness. As commonly taught in YMCAs, colleges, community centers, or even public television, yoga and TM are purged of all sectarianism or religion. As practiced in the Ashram, these techniques

serve a dual purpose of religion and whatever benefits to the individual may flow from their practice.

The Ashram also offers fellowship and community. These factors exist in all communal living, but are brought to a higher peak of intensity in the Ashram. The process begins with the religiously-inspired yoga exercises outlined above. The fact that members engage in them together undoubtedly serves to solidify relationships between members of the commune.

Another major source of fellowship is the practice of pangat, taking meals together. All meals are taken together if possible, but where this is impossible members will have lunches prepared for them. The evening meal, however, is virtually always communally prepared and taken together. Evenings are also spent together on communal projects, as are weekends and other free time.

Moreover, even when Ashram members are working in the "outside" world, they are conscious of the fact that they are earning the money necessary to keep the commune going. Absences from the Ashram are a necessary means of contributing to it. The ideal is for the commune to develop a business or enterprise that will enable all members of the Ashram to work together. Even when that cannot be done, the members constitute a very close community despite the need to work outside the "home."

Ashram members therefore are involved "in a cause outside their own skin." The dynamics of the commune demand that they live for others on a daily, almost minute-by-minute basis.

In attempting to analyze the components of self-actualization, Maslow (1971) emphasized the importance of "giving up the past." This

is not to say that the past should be forgotten, but that it should be integrated into the present reality, and that one should meet present problems head on. In a very real and concrete sense, entering an Ashram implies giving up the past and living in a new present.

The self-actualizing person also sees each day and each experience as something fresh and new. The way of life in an Ashram with its blend of sociable meditation and a variety of social tasks probably serves to diminish focus on the self, helping what Maslow (1971) considers the necessary "loss of ego" or self-forgetfulness.

THE SETTING AND DATA

The most important finding, however, was the necessity to differentiate within the Ashram setting itself. When such differentiations were made, global as they might be, a number of crucial factors came to light. These findings have several implications with respect to the significant relationship between the Ashram setting and self-actualization.

Members' Perceptions of One Another

As in any small group, Ashram members developed a variety of feelings and attitudes about one another. In the areas of acceptance and trust the Ashram groups appeared to show a reduction of fear and distrust and an increase of warmth that was perceived by members as genuine and often characterized as "nothing like what I have felt before." There also appeared to be a high amount of confidence in the ability of the group, with minimal concern about comparing the group with other groups.

This attitude of acceptance and trust, however, is not borne out by the POI. On the Capacity for Intimate Contact scale, the subjects' low scores indicated that they had difficulty with warm inter-personal relationships. The test scores, may, in part, be explained by the Ashram groups' attitudes toward conformity. The Ashram group appears to have developed ways of handling members who deviate in attitude or behavior and of communicating rewards and punishments both for conformity and non-conformity. Strong standards have also been developed about whether feelings should be expressed freely, how often and by whom feelings and perceptions may be expressed, and what kind of feelings and perceptions are admissable in verbal interaction. It appears that the Ashram group can be permissive and tolerate varying opinions and ideas but reacts restrictively to the expression of feelings and attitudes that threaten the identity and cohesiveness of the group.

Openness and Spontaneity

The Ashram group appeared to have a high degree of integration needs and actions at all levels of awareness. There was minimal inter-personal conflict. However, there appeared to be a high disparity between inner thoughts and verbalized speech, which suggests that members do not act spontaneously in an open expression of feelings and that conflict tends to be suppressed.

Problem Solving

The group's orientation to work is high. In the work environment competitive behavior was observed but viewed as minimally obstructive, with consistent ideas and behavior emerging around the

nature of work. Conflict in the work situation is minimal. Work goals appeared to be explicit and verbalized, and consistent ideas emerged around what kinds of activities are treated as productive or nonproductive. The Ashram group appeared able to engage in solving problems without an undue expenditure of energy. The group seemed to work well in joint inquiry and joint problem solving and appeared to function well within an organizational structure that has numerous external controls.

