

Read it once, then reread it, making sure you understand what he means by each of his "defining qualities." In fact, it would be a good idea to jot down, in your own words, a brief definition of each.

Then proceed on to the descriptions of five different societies, ones we have constructed from studies done by other anthropologists and sociologists. Once you have read the descriptions, write an essay classifying the societies on the basis of Redfield's category system. How well does Redfield's system apply to each of them? Which societies seem to fit the best? Least well?

I

C

Little Communities

ROBERT REDFIELD

The small community has been the very predominant form of human living throughout the history of mankind. The city is a few thousand years old, and while isolated homesteads appeared in early times, it was probably not until the settlement of the New World that they made their "first appearance on a large scale." To Tocqueville, the village or township was "the only association . . . so perfectly natural that wherever a number of men are collected it seems to constitute itself." One estimate is that today three-quarters of the human race still live in villages. . . .

In the development of systematic investigation of human life the small community has come to provide a commonly recognized unit of subject matter. Anthropologists have done most of their field work in little communities, and no small part of empirical sociology derives from the investigation of villages, small towns, and urban neighborhoods. . . .

What, then, do we mean more particularly by a little community? I put forward, first, the quality of distinctiveness: Where the community begins and where it ends is apparent. The distinctiveness is apparent to the outside observer and is expressed in the group-consciousness of the people of the community.

Second, the community we are here concerned with is small, so small that either it itself is the unit of personal observation or else, being somewhat larger and yet homogeneous, it provides in some part of it a unit of personal observation fully representative of the whole. A compact community of four thousand people in Indian Latin-America can be studied by making direct personal acquaintance with one section of it.

Third, the community to which we are to look in these chapters is homogeneous. Activities and states of mind are much alike for all persons in corresponding sex and age

Anthropologist and sociologist ROBERT REDFIELD (1897-1958) studied primitive villages in Mexico and Guatemala. He was considered an authority on Middle American folk culture. His books include *Tepoztlan, A Mexican Village* (1930), *A Village That Chose Progress* (1950), *Peasant Society and Culture* (1956), and *The Little Community* (1955), from which this passage is taken.

positions; and the career of one generation repeats that of the preceding. So understood, homogeneous is equivalent to "slow-changing."

As a fourth defining quality it may be said that the community we have here in mind is self-sufficient and provides for all or most of the activities and needs of the people in it. The little community is a cradle-to-the-grave arrangement. A club, a clique, even a family, is sectional or segmental contrasted with the integral little community.

These qualities — distinctiveness, smallness, homogeneity, and all-providing self-sufficiency — define a type of human community that is realized in high degree in the particular bands and villages to be mentioned in these chapters.

Summaries of Studies on Community

HUALCAN, PERU, 1952

Hualcan is a mountain village in Peru. It has been described by anthropologist William Stein, who visited it in the 1950s and wrote about it in his book *Life in the Highlands of Peru*.

In 1952 Hualcan had 740 residents, all Indians and all dependent on farming. Although most families had small plots of their own, many residents relied on farm work at nearby estates. They were seldom paid in wages, but in crops or grazing rights. According to Stein, two-thirds of the parents of children born in Hualcan during 1951 were born there themselves.

The main economic units in Hualcan are extended families. Few families consist only of husband, wife, and children. A newly married couple lives with the parents of one of them; or sometimes the families of brothers and sisters live together as a single household. Each household pools its resources under the leadership of a senior male, who assumes responsibility for all of that household's economic decisions — from purchases and labor contracts to fines, bribes, and community contributions.

A large portion of the community's time and resources go into religious festivals. There are six major festivals and numerous minor ones. Each festival is run by a *mayordomo* (steward). It is considered a great honor to be chosen *mayordomo* for one of the festivals, but in return the *mayordomo* must convert a sizable portion of his family's wealth to the expenses of the festival. It's an honor no one can refuse, one that only the older senior men have the resources to meet. The most prestigious role is that of *mayordomo* of the festivity of St. Ursula, saint of the harvest.

After having been *mayordomo*, a villager can be appointed to the commission of *varyok*, six men who are in effect the ruling political body of the town. They decide on public projects, collect taxes, and listen to disputes. Technically, the highest-ranking official in Hualcan is an officer stationed there by the Peruvian government, which does not officially recognize the *varyok*. But this official must yield to the real power of the *varyok*.

