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The Individual, Community and Society: Rights and Responsibilities from an Anthropological Perspective

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THE INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FROM AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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I. INTRODUCTION

As a social anthropologist, my concern and interest in the topic is not only with various levels of social integration and their structures, but also

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with the law and with legal institutions as they exist and function in American society. The institutions of one society may better be understood by cross-cultural comparison, a technique that stimulates our thinking about the legal, social and moral aspects of specific issues in our own society. In comparing two contrasting forms of society, loosely described as "primitive" and "civilized," we discover different concepts as well as different practices relating to the three social units under consideration in this article. Primitive usage suggests that our own system, while well adapted to our own specific context, still may be suffering from certain deficiencies. This article will present examples from other cultures not with any thought that the examples in themselves may serve as models which can be adopted elsewhere, but because the examples throw new light on the basic principle at work, on the social process, and hence on our own law and legal institutions.

The justification for such a study lies, at least in part, in the evident dissatisfaction with our legal system and with the disjunction between law and justice. This dissatisfaction is expressed both in and out of court, by the general public as well as by practitioners of the law, by victims as well as criminals. This article will examine how it is that other cultures are able largely to avoid this malaise and to arrive more easily at a harmony between the exercise of authority and achievement of justice. Sometimes other cultures arrive at a greater degree of order without law than we often seem to achieve with it, perhaps thereby achieving a greater degree of justice for all. This article will also confront the issue of what the terms "individual," "community," and "society" really imply, their structural relationship with each other, and the rights and responsibilities of each.

First, however, from the vantage point of having lived and worked with a variety of "primitive" societies, I will start by looking at a few specific aspects of our own society to make the comparison more productive. No value judgment is implied on the fact that I ignore our society's obvious merits and select only those aspects of our system that merit adverse criticism. Space and time alone demand selectivity. The anthropologist is not interested in making any judgment against one form of social organization or for another, since he recognizes that each society tends to develop the system best suited to its particular context. Our own system, however, has been undergoing such far reaching changes over such a short period of time that we may not have had time to develop what is suited to our context, for our needs and context are in a constant state of flux. And if public dissatisfaction is any measure, the system is not even what we want.

II. THE RETRIBUTION-RESTITUTION DICHOTOMY

My most intimate contact with the legal system in our country comes from teaching and research in a number of prisons. Many of those I have interviewed in prison, even when they admit their guilt (that is, admit that they committed what the law has determined to be a crime, which is a rather different thing from admitting moral culpability), genuinely feel that they have

been done an injustice even while they recognize their responsibility in consciously committing the act.

We must put aside the temptation to dismiss this as irrational self seeking or self pity. Regardless of its validity, the sentiment is very real indeed. Such sentiment has profound social implications and must be dealt with. The injustice often stems from comparison with judgments passed on others of different social, economic or religious origins for the same offense, sometimes in the same court. Comparison with judgments for comparable acts in neighboring counties or states aggravates the sense of injustice. With or without justification the law is in this way brought into disrepute and even invites disrespect from the individual. Yet, among a comparable class of individuals on the African societies, this sense of injustice is almost totally absent even among those whom we would say were penalized most heavily. Part of the reason is that the "penalty" is not regarded as such, but rather as a welcome means of making restitution and of being restored to society. Moreover, judgments earn respect because they are not valid until they are accepted by all. The only exceptions have occurred when traditional customary expectation has been replaced by western law, which takes judgment out of the hands of the community.

In our own society, the prison system illustrates the malaise most clearly. The malaise is not confined to those serving in prisons, but the prison is perhaps the most obvious and most disturbing by-product of our legal system. We know prisons to be breeding grounds for discontent and social maladjustment, and hence of future crime. Prisons are even more insidiously breeding grounds for discontent with and abuse of the legal process itself. This discontent makes itself felt far beyond the prison walls, permeating society at large. When those convicted and their families view the convictions as marked by chance and caprice, if not by wilful bigotry and prejudice, their demand for "justice" is frequently no more than a demand for vengeance, for self satisfaction. Ultimately, the prison system even victimizes its own employees, creating yet other grounds not only for discontent but also for disrespect for the law.

Many nearly illiterate inmates voice an observation that would be precisely the one made by almost any anthropologist comparing our legal system with a typically "primitive" manner of resolving conflict. The inmates I have interviewed unanimously have observed that our system seems to be primarily concerned with retribution, and even denies the person convicted the possibility of making restitution. This is one of the most deeply felt sources of the pervasive sense of injustice, not only among petty thieves who say they would see more sense to their incarceration if in some way it enabled them to make restitution, but even among murderers on death row. Of course, capital punishment is the institution in which our system most effectively excludes any possibility of atonement. Yet, even in murder cases, traditional African societies often strive for and effect not only reconciliation, but restitution.

It is worth taking a moment to look at how this works in Africa because it highlights the relationship between the individual, community and society. Thus, among the Bira of Zaire, as among many other such rural farming

societies, the real victim is not the murdered person, nor even his or her family, but society itself. Nor is the act of murder in itself necessarily and inherently right or wrong. In assessing such rightness or wrongness not only the intent must be considered, but also the result. The result in question is not merely the death of an individual, but the social import of that death for society. Thus, the death of a healthy child might be considered as more serious than that of an aged and sick person who has become a burden to society, while conversely the death of a weak or deformed child would be weighed lightly against the death of a wise elder who had much to give society. In determining the appropriate societal response to an act of murder, the objective is not to hit upon a "fair" or "just" penalty, but to have the murderer take the steps necessary to repair the damage to the social fabric.

Further, while murder generally is considered "wrong" (i.e., harmful to society), murder also is considered unnatural for much the same reason as leads our courts to presume "innocence" until otherwise proven. So, much of the inquiry among the Bira centers on the *cause* of this unnatural condition in an otherwise perfectly natural (and social) person. In our courts the accused is allowed to introduce "mitigating circumstances," but in other societies instead of being peripheral or secondary, such circumstances are central. Only when the full social implications of a murder have been assessed, including the conscious motive, the cause or causes, and the damage to society, is any decision reached.

Such a decision is always related directly to the individual case and tailored precisely to the need for effective restitution. Economic damage must be repaired, but so must personal, familial, and even emotional damage. Damage to narrowly individual rights ranks lowest, much as individual responsibility ranks lower than collective responsibility. The assessment of "cause" almost invariably serves to distribute responsibility for the act. Family or friends may in this way be judged as "accomplices." The victim or the victim's family and friends can be held to share in the "guilt." But even family rights and responsibilities are held subordinate to those of community, and so on up through various levels of integration such as lineage and clan, to the rights and responsibilities of society itself.

These rights and responsibilities are social, economic, political and religious. All four of these must be taken into account, in such societies, when assessing damage and restitution. A man who has killed a woman obviously cannot bear children in her place, but if he has female kin they could and would undertake that role for the bereaved husband (and his family). Instead, he could name any children subsequently born to him as if they had been born to the murdered woman, and they would be brought up as such with full rights in her family and that of her widower, but none in those of their biological parents. If a boy is killed before he has been circumcised, if he was close to the age of circumcision, the operation is performed with all the ritual and social obligations, again shared by those judged to be causal factors as well as by the murderer himself and his family. Among the Bira this satisfies specific political and religious niceties essential to the continuity of

political and religious life, and it also satisfies what would otherwise be a major source of emotional stress, the failure of the boy to complete this important stage of the life cycle.

In these and many other similar ways the "criminal" as well as those who contributed to the cause of the crime (and this always includes immediate kin) all share in the task of restitution in all four areas of social life. Ultimately, this must result in the restoration of previously existing social relationships between all involved. Fines, and even exile where (rarely) imposed are not considered as punishments, but rather as obligations and/or opportunities for restitution and atonement. In similar ways, most traditional community-oriented societies achieve justice for both victim and offender by seeking, finding and coercing a restoration of the original *status-quo*, including as far as possible the restoration of the normal social, interpersonal and intergroup relationships vital for the ongoing life of the society.

III. AMERICAN COURTS AND TRADITIONAL AFRICAN TRIBUNALS

Comparisons between a county court and a traditional African tribunal or council, its nearest equivalent, are also instructive. Generalizations about either society are of course dangerous, but perhaps permissible here since we are looking for general principles. While my sample in this country admittedly is small, numbering fewer than two hundred inmates with whom I have had personal contact and/or maintained more than casual correspondence, I have not met a single one who has been able to associate a court or court procedure with either honor or justice. This is in sharp contrast to the Bira, where even those unfavorably adjudged by village tribunals may come away with understandable feelings of personal embarrassment, disappointment, even anger, but with their respect for the "law" (i.e., for the ideal way of life and its rights and responsibilities) reaffirmed by the actions of others, and even heightened by the ritual and religious elements of the procedure.

The reasons cited for the unfavorable attitude of inmates in this country vary from accusations of blatant prejudice to judicial incompetence. Discretionary powers are seen as vested in magistrates and justices who not only may be ill-versed in the law, but who too often see the position as one enabling them to impose their own private and individual view of what society (and the individual) should be upon the community under their jurisdiction. Since the position is regarded by some as a moderately lucrative and prestigious form of retirement, we could in some cases add senility to the complaints of incompetence, bigotry and megalomania. This may sound like an overstatement of reality, however limited. If anything it is an understatement of the opinion held by many of those processed through our judicial system, an opinion spread outwards through them to their families, friends, and others of the public who have not experienced the courts as they *can* function, with honor and justice.

Without looking for these unfortunate characteristics, I have seen them at work in five states in both civil and criminal courts, in cases ranging from

failure to pay rent to capital murder. The very appointment of Supreme Court Justices can be interpreted as being a matter of political whim rather than of concern with justice. Even if this allegation is not true, the fact that it is made and taken seriously threatens the good repute of the overall system.

The variable competence of judges, as with their variable predisposition to allow personal opinion and belief to enter into the proceedings, results from many factors, educational ones included. The one the general public would be least likely to recognize as prime, but which any village African would pick out at once, is the failure of some judges to separate the social self from the individual self, the office from the person. Yet the ritual of separation is there, clear for all to see if only we were more ritually conscious, in court dress, insignia, paraphernalia, in the use of horizontal and vertical orientation with their connotations of right and left, up and down, with good and bad, and so on. We readily fail to see the function of the "primitive" mask, often worn by judges as a public demonstration that the judgment rendered is not theirs, but that of the sacred authority they represent. Similarly, we fail to accept the function of our judicial robes and insignia and ritual procedure. So, I suspect, do some of the judges I have seen in action.

That, of course, is largely an educational problem, particularly aggravating in a plural society such as ours in which it is difficult to find symbols that have the same significance for all, just as it is impossible to find a common belief system. One might contrast the great strength of the traditional African court, the appeal to a common Sacred, accepted by all because it is believed in by all. Our society is not without religious fervor by any means, but it is fervor that divides rather than unites.

Another factor that we tend to neglect when we consider court composition has the same potential for us that it does for the traditional small-scale society. The factor is family, and the associated concept of individual rights and responsibilities as being morally, if not legally, interconnected with the rights and responsibilities of family. We tend to expect, and often prefer, to be heard in a court composed of strangers, suspecting that personal prejudice is likely to be more of a factor in a court composed of kith and kin. A village African would find it virtually impossible to accept that justice was being done in any court unless his kith and kin were not only present, but made an integral part of the enquiry, giving evidence and taking part in the adjudication. At the village level, in Africa and elsewhere in small-scale societies, the court is composed almost exclusively of kith and kin, including the judge or judges. In our own country, in some small, rural courts, we find something of the same process at work. Here the similarities as well as the differences are instructive. We shall examine them more closely in our discussion of "community."

In our own society the secularization of the court and its officials has weakened authority by removing the sense of infallibility associated with the sacred, and by placing authority openly in the hands of fallible humans. If respect is shown in court, it well may be for power rather than authority. The fact that our courts are composed of strangers rather than kith and kin

aggravates any potential lack of confidence or suspicion of prejudice or incompetence. While the jury system helps, our Bira critic would say it is a poor substitute. By his standards a jury of strangers is necessarily a jury of incompetents, the more so since they typically have no training or experience in critical analysis and evaluation, have no first hand knowledge of the parties or problems before them, and do not have unlimited time with which to study the issues.

By contrast, even at the crucial upper level of the Bira process, the final decision-making process involves all parties, and a system of checks and balances operates to make the exercise of individual prejudice or self-interest impossible. Perhaps most dramatically of all, the participation of the entire community often is required. As a result, not only is the objective of the tribunal different from that of our courts (that is, restitution rather than retribution), but so is the entire process.

We place different values on objectivity and subjectivity. We claim than an "impartial" jury of strangers can be more objective, having no personal stake in the outcome of the case. The Bira would deny that this is so, since the beliefs and convictions of each member of the jury are at stake, and they may be very different from those of the litigants. Much of the "objectivity" is thus a pretense, however honest the effort. Far better, the Bira would say, to be judged by those who know you well and whose welfare intimately is bound up with yours and that of others involved in the proceedings. If that effective interdependence is reflected in the court composition, the Bira would say, it is unquestionably in the court's interest to resolve the case in such a way that is satisfactory to all by restoring and reinforcing the human relationships, the social bonds of rights and responsibilities, that are manifestly in the interests of all. Again, he would say, one of the major problems with our system is the value we place on the individual and on independence, rather than on society and interdependence.

Another factor worth comparing is the relationship between the accuser and the accused, in the context of their objectives and the objectives of the court. While in our society economic restitution increasingly is being written into judgments given in criminal cases, it is a far cry from what is meant by restitution in the African tribunal we have been looking at. Moreover, economic restitution is generally considered only in minor cases with some highly significant, if controversial, exceptions involving major corporations. The more serious the offense, and certainly when the offense involves violence, the less likely it is that a solution will be found that will be satisfactory to both parties and will effect *any* kind of restitution, economic or otherwise. Accuser and accused are cast as antagonists. Our court process can be seen by the anthropologist as a kind of game in which each side seeks to defeat the opposing side. Both agree only to follow certain prescribed rules in achieving that goal. In fact, the rules are often broken or circumvented. Formal rules govern that procedure, as when there is "inadvertent" introduction of inadmissible evidence, or equally "inadvertent" leading of a witness at the cost of a perfunctory apology or a meaningless instruction to a jury to "ignore"

what has been said as though their memories selectively can be erased. In every case of this kind the loser, be it the accuser or the accused, is likely to feel dissatisfaction with the legal process and to feel that the court has, albeit unwittingly, committed a "wrong."

This is in direct contrast to a comparable process of conflict resolution in a "primitive" society in which the court proceeding, or "hearing," is more analogous to a ritual than to a game. A ritual suggests that we are dealing with sacred authority rather than secular power, with the infallible rather than the fallible. Moreover, another essential difference exists between a game and a ritual. In a game both sides start theoretically equal and the objective, or at least the effect, is to end unequal. In a ritual the participants start theoretically unequal and the objective is the restitution of equality. In our system the focus is on the act, its criminality as defined by law, and whether or not the defendant was responsible for that act. In other cultures, in the absence of a legal code, there is nothing necessarily right or wrong in the action itself, as we have seen, and the objective of the court is the equalization of whatever inequities the action may have wrought, consciously or unconsciously. No anthropologist would say that one system is "better" than another. Nevertheless, while primitive systems are consistent in aiming for and achieving the social equality and harmony that are the communally accepted ideals, in our system we systematically seek and impose an inequality that is inconsistent with our ideals. In this way, we further rend, rather than repair, the social fabric.

In making these comparisons we should look for consistency between the nominally held ideals and the actual practice of the law. We certainly cannot suppose that fragments of one system that we deem "good" can be grafted onto another system, especially when, as here, the two contexts being compared are obviously at almost polar extremes. In the farming, fishing, and hunting communities and societies of the tropical rain forests of Africa, the communities are small enough to allow for every individual to participate in major hearings, or at least for every individual to be represented by a close kinsman. Further, the subsistence economy allows for prolonged discussion in which all members of the community are meant to participate, each being allowed to state his own opinions about the case in his own way and at whatever length he or she chooses. Indeed, that is an essential part of the process and perhaps is not so time consuming as it may at first seem, since any one case is made a pretext for informally bringing into the open all other disputes, latent or manifest. This serves a much wider social need than the resolution of one specific dispute. In our modern society, pressures of time and money, coupled with the overwhelmingly high incidence of anti-social behavior, mean that our courts face enormous backlogs of cases awaiting attention. These cases must be dealt with as expediently as possible. The irony is that when the legal system demands that courts deal with the greatest number of cases in the shortest possible time, a disservice results to society at large.