Behavioral and
Social Implications

The Sikhs utilize behavioral modification processes to reduce the competitive tendencies, the idiosyncracies and the selfish urges of the previous lifestyle of the members.

In the Sikh commune, changing the former lifestyle was an active concern of all members. The group was highly conscious of its communal goals, self-actualization, and transcendence of personality into a "unified consciousness." The "dressing up" in Indian-style clothing was one of several practices required for shedding the old identity. In addition, persons were forced to give up drugs, sex, and even change their name in order to become members of the Ashram.

After this process, differentiating the members from outside, the group sought to break the barriers between individuals. Informal group criticism or encounter tactics were employed to eliminate undesirable traits and to establish dependency patterns. All socialization is grounded in the supernatural, in a religiously held source of authority and absolutism that determines the proper ordering of social relationships. Self-development is de-emphasized, though not totally, and individuality is often subordinated to the welfare of the Ashram.

Some informal deviancy and individuality is tolerated but kept within manageable proportions. The result is an emphasis on rehabilitation of the individual in the direction of a "proper spiritual nature," with a maximum of group support.

Authority Patterns

The Sikh commune has a highly structured decision-making process beginning with Yogi Bahan, the Spiritual head of the Sikh movement in the United States, and diffused through various levels of the community. Although ultimate decision making is isolated from the rank and file, all members are involved in daily decisions. Within the Sikh Ashram, order is believed to flow from what the members call "cosmic energy." All professed beliefs and activities are linked to this source.

The Ashrams tended to have an elaborate ideology, to provide purpose and meaning for community life and to serve as the ultimate guide and justification for decisions. The social practices were based on the standards, values, needs, and historical circumstances of traditional Sikhism. Thus, they tended to have strong central figures, charismatic leaders who symbolized the communities' values, made final decisions, and set spiritual and structural guidelines. The charismatic leader, as value bearer, remained the ultimate source of authority. The Ashram also tended to have fixed daily work routines and personal conduct rules--all deriving from ideology and informing an individual of his responsibilities. Finally, they tended to require ideological conversion and fostered a sense of group mission.

This controlled process of adjustment to social change limits expression for the Sikh individual, who must adjust his way of life within the conflict of his own cultural traditions and the contemporary American Sikh values of his environment.

Thus, it appears the Sikh has many of the creative elements contributing to the potential for self-actualization, but due to external controls within the Ashram lacks the self-regard and self-acceptance needed for a more complete expression of potential, and is also hindered to some unknown degree by the need to suppress the open and immediate expression of thoughts and feelings.

Limitations and Implications

One may well ask: If the Ashram environment is such an influential experience on the self-actualizing levels of Ashram subjects, why weren't more and larger differences found between the Ashram subjects who practice certain customs and rituals and the non-Ashram population, who practice other behaviors? There are several possible explanations why more dramatic results were not obtained.

Perhaps one major limitation of the study was the brief testing period. Ashram living is a new experience for many of the residents. Although Sikh customs and behavior are easily transmitted, a period of adjustment to the novel experiences accompanying the acculturation process might be necessary before new converts are able to fully experience the new value system.

In addition, the effects of acculturation are cumulative and should be more obvious after a longer period of adjustment. Conversely, the effects of the various social-psychological factors, while extremely

salient at the outset, should decrease after the initial adjustment phase, unless there is a facade of socialization or pseudo-adjustment in which members appear over zealous in their conversion to a new lifestyle and a new set of values. This may be the case with those neophytes that obtained high scores on the POI. Any checks for this pseudo-adjustment would do well to include an experimental testing period of several months. This would provide a sufficient period of time for all subjects to get comfortable with their new surroundings, would provide a developmental perspective to the study, and would provide ample time for the cumulative effects of the acculturation process to be felt. In this way a more precise indication of differences between those social-psychological factors which are inherently potent and productive of greater self-actualization and those which rely solely on factors extraneous to the actual Ashram experience for their effect could be obtained.

