

# Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good\*

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“Human behavior is always motivated by certain purposes, and these purposes grow out of sets of assumptions which are not usually recognized by those who hold them. The basic premises of a particular culture are unconsciously accepted by the individual through his constant and exclusive participation in that culture. It is these assumptions—the essence of all the culturally conditioned purposes, motives, and principles—which determine the behavior of a people, underlie all the institutions of a community, and give them unity” (Hsiao-Tung Fei and Chi-I Chang 1945:81–82).

“Human beings in whatever culture are provided with cognitive orientation in a cosmos: there is ‘order’ and ‘reason’ rather than chaos. There are basic premises and principles implied, even if these do not happen to be consciously formulated and articulated by the people themselves. We are confronted with the philosophical implications of their thought, the nature of the world of being as they conceive it. If we pursue the problem deeply enough we soon come face to face with a relatively unexplored territory—ethno-metaphysics. Can we penetrate this realm in other cultures? What kind of evidence is at our disposal? . . . The problem is a complex and difficult one, but this should not preclude its exploration” (Hallowell 1960:21).

1. *Cognitive orientation.*
2. *The “Image of Limited Good.”*
  - 2.1. *Economic behavior.*
  - 2.2. *Friendship.*
  - 2.3. *Health.*
  - 2.4. *Manliness and honor.*
3. *Peasant behavior as a function of the “Image of Limited Good.”*
  - 3.1. *Individual and family action.*
  - 3.2. *Informal, unorganized group action.*
  - 3.3. *Institutionalized action.*
4. *The “open” aspects of peasant society.*
5. *Peasant cognitive orientation and economic growth.*

1. The members of every society share a common cognitive orientation which is, in effect, an un verbalized, implicit expression of their understanding of the “rules of the game” of living imposed upon them by their social, natural, and supernatural universes. A cognitive orientation provides the members of the society it characterizes with basic premises and sets of assumptions normally neither recognized nor questioned which structure and guide behavior in much the same way grammatical rules unrecognized by most people structure and guide their linguistic forms. All normative behavior of the members

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of a group is a function of their particular way of looking at their total environment, their unconscious acceptance of the "rules of the game" implicit in their cognitive orientation.

A particular cognitive orientation cannot be thought of as world view in a Redfieldian sense, i.e., as something existing largely at a conscious level in the minds of the members of the group.<sup>1</sup> The average man of any society cannot describe the underlying premises of which his behavior is a logical function any more than he can outline a phonemic statement which expresses the patterned regularities in his speech. As Kluckhohn has pointed out, cognitive orientations (he speaks of "configurations") are recognized by most members of a society only in the sense that they make choices "with the configurations as unconscious but determinative backgrounds" (1943:218).

In speaking of a cognitive orientation—the terms "cognitive view," "world view," "world view perspective," "basic assumptions," "implicit premises," and perhaps "ethos" may be used as synonyms—I am as an anthropologist concerned with two levels of problems: (1) the nature of the cognitive orientation itself which I see as something "psychologically real," and the ways in which and the degree to which it can be known; and (2) the economical representation of this cognitive orientation by means of models or integrating principles which account for observed behavior, and which permit prediction of behavior yet unnoted or unperformed. Such a model or principle is, as Kluckhohn has often pointed out, an inferential construct or an analytic abstraction derived from observed behavior.

A model or integrating principle is not the cognitive orientation itself, but for purposes of analysis the two cannot be separated. A well-constructed model is, of course, not really descriptive of behavior at all (as is, for example, the term "ethos" as used by Gillin [1955] to describe contemporary Latin American culture). A good model is heuristic and explanatory, not descriptive, and it has predictive value. It encourages an analyst to search for behavior patterns, and relationships between patterns, which he may not yet have recognized, simply because logically—if the model is sound—it is reasonable to expect to find them. By the same token, a sound model should make it possible to predict how people are going to behave when faced with certain alternatives. A model therefore has at least two important functions: it is conducive to better field work, and it has practical utility as a guide to policy and action in developmental programs.

A perfect model or integrating principle of a particular world view should subsume *all* behavior of the members of a group. In practice it is unreasonable to expect this. But the best model is the one that subsumes the greatest amount of behavior in such fashion that there are no mutually incompatible parts in the model, i.e., forms of behavior cast together in what is obviously a logically inconsistent relationship. Kluckhohn speculated about the possibility of a single model, a dominant "master configuration" characterizing an entire society, for which he suggested the terms "integration" (1941:128) and "ethos" (1943:221), but I believe he never attempted the task of describing

a complete ethos. Opler, on the other hand, has described Lipan Apache culture in terms of twenty "themes" which are, however, to a considerable extent descriptive, and which in no way approximate a master model (1946).<sup>2</sup>

How does an anthropologist fathom the cognitive orientation of the group he studies, to find patterns that will permit building a model or stating an integrating principle? Componential analysis and other formal semantic methods have recently been much in vogue, and these techniques unquestionably can tell us a great deal. But the degree of dissent among anthropologists who use these methods suggests that they are not a single royal road to "God's truth" (cf. Burling 1964). I suspect there will always remain a considerable element of ethnological art in the processes whereby we come to have some understanding of a cognitive orientation. However we organize our thought processes, we are engaging in an exercise in structural analysis in which overt behavior (and the simpler patterns into which this behavior is readily seen to fall) is viewed somewhat as a reflection or representation of a wider reality which our sensory apparatus can never directly perceive. Or, we can view the search for a cognitive view as an exercise in triangulation. Of each trait and pattern the question is asked, "Of what implicit assumption might this behavior be a logical function?" When enough questions have been asked, the answers will be found to point in a common direction. The model emerges from the point where the lines of answers intersect. Obviously, an anthropologist well acquainted with a particular culture cannot merely apply simple rules of analysis and automatically produce a model for, or even a description of, a world view. In effect, we are dealing with a pyramidal structure: low-level regularities and coherences relating overt behavior forms are fitted into higher-level patterns which in turn may be found to fall into place at a still higher level of integration. Thus, a model of a social structure, sound in itself, will be found to be simply one expression of a structural regularity which will have analogues in religion and economic activities.