This all suggests two classifications by which we can tentatively distinguish the "primitive" system from our own, with the one being moralistic and the other legalistic. In the one society the rules of behavior are internalized, volun-

tarily accepted and perceived as sacred, if not god-given. They are sanctioned by some supernatural power. In our own society the rules are imposed rather than arising from within, and are man-made, secular. We have already noted that punishment is not an objective in African cultures. When punishment is considered in those cultures, it is invoked rather than imposed, being left in the hands of the supernatural. The human court concerns itself only with the problem of restitution. We have replaced this essentially moral coercion, perhaps necessarily given the size and complexity of our society, with physical coercion. The question raised by the comparison is whether we have not in this way lost a major, perhaps vital, force toward social order by neglecting the role of moral coercion as a necessary part of our social and legal structure. We leave such coercion to individual conscience or religious conviction rather than making it an integral part of our daily lives, including the educational system.

The "primitive" would indeed have to wonder at our inconsistency throughout the system, but most particularly at the separation of church and state. Even when we insist on the oath of truth being taken upon the Bible, the process of cross-examination seems to assume that the oath is ineffective. And while we invest the judge with evident symbols of near-divinity, at least of wisdom and justice and overall excellence, we then relegate him to the role of overseer and bind him to the decision of a jury that is secular and necessarily less qualified, often singularly unqualified.

The malaise that characterizes our legal system derives not only from the material pressures of time and economy, however important these and other material factors are. Nor does it derive primarily from the built-in reality of inequality so directly in conflict with our stated ideal of equality. The system and the malaise both have their roots in our ideals and in the concepts associated with those ideals. We vociferously hold to the ideal of equality, yet not only does our society tolerate grotesque inequalities, it even encourages them. A major source of national pride lies in games and sports through which we publicly honor and advocate competition and its resultant, inevitable inequality. It might even be said that our very emphasis on and aspirations towards equality of opportunity legitimize ultimate inequality. We talk, sincerely, about social responsibility, cooperation, harmony, brotherhood and love; yet in the same breath we honor the antithetical ideals of independence, individual initiative, and competition, and we acclaim as an American folk hero the "self-made man." Self sufficiency becomes an ideal in itself. One might ask whether such inconsistency is the mark of a healthy society, or the inevitable price we have to pay for having traveled too far too fast.

IV. AMERICAN CONCEPTS OF INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY RE-EXAMINED

We need to rethink our concepts of individual, community and society. Insofar as justice reflects ideals, when a society's ideals are in conflict with each other and cannot be practiced, the conflict between law and justice becomes inevitable at a certain level.

The inherent conflict between ideal behavior and expected or required behavior has been seen, for example, in the trials of those who refused to register for the draft. In some cases, at least, the refusal was clearly an honorable and courageous act that happened to be illegal. While Sassway said that "an individual should have some means to challenge the law," the prosecutor said that in Sassway "we have an individual who wanted to set himself above the law and that is not what society is about." Both of course were right, for one was thinking of justice and the other of law. Sassway's parents made an emotional appeal, which brings us to the crux of the issue. They claimed that while Sassway broke a man-made law, he held to a higher law, God's law. We shall need to return to the concept of a "higher law" when we attempt to define community as distinct from society. For the moment I want to use this case to illustrate an inherent weakness in our concept of the individual. It is plain that we have a problem when it can be illegal to be honorable, or when it is considered honorable to commit an illegal act. Plainly also we have a problem when the pursuit of freedom to follow religious belief, guaranteed by the constitution, can be considered as deserving of imprisonment. The problem is associated not only with our view of individuality but also with our particular individual-oriented concepts of guilt and innocence and their occasional confusion with the concepts of right and wrong. We suffer from a lack of clarity that is not found in any "primitive" system known to me. More important still, is the contrast between the two conceptual worlds.

I have already had to place "guilt" in quotes when using it in the African context, because in the African societies and languages known to me, the concept does not translate, though a very superficial observation of the village tribunal in action might suggest that it does. While every adult has a duty to seek the "right" way of life, to make the effort to follow the way of the ancestors, this is plainly different from a mere duty to obey the law. Failure to succeed in the effort is not wrong, it is merely the cost of human fallibility and should be corrected rather than punished.

Even in our society there is some ambivalence. "Guilt" has been applied at different times to describe some general fault in an individual, a dereliction of duty, the commission of a crime, later the commission of a sin, and later still "the state of being justly liable to penalty." The connotations of "guilt" today are primarily secular and suggest a human offense against a human law. The formal opposite used in handing down a verdict is not guilty. Yet, the opposite in common parlance is *innocent*, which implies much more than the mere non-commission of a crime, more than adherence to some man-made law. The state of innocence suggests uprightness, virtue, purity and morality. A guilty verdict indicates illegality, yet the moment a non-guilty verdict is translated by the word "innocent" it conveys with it an aura of righteousness, a far cry from mere legality. Are we being merely careless, or evasive, in such conflicting usage? If we accept "innocent" as an alternative for "not guilty," why do we never hear of "sinful" being used as an alternative for "guilty"? It is not such a small point as it seems, and is certainly symptomatic of the conflict and confusion inherent in our system. Do we really mean and believe

“guilty,” or do we mean “fallible”? Do we mean “legal” or do we mean “righteous,” “illegal” or “sinful”? Perhaps our separation of church and state has not been as complete as we thought, otherwise why this ambivalence?

The issue of dual meaning, significant in itself, is indicative of two other, more immediately relevant and vital considerations revealed by a comparison between the two systems. The first, already discussed, is that unlike others, we concentrate on the notion of individual guilt. The second consideration is that when the illegal act is committed by several individuals, each may be held to be wholly guilty and responsible, whereas in a small-scale society the responsibility probably would be shared. In both instances, moreover, we hold the total person responsible and adjudge that person totally guilty. It seems logical and just to us that when a crime is committed by more than one person in equal partnership they should both suffer the full penalty rather than share it. This is in contrast to the traditional African approach partly because we have codified behavior and defined acts as right or wrong, legal or illegal. We have slipped into what such an African would say is the grossly unjust, unrealistic and usually unwarranted assumption that any person who commits an illegal act is therefore also morally “wrong” or “sinful.”

In many other cultures the blame for the commission of an anti-social act invariably and systematically is shared between the perpetrator(s) and others in the community whom we would hold to be totally innocent. As often as not the accuser is found, in our terms, to be guilty as the accused, sometimes more so. It is thus rare, if ever, that an individual is held to be totally guilty, even if he cannot plead self defense, insanity, or mitigating circumstances, devices employed in our own society to come closer to justice in spite of the law. It is equally unlikely that any individual would be held totally bad or totally good, totally right or wrong. Thus, in such a society, it would be unjust to put all the blame on any one individual or to place on any single person the total burden of restitution. Similarly, it would be unjust to incarcerate an entire human being, since no human is totally without merit. The problem is resolved not by the cutting off of the guilty hand, letting the other remain, which is one primarily symbolic resolution. It is resolved in such societies by the avoidance of a penal system. The responsibility is shared by all those found to be causal factors. They also share the burden of restitution, without in any way being denied the right to continue to pursue their positive activities for the continued benefit of society, much as we penalize the innocent families of convicted criminals by incarcerating their kin.

In a Bira tribunal the hearing almost consciously sets out to distribute the blame so as to allow the offender every opportunity to pursue more socially acceptable forms of behavior without stigmatizing him as “guilty.” The issue of whether or not someone committed a certain act is seldom in question. Thus, one of the first steps is to establish the positive attributes of the “accused” as a good father, a good son, a good brother, a good friend, a good farmer, and so forth. To this end the entire community is expected to testify. Any “badness” that is left over, and which became manifest in the anti-social act, is thus fractional and is by equally diligent enquiry apportioned among

those who however indirectly or unconsciously contributed to the manifestation of that latent badness: the wife who burned his breakfast that morning, the friend who refused to repay a debt, the child who laughed at him when he tripped and fell, the fact that his best piece of cloth was caught by the current and swept away while being washed. All these and many more I have heard listed as contributing factors for purposes of sharing responsibility. If it were a case of theft of food, for instance, it might well be held that as a good neighbor the accuser should have known the accused was hungry and should have offered food. I have heard it held that the "thief" was doing his victim a good service by compelling him to do the socially and morally correct thing (sharing his food with others) by taking it when it was not offered freely. In cases like this, the Bira say it is more important publicly to reaffirm an ideal for all to benefit, than to harm a weak and foolish individual.

The crucial difference in such communities is that what is at stake is not individual guilt or innocence, for we all have a potential for both, but rather the social and communal good. This will be defined differently from one population to the next, but basically it involves the recognition of reciprocal obligations for each other's welfare, material and/or spiritual. In his analysis of traditional law in southern Africa, among peoples organized into states rather than the less centralized tribal societies to which I mostly have been referring, Max Gluckman, himself trained in British law, identified the concept of "the reasonable man" as being the central concept in the jural process. In considering any action brought before the tribunal the issue was whether or not that action was "reasonable," and that in turn was defined in terms of social responsibility. Again the objective of the tribunal, as in tribal societies, was to effect a restitution of the sociality that was intended to be the all-pervasive norm. In such a society no room exists for the concept of individual guilt or innocence.

This is consistent with the belief in such societies that truly independent individual action is as impossible as exclusively individual responsibility. Thus, a man is not capable of truly independent action, they would say, since his actions are always influenced by the actions, thoughts, desires and manipulations of others. If he is not capable of truly independent action, he can never exclusively be held responsible for his actions save in a few exceptional cases where it can be shown that by consciously evil manipulation of the supernatural an individual has overcome these external influences and achieved true independence. In a true society, they would say, in which members are bound to each other in mutual need, respect, and consideration, the individuality and independence we value so highly are anathema, the mortal enemies of sociality and of society itself.

V. INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTEXT

A. *Concepts and Definitions*

We are now in a position to consider the concepts of individual, community and society in a way that will throw light on the malaise that affects

all of us, including our legal system. Part of our trouble is that we have taken our sociality for granted, it being a commonly accepted myth that humans are innately social. A "society" by definition implies some form of social organization, involving various techniques of social control in the quest for both order and survival. All forms of social control involve coercion of some kind and impose limitations on individual freedom. This is where the major potential for conflict arises. The extent of that potential depends on how effectively individuals are encouraged to perceive their individual survival as synonymous with the survival of society as a whole; how far their self perception is that of independent isolates or of vital, necessary, integral parts of a whole; and the extent to which they are taught the values of independence or interdependence. The foundations of social behavior are laid upon these values. They determine the relative importance and success of moral and physical coercion. It is primarily an educational problem. Such an education takes place in domestic life and through the system of religious belief and practice, not only in schools, if it is to become a truly vital and effective force toward social order in our lives.

The problem is magnified in plural societies with a significant internal differential in the form or structure of domestic or religious life. The variables, however, that determine the potential for conflict remain essentially the same. This latent primal conflict between the individual good and the good of society, between the individual self and the social self, underlies much of the conflict that manifests itself in crime and violence in any society, plural or small-scale. By looking to exotic societies for comparisons we not only are likely to uncover the basic principles at work in any society, but we are compelled to reassess our concepts of both individual and society and to perceive the importance of that intermediate unit here called community. A preliminary attempt at definition immediately shows that the relationship between individual, community and society is much more complex than might have been thought, and demonstrates the cogency of a relativistic approach to conflict in any plural society.

The concept of individual, which would at first seem the simplest to define, is in fact the most difficult. Self awareness is one thing, self perception is clearly something totally different. Perhaps in our educational system the significance of self perception is underestimated. Self perception may even be with and subordinated to the crude fact of self awareness. Self awareness is sensory, self perception is intellectual. The one is a fact evidenced with undeniable and vital clarity by each and every sense; the other is a construct of our mind, and therefore changeable and questionable. Not only is self awareness vital and undeniable, it persists for the duration of our conscious lives and provides us with a sense of continuity, a sense of individual identity that persists in some way without change. The only variation in such awareness is largely one of intensity. Self perception, on the other hand, is constantly subject to change as we grow older, as we alter our social context, move from one environment to another, and as we engage in increasingly complex interrelationships with other individuals. Just as self awareness isolates us as in-

dividuals, so self perception joins us to and makes us a part of the world around us. The primacy of self awareness is biologically determined; sometimes its power and vitality are borrowed falsely by the more strictly sociologically determined construct of self perception, giving it a seeming primacy and unquestionability that it does not deserve. By the same token, however, this process can be an invaluable positive force by which self perception is molded by cultural factors into culturally accepted form.

In considering the concept of individual we are concerned with self perception, but with the knowledge that the quality of self perception may, particularly in unthinking moments, be unwarrantably enhanced by confusion with the unquestionable fact of the perceiving individual's existence. Let us not enter for the moment into the even more complex realm of one individual's perception of another.

Our self perception as individuals is conditioned by many factors. I have suggested that two major realms of influence lie in our domestic and religious organization, and for the purpose of this discussion I include philosophy as a part of religious life. Depending upon the cultural context in which we are born and nurtured during the first few critical years of life even our most basic perceptions, such as those of time and space, will vary enormously. For instance, in the western industrial world we have a linear sense of time and space; others have a cyclical sense of the two phenomena, and for some they are both conceived in spherical terms. While our system supposes a unilinear, non-repetitive progression from one mundane point to another, through life to death, others posit a cycle of birth and rebirth, and still others explain the phenomena of life and death by a belief in two realms of existence that are paralleled, simultaneous and eternal. These varied perceptions necessarily bring about variations in perceptions of self, and necessarily have social implications.

In the last mentioned system the individual coexists with his other self in the "other" world. Since the two worlds are believed to be in constant interaction a double set of sanctions is at work, natural and supernatural. The incentive to social order is extremely high, particularly given the belief that this eternal interplay between the two worlds, and within each, results in an effective system of reciprocal obligations and responsibilities between all those within the same "sphere" at any given moment. This ordering system is prescribed not by law but by belief and perception, coerced not by threat of physical or supernatural punishment but by what is perhaps the most basic urge of all, the urge to survive. When social order is seen not as a duty or legal requirement but as a logical necessity and a prerequisite for survival, a powerful inner incentive drives the individual self to try to become a social self.

In cyclic systems the individual sees his present existence as conditioned by the past and as conditioning the future. This results in identification with and hence obligation toward the past as well as the future, a process virtually incomprehensible to those with a spherical sense of time and space. Identification with the past lends power to the social prescriptions and proscriptions

attributed to the ancestors. These correspond in many respects with our legal principles, but they have greater flexibility. Identification with the future provides for effective, active concern for the unborn, with predictable consequences for property law, rules of inheritance, and so forth. But again the coercion is from within, deriving from this particular form of self perception, rather than from without. The concept of "the way of the ancestors" serves more as an explanation than as a coercive element.

In linear systems individual existence becomes more central since it is seen as being brief, unique, limited and non-repetitive. In such systems the quest for social order demands reassurance or reward, often through religious belief in after-life. It is in proportion to the strength or weakness of that belief system that we find the absence or emergence of secular law resting on the threat and use of physical coercion. When we have a plurality of belief systems, adhered to with varying degrees of intensity, the perceived need for secular law and respect for it will vary accordingly.

The cyclic and linear cultural models represent extremes to highlight the degree of variability possible, but even within any one culture the sub-cultural variations are by no means insignificant. We have only looked at one aspect of self perception, in relation to culturally determined concepts of time and space. Nevertheless, the implications for our understanding of the legal process are clearly fundamental, particularly when we talk of "individual" rights and responsibilities.

