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Quests for Community: The United States, Community Development, and the World, 1935–1965

By

Daniel Immerwahr

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor David A. Hollinger, Chair
Professor Robin Einhorn
Professor Peter Evans

Spring 2011

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Abstract

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During the middle decades of the twentieth century, policymakers in the United States grappled for the first time on a national level with the problem of poverty. They did this both at home and abroad, as part of the New Deal, the Cold War, and the Great Society. This dissertation focuses on one particular approach to improving the lives of the poor that was tried in all three of those contexts: community development. Although its particulars varied from place to place, the basic idea of community development was that poverty could be best alleviated not via macroeconomic stimulation or by the replacement of traditional institutions with modern ones but rather by the generation and encouragement of democratic communities in which the poor themselves would design and implement antipoverty schemes. Community developers believed that small-scale works, local knowledge and customs, grassroots participation, and communal solidarity were the key to development. Although that approach played a minor role in the New Deal, it became a major foreign aid strategy—pursued in dozens of Third-World countries in the 1950s—and was in the 1960s a major component of the War on Poverty pursued by the Lyndon Johnson administration.

The community development movement has been largely forgotten, so the first contribution of this dissertation is to simply document its existence and prominence. Other major contributions: describing the divergence between community development and modernization theory, exposing the extent of communitarianism in U.S. thought and social science in the midcentury decades, offering a new account of the origins of the War on Poverty that stresses the role of overseas development projects in setting models for domestic antipoverty projects, and explaining the failure of community development strategies—a particularly relevant contribution as such strategies have been revived and are today being pursued aggressively by development experts, especially those at the World Bank. Chapters are dedicated to (1) the new interest in communities and small groups in the United States starting in the 1930s, (2) the trajectory of anthropologists and rural sociologists as they left jobs in the New Deal and the Japanese internment camps for those in foreign aid, (3) India's influential community development program, (4) the Philippine community development program and the Philippine adaptation of community development techniques toward counterinsurgency campaigns (including in Vietnam), and (5) the War on Poverty's Community Action Program.

For my father

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Throughout my education, I have been lucky to have had some of the best teachers around. Anders Stephanson and Gwendolyn Wright at Columbia pointed me in the direction of international history and C. A. Bayly and Francesca Orsini at Cambridge introduced me to India. At Berkeley, I have enjoyed the benefit of an extraordinary committee of advisers, each of whose influence is evident in an almost embarrassing degree in this dissertation. David Hollinger's pathbreaking research on the history of the social sciences and particularly his recent work on liberal Protestant missionaries allowed me to see the history of development in a new light. Robin Einhorn's emphases on the importance of political economy and clear communication rarely leave my thoughts whenever I sit down to write. And it would be hard for a student of development to find a better guide than Peter Evans, whose guidance within the field allowed me to understand the contemporary relevance of community development. Although not official members of my committee, Prachi Deshpande and David Szanton served as invaluable advisers in matters pertaining to Indian and Philippine history, respectively. I am grateful to all of my Berkeley mentors for their kind encouragement and willingness to engage with my research as well as for their intellectual guidance.

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Introduction

In 1958, the *Saturday Evening Post* began publishing serial installments of an unorthodox novel. It had no love story, little action, no single protagonist, and not even much by way of a plot. It was set in a fictional country in Southeast Asia and discussed such arid topics as embassy life, the relationship between nationalism and Communism, foreign aid, and what Asians thought of the United States. But despite its unusual form and content, *The Ugly American*, by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, did tremendously well. It reached sixth place on *Publishers Weekly*'s fiction list for 1959, outselling even Vladimir Nabokov's sensational *Lolita,* which had also been published in 1958.[1] Overall, the novel sold over six million copies, was a Book-of-the-Month Club main selection, went through fifty-five printings, and remained on the bestseller lists for seventy-eight weeks.[2] John F. Kennedy loved it so much that he had copies sent to every member of the Senate and based his Peace Corps plan in large part on its suggestions (Lederer was hired by the Peace Corps to train volunteers).[3] Marlon Brando took an interest and starred in the film adaptation, which appeared in 1963. The phrase "the ugly American" became firmly entrenched in the popular lexicon, appearing, for example, in E. D. Hirsch's *Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*.[4] By any measure, then, Lederer and Burdick's book was a major triumph—the biggest policy novel since Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*.

The novel was so successful because it touched a nerve. The United States, it argued, had spent millions of dollars on aid to Asia, but had little to show for it. The problem, the authors explained, was that "most American technicians abroad are involved in the planning and execution of 'big' projects: dams, highways, irrigation systems," projects that were often unwanted because they did not meet the requirements of the villages they were supposed to benefit.[5] What was needed, instead, was to focus on "little things" and "tiny battles."[6] The reduced scale of operations would allow rural people themselves to participate in and shape aid projects. This participatory approach is showcased by the actions of the novel's hero, Homer Atkins, a retired engineer who scorns the technical experts in the capital and heads out for the "boondocks" to take up residence in a small village. There he works with a villager, Jeepo, to develop a pump that will carry water from one rice paddy to the next. Such pumps are widely available in the United States, but Atkins refuses to use them. "It has to be something right here, something the natives understand," he explains. "If the pump is going to work, it has to be their pump, not mine."[7] Indeed, it is Jeepo who comes up with the crucial innovation that makes the pump a success, an innovation based not on technical knowledge of mechanical engineering but on social knowledge of the ways of his neighbors. Together, Jeepo and Atkins start a cottage industry that produces the pumps and brings mild prosperity to the village. As Lederer and Burdick make clear, it is through such local knowledge of rural villages and dem-

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[1] *PW* lists available at www.booksofthecentury.com. *Lolita* was first published in Paris in 1955 but was not released in the United States until 1958.

[2] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 87.

[3] Robert D. Dean, "Masculinity as Ideology: John F. Kennedy and the Domestic Politics of Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 22 (2002): 58.

[4] E. D. Hirsch, Joseph F. Kett, and James S. Trefil, *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), 330.

[5] William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, *The Ugly American* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1958), 281.

[6] Ibid., 267.

[7] Ibid., 216.

ocratic deliberation within them that development must happen, not through large plans forced upon those villages from Washington.

"Tiny Battles": Ambassador Gilbert MacWhite, played by Marlon Brando (left), listens to village expert Homer Atkins in the film *The Ugly American* (1963).

It is easy to read *The Ugly American* as a cry in the wilderness, a sweeping criticism of the hubris and cultural insensitivity found at all levels of U.S.-sponsored development programs. Indeed, that is how the book presents itself; Atkins and those who sympathize with him are described collectively as "a wild exception to the rule."[8] But, in reality, Atkins and his fellow-travelers were not as exceptional as all that, and the explosive success of *The Ugly American* may be taken as an indication that there were many persons, including high-level government officials, who were interested in applying Atkins's principles to development projects.

If we take Lederer and Burdick as symptomatic of a larger movement rather than as radical critics, we prepare ourselves to recognize a significant strain within developmental thought during the Cold War years: community development. Just like the characters from *The Ugly American*, community developers worked in villages, eschewed industrial technology, learned local cultural mores, and above all sought to involve the people of the Third World in development projects. Community development programs in a number of countries were regularly able to command millions of dollars from the U.S. government and from the governments of host countries. The United States, in fact, had a Community Development Division within its foreign aid agency, and by 1956 it was providing aid and staff to community development programs in 47 countries.[9] Additionally, international bodies like the United Nations and SEATO, and philanthropic agencies like the Ford Foundation and CARE, invested in community development by funding conferences, journals, expert consultants, and pilot projects. While community development certainly did not achieve all that it sought to, it

[8] Ibid., 277.

[9] William J. Caldwell, "Note to Correspondents," 28 August 1957, Max Millikan Papers, MC188, box 7, folder 192, Institute Archives and Special Collections, MIT Libraries.

played a major role in a number of Third World countries, including the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Iran, Colombia, and Vietnam, not only spawning thousands of small-scale aid projects but also often leading to the democratization of local governments.