In review, it becomes dramatically evident that there is an interplay of all value categories in the interpersonal acts occurring in the social process of the Ashram, that give us an impression of balance and imbalance. One explanation for the imbalance might be found in the dynamics of group process. Members enter the Ashram with unresolved feelings of fear and distrust. The facade produced by socialization makes it difficult for a person to find himself, accept himself, or trust himself. One sees many symptoms of distrust in the Ashram: attempts to change attitudes and beliefs of others, attempts to make decisions for others, avoidance of feeling, avoidance of conflict, cynicism about the power of the group. With group development, these symptoms are reduced and the group learns to communicate its values

more effectively. In varying degrees the Ashram members learn to be more subordinate in their actions and to integrate their values into the group process.

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that the system of beliefs and practices in the Sikh Ashram do not effect significant positive changes in self-actualization. The findings also show that the regular practice of certain other behaviors (i.e., meditation) which encompass limited aspects of the complete Ashram experience is not significantly beneficial in this area. The question of the relative capability of the Ashram to influence personal growth has not been satisfactorily resolved. The fact that a major portion of the results was inconsistent with the original hypothesis demonstrates the probability that the effect of the Ashram experience is due to something more than just an interaction of set and setting.

It therefore seems clear from the evidence presented in the study that Ashram members tend to be less self-actualizing on certain levels than their peers. The background, current status, and environmental interaction within the three selected Ashrams does not appear to predispose its members toward specific self-actualizing values as delineated by Maslow. Some suggestions have been offered regarding those features of the Sikh religion and Ashram life that seem to be important in increasing the extent of self-actualization. However, these are merely suggestions, and considerably more research on the Sikhs, on other religious and communal groups, and on the effects of yoga and meditation will be required before a greater degree of certainty can be achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Several suggestions may be made in regard to any future attempts to study the American Sikh in a social-cultural-situational context. Since meditation plays such an important part in the life of the Sikhs, studies of subjective inner-emotional experiences through analysis of subjective reports appear warranted. Also, studies of values as they appear in the content of speech, that is, studies of linguistic forms which represent emotions, feelings, and values, as well as studies of facial expressions and/or body movements, may help to shed more light on the phenomena of meditation and mystical experiences that are claimed to be ineffable.

Since value messages may not require the actual use of words, such studies on the phenomena of meditation are likely to provide information as to how value messages may be expressed non-verbally and how a group like the Sikhs convey value messages via the meditation experience.

In the light of Maslow's (1970) comment that "self-actualizing people are. . .altruistic," it might also be of interest to obtain pre- and post-meditation measures of altruism. Even more intriguing would be some pre- and post-meditation measures by subjects of congruence (or self-liking). Intuitively one would expect the correlation between perceived and ideal self to be higher following meditation.

Maslow (1970) states that self-actualizing people can all be described as relatively spontaneous in behavior and far more spontaneous than that in their life, thoughts, impulses, etc.. Although

spontaneity is a difficult variable to assess behaviorally, blind clinical judges might globally rate, control, and experiment subjects for spontaneity.

Finally, the concept of self-actualization may need to be re-examined. Maslow's point that there is no sharp distinction between self-actualizers and ordinary people, leads this investigator to the conclusion that everybody is potentially a self-actualizer, and the choice is largely a matter of free will, not of circumstances.

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APPENDIX A

POI DESCRIPTION

The profile on the <u>Personal Orientation Inventory</u> <u>(POI)</u> shows the degree to which attitudes and values compare with those of self-actualizing people. A self-actualizing person is one who is more fully functioning and who lives a more enriched life than does the average person. Such a person is developing and utilizing his unique talents to the fullest extent.

The interpretation of the scores falls into two general categories, the ratio scores and the profile scores. If the ratio scores are close to the scores that self-actualizing persons make, we may consider the values and attitudes, as measured by the POI, to be similar to these people.

Ratio Scores

Interpretation of the TI - TC Ratio

In order to understand the Time Incompetent - Time Competent (TI - TC) ratio, it is of help to consider time in its three basic components--Past, Present, and Future.