We now are able to expand on our understanding of the social implications of the concept of individual, thus beginning to come to grips with the concept of community. As generally understood the term has distinct *qualitative* connotations implying not only a special degree of conformity of behavior and belief, but also suggesting a communality of individual self perception that makes conformity and order a matter of choice. This minimizes the need for the threat of physical coercion or secular law. In general usage "community" invariably is used to connote a very different kind of social unit than is understood by the word "society." Equally general but widespread is the notion that "community" is smaller than "society," more highly integrated, characterized by greater conformity and order. It is also often thought that community, perhaps because of its apparently more cohesive sense of identity, possesses a special power that helps to bring about a measure of social order related directly to the perceived needs of the community. All these are partial truths, as is our uncomfortable awareness that the needs of community are not always in conformity with the needs of society. Yet so powerful is the qualitative aura attached to the very word "community" that in spite of the lack of any clear, unequivocal definition of what "community" is, the word is often used to win support in both legal and political arenas, the implication being that "communities" have special rights to which other social units are not privileged.

In fact, there is far more to "community" than the general qualities listed above. Conformity, order and uniformity, however voluntary, do not make a community any more than does the mere assertion by a given social unit,

be it a rural village or an inner city ghetto or block association, that it is a "community." Such an assertion may just be wishful thinking, or a conscious attempt to claim special consideration. And it may well be a mistaken extension of individual self *awareness* to group *awareness*, whereas what really defines a true community is the nature of its self *perception*. The same distinction is made in the kinds of exotic societies I have been referring to, between a "good" person and a "bad" person, one who is socially responsible and one who is not. The socially responsible person is one who has realized the all important difference between the narrow but intensely vital and demanding individual, biological self, and the wider, less tangible but potentially much greater social self.

I have referred to an educational problem in dealing with various legal and social issues. Here it is important to pursue the cross-cultural examination by seeing how other cultures deal with the specific educational problems of socialization, of transforming the individual self into the social self. Into this task they put an enormous amount of time and energy. It starts with the birth of an individual and does not end until death. The educational process involves both formal and informal techniques; it is private and public; it is constant and ongoing at all levels of life. This is because without such sustained effort, as they see it, there would be no community, and without community there would be no society. Graphically, in their own terms, "[w]ould all be animals."

B. A Specific African Culture: The Mbuti

I shall from now on be very specific in my cross-cultural examples, referring to the northeastern corner of the Republic of Zaire, where I have spent many years of field work. It is a tropical rain forest, the Ituri. The area under consideration is about 50,000 square miles, bisected by a single road running west to east, connecting the navigable head of the Congo River, at Kisangani, with Uganda. This road follows the old slave trail, a trail that was followed and enlarged by Stanley in his journeys across the forest barely a hundred years ago. It was not made into a "motorable" road until the nineteen twenties, under Belgian colonial rule. Even today it is only barely motorable and often impassable. Further, since the Ituri was not an economically productive area, the Belgians left it largely undeveloped though by no means "untouched." Traditional ways of life continued through all the time of my researches, which were begun in 1951 and are ongoing; and yet there was sufficient contact with the colonials and their way of life for the Africans to make cross-cultural comparisons of their own.

Finally, for our purposes this area is ideal in another respect, for its population includes diverse and culturally interesting groups. One is an extremely early indigenous population of nomadic hunters, the Mbuti, who are organized at the band level of social integration, without any form of centralization. Among the Mbuti, a hunting band of from three to a maximum of thirty families is the largest effective social unit. At the other extreme are recently immigrant empires and kingdoms such as those of the Azande and Mangbetu

in the north. At an intermediate level, and best known to me after the hunters, are a number of tribal groups who are either farmers or fishers. Each tribe is divided into relatively autonomous villages loosely linked in a clan system, the village headman being subordinate to the clan head, and all clan heads being (more or less) subordinate to the tribal chief. All these tribes are at the subsistence level of economy, and again are relatively recent immigrants, the forest having been the preserve of the hunters until some four hundred years ago. The migration came from all directions, composed of populations with very different cultural backgrounds, speaking different languages, holding to different religious beliefs, with very different political and economic systems. Some were fleeing from persecution, others from mere population pressure, and now with the new cash economy, a new wave of immigrants seeking personal gain has come. There are, therefore, some special reasons for making a comparison between this area and the United States though there is absolutely no simple equation between specific segments of each population.

I shall refer to the wider process of social integration later, but for an example of how at the smallest, narrowest level the individual is socialized into a perception of being a part of the much wider whole, I here refer to the Mbuti hunters. They are by far the longest established population in the area, numbering about 40,000. They occupy the entire central part of the forest, the immigrants being settled around the periphery. They have had probably at least ten thousand years to adapt to this tropical rain forest environment and have evolved a system of socialization that encourages the child, almost from birth onwards, to see itself as a functioning and therefore necessary part of the total ecological system. A child's first lessons teach the value of dependence, and the very teaching reinforces the same value for all others. From the first lesson of dependence upon the mother's breast for milk the child's social horizons are widened, together with its horizons of rights and responsibilities, by being shown that it profits enormously from increasing those horizons. For instance, it allows itself to be fed by other "mothers." As the child grows older he or she quickly learns the reciprocal nature of the relationship, and by the crawling stage already seems to sense the reality of mutual interdependence. It will by then have classified all other adults in the camp as either fathers or mothers, and will address them by the same form used for its biological parents. It will recognize that this terminology, and with it the corresponding system of rights and responsibilities, is only effective for as long as those fathers and mothers (and grandparents and siblings, for everyone in the camp is considered as kin) are actually residing in that camp and hunting and gathering with that band. Thus the very system of kinship terminology is a powerful lesson in the realities of reciprocal rights and obligations, teaching that these primarily operate among all those bound together by common residence, the economically cooperative band. When biological kin leave the territory (and every month the camp moves with some people leaving and others coming in) they are no longer referred to as kin, but by their personal names, removing them from that intimate circle of effective inter-dependencies.

By the time the child is old enough to make its way to the adjoining *bopi*, or children's play area, it is aware that children have a special role to play in the life of the band. Unless the children light the morning hunting fire nearby, the adults and youths will not be able to go off hunting. They may not yet know that this is because they are considered as "pure" and therefore able to mediate and propitiate the forest for the killing to follow, but the children certainly realize that this gives them a measure of social control, for while they can stop the hunt by refusing to light the ritual fire, causing others to go hungry, they can then go and get for themselves certain foods forbidden to others. The rest of the camp goes hungry but they do not. They also learn to exercise this control wisely, for other age levels have controls that they can exert. Even in the *bopi* activities, the Mbuti children are learning essential lessons of social behavior, of the profit to be found in dependence rather than independence. There is, for instance, a total absence of competitive games, though there are plenty of pastimes by which each individual may in a sense compete with himself to develop skills, but never in competition with the others. Some pastimes indeed demonstrate the very real dangers inherent in any attempt to be independent, or to assert oneself over another. A young sapling climbed by ten children will bend down until it almost touches the ground. A Mbuti pastime is to do this, then for all to jump together and watch the sapling spring upright like an arrow from a bow. Sometimes, not very often, a solitary child will stay clinging to the branches a second longer than the others, perhaps to show his bravery, perhaps just to find out what it is like to be different. The child gets thrown upwards with the tree, and is lucky to escape with no more than a few scratches and bruises.

By the time youth is reached, every child has found that the greatest satisfaction, as well as security, lies in cooperation rather than isolation, in the sharing of thoughts and tasks rather than in individual initiative and effort. Each has discovered how to explore and develop that which is uniquely her or him (the aware, the individual self) in such a way that it can express that separate individuality most satisfactorily in cooperation with others. This is a lesson that is sharpened during youth and reinforced for the rest of life in many ways, of which the most graphic is perhaps music-making. Music is not made very often with conscious educational intent, but the anthropologist would be tempted to say that for the Mbuti that is its prime function. Thus, on entering youth and approaching the age of puberty the Mbuti learn something of the social consequences of gender by taking part in songs in which the boys may sing in antiphony to the girls, and in which the girls sing in parallel seconds rather than in unison. In these puberty songs, as in songs associated with gathering, the female part dominates. Similarly, in an almost literal reflection of real life, the technique required for singing hunting songs demands just the same pattern of cooperation between the gender and age groups as is demanded by the hunt. In no songs (except the lullaby) are there soloists and this is how it should be in real life, for the Mbuti.

This could be elaborated in much greater detail, not only for song, but also for dance, story telling, and other forms of entertainment and pastime.

In fact there is probably not a single recreational activity that does not have clearly recognizable educational value and play an important role in the constant revitalization of the social values that bind all the individuals in the hunting band together as a single, cooperative, corporate being with a vitality of its own.

But the Mbuti are no paragons of virtue. Just as in childhood a child may be tempted to find out what it is like to stay on the sapling after all the others have jumped, so in later life any Mbuti may be tempted to do something that is not in keeping with the social good. Such individual actions, however, are explained rather than punished, for the innate conflict between the individual self and the social self is well recognized. If the action is harmful to society, the action is blamed, not the actor.

Take an example. When Kenge awakened his girl friend's father as he crawled into bed with her, and the father awakened the rest of the camp with his shouts of outrage, what was at fault was the noise ... and as Kenge slyly pointed out, the father was making more noise than anyone else, so if any *person* was at fault it was he. All that was needed to put an end to the harm being done was for an old man to say that everyone was making too much noise, and had given him a headache; for who wants a headache? In muttered discussions to which I was privy, individual blame of a sort was apportioned; on Kenge for having been careless enough to wake the father; much more on the father for having made so much noise that he awakened the entire camp; but most of all the noise itself was blamed for having given an old man a headache, and for having threatened to do the same for others.

So it is with other disputes. If Kenge had gone on being "careless," corrective action would have been taken, and that knowledge was enough to encourage him to avoid "noise." The action would have been some form of ostracism, from mild ridicule to temporary exile. The latter is mild for a nomadic people whose bands change in composition every month, and who have a "kinship" system that classifies everyone as family who takes up residence in any camp and participates fully in its life, according to age, gender and ability. Ridicule within a camp is a powerful sanction, almost more powerful than exile, except that it gives the offender an opportunity to cure himself. But rather as with the case of Kenge's flirtation, the focus of attention is gradually weaned away from the initial act, which we could call the offense, and even from the actor (or offender) so the blame is placed in such a way that many more than the original offender are held to be responsible.

In the case of the flirtation, when "noise" became the offense, almost everyone was shouting, at Kenge to be more careful, at the girl to choose less clumsy friends, at the father to go back to sleep. Thus, it could be said that almost the entire camp was at fault. But when Kelemoke slept with his first cousin, a profitless rather than sinful thing to do, he was endangering more than sound sleep. Premarital sex is encouraged, but always with the end of settling down to a lasting marriage and raising a family. Marriage is a means by which the Mbuti expand their social horizons, acquiring in this way whole new sets of kin with whom they can interact accordingly. So why sleep with

your cousin, particularly in the same band, and so called "sister"? To marry her would not enlarge one's area of sociality at all, either for you or, much more importantly, for the band as a whole.

Because the band, the grand "family," stood to lose or gain as much as Kelemoke by his courtship and ultimate marriage, he was subject to the band's most extreme sanction (with one exception), exile. He had threatened the welfare of all, so he no longer deserved to be a part of the family he served so ill. He was immediately driven from the camp, into the forest, that very night. But then it was recognized that Kelemoke had no intention of marrying the girl, so he intended no harm to the group as a whole. His individual needs had merely taken momentary precedence over his (and the group's) social needs. He was allowed to slip back into the camp and resume his place, without direct comment, after three days. The only comment was a question as to his health, which in their language referred to his social and spiritual as much as to his physical and mental health. His answer meant both "I am well" and "I am cured." As with the case of Kenge's flirtation, any attention given to the affair beyond the initial reaction was concentrated on the noise created by various family members who, with rather less justification than Kelemoke, were voicing individual and private concerns at the cost of *ekimi* (peace and quiet) for all. As in the other case, they were induced to waive these personal complaints by being shown that they were creating widespread *akami* (noise) and were in danger of giving the entire camp a headache.

It is not the nature of the disputes, nor even of their resolution, that is important to us, but rather the restitutive and diffusive process at work. In particular, the value of the social good has been so thoroughly assimilated and learned by all that it is necessary only to point out that their actions are harmful to the larger group. At that point they abandon such actions without further coercion. If anyone feels that his action was justified and posed no threat to society at large, the Mbuti always have the solution of leaving the band temporarily, until the dispute blows over, on the pretext of visiting some friend or relative in another hunting territory. I have found that such movement was an almost invariable indication of some latent dispute.

Two more cases need to be described to complete the picture, for if the Mbuti were without conflict they would not serve our purposes very well. Some cases are severe enough to warrant stronger action than mere ridicule, ostracism or temporary exile. Such a case involved one of the most popular hunters, Njobo. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, including his familiarity with western ways, Njobo was aware that he possessed certain abilities that others did not. He knew how to deal with colonial administrators on the rare occasions when it was necessary, just as he knew how to deal with the village farmers like the Bira, with their incessant demands for forest products and for help in their fields. He also happened to be a particularly clever and brave hunter, and as a mere youth fulfilled every Mbuti male's dream of killing an elephant single handedly. That is more of a symbolic act than an act of bravery, for to the Mbuti the elephant represents the forces of destruction. It was the only animal capable of destroying the forest, until the advent of the village farmers,

and of course the colonials. But Njobo went on and killed another elephant single handedly, and another, and another. He was plainly boastful of his prowess and his bravery, and more concerned with that than with the symbolic fight against destruction. Worse, he began using his excellence as a hunter to *tell* others how and where they should hunt, instead of discussing with them, as is the Mbuti custom. Rather as with the tree-clinging pastime, Mbuti children learn that all decisions affecting the group as a whole are taken by the group as a whole, that there are no leaders. Children that are beautiful are given ugly nicknames, those that are ugly are given beautiful nicknames. The slow are called "lightening," and the speedy "tortoise." All are trimmed to the same size, while allowing for full individual development nonetheless.

Njobo threatened the system, not so much by merely being a better hunter than others, but by wanting to make it *his* hunt and by thinking that this would make it a better hunt. In addition, he refused openly to acknowledge that in other ways he was less than perfect, and should be subordinate. At first people tried telling him that all he was doing in this way was to create *akami*, but Njobo would point to the pots full of food. Then ridicule was tried, picking on the slightest mistake Njobo made during the hunt. Youths and adults and elders all took part. Njobo paid no attention. Finally, the children, those who have just come from "the other world" and are therefore close to purity and power, even if they did not know it, began to ridicule Njobo. But instead of picking on his hunting ability, or his tendency to give orders or dominate discussions, they diverted attention away from this painful reality and "cured the sickness" in a masterly way. For anyone else, which means for the band as a whole, to have told Njobo to pack up and leave would be unthinkable, for he was a good man, and well loved. But his departure was all that could save the situation.

It so happened that Njobo only had one child, a boy who was born crippled. He had been able to get no other children, though he tried with three successive wives. Other Mbuti would have accepted the fact of their sterility or barrenness and simply have accepted adoptive children offered them by others with already large families. But not Njobo. When the children started to ridicule Njobo, it was not at the expense of the boy, Nyange, but it was by a graphic mime, performed in mid-camp for all to see, of Njobo engaged in the act of copulation. It suggested that the reason he was so unlucky with children was that he did not have the slightest idea of how to copulate. Each day we came to look forward to the afternoon performance, to see what new impossible and unproductive positions, postures and antics the children would have dreamed up as a parody of Njobo's private sexual life. That was more than Njobo could stand. His self (*individual* self!) esteem was his biggest fault, standing in the way of his social self, and the children wounded his self esteem. After a short time Njobo announced that he was leaving. He would take crippled Nyange out of the band, out of the forest, and go to the colonial hospital to try and have Nyange cured. Nobody reminded him that he had refused medical help from outside the day Nyange was born. Everyone wished him well. But the day he left he ceased to exist.

I took Njobo and Nyange to the hospital in Bunia. That was just before independence with the Simba Revolution and the mercenary warfare that tore the Ituri apart for the following years. It was eleven years before I could return. Nyange was back with the hunting band, still crippled, but occupying an honorable role. He and all the others said that Njobo had died. But months later, when I was visiting a colleague who was working in a different part of the forest, a villager who knew me from the old days told me that Njobo was alive and well, living in that part of the forest with another band. But he had changed his name, adopted children, and was known as having only killed one elephant.