Although families seem to function independently economically, the system of religious festivals subordinates individual wealth to community purposes. And tying political power to these same religious celebrations ensures a gradual rise to political power of men committed to community traditions.

SPRINGDALE, NEW YORK, 1958

In *Small Town and Mass Society*, Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman describe the town of Springdale as it existed in 1958. A small town in upstate New York, Springdale is within a short drive of several small cities and within relatively easy reach of New York City and Washington, D.C. In 1958 it had about 2,500 residents. Many of those residents were farmers, and many of its businesses were farm-related. The town's largest single business was a sawmill owned and operated by two local families.

The stream that runs through the center of town originally split the community into two distinct neighborhoods, with separate shopping centers and even separate fire companies. But by 1958 there were few signs of the social tensions once felt between the two areas. Though no longer important as a boundary, the stream itself remained important enough to the community that a few years earlier the townspeople collectively contributed to reconstructing its dam.

The social life of the community revolved around churches, schools, and private homes. Local organizations included the Masons, the American Legion, the Grange, the local fire brigades, weekly book clubs, a community club, 4-H, and booster groups. Residents of Springdale spoke of themselves as "just plain folks" and saw their town as a place where "everybody knows everybody" and "where you can say hello to anybody." People passing on the street would regularly stop to exchange greetings; in fact, people not stopping would be regarded as snobs. Springdalers were very aware of the nearby cities and seemed very proud to think of themselves as rural people.

Much of the town's economy revolved around farming. Many of the town's small businesses depended on the trade of farmers, and many of the farmers, in turn, relied on stable grain prices. Small fluctuations in milk prices could be felt throughout the community. When fixed agricultural costs rose, the town's general economy suffered.

Next to farming, the closest thing to a major enterprise in Springdale, according to Vidich and Bensman, was the community school, employing about sixty people. Located in the center of town, it was also viewed as the social and moral hub of the community, and its tax support was seen by most residents as an investment in the town's future.

According to Vidich and Bensman, one-fourth of the adults living in Springdale in 1958 were born there. Some of them had not lived in Springdale continuously, however. One-third of the town's population arrived during the years between 1940 and 1952.

THE VICE LORDS, CHICAGO, 1967

R. Lincoln Keiser closely studied the Vice Lords, a group of street gangs inhabiting Chicago's major black ghettos (*The Vice Lords: Warriors of the Streets*). Keiser characterized the Vice Lords' social organization as a "federation," each branch "with its own name, set of officers, and territory." Most groups also had female auxiliaries. The number of branches kept shifting as old groups dissolved and new ones came into being. Keiser estimated that the size of the Vice Lords in the late 1960s varied between 600 and 3,000.

In his study, Keiser described the oldest branch of the Vice Lords, the City Lords. The City Lords were formed in 1958 at the Illinois State Training School for Boys in St. Charles, Illinois. It had a seven-man group of officers, including not only president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer, but "supreme war counselor, war counselor, gun

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keeper, and sergeant-at-arms." The center of the City Lords' territory became 16th and Lawndale. The precise boundaries of that territory were hard to define. As Keiser puts it, a Vice Lord's territory "is that part of Chicago in which there is little chance that a Vice Lord will be attacked by an enemy group but a significantly larger chance that a member of an enemy club will be attacked by a group of Vice Lords."

Violent exchanges with other street gangs are frequent. Sometimes they occur by chance, while at other times they occur when Vice Lords deliberately enter enemy territory or when they perceive an invasion into their own. Despite the constant violence, membership in the group is also perceived as a defense against violence. Young boys often see membership in the group as a way to prevent being harassed by older boys. The Vice Lords replenish their numbers by recruiting such boys. A young boy entering the brotherhood usually must go through a trial period, during which time an older member is assigned to watch out for him. Bonds usually form quickly, and there is a strong sense of group unity.

Despite the group's solidarity, membership is also very fluid among the older members. Keiser estimates the 1967 membership of the City Lords to be about 150, though he admits that an accurate number was hard to estimate, even for the City Lords themselves:

A person may get a job, start supporting a family, and cease to take part in most Vice Lord activities. Occasionally, however, he may come out on the corner, drink wine, and shoot craps with other Vice Lords. While he is on the corner he acts like and is treated by others as a Vice Lord. . . . Further, an individual himself may claim to be a part of the group in one instance but deny he is a member at other times.