Community development, however, was not exclusively a matter for the global South. One of its more intriguing features, in fact, was that it operated for the United States as both foreign aid and domestic reform. Community developers played leading roles in the New Deal Department of Agriculture, in the Tennessee Valley Authority, in the administration of the Japanese internment camps during World War II, and in the War on Poverty. Surprisingly often, the same experts worked both at home and abroad. And as they passed in and out of the United States, they engaged in conversations with intellectuals from the Third World, conversations that then informed their practices at home. Many prominent thinkers from the United States wrote books about community development, including Margaret Mead, Pearl Buck, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Granville Hicks, Kenneth B. Clark, and Saul Alinsky. But community development was important as well to Third World politicians and intellectuals, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Ramon Magsaysay, and Y. C. James Yen. Today, the legacy of community development is as prominently visible in the work of Muhammad Yunus, president of the Grameen Bank and the public face of microlending, as it is in Yunus' fellow Nobel Laureate Barack Obama, who began his career as a community organizer on Chicago's South Side. Appropriately, both have links to transnational community development. Yunus began his career and work with microcredit at the Comilla Academy for Rural Development, a community development academy in Pakistan, funded in part by the Ford Foundation and the U.S. State Department, that employed U.S. rural sociologists from Michigan State University as its advisers.[10] Obama's mother, Ann Dunham Soetoro, was an anthropologist who wrote her dissertation on the culture of artisanal blacksmiths in a remote Javanese village and who worked with the Ford Foundation and USAID to establish microcredit programs in Indonesia.[11]

The size and prominence of community development in the midcentury decades may come as something of a surprise. For the past fifteen years, historians of U.S. foreign relations have tended to characterize the United States in the global South as pursuing technocratic, top-down, state-directed industrialization.[12] In the view of such historians, much of what the United States has done in the Third World is most fruitfully explained not in reference to corporate investments or to a zeal for democracy but to an urge to modernize: to protect U.S. interests by setting the poorer nations of the earth on a set of convergent paths toward a politically stable and economically prosperous modernity. At the heart of this project, we are told,

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[10] Arthur F. Raper, *Rural Development in Action: The Comprehensive Experiment at Comilla, Pakistan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970).

[11] Michael R. Dove, "Dreams from His Mother," *New York Times* 10 August 2009.

[12] Exemplary works include Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michael E. Latham, eds., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); and Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).

is the replacement of traditional thought-patterns and institutions with modern ones—with "modern" meaning governed by secular, cosmopolitan, urban norms and undergirded by economic industrialization. The urge to modernize can be traced at least to the New Deal, when David Lilienthal, a director of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), oversaw the construction of thirty dams on Tennessee River, employing tens of thousands of workers to clear over 175,000 acres of land and pour some 113 million cubic yards of concrete.[13] Lilienthal hoped that the introduction of industrial technology into an impoverished region would rescue the Tennessee Valley's residents from poverty, not only by improving their material circumstances but also by effecting a spiritual change, through which they would learn to adopt new behaviors and to entertain new aspirations. Lilienthal also hoped, as did many of his supporters, that the TVA model could be exported to "a thousand valleys over the globe."[14] Global ambitions of that sort were prevalent within the foreign policymaking establishment. They reached an apex by the late 1950s, when a cadre of social scientists known as modernization theorists had translated the urge to modernize into a fully elaborated theory of history. The modernization theorists were welcomed into the halls of government, where they played an important role in shaping U.S. foreign policy during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, including during the prosecution of the war in Vietnam.

In part because of modernization theory's complicity in the Vietnam War, the scholars who have written about the urge to modernize have been strongly critical. They have taken modernizers to task for the blindness, arrogance, and recklessness with which they approached the global South. Too often, we now know, their development schemes amounted to little more than top-down attempts to impose abstract notions of "modernity" upon weaker nations, with no acknowledgment of the importance of local variation or of cultural traditions. Modernizers' uncritical faith in science and technology endowed them with a confidence in their own authority that, in hindsight, has seemed catastrophic.[15]

Those criticisms are entirely warranted, but it is possible that in our zeal to make them we have exaggerated the extent of the urge to modernize. Rather than seeing modernization as the essence of U.S. foreign policymaking after World War II, I submit, we should see it as only a part of the story. For, as this dissertation will argue, the urge to modernize was, in the midcentury decades, locked into a competition with a rival approach, which sociologist Robert A. Nisbet called "the quest for community."[16] Broadly defined, the quest for community was an effort to shore up small-scale social solidarities, to encourage democratic deliberation and civic action on a local level, and to embed politics and economics within the life of the community. Its adherents preached the values of grassroots democracy and recognized the ways in which traditional institutions could express worthy cultural values and protect their members from the economic and political shocks of modernization. Adopting the conceptual language of Ferdinand Tönnies, which many at the time did, we can say that if the urge to modernize set its sights on the *Gesellschaft*, the quest for community sought to nourish the *Gemeinschaft*.[17]

There should be little to shock in the suggestion that the midcentury decades saw the rise of communitarian projects alongside modernizing ones. After all, the tension between the

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[13] David Lilienthal, *TVA: Democracy on the March* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 11.
[14] Ibid., 2.
[15] An important articulation of this criticism can be found in James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
[16] Robert A. Nisbet, *The Quest for Community: A Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953).
[17] Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society*, trans. Charles P. Loomis (1887; New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988).

urge to modernize and the quest for community has deep historical roots and can be found in many different temporal and cultural contexts. Elements of the same basic rivalry can be seen in the argument between Thomas Paine and Edmund Burke or in the argument between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. But the presence of communitarian thought and action has been harder to recognize in the context of the twentieth century. We seem at times to be afflicted with a sort of knee-jerk Weberianism, according to which the urban, the bureaucratic, and the centralized stand in our minds for modernity. Even as we see clearly the perils that have attended modernization projects, we tend to talk about them as if they were the only real approach to governance. However much we admire decentralist thought and participatory projects, we have a tendency to write them off as if they were romantic throwbacks, doomed to failure because of their inability to cohere with the requirements of the modern age, or we write about them as if they had never been seriously tried at all. In speaking and writing this way, we reproduce the modernist logic about which we so often complain. Perhaps more importantly, we also end up blinding ourselves to wide and relevant swaths of the past. For, however we *feel* about the urge to modernize, our obligation as historians requires us to grapple with the sometimes awkward fact that many powerful and forward-looking people in the twentieth century, including a number of successful political leaders, were critics of it, and designed political projects that aligned with the quest for community.

Although our implicit preconceptions can sometimes make it hard for us to recognize the quest for community as a key feature of the historical landscape in the middle decades of the twentieth century, communitarian thought did, in fact, take on renewed vitality during that time. The period that this dissertation covers began with the Depression and the rise of totalitarian governments in Europe and it included a world war, the development of nuclear weaponry, the industrialization of agriculture, a series of violent colonial wars, and the growth of a military-industrial complex. It was hardly radical to propose that humans had somehow lost control of their own creations. "The trouble is that everything is too big," wrote the former Communist Dwight Macdonald in 1946.[18] "We must begin way at the bottom again, with small groups of individuals."[19] That basic sentiment, in various forms, animated a great deal of the social criticism of the day. Many, like Lewis Mumford, pled for "the restoration of the human scale."[20] For some, the problem was that corporations had grown too large. For others, the centralization of state power was the main concern. But what is remarkable about midcentury social theorists in the United States is how many of them no longer regarded the tension between states and markets as the primary political battle line. The *size* of decision-making institutions, rather than their public or private character, was what most profoundly concerned them. Whereas typical progressive intellectuals of the early twentieth century were writers like Walter Rauschenbusch and Jane Addams, who held strong beliefs about where the border between the public and private spheres of governance should be drawn, the typical midcentury progressive intellectual was more like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who certainly held opinions about the public-private divide but was more deeply moved by the crisis affecting the entire political arena, by which "freedom has lost its foundation in community and become a torment."[21] The midcentury decades were not, for Schlesinger, a time of well-defined political

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[18] Dwight Macdonald, "Too Big," 1946, reprinted in *Memoirs of a Revolutionist: Essays in Political Criticism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957), 373.

[19] Dwight Macdonald, *The Root is Man* (1946; New York: Autonomedia, 1995), 136.

[20] Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938), 382.

[21] Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1949), 244.

battles, but rather an "age of anxiety," in which the political dreams of the prior generation—capitalism and Communism—had both proved dehumanizing and disastrous.[22] That existential crisis could be solved, he believed, only by reviving "widespread and spontaneous group activity."[23]

Not every thinker who judged the problem of the midcentury decades to be that of centralization agreed with Schlesinger's prescription. Ayn Rand, for example, received an enthusiastic reception when she promoted individualism, not group life, in response to the crisis of centralization.[24] But Rand was the exception. Most thinkers who identified centralization as a problem came to embrace some form of small-scale community life. The trend is dramatically illustrated by the career of popular novelist Sinclair Lewis. Lewis made his name with *Main Street* (1920) and *Babbitt* (1922), savage depictions of life in small towns ("It is slavery self-sought and self-defended. It is dulness made God"[25]). But in the 1930s, Lewis *moved* to a small town—Barnard, Vermont—and from there wrote *It Can't Happen Here* (1935), about the triumph of small-town values over Hitlerism, and *The Prodigal Parents* (1938), about the same values vanquishing Bolshevism. From another part of the political spectrum, Granville Hicks, formerly the editor of the *New Masses* and one of the Communist Party's chief literary critics in the United States, left the Party and moved to a small town in upstate New York, from which he wrote a series of fiction and nonfiction books celebrating small-town living as a solution to some of the political problems of modernity.[26] It is easy to suppose that there has always been in the United States a nostalgic appreciation for small-town life, but in fact such nostalgia dramatically increased around 1935 and changed its tone. Former celebrations of life in small communities had either celebrated their rugged individualism, as in Frederick Jackson Turner's famed frontier thesis, or celebrated their communal affiliation as a precursor to national affiliation, as in the writings of Progressive-Era thinkers like John Dewey and Mary Parker Follett.[27] By the middle decades of the twentieth century, people wrote more about small towns and particularly praised their communal aspects as a *defense* against overreliance on remote centers of power, as in the popular play *Our Town* (1937), by Thornton Wilder. Somewhere between the individual and the nation, a middle zone of communal life was coming into view, and it seemed to carry with it great hope.