The other "offense" is the most extreme of all. I have never even heard of it actually occurring. Yet it is most significant that such essentially non-violent people without any penal system, should have one penalty that at least in theory could be imposed on an individual, and that the penalty should be death. This capital sin, for such it is, rather than a crime, is refusal or failure to sing during the *molimo* festival. This is a sacred festival, most often occasioned by death. It is a way, as the Mbuti see it, of "making the death good," of making sure that the dead person has made the transition satisfactorily to the "other world," that the forest is happy. They believe the festival to be absolutely essential, since otherwise the death might have come unknown to the forest, which is the impersonal deity of the Mbuti (or perhaps better, which is their symbol for the creative force that animates all living things).

Extending their family system outwards, the Mbuti refer to the forest as "mother" and "father," and claim that just as parents look after their children, so the forest looks after the Mbuti. They call themselves *bamiki bandura*, children of the forest. So, they say, if the forest intended the death, it is good, but if the forest was asleep and did not know, then death could strike again, anywhere and at any time. The *molimo* is designed to make sure the forest is awake. This is done by song using a technique that incorporates "forestness" by making use of the echo, and by using a trumpet into which the song of the *bamiki bandura* is sung and carried off into the depths of the forest in the dead of night, carried in all directions, to reach forestness wherever it might be. For the song to be heard, for it to awaken the forest if the forest is asleep, and when it is awake to "rejoice" in it so that the good life can continue for the band, the song must be unanimous. *All* must contribute, especially the men who as hunters daily threatened the *ekimi* of the forest by bringing death to forest animals. So for one whole month, every night, from dusk to dawn, *all* men in the camp must sing. Any man not doing so renders the song ineffective, and thus threatens the entire band with further death or disaster.

During the night, a dance takes place during which a singer arms himself with two spears, one under each arm, and followed by the others, all singing, prowls around the camp looking for any sleeping man. The *molimo* trumpet makes noises like a leopard one moment, like an elephant the next, just as the two spears are made to look like the fangs of a human leopard one moment, and like the tusks of a human elephant the next. They say that if a

man is found sleeping anywhere in the camp, the "elephant" will kill him with his tusks; the body will be buried beneath the *molimo* hearth, and that person's name will never again be mentioned. He will have no place in this world or the other world. To put it shortly, the death penalty is warranted only by blasphemy, by an insult against the Divine, an action that threatens directly to bring down Divine wrath on the entire society. The counterpart in a secular nation-state would be treason.

This is perhaps the clearest indication of the extent to which the Mbuti focus on restitution, not just in economic terms, nor even merely in terms of the restoration of the essential effective network of human relationships by which their society survives. Their focus is on the reestablishment of the highest demand of all, unanimity of devotion to the forest and "its" way of *ekimi*. If anyone were just to nod off at the *molimo* fire, he would merely be awakened, with some caustic jokes at his expense. But for someone to leave the *molimo* hearth and go to another part of the camp and deliberately lie down and go to sleep would be to demonstrate a deliberate, conscious lack of concern for the common good. It would be a blatant affront to the spirit of "forestness," for that is really synonymous with the common good. The death of such a hypothetical sinner would not be a punishment, but a purification, in Mbuti terms of "curing," or "making good." The removal of the name effectively removes any stigma that would otherwise have attached, through the system of diffusion, to kith and kin.

Thus, we have an example of how, in another culture, a community has established and maintained social order without a penal system. It has done so through the conscious and ongoing education of all its members in social awareness and obligation. Much (one might almost say *all*) of this education is "religious" in nature, in that it makes an ultimate appeal not so much to what is good for society as to what is good for the forest, i.e., the supernatural. This is the Spirit God, whatever it might be called elsewhere. The Mbuti clothe their supernatural in "forestness," referring to it simply as Mother Forest or Father Forest, so that at every moment of every day they are surrounded by their deity, dependent upon it, deriving all their benefits from it, living in the shelter it provides, eating the food it allows them. They are even clothed in forestness, bark cloth. And we have also seen how as part of their system for maintaining social order, the focus is on restitution of the social order, of the social norm, and on diffusion of blame so that no individual ever can be seen as "better" or "worse" than another.

These are all some of the factors that, in a rather less consistent and systematic way, we tend to acknowledge with respect to our concept of "community."

C. *The Western Concept of "Community"*

1. The Size and Nature of a "Community"

In a rather inconsistent way, we acknowledge some of the factors the Mbuti demonstrate when we think of "community." Yet in spite of our frequent

appeal to the concept of "community," it has little if any legal or political significance as a social concept. Definitions are so broad that the entire United States of America could be called a "community." The criteria that limit community to a group of people sharing common residence, common interests, common policy, who interact with each other and are a part of a larger society, can be applied at any level from the nuclear family to the nation. Yet clearly when we talk of the nation as a community we imply that nationality demands more than we commonly give it by way of loyalty, unity, and responsibility. While a community can, theoretically, be of any size, the intimacy, the *degree* of communality of interests, rights and responsibilities that we imply by the term "community" are only to be found in relatively small populations and geographical areas. Thus, the concept of a national community may only be an ideal, rather than an empirical reality. We must work from that to see if studies of other cultures permit us to discover at least a structural reality.

This is important. While as a mere ideal "community" serves a useful function, if it *does* or *could* have empirical reality, we are losing an enormous potential force toward social order. What *does* have reality is the powerful sense of belonging to a community, affecting a wide range of social relationships. This exists in some urban areas just as strongly as it exists in rural areas. Where it exists, moreover, the sense of rightness or wrongness of social behavior is heightened so that insofar as community interests (as they are perceived by individuals) do not coincide with the greater social interests, we have a basic potential for conflict with any law that does not take "community" into cognizance. When a sufficient number of citizens, territorially discrete, share such interests and also share political power, the potential for conflict becomes all the greater.

The potential for conflict reaches its greatest proportions when the community can define itself in terms of religious belief. We have already noted the vital importance of communality of religious belief, and the consequent acceptance of common religious symbols that convey a sense of unity that is also economic, political, social, as well as spiritual, affecting each individual equally. In our society we have examples of what for the moment we might call "religious communities" in both urban and rural contexts, such as the Hassidim in New York, and the Amish in Pennsylvania. It is precisely when religious belief becomes a factor that such social groups acquire the greatest legitimacy within the wider society, almost *because of* their difference in religious belief. Such groups are allowed privileges not allowed to other common-interest residential groups that are secular rather than religious, such as block associations, ethnic neighborhoods, rural hamlets, villages or counties, though all of these frequently use the word "community" in describing themselves. They may have well established legal identities, but remain well within the law of society. Religious communities on the other hand, are given special consideration and allowed to maintain a life style that is not only distinct from that of society at large, but almost counter to it. This is possible only when there is a structure that enables such religious communities to exist (at times) in opposition to society at large, but without ever being in conflict with

it. We will see how the Mbuti achieve this, as a religious community with a highly distinctive style of life and thought, with distinctive behavioral expectations (approximating to our moral code), existing within a series of wider societies. They retain their integrity at each level, but do not come into conflict.

In our own society the conflict arises not when the opposition is the most consistent and explicit, as with the Hassidim and Amish, but when members of the self-styled community, while claiming to be different in some respects, also claim *not* to be in opposition to society at large and to subscribe to that society's law. It seems to be much healthier and more constructive, in fact, for a "community" to run counter to the law of wider society, at times, than for it to operate, as often happens, *in spite of* that law, either by consciously circumventing it or by ignoring it, treating it as a regrettable political reality but one with little or no moral justification. Such would-be communities frequently appeal to morality as though it were indeed a "higher law," and try to validate their independence still further by claiming communality of religious interests. When this fails it is probably because they mistake communality of church membership for communality of religious interests, even when such a communality does exist outside that membership. Such seems to the outsider to be the case in the rural county in which I have lived in Virginia for the past fifteen years or so. It is from the outsider's point of view that I shall describe it.

2. A "Community" in Virginia

Lancaster County is a relatively isolated county at the southern tip of what is known as "The Northern Neck of Virginia." Its population is just over ten thousand, now rather more white than black, who traditionally all have survived by farming and fishing. Forty acres is considered a reasonable sized farm. In addition to this "native" population is a steadily increasing population of wealthy retirees. When I first came to know Lancaster, over twenty years ago, it had all the outward appearances of being a "community," which was indeed how it perceived itself. There was a great deal of communality of interests at all levels, social, economic, political, and religious. While primarily Baptist, a certain elite related to the earliest settlers formed an Episcopalian minority with considerable prestige. Methodists probably ranked next in acceptability, then Roman Catholics and "others," but strictly Christian "others." The economic differential was not highly marked, though nearly all the business in the county was in the hands of whites. It seemed, at that time, that there was little racial or religious conflict, and that what segregation there was either existed because of some "foreign" law, or was voluntary. There was a fair degree of inter-racial socialization, both legal and illegal, in both business and pleasure. The churches were completely segregated, however.

Such was the expectation of communality of interest in those days that the sheriff's department and the court both worked to try and avoid disputes from being brought to trial. The sheriff himself was known to drive around and try to mediate between parties to a dispute. There was a common

understanding that outside or foreign interference, however legal, was unnecessary and unwelcome. If an issue arose in the county, that was where it should be settled. Stories circulated freely to support this view, and functioned (regardless of their validity) to coerce a certain degree of conformity to "the Lancastrian Way" (not incomparable to the African "Way of the Ancestors," though it was not recognized as being in any sense a religious communality). One such story concerned a young teen age neighbor of mine who claimed to have been raped, but at first could not say by whom. Since she was white, the immediate fear expressed, by black and white alike, was that her assailant was black, and there was general relief when a white was arrested and jailed. Nobody seemed unduly surprised when the story circulated, a few days later, that the young man had died "of a heart attack" in the county jail, so there would be no need for an unpleasant trial, bringing foreign lawyers, media and others into the county.

"Outside" law (state and federal) was sometimes avoided by a court bringing lesser charges that could be dealt with at the county level such as by construing as a misdemeanor what might be a felony, if that were considered in the interest of the "community." But increasingly it was said that this preferential treatment was selective and worked against certain segments of the community, notably blacks and those classified as "white trash." Blacks were afraid to go to a certain clinic because of stories about blacks who had died after the most minor treatment there. It was thought that the court and the sheriff's office were in complete collusion and that their protection was denied those deemed by them to be "undesirable members of the community." As an outsider living in the county, I found that my personal experience was more than enough to cause me to give some credence to such allegations.

Over the past few years the county has been invaded by an ever increasing number of wealthy retired people, many buying up waterfront property and adding to the general decline of oystering, crabbing and fishing as an almost universal way of life, in conjunction with small farming. This immigration also brought a flow of cash unknown before, and an economic differential began to form quite clearly, particularly along racial lines. Individual interests now were manifest as against community interests, and economic considerations took precedence over religious. Whereas it used to be a requirement of "community acceptability" that residents were churchgoers, this criterion became lowered to mere church membership. Even this vestige of what used to be one of the prime requirements of "acceptability" has been further reduced by the now overt repudiation of commonly stated church values, particularly those concerning drink, sex and gambling, by nominal church members. Lancaster County is thus in the process of transformation from a quasi-religious community into a secular district in which increasingly individual and economic values take precedence over communal and religious values. Since the county is still strongly influenced, if not directly controlled, by those with a vested interest in the old concept of "community," we may expect further discontent and disorder.

My own subjective appraisal of the situation in Lancaster County is in

many ways in accord with that of those who remain faithful to the old community ideals, even though I differ from them in background and political and religious beliefs. They frequently refer to the effective and affective human relationships that used to pertain in the county, transcending race and religion, and to the customary expected behavior of mutual aid in the occupations of farming and fishing. They made such references as if these relationships and this behavior were religiously ordained, if not actually spiritual in nature. Both the affectivity and the effectivity of the relationships have all but disappeared, and with them the spiritual bond. What symbols there were, though few recognized them as such, are blurring or vanishing. These symbols not only used to separate insiders from outsiders, but also made it possible to recognize some of the ranking system at work within the "community." Thus predictability of behavior is lessened, and predictability appears to be one of the factors that connotes an "effective" community as distinct from a merely self-styled community.

For example, it was considered right to eat certain kinds of food, wrong to eat others, and very definitely wrong not to eat the right kind. Thus food was used to effect both negative and positive sanctions. Much of this was associated with the sentiment attached to fishing, oystering and crabbing, vanishing standbys that formerly assured all against hunger. The anthropologist would be quick to note the universality of food taboos, prescriptions and proscriptions in religious observances, and would use this as partial evidence that "religion" at least contributed to Lancastrian communality. There were distinctive forms of greeting, even between pedestrians and automobile drivers that signified "community" membership and implied unspecified mutual obligations.

With the symbol of dress, there was also a right way and a wrong way, and this varied for different segments of the population. There was a significant period during which it became "right," at least in the sense of expedient, for black and white to dress differently, particularly when not at work. It became as wrong for a black to dress well, drive a good car, and demonstrate a good education, as it was for a white to dress poorly and manifest a lack of education; one was "uppity" and the other was "trashy." These are distinctions common in the South, but such distinctions were newcomers to this county and represented an intermediate stage in the process being described. But this stage was quickly superseded by open confrontation which, while having certain racial overtones, was perhaps equally part of individual assertiveness against the community, and individual competition in the quest for individual success, defined differently by each individual. So also, the common sanctions continued against outsiders or those who became unacceptable or undesirable, but were imposed along lines of individual conflict and competition. Such sanctions included a certain amount of ridicule, but were and still are primarily in the nature of withholding of services, even at some economic cost. But most dangerous of all is the lingering feeling held by some, at least, that the power structure still represents the old values of now defunct "community," and that any who flaunt those values, however much it is their legal

right to do so, can expect no support or protection from "the law," and may indeed expect systematic harassment.

The rights and wrongs, even if this be true (and I believe it to be partly true, at the very *least*) are not what need concern us here. The interesting point is that the county demonstrates the subtle way in which a general malaise can permeate a healthy community within a larger society when that community insists on isolation and an unrealistic degree of autonomy in the name of "community." There is clear hierarchy of sentimental social identities, but it is without effective significance. Loyalty is first to the county, then to the Northern Neck, then to the eastern, coastal part of Virginia, then to the Commonwealth in opposition to neighboring states, and thence to the "south" and finally to the nation. What some of the older Lancastrians do not realize, having grown up at a time when migration in and out of the county was minimal, is that the community values, and the community version of "law," had to change as the isolation broke down. But they had become fixed and inviolable in the minds of some, and are increasingly inconsistent and hence in conflict with the values and law of the wider society of which Lancaster, perhaps grudgingly, is a part. The genius of "community" in small scale societies is the way in which its values and law are sufficiently conservative to ensure continuity of distinctive identity while being flexible enough to adapt to changing social horizons, usually expanding. The common manifestation here of "community" identity in the form of intercommunity competition through sports or otherwise, does not help towards the creation of a wider, integrative structure, nor do the economic and political rivalry, nor the rivalry of sectarian interests passing for "religion."

For instance, a Baptist church may organize a rummage sale on the same day and at the same time as a Methodist church sale held two miles further up the road. While the motives may be good and ostensibly in community interest, bad feelings, even hostility, are engendered at both locations by the recognition that people either wishing to support the cause or to purchase some inexpensive items from their own group are likely to stop first at the other if approaching from that direction. Again, the vital and indisputable communal volunteer fire departments increasingly raise the necessary money by setting up what amount to road blockades in such a way as to make it all but impossible for automobiles to evade the outthrust nets. The point made by this practice is not only that the community does not support its volunteer departments adequately, but that it has to be coerced in an aggressive manner to general inconvenience at the cost of much goodwill.