The TI (Time Incompetent) person is one who lives primarily in the Past, with guilts, regrets, and resentments, and/or in the Future, with idealized goals, plans, expectations, predictions, and fears.

In contrast to the TI person, the TC (Time Competent) person lives primarily in the Present with full awareness, contact, and full feeling reactivity. Because it is known that the self-actualizing person is not perfect, he is understood to be partly TI and partly TC. His TI - TC ratio is, on the average, 1 to 8. His ratio shows that he therefore lives primarily in the Present and only secondarily in the Past or Future.

If the score is significantly lower than 1 to 8, for example 1 to 3, this suggests that he is more Time Incompetent than the self-actualizing person. If his score is above 1 to 8, for example 1 to 10, this suggests that he is excessively Time Competent and this may perhaps reflect a need to appear more self-actualized than he really is.

Interpretation of the O - I Ratio

In order to understand the score on the Support (Other - Inner) ratio, one should first understand that the self-actualizing person is both

"other-directed" in that he is dependent upon and supported by other persons' views, and he is also "inner-directed" in that he is independent and self-supportive. The degree to which he is each of these can be expressed in a ratio. The O - I ratio of a self-actualizing person is, on the average, 1 to 3, which means that he depends primarily on his own feelings and secondarily on the feelings of others in his life decisions.

If his score is significantly higher than 1 to 3, that is 1 to 4 or above, it may be that this indicates an exaggerated independence and reflects a need to appear "too self-actualized" in responding to the POI. On the other hand, if his score is lower than 1 to 3, for example 1 to 1, it would suggest that he is in the dilemma of finding it difficult to trust either his own or others' feelings in making important decisions.

Profile Scores

On the Profile Sheet, short descriptions of each of the sub-scales are shown which describe high and low scores. In general, scores above the average on these scales, that is, above the mid-line shown by a standard score of 50, but below a standard score of 60, are considered to be most characteristic of self-actualizing adults. The closer his scores are to this range, the more similar are his responses to the POI responses given by self-actualizing people. The further below the score 50 his scores are, the more they represent areas in which his responses are not like those of self-actualizing people. If most of his scores on the profile are considerably above 60, he may be presenting a picture of himself which is "too" healthy or which overemphasizes his freedom and self-actualization.

Raw Scores

TI/TC

1:22		1:22.0	
2:21	Self-actualized Range	1:10.5	Self-actualized 1:7.7
3:20		1:6.7	
4:19	Normal Range	1:4.8	Normal, 1:5.1
5:18		1:3.6	
6:17		1:2.8	Non-self-actualized, 1:2.9
7:16	Non-self-actualized Range	1:2.3	
8:15		1:1.9	
9:14		1:1.6	

Sample Time Ratio Scores

Raw Scores

0:I

10:117		1:11.7	
15:112		1:7.5	
20:107	Self-actualized Range	1:5.4	Self-actualized, 1:3.3
25:102		1:4.1	
30:97		1:3.2	
35:92	Normal Range	1:2.6	Normal, 1:2.5
40:87		1:2.2	
45:82	Non-self-actualized Range	1:1.8	Non-self-actualized, 1:1.4
50:77		1:1.5	
55:72		1:1.3	

Support Ratio Scores

APPENDIX B

THE POI SCALES

Tc   **TIME COMPETENCE:** The Time Incompetence/Time Competence ratio measures degree to which one is "present" oriented as contrasted with the time incompetent (T₁) person who lives primarily in the past, with guilts, regrets, and resentments, and/or in the future, with idealized goals, plans, expectations, predictions, and fears. The Time Competent person appears to live more fully in the here-and-now. He is able to tie the past and the future to the present in meaningful continuity. He appears to be less burdened by guilts, regrets, and resentments from the past than is the non-self-actualized person, and his aspirations are tied meaningfully to present working goals.

I   **INNER SUPPORT:** The Other/Inner support ratio measures whether reactivity orientation is basically toward others (O) or self (I). The inner-directed person appears to have incorporated a psychic "gyroscope" which is started by parental influences and later on is further influenced by other authority figures. The inner-directed man goes through life apparently independent, but still obeying this internal piloting. The source of direction for the individual is inner in the sense that he is guided by internal motivations rather than external influences.