The turn toward small communities carried with it an analytical as well as a normative component. Just at the same time that writers and artists took up the cause of the small town, social scientists began to take interest in small social groups. Network maps, charting the social space in which individuals were enmeshed, were invented and adopted across a number of fields. After a famous series of studies known as the Hawthorne experiments, management theorists abandoned the Taylorist preoccupations with individual efficiency and began to inquire about the small-scale social structures of corporate life. The War Department made a similar move when it hired an enormous team of social scientists to produce *The American Sol-*

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[22] Ibid., 1.
[23] Ibid., 253.
[24] See Jennifer Burns, *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[25] Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street: The Story of Carol Kennicott* (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1920), 265.
[26] Hicks's small-town works—*First to Awaken* (1940), *Only One Storm* (1942), *Behold Trouble* (1944), *Small Town* (1946), and *There Was a Man in Our Town* (1952)—are treated in Terry L. Long, *Granville Hicks* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981) and Leah Levenson and Jerry Natterstad, *Granville Hicks: The Intellectual in Mass Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993).
[27] On the latter, see particularly Jean B. Quandt, *From the Small Town to the Great Community: The Social Thought of Progressive Intellectuals* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970).

dier (1949), a multi-volume study of military life that placed emphasis on the informal, small-group structures that grew up within the military. Therapists augmented their individual interventions with "group therapy," which focused on the social aspects of pathology, and social workers supplemented their case work with "group work." In nearly every field of social scientific inquiry, the "small group" emerged as a new research object. Indeed, by the 1950s there were a few journals dedicated principally to small-group research (*Autonomous Groups Bulletin*, *The Group, Human Organization*, *Sociometry*) and numerous book-length surveys of the field published by major presses.[28] The small group had become, as Edward Shils argued, a "focal point, toward which have converged the hypotheses and investigations of a variety of scholars working on widely different concrete problems and subject matters."[29] David Riesman agreed. Summing up the intellectual trends of the times in 1951, he wrote that "the pendulum has swung toward groupism," and wondered whether remedial action might not be necessary.[30]

Groupism, as Riesman called it, was community development's point of departure. But community development also emerged from a more specific institutional context. Most of the reformers who became community developers were social scientists who had some engagement with rural life, mainly rural sociologists and anthropologists. During the New Deal and World War II, they tended to find employment in the Department of Agriculture, particularly in the USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and in the War Relocation Authority's Community Analysis Section. A few worked in both. At the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, they set about the task of improving conditions in the rural South and West. Unlike urban liberals like Rexford Tugwell, the rural sociologists who worked in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics rejected broad macroeconomic solutions to the problems of rural poverty. Simply enriching the nation would not protect farm communities; at best it would pull more labor out of the farms and into the cities. Their preferred strategy was a form of grassroots rural democracy: calling together local councils in which rural inhabitants would discuss their needs and generate their own local economic plans. At the TVA, the message of grassroots democracy also prevailed, although there the emphasis was more rhetorical than actual, as the communitarian aspects of the TVA were the work of the chair of the board of directors, Arthur E. Morgan, who was eventually ousted by the TVA's more charismatic and technocratic director, David Lilienthal. A similar gap between intent and reality could be found in the Japanese internment camps, where anthropologists oversaw the creation and maintenance of communal democracy through a series of local councils and other communal institutions. Local democracy, however, was severely circumscribed by the barbed-wire fences and guards that forced internees to live in the camps.

None of the Roosevelt-era experiments in community development were entirely successful, although recently scholars have latched onto the Bureau of Agricultural Economics' work as an inspiring moment in U.S. governance.[31] By 1946, Morgan had been ousted from

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[28] Those surveys include George C. Homans, *The Human Group* (New York; Harcourt, Brace, 1950); A. Paul Hare, Edgar F. Borgatta, and Robert F. Bales, eds., *Small Groups: Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Knopf, 1955); and W. J. H. Sprott, *Human Groups* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1958); and Michael S. Olmstead, *The Small Group* (New York: Random House, 1959).

[29] Edward A. Shils, "The Study of the Primary Group," in Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell, eds., *The Policy Sciences* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951), 44.

[30] David Riesman, "Individualism Reconsidered," 1951, in *Individualism Reconsidered* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1954), 28.

[31] The scholar who has done most to promote an understanding of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics is the rural sociologist Jess Gilbert, whose work can be found in the following articles: "Eastern Urban Liberals and Midwestern Agrarian Intellectuals: Two Group Portraits of Progressives in the New Deal Department of Agri-

the TVA; the Bureau of Agricultural Economics had been dismantled in deference to the pressure put on Congress from the owners of large, mechanized farms; and the War Relocation Authority closed its internment camps. It would be easy to conclude that the end of communitarian projects at home was symptomatic of a fundamental incompatibility between the quest for community and the functioning of the United States government. But just as opportunities for community developers were closed at home, new ones opened, resoundingly, abroad. By 1950, rising Cold War tensions, a wave of decolonization, and the Communist takeover of China had led many policymakers to conclude that the global influence of the United States would depend on the triumph of liberalism over Communism in the Third World. Historians have shown how the U.S. government drafted Area Studies experts into this effort. But the U.S. foreign policymaking apparatus also depended on another sort of expertise, particularly in the early years of the Cold War: rural experts. Thus, many of the men and women sent overseas were the same rural sociologists and anthropologists who had worked in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics or the Japanese internment camps. As they arrived at their new posts, they designed community development projects to resemble those they had attempted during the New Deal and the War.

Those community developers, who are the primary focus of this dissertation, were of a different type than modernization theorists. They were anthropologists and rural sociologists rather than political scientists and economists. Because of their disciplinary engagements with the social lives of rural peoples, they were unusually sensitive to the ways in which urbanization and industrialization threatened the countryside. Thus, their approach to development was always cautious. While they recognized that impoverished areas would need to adapt to changing conditions, they rarely spoke of replacing traditional institutions with modern ones. Rather, they advocated a balanced *process* of development, rooted in the "felt needs" of villagers, that would operate through traditional institutions rather than working to replace them. Even their end goal was different. Whereas modernization theorists hoped to shepherd developing nations toward a political and economic maturity in which they would resemble the United States, community developers hoped that the countries of the global South would achieve a decentralized form of development and would avoid the excesses of the United States. Their major theorist was not Walt W. Rostow but rather Robert Redfield, an anthropologist at the University of Chicago who believed that development in Asia and Africa would involve "an effort of the 'backward' peoples to recover from their disruptive encounters with the West by returning to the 'sacred centers' of their ancient indigenous civilizations."[32] On the occasions when community developers encountered modernization theorists, these differences quickly came out.

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culture," *Agricultural History* 74 (2000): 162–180; "Agrarian Intellectuals in a Democratizing State: A Collective Biography of USDA Leaders in the Intended New Deal," in Catherine McNicol Stock and Robert D. Johnston, eds., *The Countryside in the Age of the Modern State: Political Histories of Rural America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 213–239; and "Low Modernism and the Agrarian New Deal: A Different Kind of State," in Jane Adams, ed., *Fighting for the Farm: Rural America Transformed* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 129–146. See also Richard Kirkendall, *Social Scientists and Farm Politics in the Age of Roosevelt* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1966); Olaf F. Larson and Julie N. Zimmerman, *Sociology in Government: The Galpin-Taylor Years in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1919–1953* (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Sarah T. Phillips, *This Land, This Nation: Conservation, Rural America, and the New Deal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Andrew Jewett, "Philosophy, Deliberative Democracy, and the Cultural Turn in the 1930s USDA," forthcoming.

[32] Robert Redfield and Milton B. Singer, "The Cultural Role of Cities," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3 (1954): 73.

This dissertation offers chapter-length studies of U.S.-sponsored community development programs in two countries: India and the Philippines. Those were certainly not the only countries to make large investments in community development; in 1960, the UN estimated that over sixty countries had substantial programs, about half of which were national in scope.[33] Nevertheless the Indian and Philippine programs were the most influential. India's claim to preeminence was obvious; it had the first major community development program and by far the largest. By 1965 its national program serviced every village in India—villages that collectively contained approximately ten percent of the global population. The Philippine program, though smaller, achieved prominence through its function as an international showcase for community development. It received visitors from other countries, sent its own officials abroad, and spawned community development programs throughout Latin America and Southeast Asia.