Lancaster County also points to other hazards that a would-be community within a wider society has to face. By focusing on the necessity of economic survival it has lost touch with the equally vital necessity of survival of identity, the centerpiece of the "religious" factor to which I have so frequently referred. It has virtually lost anything that can be called a common "sacred," and has consequently lost the all pervasive unifying and socially binding power of a shared religious sentiment. There has been a process of fission into smaller units, church and otherwise, that has only further heightened the spirit of

divisiveness and competition. The retirement population has not effectively been integrated into what is left of community, but stands outside it in some respects while assuming control in others. In some ways the retirees take an increasing interest in county affairs while older residents sink further into apathy, yet in other respects, such as matters pertaining to schools, the retirement community—without children of its own to send to those schools—shows less than adequate interest.

Above all there is a lack of clarity in the authority structure. That structure, however informal flexible, must be established clearly if a community is to survive as such. Given the lack of homogeneity of church membership, there is no central spiritual leader, no priest or prophet such as one might find in a community within a small-scale society. But equally there is no charismatic figure either to lead or advise. The constitution does not encourage this, there being at least five authority figures that are responsible to the Commonwealth rather than to each other or to the community or any central community representative. The Commonwealth Attorney, thought by many (probably by most) to be the most powerful authority figure, and indeed thought by many to have authority over the others, is himself isolated; similarly with the sheriff, the clerk of the court, the treasurer and the board of supervisors. If these virtually independent elective officers choose to work together, there might be a greater sense of community than there is, but to be effective such cooperation would demand more time than is available. The best that can be expected under such conditions is for the county to operate as a mere geographical administrative segment of the Commonwealth, in rivalry for the attention of the Commonwealth with other segments. Many of the others are closer to Richmond, wealthier, more prestigious for historical or other reasons.

In these circumstances, rivalry again takes the place of that essential feeling of religious unity, a shared identity and common destiny, that is the hallmark of the true community. When community, in this sense, is lost, the larger society is ultimately the loser. Common adherence to a wider secular law can be more or less coerced and enforced, but the shared, voluntary will to unify, arising through various levels of recognizable and ritualized common identity, can never be imposed. It can only arise from within, at the smallest, familial level of social organization.

D. *The Mbuti Again*

Let us return for the last time to the Ituri Forest, briefly reassess just what "individual" and "community" mean there, and see how the Mbuti consciously work to integrate communities into the wide society while leaving them free to pursue separate sets of religious beliefs and practices in such a way as to bring about order without law. As we have seen, in such societies it is the common good (at whatever level) that is sacred, not the individual. Clearly what defines a "community," making it an effective social unit, is that its members share a common moral code rooted in a common religious belief. But we now have to add one other factor. That is the factor of *faith*, the essentially non-rational quality of direct knowledge, direct awareness of

truth. This faith is of course encouraged by very rational and material means, notably the consistent use of sacred symbols to which I have referred several times. It thus can be induced, whereas it cannot be intellectually taught.

The *belief* system, which is taught and learned, formally and informally, is every bit as real and as effective as our legal code and any ethical code to which we might subscribe. The shared *faith*, which is acquired in infinitely subtle but detectable ways from birth onwards, is what activates the belief system, making it a living way to be followed (the indigenous term often used is "pathway" or "road"). The neat trick is that any individual following it (as well he should, for its obvious individual rewards) unwittingly finds that it is also for the *social* good. Thus, the almost inevitable tendencies of the individual self to assert itself are turned to good advantage through what is no less and no more than a remarkably straightforward, perceptive, socially oriented, educational system.

By puberty boys and girls alike have learned that their individual welfare is synonymous with that of their community, which for the Mbuti we have seen is regarded as a kind of extended "family." Shortly after puberty, on entry into adulthood, the social horizons are likely to be enlarged still further since the various populations can no longer fight to maintain their isolation from each other. That is no longer possible, given the existence of a central national government and its delegation of authority to provinces and districts.

The situation is comparable to that in Lancaster County in that in the Ituri there is also a succession of geographical identities to which any individual can claim membership. When in relationship with a member of adjoining Northumberland County a Lancastrian would be just that. But in relationship with someone from Richmond, say, a Lancastrian would be more likely to define himself as coming from The Northern Neck, and would join with anyone from Northumberland who would adopt the same wider identity; and of course all would be Virginians in opposition to outsiders from North Carolina. Thus, the concept of "outsider" is relative. But these are sentimental, affective identities rather than effective; that is, there is no corresponding succession of rights and responsibilities.

In the Ituri a member of the Epulu hunting band is just that at one moment, but he is an Mbuti when in relationship with the farming and fishing sedentary villagers, and he is a member of the *nkumbi* confederation when in relationship with the provincial or central government. However, the individual does not remain the same in each of these very different contexts. This is sometimes indicated by the fact that he will be known by a different name in each different situation, indicating a different personality. That is indeed the reality. What might otherwise pass for systematic schizophrenia is really no more than the recognized difference between individual and social self at work. This is exactly the same process by which bias is virtually eliminated in juridical proceedings in some African societies by a judge wearing a mask and/or assuming and giving judgment under a different (sacred) name. So also a tribal chief may well use one name when he is being a husband to his wife or father to his children, but when being a chief will use

an ancestral name that will link him equally to all his kindred subjects.

We do not have the same versatility, though we do differentiate between the usage of first and last names in both address and reference, to indicate or even assert proximity or distance. But by comparison with the small scale society, it is our techniques that are primitive; they are inconsistent, un-systematic, unpredictable. It is our failure to reconcile our various levels of social identity with corresponding and clear-cut levels of social integration (reciprocal obligations) that contributes to the ultimate failure of a would-be community, such as Lancaster, and the success of "recognized" communities such as the Amish and the Hassidim.

The Mbuti boy, say, is born and for a fleeting moment is an individual (I rather think the Mbuti would question even that), with individual parents and an individual home. Within three days, however, the mother presents the child to the camp, and it immediately is classified by all camp members collectively as *our* child, grandchild, sibling. In interpersonal interaction each adult will refer to the child as *my* child. As soon as the child can talk it learns that it has a plurality of sociological parents, and that this relationship is both effective and affective. All the time the child retains the clear distinction between them and its biological parents. That distinction, however, is more affective than effective as he grows older, interacting more with his wider "family." Then, through the necessarily nomadic nature of life the child learns that he has many potential such families, and that if his parents leave one band to join another (perhaps as part of conflict avoidance) his affective life will remain as full as ever. While the names and relationships remain the same, the faces will be different. He may have different looking fathers and mothers but since they have the same names as in any other camp ("father" and "mother") the relationships will also be unchanged. At the same time he learns that his former fathers and mothers are now "outsiders," and this will be manifest by referring to them by personal names rather than by kinship terminology. Of course, with the change in terminology, there is a change in the effective relationship, in the expected system of reciprocal obligations.

By the time the boy reaches puberty he has undergone many such contextual changes. He has learned to adjust his social identity accordingly, so that he is an integral part of his present situation, wherever it is. He will have learned what it is to be "an Mbuti," for although he will only have visited and become a part of a few of the hundreds of hunting bands that make up the Mbuti population, he will know that effectively he has similar access to all of them, with absolute predictability as to what his role would be. His identity as an Mbuti also will have been sharpened by the occasional visits that all Mbuti bands make to neighboring villages on the periphery of their hunting territories. He will have seen how different life styles can be.

While in the village he will have had to eat very different foods, participate in different forms of work and different forms of recreation, and deal with different religious beliefs, different rules of behavior. Through all of this he learns to retain his identity not as an individual, but as an Mbuti. To this end he takes a different name when in the village, and with it, to some extent,

a different personality, one that is able to accept and live with the new way of life. But there is no pretence at assimilation, and the fact that the Mbuti are visibly distinct, averaging only just above four feet in height, is not nearly as significant in this respect as is their conscious and overt ridicule of village life. They do this even while participating in it, emulating it, and, in their own way, enjoying it. This ridicule is expected by the villagers, who reciprocate, thus firmly establishing *their* collective identity in opposition to that of the Mbuti. But the rules of behavior change the moment the Mbuti return to the forest, as do the causes of pleasure and thus the various forms of recreation. Highly significant here is that the Mbuti, whose highest and most sacred ritual is song, never bring their sacred song out of the forest. Territorially the sacred remains inviolable, and is left behind with the Mbuti names and Mbuti identities.

This all makes for good neighborly relationships and for a mutually satisfactory exchange of goods and services. But amongst themselves the villagers face similar problems, for while each village is relatively autonomous, rather like the hunting bands of the Mbuti, they too need to interact, primarily for courtship and marriage, but also for trade. Thus villages associate with those on each side for such purposes, forming marriage and trade "circles." And this overlapping exchange system is now used to link formerly hostile tribes together, villages on the border trading and even marrying across the border. Just the same process of identity change takes place during all of this, and consistent with that, a change in rules of behavior in each different social context: the village, the "marriage/trade circle" of villages, and the tribe (or subdivision, if it has them). Ultimately all the village farming and fishing tribes are linked together in this way, around the periphery of the forest, and all of them are also linked to each other by their common links inwards to the Mbuti who occupy the whole of the central forest. This process provided much greater security than the earlier isolation during the days of slavery, and was an effective political force in opposition to the colonial administration. Today it is an equally effective force in opposition (but not in conflict with) the still wider social unit, the national province of which the Ituri is a part.

Probably most Mbuti and villagers could verbalize all this if called upon to do so, but they would find such rationalization difficult and highly tedious, since for them it is a supra-rational reality, having been consecrated by sacred ritual and become integrated with their religious life. Once again we see religion as if it were consciously being used to make a political ideal an effective reality. To this end there is one social institution, not incomparable with our school system, but overtly religious and ritual in nature. It is called *nkumbi*. *Nkumbi* involves the circumcision of boys between the ages of eight or nine and eleven. As a rite of passage this separates each boy from his individual past and from the narrow loyalties felt to his nuclear family. It prepares the boy for his future social identity as a man, which means as a member of the wider clan and tribal societies. By a simple extension today the same ritual is used to expand that identity right through the circumcising confederation of forest tribes to national identity. When a *nkumbi* camp is built, each house pole of the

boys' shelter must be set in the ground by a member of a different village, thus bringing about the necessary cooperation between adjoining villages. And today, when a government post is within reach, a member of that is invited to take part, symbolically bringing the government into the confederation. Thus, this major political step forward was taken by the smaller political unit reaching out, once it saw the necessity, and incorporating the larger unit into itself, rather than the other way around.

The *nkumbi* takes place once every three years, and therefore serves not only to effect the social transformation of the boys, and to reinforce and reify the social norms for all regardless of age or gender, but to establish the various effective levels of social integration from family to nation and the corresponding rules of legitimate behavior. Just as it integrates the individual with the community, so it integrates community with society. And while its prime functions may be said to be political or economic, the prime conscious objective, the goal and the motivation, are unquestionably religious, ritual in nature and spiritual in content. It might be thought that this would diminish the essentially and uniquely religious nature of each community, but that is not so. The *nkumbi* provides a means by which a wide diversity of religious beliefs can retain their autonomy and distinctiveness, within their separate contexts, while coming together and forming a wider political unit sanctioned by a community of religious belief at a much wider level. It does this by finding a theoretical (religious) answer to a self-evident problem (territorial propinquity and all its attendant potential for conflict). Each of the tribes within itself recognized the need for progressive circles of socialization and met this need in its own way.

The *nkumbi* was the specific response of one tribal group, which it brought as it migrated into the Ituri from the southwest. For whatever reason this one institution proved adaptable enough to serve as a model in which all the various populations, except possibly the Mbuti, could see reflections of their own institutionalized response to the need for ongoing socialization. Adaptability was crucial, and this was possible by focusing attention on the process rather than on dogma and ritual precision. Thus, peoples who did not circumcise but had comparable institutions were given a kind of junior membership, opening the door to their eventual full admission. The political upheaval of the Simba Revolution provided an incentive, effectively completing the circumcision circle.

In some tribal cultures women are prohibited from even touching the ritual paraphernalia; in others it is they who *must* play the sacred drums, and in at least one, women openly ridicule the ritual performance of the men. The variants are all expressions of different belief systems at work, but underlying all is the common process, because there is a perceived common need for wider unity. Even the very word *nkumbi*, as with the various ritual acts, has a different meaning in the different cultures, being interpreted according to the local belief system. The process, however, remains the same.

The degree of religious diversity that can flourish in such a system is best illustrated by reference again to the Mbuti's concept of "forestness" as the

ultimate sacred, and the way in which they measure "good" and "bad" by whether it is good or bad for the forest, such as the values of *akami* and *ekimi*. The economic determinist might well say that this is obviously because of the fact that the Mbuti are hunters, and at their pre-stone age level of technology are entirely dependent upon the forest. A sociological explanation of their specific religious beliefs, as of the general belief in "forestness," would be that they are reflections of sociological needs as well as answers to individual and emotional or intellectual needs. Whatever the explanation, the Mbuti see themselves as totally dependent upon the forest and say that without it they would die; and obviously as hunters and gatherers they are right. Yet their neighbors, the farmers such as the Bira, can only survive by cutting the forest down, and as fast as they cut it down it tries to grow up again and choke out their tiny plantations. Consequently, the Bira have a very different set of beliefs about "forestness"; for them it is evil, a consciously malevolent force that seeks their destruction (as in growing up and choking out healthy fields).

At first glance the two systems seem totally opposed and necessarily in conflict, but that is not so. They both share the concept of forestness, though they interpret it differently. Some villagers, like the Ndaka, are less hostile to the forest, have adapted part way to the indigenous Mbuti system of belief, live by fishing as much as by farming, and are far less compulsive than the Bira about cutting the forest down all around them. On the other side of the Bira, the Lese have been almost as much at home in the forest as in the village, and were considered by the Bira almost to be Mbuti themselves. Historically, each segment of the population has retained its isolation for as long as is expedient, but has not hesitated to expand its social and political horizons when necessary. It has done so by expanding its ritual and religious horizons.

Africa alone can provide innumerable examples of this process, even up to the nation-state level. All that needs to be done to unite two formerly hostile nations, after all, might be to invent a sort of *ur*-ancestor. Each tribe or nation having defined itself as descended from some real or mythical ancestral hero, was as distinct and inviolable as a biological kinship group. Not for nothing were queens called Mother and kings (and later, presidents) called Father. When political expediency dictated, it was suddenly "discovered" that those ancestors, formerly thought to be totally unrelated (which condition permitted warfare), were in reality siblings, jointly descended from an even earlier common ancestor. The process is by no means unknown to us in western civilization. It is just that we do not always recognize forces such as belief and faith, name and family, when they are at work, and we have separated religious life from secular just as we have separated church from state, making it difficult if not impossible for religion to play its uniquely integrative role in the way that it does in almost all other cultures. At least, I suppose, it would have to be admitted that this is consistent with our ever-increasing focus on individuality and competition, rather than on sociality and cooperation.

Something else that aggravates the problem of social integration for us is our tendency to think in terms of absolutes and our passion for rank-ordering.

This again is consistent with our emphasis on competition, but it makes far more problems than it solves. Exclusivity in religious belief, and in community membership, is perhaps not only acceptable, but necessary, provided it is not associated with any concept of superiority. It is that concept that prevents the enormous degree of sociality found in any true community from spreading and manifesting itself at wider levels of social integration. When the Mbuti move from their forest hunting camp to a village, they feel neither superior nor inferior, but they are aware that they are in a different world and are willing to accept that, however strange or even repugnant it may seem, the religious belief and practice of that world may be best suited to its specific needs. The mutual ridicule that takes place does not serve to establish any sense of superiority, merely of difference.

Another factor at play here is that in cultures such as those thriving in the Ituri, centralization is a recognizably recent phenomenon, whereas we tend to take it for granted. And whereas in those small-scale societies socialization is an upward movement, with us it is downward. There the biologically determined dependence of child on parents rigorously and systematically is expanded into ever-increasing circles of communal and social interdependence so that, as we have seen, not only the tribe but even a whole nation, may be perceived as a vast extended family. But with us, social order is seen more as filtering downwards from the apex. Even here we do not have conformity. Some perceive the apex as secular while others see it as divine, and among those who give priority to divine law there is further disagreement as to the nature of that law, resulting in fission of society rather than fusion of community.