SAV   **SELF-ACTUALIZING VALUE:** Measures affirmation of a primary value of self-actualizing people. A high score means that the individual holds and lives by values of self-actualizing people, and a low score means he rejects values of self-actualizing people. Items in this scale cut across many characteristics but a representative SAV item stem is, "I live in terms of my wants, likes, dislikes and values."

Ex   **EXISTENTIALITY:** Measures ability to situationally or existentially react without rigid adherence to principles. Existentiality measures one's flexibility in applying values or principles to one's life. It is a measure of one's ability to use good judgment in applying these general principles. Higher scores reflect flexibility in application of values.

Fr   **FEELING REACTIVITY:** Measures sensitivity of responsiveness to one's own needs and feelings. A high score reflects sensitivity to one's own needs and feelings. A low score shows insensitivity to one's own needs and feelings.

S   **SPONTANEITY:** Measures freedom to react spontaneously or to be oneself. A high score measures the ability to express feelings in spontaneous action. A low score indicates that one is fearful of expressing feelings behaviorally.

Sr   **SELF REGARD:** Measures affirmation of self because of worth or strength. A high score measures the ability to like one's self because of one's strength as a person. A low score indicates low self worth.

Sa   **SELF ACCEPTANCE:** Measures affirmation or acceptance of self. A high score measures acceptance of one's self in spite of one's weaknesses or deficiencies. A low score indicates inability to accept one's weaknesses. It is more difficult to achieve self-acceptance than self-regard. Self-actualization requires both.

Nc   **NATURE OF MAN:** Measures degree of the constructive view of the nature of man, masculinity, femininity. A high score means that one sees man as essentially good. He can resolve the goodness-evil, masculine-feminine, selfishness-unselfishness and spirituality-sensuality dichotomies in the nature of man. A high score, therefore, measures the self-actualizing ability to be synergic in understanding of human nature. A low score means that one sees man as essentially evil or bad.

Sy   **SYNERGY:** Measures ability to be synergistic, to transcend dichotomies. A high score is a measure of the ability to see opposites of life as meaningfully related. A low score means that one sees that work and play are not different, that lust and love, selfishness and self-lessness, and other dichotomies are not really opposites at all.

A   **ACCEPTANCE OF AGGRESSION:** Measures ability to accept one's natural aggressiveness as opposed to defensiveness, denial, and repression of aggression. A high score measures the ability to accept anger or aggression within one's self as natural. A low score means that one denies having such feelings.

C   **CAPACITY FOR INTIMATE CONTACT:** Measures ability to develop contactful intimate relationships with other human beings, unencumbered by expectations and obligations. A high score measures the person's ability to develop meaningful, contactful, relationships with other human beings. A low score means one has difficulty with warm inter-personal relationships.

APPENDIX C

GROUP PROFILE

This is a profile of a group which appears to be functioning fairly well. The pattern of the profile is fairly consistent and close to the middle shown by a standard score of 50. The Time Ratio (1:4.7) falls within the normal range, suggesting that this group as a whole is present-oriented, living more fully in the here-and-now. This also indicates that they are able to integrate the past and the future to the present in meaningful continuity. They appear less burdened by guilts, regrets, and resentments from the past than the non-self-actualized group and their aspirations are tied meaningfully to present working goals.

It should be mentioned that most people on this scale tended to be either excessively time competent or extremely time incompetent, and perhaps this average does not really reflect how the group actually appeared, but when averaged these two general trends average to a score that characterizes normal time competency.

The Support Ratio (1:1.9), on the other hand, is a representative figure of what most of the group scored most often.

This suggests that as a group, they tended to be primarily other-directed and secondarily inner-directed in life decisions. As a group, they appeared as though they were dependent on looking to each others' views for support in important decisions.

On the profile scales, they, too, represented a pattern which characterized how most people scored. The group members usually

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held values of self-actualizing people, but had some difficulty in application to reality.