India proved a felicitous place to launch the first major community development program. Its government eagerly encouraged U.S. community developers from the start. The government's openness to community development was not due to a great desire to import U.S. ideas but was rather the legacy of a homegrown communitarian movement, led by Mohandas K. Gandhi. During the first half of the twentieth century, Gandhi had transformed the urban-led nationalist movement into a much broader affair by redefining Indian independence as the flourishing of India's village communities. Drawing on Orientalist scholarship about India as much as on indigenous sources, Gandhi insisted that the heart of India resided in its villages and that the sin of the British lay not in capturing the commanding heights of Indian politics but in damaging the countryside by imposing "modern" technology and social institutions: doctors, lawyers, and railroads.[34] Gandhi's largely successful rebranding of the Indian nationalist movement as a village movement had two important consequences for the emergence of Indian community development. First, it greatly increased the constituency within Indian politics for village-centered forms of rural improvement, to the point that nearly every political party, including the Communists, supported community development in one form or another. Second, it turned India into the global center of communitarian thought, so that many of the U.S. community developers—including Arthur E. Morgan of the TVA—had read quite a bit about India before they even arrived there. Thus, when a communitarian architect named Albert Mayer arrived in India with an interest in starting a village development pilot project, he found that he and his political backers, who included prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, were speaking the same language. Mayer's pilot project at Etawah received substantial international attention and became the model for an all-India community development program, which, with substantial support from the U.S. government and from the Ford Foundation, was launched on October 2, 1952—Gandhi's birthday.

The participation of the Indian government and particularly of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru in an all-India Gandhian development scheme is somewhat surprising. Just as historians of the United States have strongly identified post–World War II U.S. foreign policymaking with the urge to modernize, so too have historians of India, particularly those influenced by the Subaltern Studies group, portrayed Nehru as an arch high modernist.[35] And,

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[33] Lane E. Holdcroft, "The Rise and Fall of Community Development: 1950–1965," M.S. thesis, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, 1976, 3.

[34] Mohandas K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* (1908; Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1939).

[35] See particularly the following three influential works Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed Books, 1986); Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and*

indeed, it is true that Nehru and India's planning commissioners pursued a course of state-directed industrialization in India that was modeled on the Soviet five-year plans and that Nehru once referred to dams as "temples of the new age."[36] But what the story of community development reveals is that Nehru and many members of the Planning Commission were also worried about the prospect of over-centralization, sensitive to Gandhian pleas for village improvement, and flexible enough in their thinking to pursue community development with great vigor. Community development was "far the most revolutionary thing we have undertaken," Nehru repeatedly insisted, and both he and other members of the planning commission placed their personal weight behind the program.[37] Community development comprised a large part of India's five-year plans, its agents were spread throughout India (and were the only group of development officials with a presence in the villages), and, when the fate of the community development program seemed to hang in the balance in the late 1950s, Nehru increased the government's investment in it by unleashing a program of "democratic decentralization" by which officers in village governments would be, for the first time in India's history, formally elected. That system of village democracy remains an important feature of Indian politics today.

To some degree, the story in the Philippines is the same. There, too, U.S. interest in communitarian approaches to development resonated with domestic political imperatives and a U.S.-sponsored pilot project gained national scope when a charismatic post-independence president, Ramon Magsaysay, threw his full weight behind the program. The Philippine version of Albert Mayer was Y. C. James Yen, a Chinese national who had started an enormous rural literacy movement in interwar China but who had fled during the Chinese revolution. Yen had the full support of the liberal establishment in the United States; Pearl Buck had written a book about him and board members of his organization included Eleanor Roosevelt, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, Chester Bowles, Walter Reuther, Marshall Field, Henry Luce, Bruce Barton, Helen Gahagan Douglas, and DeWitt Wallace, the publisher of *Reader's Digest*. Uprooted from China but with ample funding from backers like Field and Wallace, Yen began a community development operation in the Philippines. Yen quickly won the support of Magsaysay who, using aid from the United States, rode to popularity with a Philippine community development program. As in India, the community development program provoked a democratization of local government; barrio councils became official units of government with elected officials and some power to tax and enact ordinances. Magsaysay's death in 1957 removed some of the momentum behind the program but the institutions of community development continued to play a major role in Philippine politics until the 1969 election of Ferdinand Marcos, to which, ironically, they had contributed.

And yet, for all of the obvious similarities between Indian and Philippine community development, there is one important difference. Whereas in India community development was largely regarded as a way to improve rural conditions, in the Philippines it had a much more direct purpose: counterinsurgency. In the early 1950s, the Philippines was the site of the Huk rebellion, a peasant insurgency so strong that it posed a serious threat to the government. Magsaysay's interest in community development came less out of an abstract concern for the plight of the rural Filipino and much more from his experience as Secretary of National De-

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Postcolonial Histories (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); and Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[36] Jawaharlal Nehru, 1954, quoted in Daniel Klingensmith, *'One Valley and a Thousand': Dams, Nationalism, and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 255.

[37] Jawaharlal Nehru, "From the Depths of India," *Kurukshetra*, June 1958, 639.

fense, where his primary task was to put down the Huk rebellion. In collaboration with the legendary CIA agent Edward Lansdale—a man who was believed to be the model for protagonists in *both* of the two most famous Cold War novels: *The Ugly American* (1958) and Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* (1955)—Magsaysay experimented with community building as a carrot that might lure insurgents back into the fold when the stick, napalm, did not work.[38] Yen's pilot project was, by design, placed in the heart of Huk territory; Yen pointedly ran a community development project in the hometown of the Huk leader. Even after the rebellion was suppressed, community development was seen by many, especially U.S. policymakers, as a way to build legitimacy for a liberal, anti-Communist government in the countryside. Tellingly, many of the funds for community development in its early stages came not through Point Four channels but through the CIA, which regarded Magsaysay's success as integral to U.S. security in Southeast Asia. With the help of the CIA, the Philippines became a model for Cold War counterinsurgency, and its brand of community development was exported to Latin America and, notably, Edward Lansdale's next theater of operations: Vietnam. Not only did the Philippines send nationals to Vietnam to do community development, but the Vietnamese strategic hamlet program, and especially the support for it that came from the United States, drew heavily on the Philippine counterinsurgency experience. The Philippine strain of community development, in other words, was a weaponized version intended explicitly for the hot patches of the Cold War.

When community development worked as a counterinsurgency strategy, it worked because, in the words of CIA agent Gabriel Kaplan, it made "a significant contribution to meeting the current threat to Free World survival by welding together those groups whom the communists seek to destroy or to set against each other": the government officials; the farmers; the workers; the church; and "the socially, economically, and political powerful."[39] By channeling political energies through villages, counterinsurgency experts hoped to create vertical bonds linking local elites to their local subordinates and crowd out horizontal bonds, of the sort that might connect peasants across space, as in the Huk rebellion. The desire to create cross-class connections had always been a part of community development. Communitarians rejected the Marxist notion that interest could be defined solely in terms of economic position, and they longed for a society in which the power of interpersonal bonds would be greater than that of economic interest. Such a society, of course, was achievable only on the small scale. For the CIA, the implications were clear: if the poor's allegiance went to their village rather than to their class, they would be answerable to their social betters and would not make revolution.

The trade-off between village and class solidarity, which made community development seem so promising as a counterinsurgency strategy, greatly diminished its effectiveness as a development strategy. The reason was simple. The rural societies of the Third World were poor, but they were also, in most cases, starkly inegalitarian in their distribution of resources. The greatest source of the suffering of peasants in the global South was not that their countries or even villages were poor, it was that they were peasants, bound to land that they did not

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38 The Magsaysay–Lansdale partnership is described in detail in Edward Geary Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972). See also Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), which disputes the widely held belief—held by Lansdale as well—that Lansdale was the model for the protagonist of *The Quiet American*.

39 Gabriel Kaplan, quoted in Louis Miniclier, "Community Development," transcript of speech, 5 December 1962, p. 3, Edward Geary Lansdale Papers, box 49, folder 1371, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

always own and to persons who had much more than they. Social customs, whether traditional or of recent invention, tended to reinforce the dependence of most villagers on a few patrons: the landlords, the lenders, and the caste leaders. Families, moreover, were strongly patriarchal, leaving women even less power than their fathers and husbands. In such a context, any strategy that grouped local elites and their subordinates together within a single political unit risked allowing that unit to be dominated by the powerful. In India and the Philippines, that is precisely what happened. Community development projects tended to center around building roads, wells, and other small improvements that benefited the well-off in the village. But rarely if ever did community councils consider questions of land reform, caste abolition, gender equality, or any of the other large structural changes that might transform village life. Clearly, any attempts to broach such issues would meet with quick and severe social and economic sanctions. After a careful study of the Indian community development program, Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal concluded that its "net effect" had been "to create more, not less, inequality."[40] As an anthropologist who worked in both India and the Philippines observed, to simply turn matters over to elite-dominated villages and then expect any kind of democratic social change was "even more unrealistic than to expect rapid, orderly integration of the schools in the southern United States to result from putting responsibility for school integration in the hands of local school boards."[41]

The inegalitarian features of community development hampered not only its ability to distribute benefits fairly but its ability to operate at all. To work, community development required participation—men and women had to carry out voluntarily decisions that were made by village councils, even if the state provided material assistance. But the skewing of community development toward elites robbed most villagers of any incentive to participate. Even basic agricultural improvements were of little interest to people who did not own their own land and who therefore would not reap the benefits of increased production. Across the globe, enthusiastic policymakers who had launched nationwide programs found that they could count on few results. Worse, a looming food crisis in Asia, starting in the late 1950s but fully emerging in the late 1960s, placed food production in many developing countries on an emergency footing. In both India and the Philippines, investment in community development declined rapidly in the 1960s as both countries pursued Green Revolution–style agricultural modernization. By 1963, the Community Development Division within the U.S. foreign aid agency had been abolished and by 1969 the United States' last community development officer overseas was relieved of duty.[42] Within Southern nations, the community development programs that were not abolished outright were most often folded into Ministries of Agriculture.