E. The Amish and the Mbuti

The Amish of Pennsylvania are an excellent example of how community can and does operate within a national framework, even though it persists in holding to ideals that are almost in open conflict with those held by society at large. While not much is to be gained at this stage by comparison with the small rural would-be community such as Lancaster County in Virginia, one general observation is pertinent. The Amish are all united by a single religious belief, and are bound together by a corresponding community of faith, which demands that the belief be put into action in daily life as fully and consistently as possible. Internal divisions in such a system are likely to occur not through any difference of belief or faith, but rather through the ability of some to deal more successfully than others with the inroads of change.

Members of Lancaster County, however, are united more by secular considerations such as common residence and (formerly more so than now) a shared economy and political position. If anything, "religion" serves to divide rather than unite in Lancaster County, and faith would be difficult to demonstrate at anything but the individual level. So would the implementation of belief in practice. This is by no means a gratuitous criticism of Lancasterians, for it is but part of a widespread national phenomenon; on the contrary it is tantamount to saying that the closer Lancaster County was to being isolated and exclusive and united in church membership, the closer it prob-

ably was to being a community and deserving of consideration as such. While resistant to outside influence, in some ways Lancaster County was not resistant enough and admitted the seeds of its own destruction as a community. We may have to consider exclusivity as a necessary characteristic of "community."

The Amish certainly display this characteristic. They not only seek to exclude foreign influences by forbidding television and forbidding or restricting the use of a number of other outside inventions that would interfere with the style of their life or thought, but they also exclude non-believers in the single belief system that is permissible for them. The exclusivity does not mean that there can be *no* movement in and out of the community. Rather like the Mbuti, the community consists of whoever is there at the time, and all of those, at that moment, subscribe to the common set of beliefs that define the Amish, regardless of what they might subscribe to in other contexts.

Tourist attraction to the Amish is in itself evidence of the positive contribution the community makes to society at large, quite apart from its economic contribution. Tourists are attracted by the unusual. One of the most unusual things about the Amish, though this may not be in the tourist's mind at first, is that their whole way of life is a manifestation of their determination to practice what they preach, to live out in daily life their religious ideals. The tourist may be attracted by the strange clothing and the use of horse carriages, but tourists do not merely look; they feel, they think, and like anthropologists, they compare. So the Amish can be said to function, consciously or otherwise, as a kind of sacred community within a secular society, reminding the rest of society of its own ideals, and of the distance that may develop between ideals and practice. It also serves to demonstrate that difference, even exclusivity of a kind, is a richness rather than a weakness, when that difference defines a community that is a functioning part of wider society, neither superior nor inferior.

Just as the Mbuti have considerable, even fundamental differences of belief (such as with respect to "forestness") from the villagers, so do the Amish differ on some very fundamental issues from the rest of society. Yet because society recognizes these differences of practice to be related to differences of belief, and see (in Amish willingness to sacrifice the individual good) the extent to which the belief is supported by faith, society is willing to negotiate and to grant exceptions from its norms for some educational and other practices.

Since society does recognize an overtly religious group such as the Amish as a true community, let us consider the values, beliefs and practices of the Amish, and see how far they enlighten us and clarify our tentative list of criteria for whatever a true community might be.

For the moment "true community" means one that functions both within itself and in relation to other communities around it and/or within any greater society of which it is a political part (i.e., in which it is subject to some form of external governmental control). Such a community may not call itself a true community. It may call itself a church or a village or a county or a block

or an inner city or a neighborhood, or many other things, but it must, for our purposes, be more than an ideal; it must have an actual, interactive part in the overall social structure. Our interest in the concept of community is that in some societies, notably the small-scale societies often called "primitive," such communities play a vital role in socializing the individual so that he is prepared for socially responsible life not only within the community, but in any wider context of which the community is a part.

An "outsider's" view of Lancaster County, shared by some "insiders," seemed to indicate that whereas under this definition Lancaster County might once have been a community, it now is not. It may be more important to test this than to demonstrate that an overtly religious group like the Amish represents a community, since Lancaster County is much more representative of the situation throughout the United States than are the Amish. Nevertheless, the Amish will help us to establish a model. And against the criticism that the Amish are a self serving group who make little or no contribution to society at large, it could be argued that at least one positive function of the Amish is to serve as a model.

The position of the Amish in the United States is not unlike that of the Mbuti in Zaire. In a sense they are a community of communities, like the Mbuti having no central political head, but nonetheless being bound together tightly in an effective network of reciprocal obligations that to a large measure averts conflict and the need for the imposition of an outside legal and penal system. Like the Mbuti, they draw this cohesion from their faith in a supernatural or divine power to which they owe allegiance. For them, it is the Christian God; for the Mbuti, it is Forestness. And the Amish have their very clearly defined form of the Mbuti Way of ("what is pleasing to") the Forest, or the villagers' Way of the Ancestors, in Matthew 18. There is no question that as a community the Amish are a community of believers, activated and unified by a deep personal, individual faith. Hostetler captures it when describing how lawyers for the Amish "were able to demonstrate to the courts that their religion was not simply a matter of worship, but a way of life expressed in the community—religion is community and community is religion."¹

The Amish also have a very clear idea as to what the other criteria of community are, and they correspond interestingly to some of these we have tentatively established for our small-scale societies, namely: "(1) A world view requiring the maintenance and functioning of a redeeming community, (2) a cooperative relationship with the soil and creation, (3) effective socialization in the practical arts, with strong emphasis on family and community responsibility, and (4) the practice of humility and simplicity."² While the first of these establishes the overtly and consciously religious nature of the community (like the Mbuti, the Amish make the analogy between Community and Family), the second corresponds to the way in which the Mbuti see themselves as part of the natural world around them, having with it a reciprocal

1. HOSTETLER & HUNTINGTON, CHILDREN IN AMISH SOCIETY (1971).

2. *Id.*

relationship just as they do with each other. It is perhaps the all-inclusiveness of this self perception that is as important as the specific relationship with "nature," and this would allow the same criterion to be applied to a strictly urban context. The third Amish criterion, of effective socialization, we have also seen to play a major role among the Mbuti. There is a striking similarity between the Amish focus on "social coherence on the one hand, and the critical analytic method stressing ego fulfillment on the other" and the Mbuti focus on social self as distinct from individual self.

Similar also, and vitally important, is the fact that for the Amish the process of socialization is not confined merely to the formal and informal education of children. It is an ongoing process that uses symbols and rituals (including what others might consider to be secular festivals) constantly to reify the community code of behavior (be it Matthew 18 or Forestness or whatever) for *all* members of the community, regardless of age, gender or other differentiation. Nevertheless, it emphasizes the proper and necessary role for such structured divisions as there might be. For the Mbuti, age was the major structural division that functioned as a basis for division of labor, authority and responsibility; for the Amish, gender seems at least as important as age in serving the same function, but the process is clearly the same. Both groups, as part of the ongoing process of socialization, reaffirm their specific rights and responsibilities to each other in ways that visibly distinguish them from other social groups or communities. Dress, body decoration and adornment (including hair style), manner of speech and manner of behavior are all used by both communities, but not as isolated techniques. All are integrated with and have their justification in the belief system, establishing a religious as well as social identity.

At this point, since "religion" is clearly one prime criterion of "community," we must clarify what is meant by the word, at least for the purposes of this argument. It is plainly more than church going or church membership, which may or may not be religious. For our purposes, "religion" involves both faith and belief in a spiritual or supernatural power that influences, or can influence, human and earthly affairs, and upon which humans are seen as being at least in part dependent. For our purposes it is irrelevant whether or not that power has any actuality in existence, or is merely the expression of sociological needs, or is the result of wishful thinking. The belief and the faith are social facts with far reaching and highly pragmatic consequences in the establishment and maintenance of social order. Moreover, when used in conjunction with the anthropological concept of "function," a form of behavior might well be classified as religious even though that is not the motivation or understanding of the "actors." So while the Amish religious belief in community makes it obligatory for members to join together to "raise" a neighbor's house that has been burned down, many attending may be there for the conscious motive of having fun, to socialize, rather than because of any "religious" commandment. All, however, would be able to point to the religious "function" of the house raising, and rather like the Mbuti would be rather sur-

prised that such a question should be asked, because for them that aspect would be most obvious.

Even architecture has indisputably religious connotations as well as communal significance for both the Amish and the Mbuti. The Amish add to their home to take care of elders, just as a Mbuti camp changes in shape and size as necessary to accommodate the "family" of the moment. Neither culture has a "church" in which religious services are held; for the Amish it is the family home, just as for the Mbuti it is the center of the family camp. Whereas for many of us the sacred is something distant and distinct, for these communities (and we may suspect for others) the sacred is essentially and necessarily familiar as well as familial. It is an integral part of all aspects of everyday life, domestic, economic, and political as well as ritual. The very process of living in such a community is an act of worship; so while religion may have its formal moments, it is also largely informal. The very concept of family is sacred in such communities.

The fourth requirement of the Amish, the practice of humility and simplicity, is a little less easy to relate to the Mbuti. Humility is not a concept they would understand, and while we might say they practice simplicity, they would not. However, there are related and comparable values which are essential to Mbuti communality. Far from practicing humility, the extrovert Mbuti are almost diametrically opposed to the Amish in their boastfulness both as individuals and as a group (for instance, when a hunting band visits a farming village). Yet the individual boastfulness is just that, it is an expression of the lesser individual self, and is almost invariably in a form of self ridicule as much as it is an expression of self awareness; if anything it serves to avert pride, which would certainly be the Amish objective, rather than to encourage it. If the boaster does not ridicule himself, his boasting will be taken up by others and exaggerated to the point of absurdity, and the individual effectively reduced to socially acceptable size. When there is group boastfulness, such as when Mbuti emerge from the forest bringing forest foods and products to the village world, telling stories of their bravery and how weak and cowardly and ignorant the villagers are for not being able to get these things for themselves, the stories are always exaggerated to such an extent that the villagers are laughing as much as the Mbuti. Such apparent demonstrations of pride serve the vital and positive function of maintaining a clear separation between the identities of the two groups while doing so in such an entertaining and obviously good-natured fashion as to avert the potentially dysfunctional formation of mutual feelings of superiority. It is indeed a form of ritual and is therefore equalizing.

As for simplicity, the Mbuti do indeed shun all but a very few of the luxuries and amenities of western civilization, including those readily accessible to them in the villages on their periphery. They do not do this with the moral conviction of the Amish, nor in response to any specific religious belief; they do it primarily because to them, in their forest world, these things would be hindrances rather than luxuries, and bring nuisance rather than convenience.

The similarity is in the sacredness of their reference point: the Mbuti reject those manifestations of the outside world that would bring *akami*, that would be displeasing to the forest, that would result in "unforestness." Hostetler's comment that "pocket calculators or battery operated razors are no threat to *family solidarity*"³ among the Amish could be applied to the Mbuti, pointing out that the little metal knives and miniature axes they get from the villagers are totally incapable of cutting down the *forest*. At the same time, the Mbuti totally reject the use of the larger axes with which the villagers fell fully grown forest trees and the guns with which they kill game. The Amish are very conscious of the effect that mechanical convenience can have on patterns of cooperation, and they have found scriptural justification for their preference for cooperation and community over convenience and individuality. The Mbuti do not have a body of written scriptures, but ultimately their appeal is equally to the sacred, their yardstick being the quality of their communal life in the forest.

Here a most important comparison is evident, one that leads us towards our consideration of society. Hostetler says that the Amish "see no contradiction in forbidding a telephone in the home but permitting its use from a pay station."⁴ The Mbuti see no contradiction in smoking marijuana when in a village, but forbidding its use in the forest. It is both a matter of keeping an appropriate distance between the sacred and the profane, and a highly perceptive awareness of the complex realities of behavioral function and disfunction. Again, for both communities, reference is to the sacred. But Hostetler says that the Amish go beyond this, and that some even encourage their young, particularly at the critical time just before marriage, to test their faith and enter the outside world, taste it, and then either voluntarily reject it and return to the Amish way, or become part of it and give up the Amish way. Some believe that the mixing of young Amish children with others may also serve, by contrast, to demonstrate the advantages of the Amish way. All children grow up with some familiarity with the outside world so that when they consciously reject it, by baptism, they know what they are rejecting.

The Mbuti, similarly, while keeping their sacred world apart from the profane village world, accomplish far more even than the vital reaffirmation of their communal belief. Like the Amish, the Mbuti explicitly recognize the reality of the outside world simply by the fact of opposing it, or dealing with it in any way whatsoever, and by not trying to convert that outside world to their own way of life and thought. They take pains not to interfere with that foreign way; both communities implicitly recognize the equal right of others, however distinct, to exist. So at the very least, it is perfectly possible for social groups, however distinct, to form a community of communities, given each group's ability to retain its own distinct way without interfering with the right and ability of the others to do the same. That does not constitute a society, but it points the way.

3. *Id.* (emphasis added).

4. *Id.*

F. Community-Society Conflict

1. The Reciprocity Issue

The problems that rise between community and society mostly arise when each is unwilling or unable to respect fully the rights and interests of the other, when they seem to or do necessarily run counter to each other, and when separation is not possible. What binds communities together into a single society is some necessity for mutual reciprocity, which can be in one or all areas of life. Such a necessity demands the establishment of a common code of behavior defining the relationship, at least; it need not always define behavior within the communities. One factor that in our society makes it necessary for the common code to reach into the communities and define to *some* extent what behavior shall be throughout, is the possibility, likelihood, and even necessity in our society for mobility. In the Ituri, a member of one community who does not like it, or is disliked, can with relative ease move to another without any stigma, and will be perfectly welcome wherever he can be a good community member. The standard and the quality of life does not vary that much, except between the farmers, fishers, and hunters. Between such dramatically different life style communities there is less mobility. All that is required, however, is the willingness and ability to practice the appropriate way. Consequently, it was by no means unknown, although rare, for village farmers to live in the forest among the Mbuti hunters. They were then, however, subject to the forest code, not that of the village.

In our society such total fragmentation and autonomy of communities is not possible. Nevertheless, each community had its own inner conflict between communal self awareness and communal self perception. Near-communities, like Lancaster County, feel a divided loyalty to two laws, not precisely those of God and Mammon, but certainly those that in our terms are sacred (communal) and secular (social). Individuals can and do utilize whichever set of "laws" suit their needs, but this practice would be totally impermissible in a small-scale society in which the context would define which set of laws was applicable. The issue is compounded in proportion to the strength with which any community believes that its survival as such depends on adherence to its "way."

2. The Factor of the Sacred in Amish and Mbuti Communities

The Mbuti and the Amish make it very clear, conscious and overt, that their ways of life and thought are their very being, that without the possibility of pursuing those ways they would cease to be Mbuti and Amish. Such conviction is the mark of a true community, and while it opens the door to confrontation by its very uncompromising nature, it also opens the door to negotiation and a conflict-free resolution by at least clarifying the situation. If then a community finds it cannot come to terms with the needs and demands of the society of which it is a part, the only option is for it to leave. This does not happen frequently in our society, but the voluntary self-exile of the Jonestown community (however mistaken thinking was on both sides) is one

example. Better that than for a community to compromise merely for the sake of compromise, without conviction, for then it loses the religious integrity and vitality that is its prime justification for existence.

Adaptation, modification and reconciliation can take place without being compromised only if the belief systems involved are flexible. There is nothing more destructive of society or of communities within societies than the religious arrogance that claims both absolute superiority and absolute uniqueness, and consequently refuses to depart from the letter of its own law. Such inflexibility may well be a sign of inner weakness rather than strength, but nonetheless the damage it does to the fabric of society is real and powerful. The success of the Amish in the United States is an example of how a people totally and uncompromisingly dedicated to their religious ideal, to their chosen way of life, can still be flexible enough to make their presence in a very different society perfectly workable. If there is any danger in that relationship, between the Amish and the state or the nation, it is likely to be due to inflexibility on the part of the latter.

For one thing, like the Mbuti their very dedication to their way of life, which for them is their "law," inculcates and demands a respect for "law" in general. Thus, state and federal law are respected insofar as the respect is mutual. Very significantly (and very differently from the multitude of near-communities like Lancaster County of Virginia), the Amish do not take their internal problems to courts of law, and indeed decline to appear in such courts even when accused of violating state or federal law. But they accept the consequence, even though that may be jail. This is not how the system need work, any more than truly conscientious objectors should be jailed because of their religious beliefs. The specific beliefs of the Amish make theirs an extreme case, for to be Amish is a matter of belief, not a matter of preference. You could only be Amish if you could not be anything else. Living is stated to be "a redemptive process"; the focus is on right effort, and failure it expected since the perfection aimed at is superhuman.