Since all normative behavior of the members of a group is a function of its particular cognitive orientation, both in an abstract philosophical sense and in the view of an individual himself, all behavior is "rational" and sense-making. "Irrational" behavior can be spoken of only in the context of a cognitive view which did not give rise to that behavior. Thus, in a rapidly changing world, in which peasant and primitive peoples are pulled into the social and economic context of whole nations, some of their behavior may appear irrational to others because the social, economic, and natural universe that in fact controls the conditions of their life is other than that revealed to them—however subconsciously—by a traditional world view. That is, a peasant's cognitive view provides moral and other precepts that are guides to—in fact, may be said to produce—behavior that may not be appropriate to the changing conditions of life he has not yet grasped. For this reason when the cognitive orientation of large numbers of a nation's people is out of tune with reality, these people will behave in a way that will appear irrational to those who are more nearly attuned to reality. Such peoples will be seen as constituting a drag (as in-

deed they may be) on a nation's development, and they will be cutting themselves off from the opportunity to participate in the benefits that economic progress can bring.

In this paper I am concerned with the nature of the cognitive orientation of peasants, and with interpreting and relating peasant behavior as described by anthropologists to this orientation. I am also concerned with the implications of this orientation and related behavior to the problem of the peasant's participation in the economic growth of the country to which he may belong. Specifically, I will outline what I believe to be the dominant theme in the cognitive orientation of classic peasant societies,<sup>3</sup> show how characteristic peasant behavior seems to flow from this orientation, and attempt to show that this behavior—however incompatible with national economic growth—is not only highly rational in the context of the cognition that determines it, but that for the maintenance of peasant society in its classic form, it is indispensable.<sup>4</sup> The kinds of behavior that have been suggested as adversely influencing economic growth are, among many, the "luck" syndrome, a "fatalistic" outlook, inter- and intra-familial quarrels, difficulties in cooperation, extraordinary ritual expenses by poor people and the problems these expenses pose for capital accumulation, and the apparent lack of what the psychologist McClelland (1961) has called "need for Achievement." I will suggest that peasant participation in national development can be hastened not by stimulating a psychological process, the need for achievement, but by creating economic and other opportunities that will encourage the peasant to abandon his traditional and increasingly unrealistic cognitive orientation for a new one that reflects the realities of the modern world.

2. The model of cognitive orientation that seems to me best to account for peasant behavior is the "Image of Limited Good." By "Image of Limited Good" I mean that broad areas of peasant behavior are patterned in such fashion as to suggest that peasants view their social, economic, and natural universes—their total environment—as one in which all of the desired things in life such as land, wealth, health, friendship and love, manliness and honor, respect and status, power and influence, security and safety, *exist in finite quantity and are always in short supply*, as far as the peasant is concerned. Not only do these and all other "good things" exist in finite and limited quantities, but in addition *there is no way directly within peasant power to increase the available quantities*. It is as if the obvious fact of land shortage in a densely populated area applied to all other desired things: not enough to go around. "Good," like land, is seen as inherent in nature, there to be divided and redivided, if necessary, but not to be augmented.<sup>5</sup>

For purposes of analysis, and at this stage of the argument, I am considering a peasant community to be a closed system. Except in a special—but extremely important—way, a peasant sees his existence as determined and limited by the natural and social resources of his village and his immediate area. Consequently, there is a primary corollary to The Image of Limited Good: if "Good" exists in limited amounts which cannot be expanded, and if the system is

closed, it follows that *an individual or a family can improve a position only at the expense of others*. Hence an apparent relative improvement in someone's position with respect to any "Good" is viewed as a threat to the entire community. Someone is being despoiled, whether he sees it or not. And since there is often uncertainty as to who is losing—obviously it may be ego—*any* significant improvement is perceived, not as a threat to an individual or a family alone, but as a threat to *all* individuals and families.

This model was first worked out on the basis of a wide variety of field data from Tzintzuntzan, Michoacán, Mexico: family behavior, exchange patterns, cooperation, religious activities, court claims, disputes, material culture, folklore, language, and many other bits and pieces. At no point has an informant even remotely suggested that this is his vision of his universe. Yet each Tzintzuntzeno organizes his behavior in a fashion entirely rational when it is viewed as a function of this principle which he cannot enunciate.<sup>6</sup>

The model of Limited Good, when "fed back" to behavior in Tzintzuntzan, proved remarkably productive in revealing hitherto unsuspected structural regularities linking economic behavior with social relations, friendship, love and jealousy patterns, health beliefs, concepts of honor and masculinity, *egoísmo* manifestations—even folklore (Foster 1964a). Not only were structural regularities revealed in Tzintzuntzan, but much peasant behavior known to me from other field work, and reported in the literature, seemed also to be a function of this cognitive orientation. This has led me to offer the kinds of data I have utilized in formulating this model, and to explain the interpretations that seem to me to follow from it, as characterizing in considerable degree classic peasant societies, in the hope that the model will be tested against other extensive bodies of data. I believe, obviously, that if the Image of Limited Good is examined as a high-level integrating principle characterizing peasant communities, we will find within our individual societies unsuspected structural regularities and, on a cross-cultural level, basic patterns that will be most helpful in constructing the typology of peasant society. The data I present in support of this thesis are illustrative, and are not based on an exhaustive survey of peasant literature.

In the following pages I will offer evidence under four headings that seems to me to conform to the model I have suggested. I will then discuss the implications of this evidence.

2.1. When the peasant views his economic world as one in which Limited Good prevails, and he can progress only at the expense of another, he is usually very near the truth. Peasant economies, as pointed out by many authors, are not productive. In the average village there *is* only a finite amount of wealth produced, and no amount of extra hard work will significantly change the figure. In most of the peasant world land has been limited for a long, long time, and only in a few places have young farmers in a growing community been able to hive off from the parent village to start on a level of equality with their parents and grandparents. Customarily land is not only limited, but it has become increasingly limited, by population expansion and

soil deterioration. Peasant productive techniques have remained largely unchanged for hundreds, and even thousands, of years; at best, in farming, this means the Mediterranean plow drawn by oxen, supplemented by human-powered hand tools. Handicraft techniques in weaving, pottery-making, wood-working and building likewise have changed little over the years.<sup>7</sup>

In fact, it seems accurate to say that the average peasant sees little or no relationship between work and production techniques on the one hand, and the acquisition of wealth on the other. Rather, wealth is seen by villagers in the same light as land: present, circumscribed by absolute limits, and having no relationship to work. One works to eat, but not to create wealth. Wealth, like land, is something that is inherent in nature. It can be divided up and passed around in various ways, but, within the framework of the villagers' traditional world, it does not grow. Time and tradition have determined the shares each family and individual hold; these shares are not static, since obviously they do shift. But the reason for the relative position of each villager is known at any given time, and any significant change calls for explanation.