Oddly, the withering of community development in the global South in the 1960s did not prevent the United States from adopting a version of the practice as part of the Johnson administration's War on Poverty. The centerpiece of that legislative effort, launched in 1964, was the Community Action Program, a scheme by which the government would provide funding to local organizations that could demonstrate that they were drawing upon the "maximum feasible participation" of the poor in their efforts. The many historians who have searched for the roots of the Community Action Program have traced it to a few precursor community programs: some anti-delinquency projects run out of the office of Attorney Gen-

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[40] Gunnar Myrdal, *The Challenge of World Poverty: A World Anti-Poverty Program in Outline* (London: Allen Lane, 1970), 105.

[41] Gerald D. Berreman, "Caste and Community Development," *Human Organization* 22 (1963): 93.

[42] Louis Miniclier, "Community Development as a Vehicle of U.S. Foreign Aid," *Community Development Journal* 4 (1969): 8–12.

eral Robert F. Kennedy in the early 1960s and a series of Ford Foundation grants, made at the same time, as part of Ford's Gray Areas program, led by Paul Ylvisaker.[43] Both of those experiments fed into the work of the Johnson administration's antipoverty task force, headed by the Peace Corps' Sargent Shriver, which designed the War on Poverty's programs, including the Community Action Program. What the historians of the War on Poverty have generally not noted, however, is the way in which overseas community development influenced the ideas and experience of the actors in the Ford Foundation, the Attorney General's office, and the antipoverty task force. Many of the advocates for community action in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, like Sargent Shriver, had had direct experience with community development as part of the Peace Corps, which took community development as a major program area and worked with the global network of community experts. Others, particularly those in the Ford Foundation, had participated in community development projects through Ford's work in India. Tellingly, right before Paul Ylvisaker established the Gray Areas program he had been working in Calcutta, where his activities included establishing an urban community development program for the city and where he worked alongside the men who had helped to launch India's national program. In interviews, the architects of the War on Poverty have been open about the influence of community development abroad on community action at home, and some have even been puzzled as to why more is not made of the connection.[44]

There are two ironies in the Johnson administration's adoption of community development as a domestic antipoverty strategy. The first, already mentioned, is that by the time the Community Action Program was begun in 1964, many similar programs abroad were winding down. The second is that, whereas overseas community development had been overwhelmingly of a conservative nature, with rural elites capturing the programs, domestic community action was, for its founders, uncomfortably radical. The requirement that local community action agencies involve the maximum feasible participation of the poor had the effect of joining community action to the increasingly radical civil rights movement, especially in the North. Irate Congressmen held hearings to determine whether federal funds had been used to purchase telescopic rifle sights or police radios to be used in paramilitary revolutionary actions. In Oakland, a community action agency served as the site of the founding of the Black Panther Party (founder Bobby Seale worked there).[45] The quick and remarkable radicalization of community action is one reason why historians have been so interested in finding the origins of the program. But here is a place where understanding the transnational trajectory of community development can help solve a historiographical riddle. As this dissertation argues, it was the uniformly conservative nature of previous community development efforts abroad

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[43] See particularly Richard Blumenthal, "Community Action: The Origins of a Government Program" (B.A. Thesis, Harvard University, 1967); Peter Marris and Martin Rein, *Dilemmas of Social Reform: Poverty and Community Action in the United States* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967); Daniel P. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action and the War on Poverty* (New York: The Free Press, 1969); Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991); Michael L. Gillette, *Launching the War on Poverty: An Oral History* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996); Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); and Noel A. Cazenave, *Impossible Democracy: The Unlikely Success of the War on Poverty Community Action Programs* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).

[44] These interviews, discussed in chapter five, include those with Sargent Shriver, Richard Boone, and David Hackett preserved at the John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson presidential libraries.

[45] Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 180.

that blinded some of the architects of the War on Poverty to the possibility that, when transposed from a Third World village to a U.S ghetto, the same approach might yield starkly different results. What they were not anticipating was that the postwar transformation of U.S. cities, which established a dramatic economic segregation so that the poor no longer lived side-by-side with the rich, would endow the devolution of power to the locality with a radical political valence. The men who designed and oversaw the Community Action Program were not surprised by its outcome because they were political naïfs with little ability to anticipate consequences, as Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously alleged.[46] They were surprised by its outcome because they had *experience* with community development, an experience that had not prepared them for the consequences of importing the strategy from integrated villages to segregated cities.

The story of community development unfolds in multiple national contexts. Following this fundamentally transnational story through archives in India and the Philippines as well as in the United States has allowed me to see things that have been easy for other historians to miss. There are agricultural historians who have written at length about the participatory programs of the USDA, but they usually regard such programs as doomed to failure, because they do not see the rich careers that USDA rural sociologists had abroad. Historians of modernization theory have made great strides in probing the motivations driving postwar U.S. foreign policymaking, but because they have tended to study the social scientists and policymakers in Washington and at the key Cold War universities, they have seen the world as it appears from the halls of power. Similarly, while many historians have explored the origins of the War on Poverty, they have done so as historians of domestic policy, and have therefore not made much of the fact that many of the architects of the War on Poverty had significant overseas experience.[47] But when we study U.S. foreign aid from the perspective of its recipients, using foreign archival materials, it becomes apparent that community development loomed very large. So large, in fact, that U.S. policymakers abroad brought it back home.

At the same time as following the story of community development across borders sheds new light on certain problems in existing historiographies, it also contributes to the study of transnationality itself. In the past ten years or so, historians, reflecting on the process of globalization that surrounds them, have been keen to recognize forms of globalization in the past as well. Mobility, trade, piracy, migration, communication, global finance, international professional networks, and international institutions like the United Nations have all received a great deal of attention.[48] Since September 11, 2001, U.S. historians have been particularly enthusiastic about this new turn, seeking to forever put to rest myths of U.S. exceptionalism by embedding the history of their own country within the larger fabric of world history. The task has been, in anthropologist Clifford Geertz's words, "seeing ourselves amongst others, as a local example of the forms of life locally taken, a case among cases, a world among

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46 Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*.

47 An important exception to this trend is Alyosha Goldstein. In his dissertation and in a more recent article Goldstein examines both overseas community development and the War on Poverty's Community Action Program. But although Goldstein recognizes the similarity between the two, he does not trace their connection. See chapter 5, footnote 5.

48 See, for a helpful overview, written as these trends were emerging, see Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, "World History in a Global Age," *American Historical Review* 100 (1995): 1034–1060. For a more recent, and also very helpful, account, see Emily S. Rosenberg, "Transnational Currents: Cultural Entanglements and Social Networks in a Shrinking World, 1870–1945," in Emily S. Rosenberg, ed., *History of the World*, vol. 5, Akira Iriye and Jürgen Osterhammel, general eds., *History of the World*, 6 vols. (English ed., Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, forthcoming, and German ed., Munich: Beck, forthcoming).

worlds."[49] But while it is easy to take this humble view of the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "transnational" history in the context of the twentieth century United States often merely shows the ways in which ideas or practices developed in the United States were imposed upon less powerful nations. This dissertation tells a different sort of story. In part because of the great desire of U.S. community developers to engage with the rest of the world and in part because of the particular features of the problem of poverty, community development is one area in twentieth century history where the United States has not only exported ideas but imported them as well. To be sure, the fact of U.S. hegemony is evident even in this case, but so is the presence of a number of non-U.S. actors who shaped and gave wings to community development. If community development has not registered as a major topic in studies of U.S. foreign relations, that is in part because many of its implementers were not employees of the Ford Foundation or of USAID, but rather were policymakers in the global South, working for their own reasons. The world of community development was, in large part, a world of their making.

[49] Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 16. Geertz's words are prominently invoked within the context of U.S. transnational history in Thomas Bender, *A Nation among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006).