In such a system, be it Mbuti or Amish, there is no place for crime, courts, or penal systems. The weak must be strengthened and the community must be protected from harm, so we are dealing with sin rather than crime, and with purification rather than punishment. Plainly the secular courts of society and its secular laws must be seen by such a community as the Amish as having little if any authority over them. It would be wrong, however, to think the Amish deny that the courts and law of the outside world, of "society," have any authority. The Amish are certainly aware of the power of those courts, and it is at that crucial point that the two worlds, community and society, may come into conflict.

Community, as represented by the Amish, achieves social order through spiritual and moral coercion, with the goal of individual redemption *through community redemption*. Hence its focus is on restitution. Society, as represented by the state and federal governments, courts and law, achieves social order through physical coercion and the threat of such coercion in the form of physical incarceration. It is essentially punitive rather than restitutive (regardless

of the ongoing debate as to how far, if at all, the system has any deterrent effect), and focuses primarily on the individual. The social good is more of a remote ideal than the immediate concern of the law. While in Community the model for order is established deeply and indelibly at the outset through family order, and is expanded upward and outward to the prime focus in adult life on communal order, with society it is the reverse. There the state (or nation) establishes itself as the model and its order filters down through successive levels to the individual. The fact that the government is theoretically of, for and by the people does not result in anything like the same immediate and directly perceived relationship between the individual good and social order as is perceived in community. Nevertheless, these differences are far from irreconcilable, and the two systems can work effectively together, as seen in the Ituri, where many communities, differing radically from each other in way of life and in religious belief and practice, nonetheless form a single political entity. This is what elsewhere I have called the *nkumbi* confederation that effectively corresponds to the provincial legal entity.

The Amish, within themselves, are sufficient in number and widely enough dispersed (not only in Pennsylvania, but in other states and in Canada) to require some form of effective centralization, though they would in the interests of the smaller discrete localized communities shun even an Amish "government." So territoriality and community of residence, as in the Ituri, are clearly shown to be prime criteria of "community" just as are religion and community of belief, and community of life style (which derives almost inevitably from the other two.) Given the permissible mobility from one Amish community to another, a mobility that may well be utilized (as it is by the Mbuti) to every conflict that would be disruptive to the community, there has to be some form of inter-community communication. This is far from approaching any form of central Amish government imposing a secular law. At the most it seems more like a religious council that exists to ensure that all communities are indeed adhering to the same "ancestral," or divine, spiritually ordained way. Thus, when mobility occurs, it can occur without danger of pollution. It would be wrong to mistake this for the rigid conformity too often and wrongly thought to be synonymous with "community." In fact, it allows for a large measure of individual freedom within the community.

The Amish among themselves, recognize the need for some form of coordination, if not government, and they certainly recognize the need for government in the modern nation state. In no way do they deny the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship, though they make relatively scant use of its rights, even resisting welfare. They perceive their social self to be necessarily a mere extension of their communal self. Thus, they accept state and federal law, their rights and responsibilities as citizens, only insofar as these do not conflict with the higher, spiritual law that, they believe, should govern *all* human behavior, including that of governments. At first it might seem that this position, although understandable, is hardly tenable in a modern state, least of all a plural society such as the United States. On the contrary, the Amish instance demonstrates

that in fact the two units, Amish community and state/federal society, conflict on remarkably few points, though those points are emotionally and structurally crucial. On the side of society there may be feelings that the Amish are a parasitical population, pursuing their own good at the expense of others, contributing little or nothing to the wider national good. They refuse to join the armed services for the defense of the nation, and they resist more localized state needs, as for instance when these impinge on Amish owned land and its usage. The Amish, on the other hand, see certain central legislation as directly interfering with their religious duty to the higher law of God, though others normally would not think of taxation and land development or the Department of Highways as having much to do with "religion." However, most of these issues have been negotiated and settled with the secular authorities. The Amish do not deny the right of others to live as they wish, in accord with their conscience. They merely seek a central government and law that will allow such freedom equally for all. The government's position is not that far removed, if we accept Warren Burger's ruling that a way of life that does not interfere with the rights and wants of others is not to be condemned merely because it is different. And the Amish acceptance of central secular government (insofar as it does not interfere with their sacred way) is not an empty posture: a sizeable proportion of the Amish population register and actively participate in the local and central electoral process, in full keeping with their conscience. They also contribute in many direct and practical ways to the welfare of the non-Amish communities living around them.

The ongoing, crucial area of conflict concerns education. Throughout this examination of individual, community and society we have come against the central importance of the educational process. Hostetler discusses this detail, showing that initially the Amish took advantage of local rural elementary education, seeing its value in providing their children with necessary contact with the outside world. Thus their decision to be Amish, when it came time for baptism, was not made in ignorance. The Amish resisted higher education, for this took their children away from the communally vital educational process that could only be had by full time residence at home and on the farm, where the Amish had their own secondary level schools. This is precisely the time in life, around puberty, when the *nkumbi* plays such a vital role in the socialization process in the Ituri, making possible the ordered relationship *between* communities while encouraging the continuation of disparate ways of living *within* those communities. What makes it possible for "community" to thrive within a wider society, as seems now to be the case, in the Ituri, is that the wider society, while not favoring the religious belief of one community over another, is not irreligious. On the contrary, the wider society, being yet another outward expansion from the nuclear family, accepts the existence and value of a diversity of religious beliefs, regards each community in this sense as a sacred community, and is therefore itself sacred.

The implications of this are simple, yet absolutely crucial to the coexistence of community and society. The main implications for our purposes are that the areas of responsibility and authority are clearly defined, and that

in such definition society fully recognizes the sanctity of community, as "family writ large," and its inviolable right to practice its religious belief. Community, similarly, must accept the defined authority of society, provide its own members with ample opportunity to know enough of the outside world to make community membership not only voluntary but well considered, and ensure that its own form of religious belief and practice in no way interferes with that of others. In this sense, all that is preventing Lancaster County in Virginia from being a "community" is its own self perception as a secular rather than sacred unit, as being composed of individuals and families rather than as itself being a family in both effect and affect. As a result it accepts individual good as distinct from communal good. There is also no possibility for the unanimity of decision making that is another hallmark of the Ituri and Amish communities. This of course derives at least in part from the diversity of religious belief within the county. That diversity of church affiliation, even of "religion" in the wider sense (Jewish, Islamic, Christian, whatever) need be no barrier to the kind of religious unity demanded by "community," though a broad diversity might result in sub-families or sub-communities. What is more necessary than nominal affiliation is a common belief in a prime common sacred. That for the Amish is the community itself, just as for the Mbuti it is "Forestness." At best, Lancaster County's *overall* self perception is secular. While this enables it to fit into the state and federal system of secular law, it is with some reluctance because of its powerful sense of self awareness, as though it felt that it had certain *independent* rights but was unable to articulate them.

3. The Poletown Conflict in Detroit

This inherent possibility of conflict begins with the conflict between the individual self and the social self, and may be enlarged into conflict between nuclear family and community, and ultimately between community and society. It becomes most troublesome in the United States when it arises in an urban context. Despite our too often repeated assertion of the separation of church of state, and the fact that we are an industrial nation, we allow a measure of "freedom" in the rural context, as though a village or county had some valid claim to being a sacred, religious unit, whereas the urban context is almost by definition secular, if not profane. Yet ethnic neighborhoods in all our major cities may come a lot closer to being communities, as we are defining the term, than many a rural village or county. It is not unrelated that the very term, "ethnic," originally had almost exclusive religious connotations, referring to populations and cultures who were gentile, or at best neither Jewish nor Christian.

When we come to consider social issues such as the proposal by General Motors to take over the northern section of "Poletown" in Detroit, as part of its massive modernization plan in 1980, we are once again having to deal with a "religious" issue. General Motors turned down offers of other sites in Detroit, and increasingly insisted on Poletown as the location for its new plant. One of Poletown's chief defenses was, in effect, that it was a "com-

munity” and, in practice if not in law, untouchable. Perhaps the most immediate weakness of the claim lay in the usage of the term “Poletown,” which for most outsiders has national rather than religious connotations. Indeed the crucial issue should have been *is* Poletown a true community, that is bound by a community of religious belief, or is it merely a secular (however viable and distinctive) neighborhood? The study by Bukowczyk enables us, after the fact, at least to use the unhappy coup of corporation over community to help resolve our own dilemma in trying to define the rights and responsibilities of society as distinct from those of community.

There were three major interested parties: General Motors, which wished to acquire a tract of land for its expansion program; the City of Detroit, in which the tract was located; and the residents of that tract. There was resistance from at least a sizeable segment of the residents (so either there was no communal unanimity or the area should not have been considered, as it was, as being a single neighborhood, let alone a “community”). This resistance publicly raised the issue of the public good (that of the residents) being sacrificed for private interests (those of General Motors). This obscured what was really the prime issue, whether or not the residents did form a “community,” and placed the focus on the shifting sands of private and public interests, shifting because what is private interest in one context may be public interest in another.

For Detroit, badly in need of an economic shot in the arm, the proposed takeover of some 465 unproductive acres meant not only the preservation of 6,000 jobs that would be lost if General Motors relocated elsewhere, but also a massive increase in tax revenue. For General Motors the acquisition of the particular tract of land was part of a vast program of expansion, and for a number of reasons the site was its first choice but by no means the only possible choice. Partly because of the complex multiple reasons that made this, for General Motors, the most advantageous site, it was possible for the media to play on the fact that General Motors was a private corporation, and to imply that this was a classic conflict between private and public interests, assuming that the interests of the residents were *ipso facto* “public.” What lay concealed in most media accounts was the fact that it was by no means clear what was private and what was public. Further obscuring the underlying issue of whether or not the area was a “community” were the distinctions made between purpose and usage, both private and public. In substituting the terms individual and social, for private and public, the issue takes on a different and less equivocal appearance.

For the third party to the dispute, the residents of the area, it was even more uncertain as to what was at stake. The issue was generally presented as being a conflict between a private corporation and “the public.” Not only did this ignore the fact that any private corporation, particularly one the size of General Motors, is an integral and potentially profitable part of the wider society, just as it is an integral part of the same social structure that incorporates “the public” (individuals), but it diverted attention from the fact that the conflict was really one of city versus neighborhood. The neighborhood *claimed* to be a community and was an integral a part of the city as General

Motors Corporation was of the state of Michigan, and the state of the nation. General Motors was merely a vehicle through which this inherent conflict was able to manifest itself. In the manifestation there was revealed an extraordinary lack of clearly defined rights and responsibilities at different levels of social integration. We have already posited clarity of these definitions as one of the chief requirements if the interrelationship between individual, community and society is to minimize conflict. Each of the participants viewed the issue rather as if they were competitors in a game, each playing the game according to different rules. Each had the same goal of an exclusive, individual victory in which its interests would win over the interests of the other participants, though not necessarily at the expense of those other interests.

Two factors emerge here that are important for our interest in the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups at different levels of social integration. One was that all three participants claimed that their interests were also in the public interest. This was an appeal to both law and morality, to what might be held to be a "religious" right. The other factor was that similarly, but much more specifically, the case for the residents involved the claim that they constituted a "community." Thus, they made an appeal to a clearly felt but hopelessly ill-defined sanctity—one that, if accurately defined, would vest in a residential unit whose members are bound together by more than mere common residence, a shared economy, a mutually acceptable life style and political position. They are bound by a community of religious belief, a bond that can almost be made to sound mystical. What is interesting is that, at that point, when the mystical or even spiritual aspect is played up, the case for community begins to lose credibility in the eyes of many, including those of the law. This is important because all along I have been saying that not only is "religion" an important factor in defining community, but that there is far more to "religion" than mere church membership, or adherence to a moral code supported by a belief system. To understand the power of "community" as an effective structural entity we have to take sentiment into account, and consider faith as a phenomenon at least as important as, and quite different from, belief.

In media accounts the terms "neighborhood" and "community" were at first used interchangeably, but the word "community" was used increasingly when the writer wished to support the case of the residents. Presumably, then, if a community is entitled to more protection in the popular view than a neighborhood (and presumably a neighborhood to more protection than a mere subdivision, and so on), one wonders why so little energy was given to determining whether or not the area of the proposed General Motors development was indeed the community it claimed to be. In fact, the issue was played out in such a way that the victory went to the best strategists, and from the outset the residential strategy was poor. Their best strategy was in claiming to be a community, though if they had been questioned on that they might have been hard pressed to substantiate the claim. But even more untenable was the claim implicit in their resurrection of the old name for that part of Detroit, "Poletown," implying that what was at stake was an ethnic

neighborhood, if not a community. Also remarkably weak in their strategy was the lack of any substantial argument that they represented any real public interest. The very private corporation the neighborhood council attacked, in precisely those terms, could with much greater justification demonstrate that in practice, if not as a prime objective, it operated for the good of the public. It could make that argument at the level of the national good, or interest, right down to the good of the individual worker. The position of the city was even less ambivalent in claiming that it properly represented the interests of a greater good than that of any of its parts.

From our point of view, the position of the neighborhood council that claimed to represent the residents was the most untenable. Many of the residents were in favor of the takeover, some standing to gain as part of the labor market that would benefit by the creation of 6,000 jobs, and some standing to gain by accepting the city's offer to pay more than market value for rapidly depreciating property. In addition, the claim implied in the resurrection of the old name "Poletown" did not reflect the actual ethnic composition of the district, which was primarily black American and secondarily Polish. It also had a substantial number of residents from East Europe and from such places as the American South and the Philippines. Although the district had a ratio of one church for every eighty-five households, that does not suggest a very tight-knit single "community," nor even a "neighborhood" of any effective homogeneity. Divided as it was by race, class, national background and religion, the use of the name Poletown was clearly a tactic to win popular support and favor in court. It was also designed to win the support of the powerful Roman Catholic Church, headed locally by a Polish Archbishop and, of course, in Rome by a Polish Pope.

Historically, the district first began to assume a residential ethnic character with its settlement by German workers; ever since there have been successful waves of immigrants, including German Poles, Russian Poles, Austrian Poles, and presumably some Polish Poles. During this period it acquired the name Poletown; it was a period when it might have been able to lay claim to being a community, with Polish schools, churches using the Polish language, and festivals that expressed the shared spiritual heritage. That was a far cry from the shared spiritual heritage. That was a far cry from the cultural scene as it was at the time of the dispute, in 1890.

In fact the population of the area designated for demolition did have some justification for their claim to be a community, but it was ill-formulated and falsely presented. First, there was a common attachment to territory, and territoriality is one of the criteria we have suggested as determining what is and what is not "community." That the territory was, in the eyes of others, dilapidated, run down, a "wasteland" (as it was described with remarkable insensitivity), in no way affects the reality and strength of the sentiment felt by the residents. The Mbuti hunters regard the forest as all that is good, yet it is perceived as dark and full of evil by their village neighbors. Again we are dealing with the reality of self perception. This common attachment to territory transcended the nominally "religious" and ethnic and class divisions of Poletown.

Second, "family," another major criterion of "community," was also present, though not (as presented by the critics of General Motors) through any common Polishness, nor even common formal religious affiliation. Rather, it was in the form of union fraternity. There was certainly an economic cohesiveness, though in trying to establish the validity of a claim to being a community, any researcher would want to know a lot more about the system of economic rights and obligations as it bound (or did not bind) individual households into a single corporate entity.

While all this would have lent strength to an argument for preserving the area as a community, there were other factors crucial to the concept of community that were lacking. There was no unanimity. And while relocation of individuals and families would have made it difficult or impossible for some affective bonds to be retained, it does not seem that such relocation would have broken any bonds that were both effective and necessary. Nor is it clear that there was anything approaching an effective socialization system that provided a common loyalty to a common communal good, a common good that would be recognized and ranked by all as greater than that of the individual good. Union membership would have achieved this to some extent, but it does not seem to have been represented in the formal educational system nor in the home (through common child-rearing practices), and above all there was little if any ongoing socialization in the form of rituals of revitalization. At best such revitalization and sharing of common symbols of sociality might have been found at the smaller parish level, but not at the community or neighborhood level.