2.2. The evidence that friendship, love, and affection are seen as strictly limited in peasant society is strong. Every anthropologist in a peasant village soon realizes the narrow path he must walk to avoid showing excessive favor or friendship toward some families, thereby alienating others who will feel deprived, and hence reluctant to help him in his work. Once I brought a close friend from Tzintzuntzan, working as a *bracero* in a nearby town, to my Berkeley home. When safely away from the camp he told me his brother was also there. Why did he not tell me, so I could have invited him? My friend replied, in effect, that he was experiencing a coveted "good" and he did not want to risk diluting the satisfaction by sharing it with another.

Adams reports how a social worker in a Guatemalan village unwittingly prejudiced her work by making more friends in one *barrio* than in the other, thereby progressively alienating herself from potential friends whose help she needed (1955:442). In much of Latin America the institutionalized best friend, particularly among post-adolescents, variously known as the *amigo carnal*, or the *cuello* or *camaradería* (the latter two described by Reina for Guatemala [1959]) constitutes both recognition of the fact that true friendship is a scarce commodity, and serves as insurance against being left without any of it. The jealousies and feelings of deprivation felt by one partner when the other leaves or threatens to leave sometimes lead to violence.

Widespread peasant definitions of sibling rivalry suggest that a mother's ability to love her children is viewed as limited by the amount of love she possesses. In Mexico when a mother again becomes pregnant and weans her nursing child, the child often becomes *chípil*. It fusses, cries, clings to her skirt, and is inconsolable. The child is said to be *celoso*, jealous of its unborn sibling whose presence it recognizes and whom it perceives as a threat, already depriving him of maternal love and affection. *Chípil* is known as *chíp* or *chipe* in Guatemala, where it is described in a classic article by Paul (1950), as *sipe* in Honduras, and simply as *celos* ("jealousy") in Costa Rica. *Chucaque*

in southern Colombia, described as the jealousy of a child weaned because of its mother's pregnancy, appears to be the same thing (communicated by Dr. Virginia Gutierrez de Pineda).

A similar folk etiology is used among the semi-peasant peoples of Buganda to explain the onset of *kwashiorkor* in a child recently weaned. If the mother is again pregnant, the child is said to have *obwosi*, and shows symptoms of pale hair, sweating of hands and feet, fever, diarrhea, and vomiting. "The importance of pregnancy is such that if a woman takes a sick child to a native doctor the first question he asks is 'Are you pregnant?' " (Burgess and Dean 1962:24). The African logic is the reverse of, but complementary to, that of Latin America: it is the *unborn child* that is jealous of its older sibling, whom it tries to poison through the mother's milk, thereby forcing weaning (Burgess and Dean 1962:25). In both areas, insufficient quantities of love and affection are seen as precipitating the crisis. In Buganda, "In the local culture it is essential that the mother should devote herself to the unborn child or a child recently born, at the expense of any other children; *there does not seem to be an easy acceptance of the idea that there can be enough love for all*" (Burgess and Dean 1962:26. Emphasis added).

Similarly, in an Egyptian village, sibling rivalry is recognized at this period in a child's development. As in Latin America, jealousy is one way; it is always the older who is jealous of the younger. "It is also acknowledged that the youngest child becomes jealous immediately his mother's abdomen becomes enlarged on pregnancy and he is usually told of the *forthcoming event*." This jealousy, in excess, may have ill effects on the child, causing diarrhea, swellings, lack of appetite, temper tantrums, and sleeplessness (Ammar 1954: 107-109).<sup>8</sup>

In parts of Guatemala *chipe* is a term used to express a husband's jealousy of his pregnant wife, for temporary loss of sexual services and for the attention to be given to the baby. Tepoztlán husbands also suffer from *chipilez*, becoming sleepy and not wanting to work. Oscar Lewis says a husband can be cured by wearing a strip of his wife's skirt around his neck (1951:378). In Tonalá, Jalisco, Mexico, husbands often are jealous of their adolescent sons and angry with their wives because of the affection the latter show their offspring. A wife's love and affection are seen as limited; to the extent the son receives what appears to be an excessive amount, the husband is deprived (communicated by Dr. May Diaz). In the Egyptian village described by Ammar a new mother-in-law is very affectionate toward her son-in-law, thereby making her own unmarried sons and daughters jealous. By showing affection to the outsider, the woman obviously is seen as depriving her own offspring of something they wish (Ammar 1954:51, 199).

2.3. It is a truism to peasants that health is a "good" that exists in limited quantities. Peasant folk medicine does not provide the protection that scientific medicine gives those who have access to it, and malnutrition frequently aggravates conditions stemming from lack of sanitation, hygiene, and immunization. In peasant societies preoccupation with health and illness is general, and

constitutes a major topic of interest, speculation, and discussion. Perhaps the best objective evidence that health is viewed within the framework of Limited Good is the widespread attitude toward blood which is, to use Adams' expression, seen as "non-regenerative" (Adams 1955:446). For obvious reasons, blood is equated with life, and good blood, and lots of it, means health. Loss of blood—if it is seen as something that cannot be renewed—is thus seen as a threat to health, a permanent loss resulting in weakness for as long as an individual lives. Although best described for Guatemala, the belief that blood is non-regenerative is widespread in Latin America. This belief, frequently un verbalized, may be one of the reasons it is so difficult to persuade Latin Americans to give blood transfusions: by giving blood so that someone can have more, the donor will have less.

Similar beliefs are found in Nigeria (communicated by Dr. Adeniyi-Adeniji Jones) and they are well known in Indian peasant villages. Here the psychological problem is further compounded by the equation of blood with semen: one drop of semen to seven (or forty, depending on area) drops of blood. The exercise of masculine vitality is thus seen as a permanently debilitating act. Only so much sexual pleasure is allotted man, and nothing he can do will increase his measure. Sexual moderation and the avoidance of blood-letting are the course of the prudent man.

In parts of Mexico (e.g., the Michoacán villages of Tzintzuntzan and Erongarícuaro) the limits on health are reflected in views about long hair. A woman's long hair is much admired, but the price is high: a woman with long hair is thought always to be thin and wan, and she cannot expect to have vigor and strength. Sources of vitality are insufficient to grow long hair and still leave an individual with energy and a well-fleshed body.

2.4. Oft-noted peasant sensitiveness to real or imagined insults to personal honor, and violent reactions to challenges which cast doubt on a man's masculinity, appear to be a function of the belief that honor and manliness exist in limited quantities, and that consequently not everyone can enjoy a full measure. In rural Mexico, among braceros who have worked in the United States, American ethnologists have often been asked, "In the United States it's the wife who commands, no?" Masculinity and domestic control appear to be viewed much like other desirable things: there is only so much, and the person who has it deprives another. Mexican men find it difficult to believe that a husband and wife can share domestic responsibilities and decision making, without the husband being deprived of his *machismo*. Many believe a wife, however good, must be beaten from time to time, simply so she will not lose sight of a God-decreed familial hierarchy. They are astonished and shocked to learn that an American wife-beater can be jailed; this seems an incredibly unwarranted intrusion of the State into God's plans for the family.