Chapter One: Groupism

In 1960, the sociologist Daniel Bell declared an end to the great ideological conflicts that had riven the industrialized West. Few serious minds still believed in the utopia of economic planning and few believed in the utopia of laissez-faire. In the absence of such extremes, Bell argued, "there is today a rough consensus among intellectuals on political issues," including a mixed economy and acceptance of the welfare state.[1] Bell's end-of-ideology thesis is famous in part for what it failed to predict: the political conflicts of the 1960s. But as a retrospective description of the middle decades of the twentieth century, Bell's theory has more merit. To historians, the twenty years or so after the start of World War II *have* seemed like a time when the United States enjoyed moderate politics, social stability, and a convergent culture. Many have lamented that such stability was achieved on the back of a humbled labor movement and at the considerable cost of the exclusion of subordinated groups, but the notion of an age of consensus still holds water. In particular, the twenty years or so after World War II were a time of compromise between the political left and the political right over what had been the defining issue between them: the opposition between states and markets. Affluence, stewarded by Keynesian macroeconomic management, accommodated market freedoms to state regulation in a way that neutralized extremists in both camps. Domestic Communism declined considerably after the 1930s and, on the right, free-market advocates like F. A. Hayek were relegated to the margins of the economics profession.

One might think that having arrived at a rough, mutually acceptable, and profitable agreement about a mixed economy would have given intellectuals and policymakers some cause for satisfaction. But the thinkers of the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s were anything but content. *Crisis* and *anxiety* are two words often invoked, both at the time and retrospectively by historians, to describe their prevailing mood. Such anxieties could be attributed to new gender norms (the ever-occurring "crisis of masculinity"), to new obligations of consumerism, to paranoia fueled by World War II and the Cold War, or to a generational existential crisis. But I would like to draw attention to one too-often-neglected aspect of the postwar period: the tension between mass society and decentralism. As I will argue, intellectuals in nearly every field, wary of the dangers of mass institutions, turned to small groups, small towns, and small communities to check the prevailing centralizing trends of the time. "Groupism," as David Riesman called it, was a major theme in social thought, especially in the social sciences, where, Edward Shils noted, the small group had "become a focal point, toward which have converged the hypotheses and investigations of a variety of scholars working on widely different concrete problems and subject matters."[2] Because groupism was a diffuse trend rather than the organized movement of one sector of society, and because it does not map easily into our own sense of what is "political," we have failed to register its importance. But a focus on groupism helps to illuminate much social theory of the period. And it essential for understanding the emergence of community development.

The turn toward the small group within the social sciences occurred simultaneously in a number of fields. An introductory sense of the overall movement, however, can be got by following the fortunes of one of its most colorful prophets, the psychiatrist, sociologist, and

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[1] Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* (New York: The Free Press, 1960), 373.

[2] David Riesman, *Individualism Reconsidered* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1954), 26; Edward A. Shils, "The Study of the Primary Group," in *The Policy Sciences*, ed. Daniel Lerner and Harold D. Lasswell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951), 44.

dramatist Jacob Levy Moreno. That Moreno should have any impact whatever on the social science establishment of his time is in itself remarkable. He was, by all accounts, a turgid writer, a slipshod scholar, and a difficult colleague, given to embarrassingly public and often quasi-religious delusions of grandeur. Moreno arrived in the United States from Austria in 1925, having done some experiments in psychiatric group therapy with Viennese prostitutes (prostitutes were of interest, Moreno declared, because "they were not acceptable either to the bourgeois or to the Marxist").[3] Fairly quickly upon arriving, he managed to win the support of the influential psychiatrist William A. White, which then allowed him to undertake two important studies, one of the prisoners at Sing Sing and another at the students at the New York State Training School for Girls in Hudson. Rather than studying the populations of those institutions in aggregate, though, Moreno and his collaborator, psychologist Helen Hall Jennings, looked for signs of small group structure. Who knew whom? Who talked to whom? Moreno and Jennings together developed the "sociogram," a representation of what Moreno called the "networks" of social relations that connected individuals to each other. The sociogram was essentially a map of the patterns and structure of social space. From his research at the Training School for Girls, Moreno identified local leaders, relative degrees of social cohesion in different friendship networks, chains of information-sharing, and the overall level of "emotional expansiveness" for the community as a whole.[4] At the heart of the project was Moreno's assumption that humans could not be understood outside of their immediate group context. To do so—for example, to rely on the staple sociological method of the sample survey—would be to abstract the individual from his social relations and treat him, as the Soviets had done, as "the mass man, the functional man, the man who can be *exchanged*."[5] Moreno's point was not merely methodological, though. The whole point of mapping social space was, he argued, so that social science could point out the poverty of most social networks in an industrial society and offer techniques to create more cohesive societies through the cultivation of spontaneous, voluntary groups.

The network analysis approach that Moreno and Jennings developed, which Moreno called "sociometry," made an immediate splash, and Moreno found his sociograms widely reproduced. According to his memoirs, Moreno's magnum opus, *Who Shall Survive?* (1934), made such an impression on Rev. Frank Wilson of the Episcopal Church at Hyde Park that Wilson delivered a sermon on sociometry and arranged a brief meeting between Moreno and the most famous member of Wilson's congregation: Franklin Delano Roosevelt.[6] Presidents aside, when Moreno began his own journal, *Sociometry*, in 1937, he was able to elicit the participation of a startling number of leading social scientists. In the eighteen years that *Sociometry* ran under Moreno's supervision, the roster of contributing editors and editorial board members included ten presidents of the American Sociological Association, four presidents of the American Psychological Association, and such luminaries as Adolf Meyer, Margaret Mead, Kurt Lewin, Wesley Clair Mitchell, George Gallup, Robert S. Lynd, and John Dewey.[7] Less

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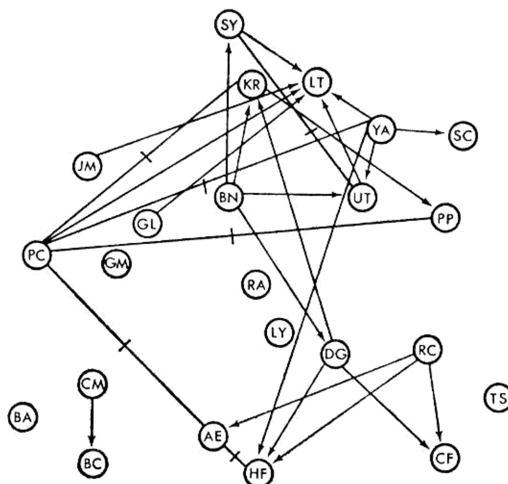
[3] J. L. Moreno, "Preludes of the Sociometric Movement" in *Who Shall Survive?: Foundations of Sociometry, Group Psychotherapy, and Sociodrama*, 2d ed. (Beacon, NY: Beacon House, 1953), xxix.
[4] J. L. Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?: A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelations* (Washington, D.C.: Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., 1934), 134.
[5] Ibid., 338.
[6] Moreno, "Preludes of the Sociometric Movement," lxv–lxvi.
[7] The ten ASA presidents who served as editors for *Sociometry*: Howard Becker, Ernest W. Burgess, F. Stuart Chapin, Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., Paul Lazarsfeld, Charles P. Loomis, George A. Lundberg, Samuel A. Stouffer, Carl C. Taylor, and Florian Znaniecki. The four APA presidents were Gordon Allport, John Dewey, Gardner Murphy, and Theodore M. Newcomb.

than a decade after Moreno debuted sociometry, the American Sociological Association established a section on sociometry (1941) and by 1942 Moreno opened a Sociometric Institute in New York. The journal itself had attracted enough attention that the American Sociological Society took it over in 1956 and continued to publish it for over twenty years. By that time, network analysis—the field that Moreno and Jennings had invented—was on its way to becoming an established subfield within sociology.[8]



Mapping Social Space: A sociogram representing interpersonal relationships within a group of delinquent girls (Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?*)

Were sociometry Moreno's only contribution to social science, he would be worth remembering. But Moreno's interest in psychiatry and conception of human nature as essentially social led him to develop methods for group therapy as well. While Freudian psychiatry sought to investigate and resolve traumas within the life history of the individual, Moreno believed that most psychiatric disorders stemmed from deficiencies in group integration. In place of the psychoanalytic couch, he offered the "psychodramatic" stage—psychodrama being Moreno's method for patients to explore and improve their relationships with others through acting them out in improvised scenes. Moreno's role-playing brand of group therapy aimed to be more democratic (it recognized no major role distinction between therapist and patient) and action-oriented than the psychoanalysis of the day. Here, too, Moreno enjoyed great influence. The American Psychiatric Association sponsored the first conference on Group Methods in 1932 and engaged Moreno to give an address. By 1942, Moreno had formed the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and oversaw publication of the first journal of group therapy, the quarterly *Bulletin of Psychodrama and Group Psychotherapy*.[9]

Meanwhile, other psychologists and psychiatrists—most notably William and Karl Menninger, Kurt Lewin, and Harry Stack Sullivan—began to develop their own more "social" approaches to psychology. One factor behind this sudden interest in the group was World War II, the first U.S. war in which psychiatry had a substantial role to play. "We seemed to

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[8] For information about Moreno's career, *Sociometry*, and the fate of network analysis, see René F. Marineau, *Jacob Levy Moreno, 1889–1974: Father of Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy* (London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1989) and Linton C. Freeman, *The Development of Social Network Analysis: A Study in the Sociology of Science* (Vancouver: Empirical Press, 2004).