There tended to be a general insensitiveness or denial to their own needs and feelings, especially in the area of aggression, but they always seemed to find it easy to express feelings freely on a behavioral level. Perhaps they were only positive feelings. Any negative attributes that appeared seemed to be avoided or denied by the group. This was validated by most people having high self-regard but, in almost every instance, difficulty in accepting weaknesses as part of themselves. Nearly all of the group saw man as essentially good and were able to see the opposites of life as meaningfully related. So the focus was always on the positive and the ability to express that quality was evident; but at the same time, an avoidance of accepting personal weaknesses or feelings of aggression was observable.

The need to appear positive, aware, and in a good light seemed to be the most detectable pattern of the group in general.

PROFILE SHEET FOR THE PERSONAL ORIENTATION INVENTORY

NAME _____   DATE TESTED _____

AGE _____ SEX _____

OCCUPATION _____

I T₁ - T_C (Time) Ratio:
Self-Actualizing Average: $T_i:T_C = 1:8$
Your Ratio: $T_i:T_C = 1:$ 4.7

II O - I (Support) Ratio:
Self-Actualizing Average: $O:I = 1:3$
Your Ratio: $O:I = 1:$ 1.9

		VALUING		FEELING		SELF-PERCEPTION		SYNERGISTIC AWARENESS		INTERPERSONAL SENSITIVITY	
TIME COMPETENT Lives in the present	INNER-DIRECTED Independent, self-supportive	SELF-ACTUALIZING VALUE Holds values of self-actualizing people	EXISTENTI-ALITY Flexible in application of values	FEELING REACTIVITY Sensitive to own needs and feelings	SPONTA-NEITY Freely expresses feelings behaviorally	SELF-REGARD Has high self-worth	SELF-ACCEPTANCE Accepting of self in spite of weaknesses	NATURE OF MAN, CON-STRUCTIVE Sees man as essentially good	SYNERGY Sees oppo-sites of life as meaning-fully related	ACCEPTANCE OF AGGRESSION Accepts feelings of anger or aggression	CAPACITY FOR INTIMATE CONTACT Has warm interpersonal relationships
T_C	I	SAV	Ex	Fr.	S	Sr.	Sa	Nc	Sy	A	C

ADULT NORMS

Row Scores:

19.1	84.1	21.2	18.9	14.6	12.8	12.4	13.1	13.0	7.4	14.7	17.5

| TIME INCOMPE-TENT Lives in the past or future | OTHER DIRECTED Dependent, seeks sup-port of others' views | Rejects values of self-actualiz-ing people | Rigid in application of values | Insensitive to own needs and feelings | Fearful of expressing feelings behaviorally | Has low self-worth | Unable to accept self with weaknesses | Sees man as essentially evil | Sees opposites of life as antagonistic | Denies feelings of anger or aggression | Has diffi-culty with warm inter-personal relations |

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APPENDIX D

INDIVIDUAL PROFILE OF HIGHLY
SELF-ACTUALIZING SIKH RESIDENT

This profile indicates that this is a well-adjusted individual in general. Her time ratio is exceptionally high (0:23) which suggests that this person is excessively time competent, and this may perhaps reflect a need to appear more self-actualized than she really is. Her support ratio is 1:3.2, which closely matches the ideal of 1:3 of the actualized person, which indicates that she probably depends primarily on her own feelings and secondarily on the feelings of others in her life decisions. All of her profile scales approximate those of the self-actualized person with three exceptions which fall in the normal range. Existentiality is at the minimum and suggests that she may not fully apply her actualizing values. Other scores at a minimum level are feeling reactivity and self-acceptance which seem to be related, in that this person may not be fully aware of an inability to accept herself with weaknesses. This individual's profile is a good example of an actualizing person, with the exception that her scores in areas of existentiality, feeling reactivity, and self-acceptance are depressed to the minimum level of the normal range.