The essence of *machismo* is valor, and *un hombre muy valiente*, i.e., a *macho*, is one who is strong and tough, generally fair, not a bully, but who never dodges a fight, and who always wins. Above all, a *macho* inspires *respeto* ("respect"). One achieves *machismo*, it is clear, by depriving others of access to it.



In Greece *philotimo*, a "love of honor," equates closely with Mexican machismo. A man who is physically sound, lithe, strong, and agile has *philotimo*. If he can converse well, show wit, and act in other ways that facilitate sociability and establish ascendancy, he enhances his *philotimo*. One attacks another male through his *philotimo*, by shaming or ridiculing him, by showing how he lacks the necessary attributes for a man. Consequently, avoiding ridicule becomes a major concern, a primary defense mechanism among rural Greek males. In a culture shot through with envy and competitiveness, there is the ever-present danger of attack, so a man must be prepared to respond to a jeer or insult with a swift retort, an angry challenge, or a knife thrust. "Philotimo can be enhanced at the expense of another. It has a see-saw characteristic; one's own goes up as another's declines . . . the Greek, in order to maintain and increase his sense of worth, must be prepared each moment to assert his superiority over friend and foe alike. It is an interpersonal combat fraught with anxiety, uncertainty, and aggressive potentials. As one proverb describes it, 'When one Greek meets another, they immediately despise each other' " (R. Blum and E. Blum 1962:20-22).

3. If, in fact, peasants see their universe as one in which the good things in life are in limited and unexpandable quantities, and hence personal gain must be at the expense of others, we must assume that social institutions, personal behavior, values, and personality will all display patterns that can be viewed as functions of this cognitive orientation. Preferred behavior, it may be argued, will be that which is seen by the peasant as maximizing his security, by preserving his relative position in the traditional order of things. People who see themselves in "threatened" circumstances, which the Image of Limited Good implies, react normally in one of two ways: maximum cooperation and sometimes communism, burying individual differences and placing sanctions against individualism; or extreme individualism.

Peasant societies seem always to choose the second alternative. The reasons are not clear, but two factors may bear on the problem. Cooperation requires leadership. This may be delegated democratically by the members of a group itself; it may be assumed by a strong man from within the group; or it may be imposed by forces lying outside the group. Peasant societies—for reasons that should be clear in the following analysis—are unable by their very nature to delegate authority, and assumption of authority by a strong man is, at best, temporary, and not a structural solution to a problem. The truncated political nature of peasant societies, with real power lying outside the community, seems effectively to discourage local assumption and exercise of power, except as an agent of these outside forces. By the very nature of peasant society, seen as a structural part of a larger society, local development of leadership which might make possible cooperation is effectively prevented by the rulers of the political unit of which a particular peasant community is an element, who see such action as a potential threat to themselves.

Again, economic activities in peasant societies require only limited cooperation. Peasant families typically can, as family units, produce most of their food, farm without extra help, build their houses, weave cloth for their

clothes, carry their own produce to market and sell it—in short, take care of themselves with a degree of independence impossible in an industrial society, and difficult in hunting-fishing-gathering societies. Peasants, of course, usually do not live with the degree of independence here suggested, but it is more nearly possible than in any other type of society.

Whatever the reasons, peasants are individualistic, and it logically follows from the Image of Limited Good that each minimal social unit (often the nuclear family and, in many situations, a single individual) sees itself in perpetual, unrelenting struggle with its fellows for possession of or control over what it considers to be its share of scarce values. This is a position that calls for extreme caution and reserve, a reluctance to reveal true strength or position. It encourages suspicion and mutual distrust, since things will not necessarily be what they seem to be, and it also encourages a male self image as a valiant person, one who commands respect, since he will be less attractive as a target than a weakling. A great deal of peasant behavior, I believe, is exactly what we would predict from these circumstances. The works of Lewis (1951), Banfield (1958), Simmons (1959), Carstairs (1958), Dube (1958), the Wisers (1963), and Blackman (1927) (summarized by Foster 1960-1961) and many others testify to the "mentality of mutual distrust" (Friedman 1958: 24) that is widespread in peasant societies.

Since an individual or family that makes significant economic progress or acquires a disproportionate amount of some other "good" is seen to do so at the expense of others, such a change is viewed as a threat to the stability of the community. Peasant culture is provided with two principal mechanisms with which to maintain the essential stability:

a) an agreed-upon, socially acceptable, preferred norm of behavior for its people, and

b) a "club" and a "carrot," in the form of sanctions and rewards, to ensure that real behavior approximates this norm.

The agreed-upon norm that promotes maximum community stability is behavior that tends to maintain the status quo in relationships. The individual or family that acquires more than its share of a "good," and particularly an economic "good," is, as we have seen, viewed as a threat to the community at large. Individuals and families which are seen to or are thought to progress violate the preferred norm of behavior, thereby stimulating cultural mechanisms that redress the imbalance. Individuals or families that lose something, that fall behind, are seen as a threat in a different fashion; their envy, jealousy, or anger may result in overt or hidden aggression toward more fortunate people.

The self-correcting mechanisms that guard the community balance operate on three levels, viz:

1) Individual and family behavior. At this level I am concerned with the steps taken by *individuals* to maintain their positions in the system, and the ways in which they try to avoid both sanctions and exploitation by fellow villagers.

2) Informal and usually unorganized group behavior. At this level I am concerned with the steps taken by the *community*, the sanctions that are invoked when it is felt someone is violating the agreed-upon norm of behavior. Negative sanctions are the "club."

3) Institutionalized behavior. At this level I am concerned with the "carrot": major community expressions of cultural forms which neutralize achieved imbalances. Each of these forms will be examined in turn.

3.1) On the individual-family level, two rules give guidance to preferred behavior. These can be stated as:

a) Do not reveal evidence of material or other improvement in your relative position, lest you invite sanctions; should you display improvement, take action necessary to neutralize the consequences.

b) Do not allow yourself to fall behind your rightful place, lest you and your family suffer.

A family deals with the problem of real or suspected improvement in its relative position by a combination of two devices. First, it attempts to conceal evidence that might lead to this conclusion, and it denies the veracity of suggestions to this effect. Second, it meets the charge head on, admits an improvement in relative position, but shows it has no intention of using this position to the detriment of the village by neutralizing it through ritual expenditures, thereby restoring the status quo.