[9] Moreno, "Preludes of the Sociometric Movement."

learn anew the importance of group ties in the maintenance of mental health," explained William Menninger, Chief Consultant in Neuropsychiatry to the Surgeon General of the Army and probably the most influential psychiatrist during the war, as he strove to sum up the psychiatric lessons of the war in 1947.[10] Military service, tending to rip servicemembers from their peacetime social networks and rapidly reintegrate them into a tightly organized mass organization, drove home the point to psychiatrists that not all mental health disorders stemmed from individual experiences in early childhood and that group methods could help with the many disorders rooted in crises of social integration.[11] Indeed, one of the principal conclusions to emerge from the War Department's two-volume study, *The American Soldier* (1949)—at its time one of the largest social science research projects ever conducted—was that the primary groups that developed spontaneously within the Army served vital functions in maintaining the war effort and that, in fact, soldiers persevered under fire neither for God nor country but for the fellow members of their small social groups.[12] Having received such a boost from the war, the group approach to psychology and psychiatry continued to establish itself, particularly through the work of S. R. Slavson, as an important alternative to Freudian individual analysis.[13]

What Moreno and his contemporaries had discovered was a new scale of social space. As they saw it, Victorian society, with its utilitarian emphasis on the individual, had succeeded in generating new technologies and founding an industrial order. But the more industrial society grew, the more it threatened to break apart the old ties that had formerly bound men and women together in a society. The rise of fascism brought this trend to a climax—fascist society represented, for some, a pulverizing of the European social order and its replacement by a mass society, in which a horde of unconnected individuals would be organized only by an impersonal market or a despotic state. In this dystopian vision, the human beings had become counting chips, lacking dignity and any means to fulfill their social needs. Victorian thinkers had been unable to see this coming, Moreno and his fellow-travelers argued, because they had seen only the individual and society. They had failed to see the thick middle layer of informal institutions, associations, cultural norms, and traditions that Moreno's generation believed accounted for the bulk of social coordination. Such institutions were governed not by the command of despots or by impersonal market forces, but rather by humans negotiating with each other, face to face, in small groups and communities.

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[10] William C. Menninger, "Psychiatric Experiences in the War, 1941–1946," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 103 (1947): 581. Menninger's further reflections on psychiatry and the war, with more reflections on the role of groups, can be found in *Psychiatry in a Troubled World: Yesterday's War and Today's Challenge* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948). An important wartime document on the importance of groups is the Report of the Special Commission of Civilian Psychiatrists on Psychiatric Policy and Practice in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, reprinted under the title "Combat Exhaustion" in *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 104 (1946): 358–389, 489–525. There, the Commission concludes that, for the soldier in combat, "the group life *is* his inner life" and disruption of the soldier's group is "a primary causal factor, not a secondary effect, of personality disorganization" (370).

[11] For an excellent summary of the group research within the psychiatric field in the 1940s, including during the war, see Marshall B. Clinard, "The Group Approach to Social Reintegration," *American Sociological Review* 14 (1949): 257–262. See also Robert A. Nisbet, "The Coming Problem of Assimilation," *American Journal of Sociology* 50 (1945): 261–270.

[12] Samuel Stouffer et al., *The American Soldier*, vols. 1–2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949). The theme of the primary group in *The American Soldier* is highlighted and discussed in Edward A. Shils, "Primary Groups in the American Army," in Robert K. Merton and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, eds., *Continuities in Social Research: Studies in the Scope and Method of "The American Soldier"* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1950), 16–39.

[13] S. R. Slavson, *An Introduction to Group Therapy* (New York: International Universities Press, 1943).

Of course, social networks, communities, small groups, and voluntary associations were not entirely new as objects of concern. As the intellectuals of the midcentury decades would soon recall, nineteenth-century social theorists like Alexis de Tocqueville, Sir Henry Maine, Frédéric Le Play, Ferdinand Tönnies, and Emile Durkheim had already written much about small groups and their relations to the forces of modernity. And in the early twentieth century, a coterie of thinkers including John Dewey, William A. White, Robert E. Park, Mary Follett, and Jane Addams continued to stress the importance of local communities.[14] One might particularly single out in this regard Chicago sociologist Charles H. Cooley, whose notion of the "primary group"— a face-to-face group governed by informal norms—served as a key reference point for midcentury thinkers.[15] Despite the numerous precedents, however, for many midcentury intellectuals the shift in attention away from states and markets and toward groups and communities carried the force of a sudden revelation. For one observer, the world of the group was "a new world, a world of psychological space, of vast, uncharted dimensions."[16] Maria Rogers, an obscure figure who was a major behind-the-scenes coordinator of the turn to small groups, compared its discovery to Freud's unearthing of the subterranean space of the unconscious. "The social scene which meets the eye of the beholder," Rogers wrote, "is much like the top of an iceberg floating out at sea. Beneath that innocent white peak lies a subsurface structure in some cases so powerful as to be capable of sinking a modern ocean liner."[17] Researchers were quick to chart those depths. In 1954, a massive survey of small-group research in sociology, psychology, psychiatry, and related fields revealed an explosion of scholarly activity. Whereas up to 1920 articles pertaining to the small group came out at the rate of under two per year, by the last half of the 1940s there were over 55 articles per year and by the early 1950s there were over 150 per year.[18] By the 1950s there were also a few journals dedicated principally to small-group research (*Autonomous Groups Bulletin*, *The Group, Human Organization*, *Sociometry*) and numerous book-length surveys of the field published by major presses.[19] The work of older sociologists that offered to shed some light on the problem was dutifully reprinted in new editions: Le Play in 1935, Tönnies in 1940, Tocqueville in 1945, and Cooley in 1956. Summing up the intellectual trends of the times in 1951, David Riesman wrote: "the pendulum has swung toward groupism."[20]

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[14] Jean B. Quandt, *From the Small Town to the Great Community: The Social Thought of Progressive Intellectuals* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1970). One extraordinarily helpful book that addresses the early rise of groupist thought in response to Victorianism in the Progressive Era is William Graebner, *The Engineering of Consent: Democracy and Authority in Twentieth-Century America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987). Graebner's book deals mainly with an earlier period than does this chapter but there is some overlap in terms of the persons discussed and much overlap in the analysis employed.

[15] Charles Horton Cooley, *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), chap. 2.

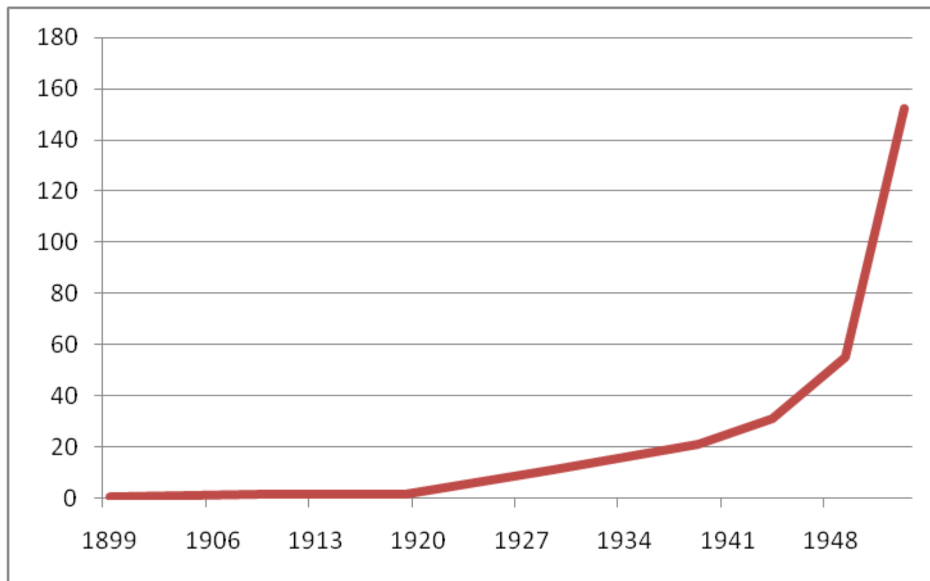
[16] Charles E. Henry, foreword to Bernice Baxter and Rosalind Cassidy, *Group Experience the Democratic Way* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943), xiii.

[17] Maria Rogers, "Foreword to the Community Organization Series," *Autonomous Groups Bulletin* 4 (1948–1949): 4–5.