PROFILE SHEET FOR THE PERSONAL ORIENTATION INVENTORY

NAME __

AGE _____ SEX _____

OCCUPATION _____

I $T_i \cdot T_c$ (Time) Ratio:
Self-Actualizing Average $T_i : T_c = 1:8$
Your Ratio: $T_i : T_c =$ 0:23

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

DATE TESTED _____

II $O \cdot I$ (Support) Ratio:
Self-Actualizing Average $O:I = 1:3$
Your Ratio: $O:I = 1:$ 3.2

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

ADULT NORMS

Row Scores:

| 23 | 97 | 24 | 22 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 17 | 16 | 9 | 18 | 21 |

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APPENDIX E

INDIVIDUAL PROFILE OF NON-SELF-ACTUALIZING
SIKH RESIDENT

This is a profile which suggests that this person is functioning below the self-actualized range. His time ratio (1:22) suggests that he is excessively time competent and this may perhaps reflect a need to appear more self-actualized on this instrument than he really is. His support ratio (1:1.8) suggests that he is in the dilemma of finding it difficult to trust either his own or others' feelings in making important decisions.

His profile scales indicate that he holds values of self-actualizing people, but has difficulty in applying them. This pattern suggests that these values are not internalized, and there may possibly be another set of values which this person uses with practicality. Other scales also indicate that he is sensitive to his own needs and feelings and is able to express those feelings with spontaneity on a behavioral level.

PROFILE SHEET FOR THE PERSONAL ORIENTATION INVENTORY

NAME _____ DATE TESTED _____

AGE _____ SEX _____

OCCUPATION _____

I $T_i - T_c$ (Time) Ratio:
Self-Actualizing Average: $T_i:T_c = 1:8$
Your Ratio: $T_i:T_c = 1:22$

1
1	2	3	4	6	6	7	8	9	10

II O - I (Support) Ratio:
Self-Actualizing Average: O:I = 1:3
Your Ratio: O:I = 1:1.7

1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

		VALUING		FEELING		SELF PERCEPTION		SYNERGISTIC AWARENESS		INTERPERSONAL SENSITIVITY	
TIME COMPETENT Lives in the present	INNER-DIRECTED Independent, self-supportive	SELF-ACTUALIZING VALUE Holds values of self-actualizing people	EXISTENTIALITY Flexible in application of values	FEELING REACTIVITY Sensitive to own needs and feelings	SPONTANEITY Freely expresses feelings behaviorally	SELF-REGARD Has high self-worth	SELF-ACCEPTANCE Accepting of self in spite of weaknesses	NATURE OF MAN, CONSTRUCTIVE Sees man as essentially good	SYNERGY Sees opposites of life as meaningfully related	ACCEPTANCE OF AGGRESSION Accepts feelings of anger or aggression	CAPACITY FOR INTIMATE CONTACT Has warm interpersonal relationships
T_c	I	SAV	Ex	Fr.	S	Sr.	Sa	Nc	Sy	A	C

ADULT NORMS

| TIME INCOMPETENT Lives in the past or future | OTHER DIRECTED Dependent, seeks support of others' views | Rejects values of self-actualizing people | Rigid in application of values | Insensitive to own needs and feelings | Fearful of expressing feelings behaviorally | Has low self-worth | Unable to accept self with weaknesses | Sees man as essentially evil | Sees opposites of life as antagonistic | Denies feelings of anger or aggression | Has difficulty with warm interpersonal relations |

Raw Scores: 22   82   22   15   16   11   14   16   11   6   15   18

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APPENDIX F

Table 5

POI Scale Means, Standard Deviations and Comparison of Differences Between Samples Nominated as "Self-Actualizing," "Normal" and "Non-Self-Actualizing."