Accounts of peasant communities stress that in traditional villages people do not compete for prestige with material symbols such as dress, housing, or food, nor do they compete for authority by seeking leadership roles. In peasant villages one notes a strong desire to look and act like everyone else, to be inconspicuous in position and behavior. This theme is well summed up in the Wisers' paragraph on the importance of dilapidated walls suggesting poverty as a part of a family's defense (1963:120).

Also much remarked is the peasant's reluctance to accept leadership roles. He feels—for good reason—that his motives will be suspect and that he will be subject to the criticism of neighbors. By seeking, or even accepting, an authority position, the ideal man ceases to be ideal. A "good" man therefore usually shuns community responsibilities (other than of a ritual nature); by so doing he protects his reputation. Needless to say, this aspect of socially-approved behavior heavily penalizes a peasant community in the modern world by depriving it of the leadership which is now essential to its development.

The mechanism invoked to minimize the danger of loss of relative position appears to center in the machismo-philotimo complex. A tough, strong man whose fearlessness in the face of danger, and whose skill in protecting himself and his family is recognized, does not invite exploitation. A "valiant" individual can command the "respect" so much sought after in many peasant societies, and he can strive toward security with the goal in mind (however illusory) of being able to live—as is said in Tzintzuntzan—*sin compromisos* ("without obligations" to, or dependency on, others). A picture of the ideal

peasant begins to emerge: a man who works to feed and clothe his family, who fulfills his community and ceremonial obligations, who minds his own business, who does not seek to be outstanding, but who knows how to protect his rights. Since a macho, a strong man, discourages exploitation, it is clear that this personality characteristic has a basic function in peasant society. Not surprisingly, defense of this valuable self-image may, by the standards of other societies, assume pathological proportions, for it is seen as a basic weapon in the struggle for life.

The ideal man must avoid the appearance of presumption, lest this be interpreted as trying to take something that belongs to another. In tracing the diffusion of new pottery-making techniques in Tzintzuntzan I found that no one would admit he had learned the technique from a neighbor. The inevitable reply to my question was *Me puse a pensar* ("I dreamed it up all by myself"), accompanied by a knowing look and a tapping of the temple with the forefinger. Reluctance to give credit to others, common in Mexico, is often described as due to *egoísmo*, an egotistical conceited quality. Yet if *egoísmo*, as exemplified by unwillingness to admit profiting by a neighbor's new pottery knowledge, is seen as a function of an image of Limited Good, it is clear that a potter *must* deny that the idea is other than his own. To confess that he "borrowed" an idea is to confess that he has taken something not rightfully his, that he is consciously upsetting the community balance and the self image he tries so hard to maintain. Similarly, in trying to determine how *compadrazgo* (godparenthood) ties are initiated, I found no informant who admitted he had asked a friend to serve; he always was asked by another. Informants appear to fear that admission of asking may be interpreted as presuming or imposing on another, trying to get something to which they may not be entitled.

A complementary pattern is manifest in the general absence of compliments in peasant communities; rarely is a person heard to admire the performance of another, and when admiration is expressed by, say, an anthropologist, the person admired probably will try to deny there is any reason to compliment him. Reluctance of villagers to compliment each other again looks, at first glance, like *egoísmo*. But in the context of the Limited Good model, it is seen that such behavior is proper. The person who compliments is, in fact, guilty of aggression; he is telling someone to his face that he is rising above the dead level that spells security for all, and he is suggesting that he may be confronted with sanctions.

Consider this interpretation as applied to an incident reported in southern Italy: "My attempt, in private, to praise a peasant friend for his large farm and able system of farming brought a prompt and vigorous denial that he did anything special. He said, 'There is no system, you just plant.' This attitude was expressed by others in forced discussions of farming" (Cancian 1961:8). Dr. Cancian offers this as illustrating the peasant's lack of confidence in his own ability to change his environment. Speaking specifically of agriculture, he

writes that "All the examples indicate denial of the hope of progress in agriculture and alienation from the land" (Cancian 1961:8). I believe the peasant viewed Dr. Cancian's praise as threatening, since it reminded him of his vulnerability because of his superior farming methods. His denial is not of hope of progress, but of cause for anyone to envy him.

3.2. The ideal man strives for moderation and equality in his behavior. Should he attempt to better his comparative standing, thereby threatening village stability, the informal and usually unorganized sanctions appear. This is the "club," and it takes the form of gossip, slander, backbiting, character assassination, witchcraft or the threat of witchcraft, and sometimes actual physical aggression. These negative sanctions usually represent no formal community decision, but they are at least as effective as if authorized by law. Concern with public opinion is one of the most striking characteristics of peasant communities.

Negative sanctions, while usually informal, can be institutionalized. In peasant Spain, especially in the north, the charivari (*cencerrada*) represents such an instance. When an older man marries a much younger woman—usually a second marriage for the groom—marriageable youths serenade the couple with cowbells (*cencerros*) and other noisemakers, parade straw-stuffed manikins representing them through the streets, incense the manikins with foul-smelling substances, and shout obscenities. It seems clear that this symbolizes the resentment of youths, who have not yet had even one wife, against the inequalities represented by an older man who has already enjoyed marriage, who takes a young bride from the available pool, thereby further limiting the supply for the youths. By institutionalizing the sanctions the youths are permitted a degree of freedom and abuse not otherwise possible.

3.3. *Attempted* changes in the balance of a peasant village are discouraged by the methods just described; *achieved* imbalance is neutralized, and the balance restored, on an institutional level. A person who improves his position is encouraged—by use of the carrot—to restore the balance through conspicuous consumption in the form of ritual extravagance. In Latin America he is pressured into sponsoring a costly fiesta by serving as *mayordomo*. His reward is prestige, which is viewed as harmless. Prestige cannot be dangerous since it is traded for dangerous wealth; the *mayordomo* has, in fact, been "disarmed," shorn of his weapons, and reduced to a state of impotence. There is good reason why peasant fiestas consume so much wealth in fireworks, candles, music, and food; and why, in peasant communities the rites of baptism, marriage, and death may involve relatively huge expenditures. These practices are a redistributive mechanism which permits a person or family that potentially threatens community stability gracefully to restore the status quo, thereby returning itself to a state of acceptability. Wolf, speaking specifically of the "closed" Indian peasant community of Mexico as it emerged after the Conquest, puts it this way: "the system takes from those who have, in order to make all men have-nots. By liquidating the surpluses, it makes all men

rich in sacred experience but poor in earthly goods. Since it levels differences of wealth, it also inhibits the growth of class distinctions based on wealth. . . . In engineering parlance, it acts as a feedback, returning a system that is beginning to oscillate to its original course" (1959:216).