THE IKS, UGANDA, 1967

The Iks are a small tribe of hunter-gatherers described by Colin Turnbull in his book *The Mountain People*. Turnbull visited the tribe between 1964 and 1967, soon after the once nomadic tribe had been restricted by the Ugandan government to a mountainous region near the Kenyan border.

The Iks observed by Turnbull lived clustered in isolated villages. They foraged for food, but without the ability to move from place to place, they had to undergo great scarcities during some times of the year. When food was available, they consumed it immediately. The Iks made no attempt to share food with one another. Even little children had to compete for food, with the weaker children often dying.

Turnbull observed little social cooperation among the Iks. Husbands often beat their wives and discarded them casually whenever they wished. Most young women became prostitutes as a way of feeding themselves. Both men and women seemed to age very quickly, and old people were not tolerated for very long. When no longer self-sufficient they often were turned out of their homes to die. The Iks acknowledged few family bonds.

An Ik village consisted of a cluster of thatched huts, surrounded and interpenetrated by a dense maze of brush. The largest village visited by Turnbull, "village Number Five," comprised thirty such huts. The village was without any central clearing or meeting place. Moving from hut to hut through the tangle of surrounding brush was very difficult, but each hut had a narrow crawl space leading to an outer edge of the compound. According to Turnbull, no villager had any need to see fellow villagers, and whole days passed without human interaction. Most villagers were distrustful of one another and

particularly antagonistic toward their closest neighbors. Turnbull quotes a characteristic greeting and reply: "Brinji Ngag." . . . "Bera Ngag" ("Give me food." . . . "There is no food").

The Iks practiced no agriculture, and they were no longer successful hunters — though in the past they had flourished by hunting cooperatively. The Iks did have some income: They let Ugandan cattle thieves hide cattle within their thickets. Indirectly cattle raids became their major economic activity, something quite irritating to the young and struggling Ugandan government, a government otherwise indifferent toward them.

THE HUTTERITES, JASPER, CANADA, 1967

The Hutterites are a religious sect that colonized Jasper, Saskatchewan, emigrating from South Dakota during the 1950s and early 1960s. By the mid-1960s six separate Hutterite colonies existed in the Jasper region, representing about 8 percent of Jasper's total population. This account of their life-style is drawn from *Hutterite Brethren* by John W. Bennett.

The Hutterites are Anabaptists and can point to a 500-year tradition of religious harassment. Their religious beliefs and practices are not unlike those of other Protestant groups; what makes them different is their commitment to communal living and their rejection of the society around them.

The Hutterites colonize by buying up farmland. A settlement stops growing and divides when it reaches a size of about 150 people. According to Bennett, a colony any larger than this "becomes difficult to manage by means of the intimate forms of social control used by the Hutterites, and difficult to support on the amount of land usually available." When a new colony starts up, it is located far enough away from established colonies to appease fears among other Jasper residents that the Hutterites are trying to buy up the entire district. The various colonies, though self-sustaining, do maintain social and economic contact with one another.

The Hutterites live by agriculture. Because of their thorough commitment to rural life, their culture seems to have a peasant quality. They have a deep respect for traditional craftsmanship and for conservative education. Yet they are not entirely resistant to modern developments, showing themselves quite willing, for example, to take advantage of advances in farm machinery.

The Hutterites antagonize other residents of Jasper by having little or nothing to do with them. Their only contact with the town is their use of it for delivering, shipping, and receiving mail. Although the Hutterites do some buying and selling with the outside world, their economy does not seem to rely on such trade. When shortages occur, the Hutterites manage to get by on their reserves.

The Hutterites preach self-help and avoidance of worldly corruption. They practice adult baptism. They associate only with other Hutterites, and they regard all those who do not practice communal living as fallen Christians. And they consider all who are not Christians heathen.

An Art Assignment

Develop a system for classifying the human images that follow, all works of art produced in and around the 1920s. Explain your classification system in an essay. We realize that not everyone has a rich vocabulary for talking about art, but describe