POI Scale	Sym-bol	Self-actualizing (29)		Normal Adult (159)		Non-Self-actualizing (34)		Mean Diff. SA-NSA	CR
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Time Competence	T_C	18.9	2.5	17.7	2.8	15.8	3.6	3.1	4.0**
Inner Directed	I	92.9	11.5	87.2	13.6	75.8	16.2	17.1	4.9**
Self Actualizing Value	SAV	20.7	3.6	20.2	3.0	18.0	3.7	2.7	2.9**
Existentiality	Ex	24.8	3.5	21.8	5.1	18.9	5.4	5.9	5.1**
Feeling Reactivity	Fr	16.3	2.8	15.7	3.3	14.3	3.8	2.0	2.4*
Spontaneity	S	12.7	2.9	11.6	3.0	9.8	3.4	2.9	3.6**
Self Regard	Sr	12.9	1.9	12.0	2.7	10.2	3.3	2.7	4.0**
Self Acceptance	Sa	18.9	3.5	17.1	4.0	14.2	4.0	4.7	5.0**
Nature of Man	Nc	12.3	2.2	12.4	1.9	11.3	2.0	1.0	2.0
Synergy	Sy	7.6	1.2	7.3	1.2	6.2	1.9	1.4	3.7**
Acceptance of Aggression	A	17.6	3.1	16.6	3.7	14.7	3.5	2.9	3.5**
Capacity for In-timate Contact	C	20.2	3.4	18.8	4.6	16.5	4.3	3.7	5.0**
Ratio Scores									
Time T_C/T_I		7.7		5.1		2.9			
Support I/O		3.3		2.5		1.4			

*Significant at the .05 confidence level.   **Significant at the .01 confidence level.
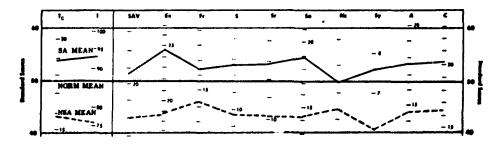

Figure 12. Profiles Based on Mean POI Scores for a Self-Actualizing (SA) and a Non-Self-Actualizing (NSA) Sample.

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APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

1. Motivation

    a.   Why did you become a member of the Ashram?

    b.   Do you have any friends as Ashram members?

    c.   Is there any particular type of person who joins an Ashram?

    d.   Are you a member of the Ashram for the same reasons?

    e.   Has being an Ashram member influenced or changed your behavior?

    f.   What are these changes?

2. Conflict-Avoidance

    a.   Do you get along well with other commune members?

    b.   Do you have frequent conflicts with other commune members?

    c.   Do you prefer working out problems with other members?

    d.   Do you prefer keeping to yourself?

    e.   Do you meditate often to avoid conflict with other members?

3. Aliveness (Participation)

    a.   Are you comfortable in your relationships with other members?

    b.   Are you direct and open in your relationship with others?

    c.   Do you find it easy to share with others in the Ashram?

4. Selflessness

    a.   Do you give of your time freely to the needs of others in the Ashram?

4. Selflessness (continued. . .)

   b.   Do you resent having to perform your daily work
        assignments for the Ashram?

   c.   Do you find yourself making sacrifices for the Ashram?

   d.   Do you usually like the idea of making this sacrifice?

   e.   Do you put the needs of the Ashram above your own?

5. Self-Sufficiency

   a.   Do you feel you are able to make independent decisions in
        the Ashram?

   b.   Are you a follower?

   c.   Do you express your own feelings, ideas, opinions rather
        easily?

6. Truth, Honesty, Reality

   a.   Can you comfortably make demands on others?

   b.   Is it difficult for you to be honest with others about your
        feelings?

   c.   Are you defensive when confronted?

7. Order (Change-Orientation)

   a.   Are you open to the attitudes, ideas, and opinions of others?

   b.   Are you flexible?

   c.   Are you creative?

   d.   Are you easily disturbed by changes in routine?

8. Meaningfulness

   a.   Do you feel your activities in the Ashram have any meaning
        to the other members?

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8. Meaningfulness (continued. .)

    b.   Do your activities have meaning to the larger community in which you live?

    c.   Is there a specific purpose to what you do in the Ashram?

9. Beauty (Rightness, Richness, Wholeness, Uniqueness)

    a.   Do you have a strong feeling of satisfaction in the way you live and what you do?

    b.   Are you a very positive person?

    c.   Would you describe yourself as a joyful person?

    d.   Do you find your life exciting and fulfilling?

    e.   Do you see yourself as a unique person?

    f.   Do you see yourself as a completed person?