4. I have said that in a society ruled by the Image of Limited Good there is no way, save at the expense of others, that an individual can get ahead. This is true in a closed system, which peasant communities approximate. But even a traditional peasant village, in another sense, has access to other systems, and an individual can achieve economic success by tapping sources of wealth that are recognized to exist outside the village system. Such success, though envied, is not seen as a direct threat to community stability, for no one within the community has lost anything. Still, such success must be explained. In today's transitional peasant communities, seasonal emigration for wage labor is the most available way in which one can tap outside wealth. Hundreds of thousands of Mexican peasants have come to the United States as *braceros* in recent years and many, through their earnings, have pumped significant amounts of capital into their communities. *Braceros* generally are not criticized or attacked for acquisition of this wealth; it is clear that their good fortune is not at the direct expense of others within the village. Fuller finds a similar realistic appraisal of the wealth situation in a Lebanese community: "they [the peasants] realize . . . that the only method of increasing their incomes on a large scale is to absent themselves from the village for an extended period of time and to find work in more lucrative areas" (1961:72).

These examples, however, are but modern variants of a much older pattern in which luck and fate—points of contact with an open system—are viewed as the only socially acceptable ways in which an individual can acquire more "good" than he previously has had. In traditional (not transitional) peasant communities an otherwise inexplicable increase in wealth is often seen as due to the discovery of treasure which may be the result of fate or of such positive action as making a pact with the Devil. Recently I have analyzed treasure tales in Tzintzuntzan and have found without exception they are attached to named individuals who, within living memory, have suddenly begun to live beyond their means. The usual evidence is that they suddenly opened stores, in spite of their known previous poverty (Foster 1964a). Erasmus has recorded this interpretation among Sonora villagers (1961:251), Wagley finds it in an Amazon small town (1964:128), and Friedmann reports it in southern Italy (1958:21). Clearly, the role of treasure tales in communities like these is to account for wealth that can be explained in no other manner.

The common peasant concern with finding wealthy and powerful patrons who can help them is also pertinent in this context. Since such patrons usually are outside the village, they are not part of the closed system. Their aid, and material help, like *bracero* earnings or buried treasure, are seen as coming from beyond the village. Hence, although the lucky villager with a helpful patron may be envied, the advantages he receives from his patron are not seen as depriving other villagers of something rightfully theirs. In Tzintzun-

tzan a villager who obtains a "good" in this fashion makes it a first order of business to advertise his luck and the source thereof, so there can be no doubt as to his basic morality; this behavior is just the opposite of usual behavior, which is to conceal good fortune.

Treasure tales and concern with patrons, in turn, are but one expression of a wider view: that any kind of success and progress is due to fate, the favor of deities, to luck, but not to hard work, energy, and thrift. Banfield notes in a south Italian community, "In the TAT stories, dramatic success came only as a gift of fortune: a rich gentleman gave a poor boy a violin, a rich gentlewoman adopted an abandoned child, and so on" (1958:66). Continuing, "Great success, then, is obtained by the favor of the saints or by luck, certainly not by thrift, work, and enterprise. These may be important if one is already lucky, but not otherwise, and few would invest large amounts of effort—any more than they would invest large amounts of fertilizer—on the rather remote possibility of good fortune" (Banfield 1958:114). Friedmann also finds that the south Italian peasant "firmly believes that the few who have succeeded in making a career were able to do so for some mysterious reason: one hit upon a hidden treasure; another was lucky enough to win in the lottery; another was called to America by a successful uncle" (1958:21).

All such illustrations underlie a fundamental truth not always recognized in comparing value systems: in the traditional peasant society hard work and thrift are moral qualities of only the slightest functional value. Given the limitations on land and technology, additional hard work in village productive enterprises simply does not produce a significant increment in income. It is pointless to talk of thrift in a subsistence economy in which most producers are at the economic margin; there is usually nothing to be thrifty about. As Fei and Chang point out, "In a village where the farms are small and wealth is accumulated slowly, there are very few ways for a landless man to become a landowner, or for a petty owner to become a large landowner. . . . It is not going too far to say that in agriculture there is no way really to get ahead. . . . To become rich one must leave agriculture" (1945:227). And again, "The basic truth is that enrichment through the exploitation of land, using the traditional technology, is not a practical method for accumulating wealth" (Fei and Chang: 1945:302). And, as Ammar says about Egypt, "It would be very difficult with the fellah's simple tools and the sweat involved in his work, to convince him that his lot could be improved by more work" (1954:36).

5. It is apparent that a peasant's cognitive orientation, and the forms of behavior that stem therefrom, are intimately related to the problems of economic growth in developing countries. Heavy ritual expenditures, for example, are essential to the maintenance of the equilibrium that spells safety in the minds of traditional villagers. Capital accumulation, which might be stimulated if costly ritual could be simplified, is just what the villager wants to prevent, since he sees it as a community threat rather than a precondition to economic improvement.

In national developmental programs much community-level action in

agriculture, health and education is cast in the form of cooperative undertakings. Yet it is abundantly clear that traditional peasant societies are cooperative only in the sense of honoring reciprocal obligations, rather than in the sense of understanding total community welfare, and that mutual suspicion seriously limits cooperative approaches to village problems.<sup>9</sup> The image of Limited Good model makes clear the peasant logic underlying reluctance to participate in joint ventures. If the "good" in life is seen as finite and non-expandable, and if apart from luck an individual can progress only at the expense of others, what does one stand to gain from a cooperative project? At best an honorable man lays himself open to the charge—and well-known consequences—of utilizing the venture to exploit friends and neighbors; at worst he risks his own defenses, since someone more skillful or less ethical than he may take advantage of the situation.

The Anglo-Saxon virtues of hard work and thrift seen as leading to economic success are meaningless in peasant society. Horatio Alger not only is not praiseworthy, but he emerges as a positive fool, a clod who not knowing the score labors blindly against hopeless conditions. The gambler, instead, is more properly laudable, worthy of emulation and adulation. If fate is the only way in which success can be obtained, the prudent and thoughtful man is the one who seeks ways in which to maximize his luck-position. He looks for the places in which good fortune is most apt to strike, and tries to be there. This, I think, explains the interest in lotteries in underdeveloped countries. They offer the only way in which the average man can place himself in a luck-position. The man who goes without lunch, and fails to buy shoes for his children in order to buy a weekly ticket, is not a ne'er-do-well; he is the Horatio Alger of his society who is doing what he feels is most likely to advance his position. He is, in modern parlance, buying a "growth stock." The odds are against him, but it is the *only* way he knows in which to work toward success.