These are just some of the factors that relate to whether or not "Poletown" was a "community," but they are the same factors that pertain to the relationship of community to society, and in fact one of the most poignant facts is that many residents who saw themselves as members of a community did not object to the sacrifice of their community if it was indeed for the wider good of the city. What they objected to, and one of the factors that encouraged them to resist, was the way that their neighborhood was described as a wasteland. Yet that appellation was not intended to be derogatory, it was merely a highly insensitive assessment that was perfectly correct in one context (that of society) and totally incorrect in another context (that of neighborhood).

VI. A WORKABLE BASIS FOR A RELATIONSHIP AMONG INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

Once we have established the duality of individual identity, we have implied the duality of community identity. Once we accept the possibility of the individual moving from one set of values to another in the making of decisions, applying the values appropriate to the context, we should be able to accept the same process as a workable basis for the relationship between community and society. At this stage we are not thinking of "community" as a theoretical construct, but as a living entity composed of rational (and well socialized) individual human beings. Its relationship with society is thus organic

rather than mechanical, moral rather than legal, but supported by and formalized through structure and law. Society also, of course, is composed of human individuals, but it is useful to think of it as a theoretical entity, mechanical rather than organic (though by no means exclusively so), for the very good reason that the interpersonal and inter-group relations within the wider human society become less direct and less personal, more diffuse and mechanical, the larger the society. The same process of mechanization of human relationships, and of the law itself, is proportionate to the degree to which the society is composed of communities rather than neighborhoods, for ultimately the nature of any given society is determined by the nature of these smaller social units. The reciprocal rights and obligations that pertain between community and society should be such that society does not have the power to determine the nature of any of its communities, and such that no one community has the power to determine the nature of society.

The word "society" can be made to mean almost anything we want it to. It is used, as are many other crucial words, with almost unbelievable carelessness and irresponsibility, and not uncommonly (as with "community") as a lever to effect some kind of behavioral or attitudinal coercion. This implies that as with "community" there is a widespread belief that the individual as well as groups of individuals are under some moral obligation to "society." As convenient as it would be to define community as sacred and society as secular, it is not quite that simple. Since no one usage of the term can claim absolute precedence it is useful here to recapitulate briefly and review how we have used the terms for our own purposes in this discussion. In light of that usage and that purpose we can find a meaning in the concept of society that will be consistent with the meaning we attach here to individual and community, and will help us to understand better the importance of greater precision in the usage, both common and legal, of such terms.

To recapitulate, as a social anthropologist I am concerned with social institutions and with social structure, and as a humanist I am concerned with *all* the forces that influence human relationships, interpersonal or intergroup, and help to bring about social order or social disorder. Among those forces, then, I must consider those loosely called emotional and religious, though without any pretension of being able to do so as thoroughly as might a psychologist, a theologian or philosopher. Finally, as a member of one particular society, the United States, my prime ultimate concern is with social order and disorder at home. To this end I use the comparative method, making comparisons both within our own society and between ours and others far removed in space and kind. My motivation is that as an individual resident in what refers to itself as a "community," and with legally binding rights and responsibilities in a nation that is sometimes referred to as a "society," I am not only aware of what I referred to as a general malaise, but a part of it. My position is, therefore, subjective as well as objective. I bring my understanding of other ways of life and thought to bear not with the slightest suggestion that they are directly applicable, but rather to enlighten first by juxtaposition, then to suggest new and specific ways of reassessing our own

social system. The reassessment includes some of those concepts we so readily take for granted, such as the three under consideration here.

In the Ituri Forest of the Republic of Zaire, then, we find a sizeable number of peoples and cultures of great diversity, yet throughout there is a common perception of "society." For them this means at least "the largest political unit" of which they are an effective part, which for some would be the forest, for others the province, and for fewer the nation, depending on their education. So for them society is not bounded by size, but by efficacy, by the fact (rather than the theory) of interaction and interdependence. I suggest that this limitation would be inappropriate in a different educational context, such as our own, in which we *might* wish to accept theoretical interdependence rather than demand actual interdependence.

Another conceptual point that all these people share is their view of human society as an expanding universe, expanding outward from the individual through an ever-widening succession of different levels of "family." At the same time they all accept that in a kind of mirror image of the same model, but flowing in the reverse direction, authority flows downwards and outwards from a single divine, supernatural, or spiritual source. Thus, the total population understands that "family" provides the basic model for all relationships, human and suprahuman, natural and supranatural. The individual is aware of himself as an isolate, distinct from all others in certain respects, but to him those respects are insignificant by comparison with the respects in which he is similar to all others at the outward extension of his universe. In such a world he can relate himself to any other individual by the simple process of tracing the two ancestries back to a common ancestor. The extent to which he has to go to find such a common ancestor will determine the precise extent and nature of their reciprocal rights and responsibilities concerning each other, their effective social relationship. While he has a single self awareness, he has an ongoing and ever changing self perception of himself as a social self rather than an individual self, with the crucial recognition that each "self" has clearly defined reciprocal rights and responsibilities. These are not ranked hierarchically in order of merit. All are equally binding; they are merely different in nature.

Similarly with his perception of the different social groups to which he belongs, varying in size and composition, the smallest is the nuclear family, and just as the emotional bonds are at an early stage the most intense, so are the rights and responsibilities. Deriving from the natural felt dependence of the infant on the mother, and its later perceived dependence upon the father, the associated rules of behavior are thought of as "natural." They are also thought of as being desirable since, if followed, they lead to satisfaction and survival. From the earliest moment onward the infant's experience is that certain forms of behavior are associated with reward, with satisfaction, and others are not. Reward is not contrasted with punishment, merely with non-satisfaction.

The next step outward from nuclear family is usually into a wider kin-group such as lineage (thence into clan and tribe, the exact divisions varying

from culture to culture). This wider kin group, however, includes affines, those to whom the individual is only related through the marriage of one of his own kin, or later through his own marriage. But in the Ituri, as in many other small-scale societies, this wider group, this association of nuclear families, has all the emotional cohesion of being a kin group and also has the cohesive strength of being a corporate economic group. Whether it is the hunting band of the Mbuti, a fishing camp of the Ndaka or a village of the agricultural Bira, *all* residents are seen as contributing in an effective way to the common good. Residents of the village, or whatever the territorial unit is, may not all actually be directly related, since some may have joined to avoid dispute elsewhere. But in that case they usually can trace some kinship if they go back far enough. Even if not, such immigrants are *classified* as kin and this way brought into exactly the same system of rights and responsibilities as others, into the same effective world and into the same affective world. This is a world in which all have a common stake in a common, shared territory, just as they share common kinship—be it real or classificatory. The members of this “family” are structured in such a way as to unite all the individuals and nuclear families as equal members in one single corporate unit that is essentially sacred in nature since all members subscribe to the same belief. The belief may be in the sanctity of the ancestor from which they are all descended, or in the sanctity of the territory that is uniquely theirs and which provides them their sustenance. Finally, members of this corporate family see themselves as distinct from similar units, even those with which they may interact. With other such corporate units they do not share the same *proximity* of kinship, nor are they as absolutely and necessarily economically interdependent; they do not share the same residential and economic territory, nor do they participate in the same rituals at the same time and in the same place. Each group is distinct and sacred in its own right, and the prime obligation of the members of each is to maintain that uniqueness and sacredness.

These communities share the same model of an expanding universe, based on the universal phenomenon of family. Consequently, when these communities come together, they merely shift horizons, in time and space, and become a larger community, we might say. Between immediate neighbors, who are likely to be interrelated through marriage anyway, and who interact most often for mutual economic and political advantage, the bonds binding them together may be almost as strong and vital as those binding members of the smaller territorial communities. Obviously, both the affective and effective bonds decrease in strength as the universe expands, and this is when reinforcement is needed. In place of “law and order,” however, this society utilizes ritual and belief, and can do so because all communities share a common sacred which they all see, though perhaps in different ways, as being manifest in society itself. Such a society thus is not less sacred than its communities, but its sanctity is more distant and that much less direct and effective. Invariably such societies, like the sacred communities, make use of rituals and symbols to reaffirm their authority while limiting that authority to the regulation of inter-community relationships.

In such interrelationships communities need to be represented, but the

representation is significantly different in nature and quality from that known in our political system. There may or may not be choice, but whether the representative comes to be that through rules of inheritance such as primogeniture (thus the senior living representative of the common sacred ancestor) or through an electoral process, perhaps based on charisma (as would be the case with the Mbuti), the representative is of the same "family" as all those he represents. He shares the same name, and therefore has the same social identity, regardless of his own individual identity. The larger the community, the more likely that the representative will be "strengthened" by rituals reaffirming this shared identity. To us that might seem like insufficient safeguards against the possibility of corruption. That is where we have to recognize the importance of the phenomenon of faith in such communities and societies, for faith, being suprarational, is inherently unquestionable (though not immune from the process of change). This may help us to realize the extent to which our system is impoverished by the absence of such well-inculcated systems of belief and faith. Since the oath taken in a courtroom is not considered any longer to have binding power in itself or through any invocative power it might have, it is little more than a public, secular, rational affirmation of the acceptance of the secular law pertaining to perjury. Were it otherwise there would be little or no need to question the veracity of any witness. If a witness did depart from the truth, there would be no place for punishment since breaking the oath would have been a blasphemy, subject to supernatural rather than mortal sanctions.

In a curious way, small-scale societies work as well as they do not by any means because they are composed of saints and angels, and certainly not because the individual members are endowed with any excess of altruism. On the contrary, they work well largely because the individuals, who are as interested in the survival of the individual self as in any society, have been socialized into accepting a system in which the individual good is best, if not only, achieved through prior achievement of the social good. Moreover, this is a self-evident truth at the level of community (perhaps that should be another criterion of true "community") and its extension to the wider society involves at most a change in degree, not in nature. Finally, all communities within such a society must be bound by effective rather than theoretical bonds, by a system of mutual interdependencies, so that in larger societies in which interaction by one community with all others is impossible, all must be inter-related by common and necessary interaction with society. This can occur in an amorphous ritual confederation of believers as in the Ituri, or in a nation-state with a central government.

Historically states have developed out of such societies. When we can trace that development on one single continent, as we can in Africa, we see that even the most powerful, centralized, populous and diverse nations and empires have retained the familiar imagery of the family, both sacred and secular. The state is then something very familiar and real even to the least educated peasant, for he sees it, if over-simply, as a superfamily, and consequently knows how to relate to it.

Even in our own world, in which the process has been going on for much

longer, the same imagery may be found. We still talk of fatherlands and motherlands, and even of a "family of nations." God Himself is seen as a Father, or Herself as a Mother. We have the same tendencies to think of the *land* as sacred. Unanimity, while plainly impossible in our nation, even at a county level, is nonetheless an ideal. The importance of religion is recognized, though perhaps not the presence of Spirit, as manifest in the Constitution and the laws relating to religious belief and practice. It is manifest again in the deep-seated and highly emotional attitude of the public to any religious issue at almost any level. Further, religion is present in many symbols and forms of behavior most of us take to be secular. So the very elements that make order without law possible in small-scale societies are all present in our own, but largely unformulated and unsystematized, subject to abuse and exploitation for private ends, it often seems, as much as subject to application toward the common good.

We do not recognize clearly the duality of individual identity, the coexistence of the individual and private self with the social and public self, and we fail to distinguish between the rights and responsibilities of these two entities. Our malaise is aggravated by our highly dangerous, indiscriminating focus on inherently non-social values such as "individual" success, "individual" freedom, "individual" rights and responsibilities. Without the clear distinction between rights and responsibilities of the individual and social self, we are not really in a position to associate with each other in communities. In true communities, individual interests of both kinds are subsumed in the communal interest, through the mere expansion of the social self through the family model to "community." Even our concept of family is rapidly shrinking, both in terms of its size and of its being a network of necessarily effective and interlocking social relationships. If the nuclear family is not a corporate unit working toward a single common goal, it is plainly impossible to expect to have a community as we have defined it. Yet few would deny the ideal that a family should be working together rather than for disparate individual interests, and the constant manipulation of the word "community" is clear indication that here too our ideals are far distant from the actuality we have created.

In place of "communities" we have "neighborhoods." That term also is value laden, and is a kind of secular version of community, with most criteria either shrunken or modified and that of common belief generally abandoned. We are also more comfortable with other, more secular criteria for "neighborhood," material criteria such as architecture, occupation, economic status, social services and facilities, and perhaps a representative body. In many neighborhoods, indeed, individual families compete with each other so that rivalry ("living on opposite banks") easily becomes a more common characteristic than territorial fraternity. Neighborhood fetes and festivals are notoriously competitive. Yet at the same time neighborhoods are also known for their neighborhood organizations, such as those for security, health or welfare, that thrive on voluntary labor and are dedicated to the common good. These frequently serve to equalize some of the inequalities. What is most lacking

by contrast with the African communities we have examined is the carefully institutionalized mandatory socialization of children in or approaching their early teens. Junior and senior high school education can in no way be said to serve this function in their present form.

Since a child growing up in a nuclear family and living in a neighborhood, progressing from one school to another, does not have the experience of mutual interdependence that an African child living in the Ituri would, there is no consistent model for the systematic enlargement of those nuclear interdependencies, no matter how strong and effective the family model might be. The wider social rights and responsibilities come to the child in the form of theory; he is instructed rather than experienced in the desirability of sociality. Being rationalized, sociality is therefore questionable, as are the rights and responsibilities learned in other cultures through unrationalized experience from birth onwards, so that by puberty, when they can successfully be rationalized, they are already the only acceptable norms. The only choice of any reasonable person in such a society is the choice to be social.

Perhaps the first spiritual and social experience of any human is the dependency of the infant upon its mother. That experience is necessarily (given the physical condition of the brain) at least nonrational, if not supernatural. Much of the enormous importance of early childhood is its sensory nature, it being a time for experimentation, for discovery, and above all for wonder together with a simple acceptance that certain things simply are. In no known society do we humans go through all of life like this. Western society tends to replace this mode of apprehension by reason, but in societies such as that of the Ituri, reason is considered to be merely yet another mode of apprehension that is added to the modes already learned, rather than replacing them. So acceptance of the unknown, including the perceived power and reality of the unknown (increasingly rationalized as the "supernatural," or perhaps better as "Spirit") becomes a matter of course. This is why it is possible to talk in very real terms of such communities as being "sacred," possible to refer to their members as sharing community of belief, as being irrevocably bound together by community of faith (a direct mode of apprehension so unfamiliar in our social life that we seldom hear the word, and if we do it is all too often confused with mere belief). If anything is to be learned from these kinds of comparisons it is that religion (not mere formal membership in a church or adherence to a specific body of rational belief, but these things built on top of an unshakable personal faith in the existence of some form of suprahuman power) is indispensable for the proper creation and maintenance of community, and of any society that is an association of communities. Even for the rationalist here also lies a perfectly rational way of resolving the inherent conflict that plagues our society, that of the private good against the public good, of self against society.

Any rational African traditionalist, looking at our society, would be likely to react with horror at the totality of our separation of church and state, the proscription against religious education in our schools, and its absence in so many homes. He would be likely to see that in denying an equal place to religion

in our society we are denying our very essence, our vital force, an inner reality that is our greatest potential source of common identity and social cohesion. As an anthropologist who has looked at many different kinds of social systems, I have found the greatest sense of security as well as the greatest degree of sociality in societies in which religious faith is deeply embedded. I believe that until we find a way of restructuring our religious belief and practice so that they broaden our sense of individual and social self awareness, using all the educational forces at our disposal, the conflict will flourish between individual rights and responsibilities, and those of society. Without some medial social unit between the individual and society, such as community, the law will continue to be faced with the impossible task of achieving social order through the threat of physical coercion. It will deal only with bodies and minds, ignoring that vital core in all of us that will always demand recognition, and cry "injustice" as long as it is not recognized. We must recognize the spiritual self that is the union of the individual and the social selves.

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