Modern lotteries are very much functional equivalents of buried treasure tales in peasant societies, and at least in Tzintzuntzan the correlation is clearly understood. One elderly informant, when asked why no one had found buried treasure in recent years, remarked that this was indeed true but that "Today we Mexicans have the lottery instead." Hence, the "luck" syndrome in underdeveloped countries is not primarily a deterrent to economic progress, as it is sometimes seen from the vantage point of a developed country, but rather it represents a realistic approach to the near-hopeless problem of making significant individual progress.

David C. McClelland has argued persuasively that the presence of a human motivation which he calls "the need for Achievement" (*n* Achievement) is a precursor to economic growth, and that it is probably a *causative* factor, that it is "a change in the minds of men which produces economic growth rather than being produced by it" (McClelland 1963:81; 1961). McClelland further finds that in experimental situations children with high *n* Achievement avoid gambling situations because should they win there would be no sense of per-



sonal achievement, while children with low *n* Achievement do not perform in a way suggesting they calculate relative risks and behave accordingly. "They [low *n* Achievement children] thus manifest behavior like that of many people in underdeveloped countries who, while they act very traditionally economically, at the same time love to indulge in lotteries—risking a little to make a great deal on a very long shot" (McClelland 1963:86). McClelland sees this as showing an absence of a sense of realistic risk calculation.

If the arguments advanced in this paper are sound, it is clear that *n* Achievement is rare in traditional peasant societies, not because of psychological factors, but because display of *n* Achievement is met by sanctions that a traditional villager does not wish to incur. The villager who feels the need for Achievement, and who does something about it, is violating the basic, un-verbalized rules of the society of which he is a member. Parents (or government school programs) that attempt to instill *n* Achievement in children are, in effect, training children to be misfits in their society *as long as it remains a relatively static system*.

As indicated above, I would argue in opposition to McClelland that the villager who buys a lottery ticket *is not* behaving in an inconsistent fashion—that is, rationally in traditional economic matters, irrationally in his pursuit of luck—but in the most consistent fashion possible. He *has* calculated the chances and risks, and in a most realistic manner *in the context of the way in which he sees his traditional environment*. The man who buys a lottery ticket in a peasant society, far from displaying lack of *n* Achievement, is in fact showing a maximum degree of it. It simply happens that this is about the only display of initiative that is permitted him by his society, since it is the only form not viewed as a threat to the community by his colleagues.

Banfield, and Fei and Chang, appear to see the economic factors in the presence or absence of initiative in much the same light. The former writes about the Italian peasant, "The idea that one's welfare depends crucially upon conditions beyond one's control—upon luck or the caprice of a saint—and that one can at best only improve upon good fortune, not create it—this idea must certainly be a check on initiative" (Banfield 1958:114). The latter see, in the Chinese data, evidence that a particular economic attitude is a function of a particular view of life. The traditional economic attitude among Chinese peasants is that of "contentment . . . an acceptance of a low standard of material comfort" (Fei and Chang 1945:82), which is contrasted to "acquisitiveness" characteristic of "modern industry and commerce in an expanding universe" (Fei and Chang 1945:83). "Both attitudes—contentment and acquisitiveness—have their own social context. Contentment is adopted in a closed economy; acquisitiveness in an expanding economy. *Without economic opportunities the striving for material gain is a disturbance to the existing order, since it means plunder of wealth from others. . . .* Therefore, to accept and be satisfied with the social role and material rewards given by the society is essential. But when economic opportunity develops through the development of

technology and when wealth can be acquired through the exploitation of nature instead of through the exploitation of man, the doctrine of contentment becomes reactionary because it restricts individual initiative" (Fei and Chang 1945:84. Emphasis added). In other words, change the economic rules of the game and change the cognitive orientation of a peasant society, and a fertile field for the propagation of *n* Achievement is created.

For the above reasons, I believe most strongly that the primary task in development is not to attempt to create *n* Achievement at the mother's knee but to try to change the peasants' view of his social and economic universe, away from an Image of Limited Good toward that of expanding opportunity in an open system, *so that he can feel safe* in displaying initiative. The brakes on change are less psychological than social. Show the peasant that initiative is profitable, and that it will not be met by negative sanctions, and he acquires it in short order.

This is, of course, what is happening in the world today. Those who have known peasant villages over a period of years have seen how the old sanctions begin to lose their power. Local entrepreneurs arise in response to the increasing opportunities of expanding national economies, and emulative urges, with the city as the model, appear among these people. The successful small entrepreneurs begin to see that the ideal of equality is inimical to their personal interests, and presently they neither seek to conceal their well being nor to distribute their wealth through traditional patterns of ritual extravagance. *N* Achievement bursts forth in full vitality in a few new leaders, and others see the rewards and try to follow suit. The problem of the new countries is to create economic and social conditions in which this latent energy and talent is not quickly brought up against absolute limits, so that it is nipped in the bud. This is, of course, the danger of new expectations—released latent *n* Achievement—outrunning the creation of opportunities.

Viewed in the light of Limited Good peasant societies are not conservative and backward, brakes on national economic progress, because of economic irrationality nor because of the absence of psychological characteristics in adequate quantities. They are conservative because individual progress is seen as—and in the context of the traditional society in fact is—the supreme threat to community stability, and all cultural forms *must* conspire to discourage changes in the status quo. Only by being conservative can peasant societies continue to exist as peasant societies. But change cognitive orientation through changing access to opportunity, and the peasant will do very well indeed; and his *n* Achievement will take care of itself.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Redfield describes world view as "that outlook upon the universe that is characteristic of a people" (1952:30). Redfield believes that "No man holds all he knows and feels about the world in his conscious mind at once" (1955:91), but at the same time he feels that a reasonably thoughtful informant can describe his world view so that an anthropologist can understand it, that if there is an "emphasized meaning" in the phrase it is "in the suggestion it carries of the structure of things

as man is aware of them. It is the way we see ourselves in relation to all else" (1953:86. Emphasis added). Hallowell, on the other hand, tends to see world view in terms of a cognitive orientation of which the Ojibwa are not consciously aware and which they do not abstractly articulate (1960).

Kenny recently defined "values" in much the same sense in which I understand "cognitive orientation": "In regard to values, I use the term to denote a series of conceptions from which a preferred type of conduct is evolved and imposed by the social system; which can be abstracted by analysis but which may not be consciously recognized or verbalized by every member of the society" (1962-1963:280).

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Theme 14: "The extended domestic family is the basic social and economic unit and the one to which first allegiance and duties of revenge are due" (1946:152).

<sup>3</sup> By the term "classic" peasant societies I follow Kroeber's statement: "They form a class segment of a larger population which usually contains also urban centers. . . . They constitute part-societies with part cultures" (1948:284). My definition of peasant is structural and relational, only incidentally concerned with how people earn a living. Firth writes, "By a peasant economy one means a system of small-scale producers, with a simple technology and equipment, often relying primarily for their subsistence on what they themselves produce. The primary means of livelihood of the peasants is cultivation of the soil" (1956:87). This, and all other definitions stressing agriculture and purely subsistence economies, seem to me to be deficient. I find "classic" peasant societies rimming the Mediterranean, in the village communities of the Near East, of India, and of China. Emergent peasant communities probably existed in Middle America before the Conquest; today a large proportion of Indian and mestizo villages in Latin America must be thought of as peasant. Parts of Negro Africa, where there are indigenous cities and well-developed markets, are at least semi-peasant, although the lack of a Great Tradition perhaps excludes them from the "classic" label.

As I see it, classic peasant communities have grown up in a symbiotic spatial-temporal relationship to the more complex component of the society of which they are a part, i.e., the pre-industrial market and administrative city. Peasant communities "represent the rural expression of large, class-structured, economically complex, pre-industrial civilizations, in which trade and commerce, and craft specialization are well developed, in which money is commonly used, and in which market disposition is the goal for a part of the producer's efforts" (Foster 1960-1961:175).

The reader will realize, I am sure, that the model, drawn up on the basis of an ideal type of rural community in a pre-industrial world, does not in fact fit any contemporary peasant community with exactitude. All modern peasant communities have experienced to a greater or lesser degree inroads from the urban, industrial world, and to that degree they must depart from the model. I freely confess, too, that I tend to see peasant society in the image of Tzintzuntzan, Michoacán, Mexico, and that greater familiarity with other peasant communities might well lead me to different expressions of details in the model.

<sup>4</sup> I don't advocate maintenance of classic peasant society, nor do I think it has a permanent place in the world.

<sup>5</sup> I do not believe the Image of Limited Good is characteristic only of peasant societies. Quite the contrary, it is found, in one degree or another, in most or all socio-economic levels in newly developing countries, and it is, of course, equally characteristic of traditional socialist doctrine. I am not even sure that it is *more* characteristic of peasants than of other groups. I examine the hypothesis in the context of peasant societies simply because they are relatively less complex than many other groups, because good data are readily available, and because my arguments can easily be tested in the field by other anthropologists. I suspect, but will leave the ultimate decision to others, that the Image of Limited Good when applied to peasant society *goes further* in explaining behavior than when applied to any other type of society. That is, and by way of illustration, although the Image of Limited Good certainly is characteristic of many urban Mexicans, including those of the highest social and economic classes, the complexity of that society requires additional themes beyond those needed in peasant society to produce an equally coherent and satisfying explanation.

<sup>6</sup> I have long speculated that the economic world view of classic peasants, and particularly of

people in Tzintzuntzan, the peasant community I know best (Foster 1948, 1960-1961, 1961a, 1961b, 1962, 1963, 1964a, 1964b, 1965) can be described by a principle I have called the Image of the Static Economy. Writing in 1948 I suggested that Tzintzuntzenos see their economic world as one in which "the wealth goal is difficult and almost impossible of achievement; hence, the stimulus of a reasonable chance of success is lacking" (1948:289). Much later I attempted to explain the frequent poor quality of interpersonal relations in peasant society in the same terms, suggesting that the "economic pie" is seen (quite realistically) as constant in size, and unexpandable. Consequently, "If someone is seen to get ahead, logically it can only be at the expense of others in the village" (1960-1961:177). Subsequently I spoke of the Image of the Static Economy as inhibiting village cooperation, particularly in community development programs (1961b). Several sentences by Honigmann about a West Pakistan village stimulated me to think about the wider applicability of the Image of the Static Economy, i.e., that this integrating principle is simply one expression of a total cognitive view with analogues in a great many other areas of life. Honigmann wrote, "One dominant element in the character structure (not only here but elsewhere in West Pakistan) is the implicit belief that good of all kinds is limited. There is only so much respect, influence, power, and love in the world. If another has some, then somebody is certainly deprived of that measure" (1960:287).

Other anthropologists also have recognized the Image of Limited Good, usually indirectly via the corollary that good fortune can be obtained only at the expense of others. Leslie, in describing world view in the Mexican Zapotec Indian peasant village of Mitla, comments that ". . . for the most part they [the Mitleños] assumed that one man's gains were another man's losses" (1960:71). Beals, speaking of a specific incident in an Indian village, writes, "There is only so much land in Gopalpur; what one man farms cannot be farmed by another. Although Danda [a farmer], by developing distant lands, has expanded the economy of Gopalpur, people do not think of his achievement in terms of the creation of wealth. They think rather that Danda's success contributes to their own failure" (1962:64). Mandelbaum, introducing the new edition of the Wisers' *Behind Mud Walls*, notes that the villagers fail to understand "that each may prosper best when all in a community prosper together. There is rather the idea that the good things of the village are forever fixed in amount, and each person must manipulate constantly to garner a large slice for his own" (1963:x).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Wolf, "Marginal location and traditional technology together limit the production power of the community, and thus its ability to produce cash crops for the market. This in turn limits the number of goods brought in from the outside which the community can afford to consume. The community is *poor*" (1955:457).

<sup>8</sup> In fact, the child who is *chp'il* may have good reason to be fussy: withdrawn from the breast and put on an adult diet, he frequently experiences an acute protein-deficiency condition that stimulates his behavior. And, of course, sibling-rivalry exists, probably, in all societies. The significant thing is not the real physiological or psychological root of the condition, but rather that the condition is explained by a folk etiology which assumes a mother can give only so much love and affection to her children, so that the older ones are deprived in favor of the newest, even before the newest makes its appearance.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Geertz 1962:244, speaking of Javanese peasants and their need for periodic labor mobilization: "What has developed . . . is not so much a general spirit of cooperativeness—Javanese peasants tend, like many peasants, to be rather suspicious of groups larger than the immediate family—but a set of explicit and concrete practices of exchange of labor, of capital, and of consumption goods which operate in all aspects of life. . . . This sense for the need to support specific, carefully delineated social mechanisms which can mobilize labor, capital, and consumption resources scattered thinly among the very dense population, and concentrate them effectively at one point in space and time, is the central characteristic of the much-remarked, but poorly understood, 'cooperativeness' of the Javanese peasant. Cooperation is founded on a very lively sense of the mutual value to the participants of such cooperation, not on a general ethic of the unity of all men or on an organic view of society which takes the group as primary and the individual as secondary."

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