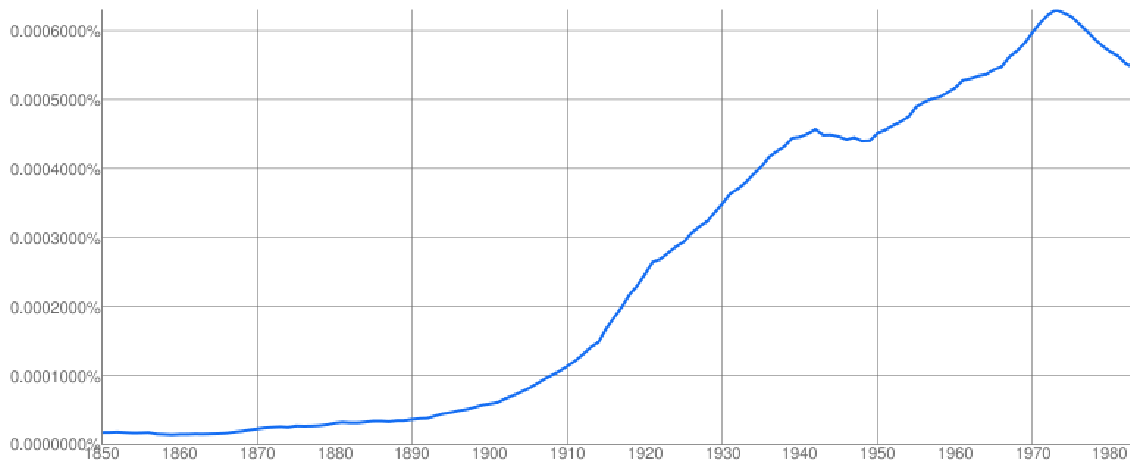
[18] Fred L. Strodtbeck and A. Paul Hare, "Bibliography of Small Group Research," *Sociometry* 17 (1954): 110.

[19] Those surveys include George C. Homans, *The Human Group* (New York; Harcourt, Brace, 1950); A. Paul Hare, Edgar F. Borgatta, and Robert F. Bales, eds., *Small Groups: Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Knopf, 1955); and W. J. H. Sprott, *Human Groups* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1958); and Michael S. Olmstead, *The Small Group* (New York: Random House, 1959).

[20] David Riesman, "Individualism Reconsidered," 1951, in *Individualism Reconsidered*, 28.



Average number of articles concerned with small group processes appearing per year in sociological and psychological journals (Strodtbeck and Hare, "Bibliography of Small Group Research")



Incidence of the phrase "small group" as a percentage of all two-word phrases in U.S. books from 1850 to 1980 (Produced with Google Labs Books Ngram Viewer).

Throughout the social sciences, the introduction of the small group as a unit opened up new analytic possibilities. For obvious reasons, small groups proved more amenable to laboratory experiments than larger ones, and thus became invaluable to social psychologists. Among the most enduring social scientific analyses enabled by the turned to small groups was that of sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld, whose influential study of the 1940 election sought to identify "opinion leaders" whose voting decisions swayed others. Political scientists, he argued, had mistakenly bought into the myth of "the omnicompetent media, on one hand, sending forth the message, and the atomized masses, on the other, waiting to receive it—and nothing

in-between."[21] An approach more sympathetic to the role of primary groups would perceive the importance of the "face-to-face influences, the local 'molecular pressures'" that played an equal or greater role in shaping opinion.[22] Another notable result of groupism was the reinterpretation by U.S. historians of one of the most powerful paradigms in their field: Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis. Relying heavily on Tocqueville, Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick argued in 1954 that the frontier cultivated democracy not, as Turner had argued, because it encouraged "frontier individualism" but rather for precisely the opposite reason: because the frontier created small, strong, and participatory communities.[23] In an interesting coincidence that points to the power of the intellectual Zeitgeist, the same reformulation of Turner was offered simultaneously and apparently independently by Lewis Atherton, who attributed U.S. democracy to the "togetherness" of frontier towns—a togetherness arising from an "informal community life."[24] Lawyers, philosophers, management theorists, and architects—indeed, practitioners in nearly all of the social scientific fields—came up with ways of incorporating groupism into their thought and practice.

Useful as the small group was as a unit of analysis, for most thinkers it carried a powerful political valence. Small-scale social solidarities were not only omnipresent and causally important, they were also imperiled and deserving of protection. How it was that small groups were imperiled remained an open question, of course. Some believed their primary threat to come from the capitalist marketplace, others believed it to come from the growth of the bureaucratic state, and many believed both. It was in fact this political ambidexterity of groupism—its ability to be deployed against *both* states and markets—that has largely erased it from our historical memory. When we go back into the past looking for capitalism's discontents we look to the left, and when we search for opponents to the regulatory state we look to the right. Groupism, however, did not map so readily onto the right/left categories we have today. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. recognized this in *The Vital Center* (1949): "The rise of fascism and Communism illustrated vividly the fallacies of the linear conceptions of right and left. In certain basic respects—the totalitarian state structure, the single party, the leader, the secret police, the consuming fear of political and intellectual freedom—fascism and Communism are more clearly like each other than they are like anything in between."[25] In that book, Schlesinger suggested replacing the familiar map of left and right as existing on a spectrum with a two-dimensional map, which I have simplified and modified:

[21] Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955).
[22] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*, 2d ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 158.
[23] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," 1893, in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 30; Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, "A Meaning for Turner's Frontier Thesis," *Political Science Quarterly* 69 (1954): 321–353, 565–602.
[24] Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954), 186.
[25] Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1949), 144.

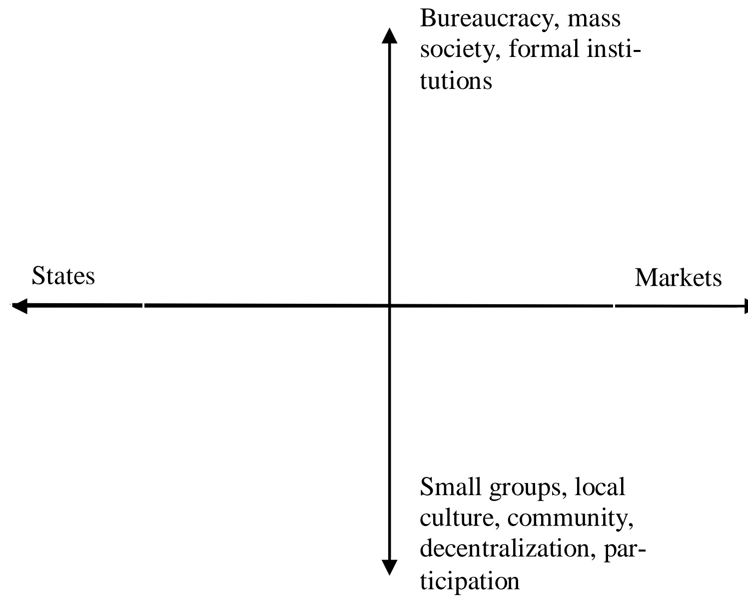


Table 1. The midcentury political vision.

Here the horizontal left-right axis, on which lies the usual conflict between conservatives and liberals, is supplemented by a vertical axis, between bureaucratic centralization at the top and small-group decentralization at the bottom. On this newly visible axis, most intellectuals noted an ongoing and potentially disastrous slide toward mass society and called for the cultivation of small groups and communities as a protective measure. For such thinkers, the relevant tension was less between markets and states than it was between groupism and mass society. That was certainly what Schlesinger believed. He devoted his concluding chapter of his influential book, *The Vital Center* (1949), to a fairly shrill warning: "freedom has lost its foundation in community," he warned, and unbound individualism would quickly lead to totalitarianism if not checked by the revival of "widespread and spontaneous group activity."[26] We usually emphasize the "center" that is mapped in *The Vital Center*, but in this reading we must also pay attention to Schlesinger's plea for "vitality," a vitality that could only be achieved by the promotion of voluntary associations, group life, spontaneity, and community to ward off the demons of mass society and atomized individualism.

If there was one intellectual who best encompassed the turn toward small groups as a defense against mass society, it was not Moreno or Schlesinger but rather the long-dead Alexis de Tocqueville. Historians often speak of a "Tocqueville renaissance" occurring in the midcentury decades, sometimes claiming that Tocqueville had been out of print and forgotten until the late 1930s. While Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* was never actually unavailable in the United States, it can be said that the publications of George W. Pierson's *Tocqueville and Beaumont in America* (1938) and Knopf's landmark edition of *Democracy in America* (1945) marked the return of Tocqueville to prominence in U.S. letters.[27] The first thing that stood out about

[26] Ibid., 244, 253.

[27] The standard narrative of the Tocqueville renaissance comes from Robert A. Nisbet, "Many Tocquevilles," *American Scholar* 46 (Winter 1976/77): 59–75. Although Nisbet's paper remains useful for its presentation of the sorts of interpretations that have been extracted from Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, its factual claims, particularly its claim that Tocqueville fell out of print and "out of mind" after Tocqueville's death, have come under

Tocqueville was his fear that an equalitarian political landscape could give rise to despotism. In that, he represented a significant turn away from New Deal liberalism. Sociologist Robert Nisbet recalled his first encounter with Tocqueville in 1939:

> That absolute power could go with social humanitarianism, could be rooted in the mass rather than an upper class, could be given extension and penetration by the very political agencies that had been created in the name of the people to cope with their problems; that totalitarianism could be understood best, not as reversion to a dark past, but as a product, however corrupt, of democratic modernity—all this was new to American thinkers and, as I recall well, not immediately accepted.[28]

In this sense, Tocqueville was, as J. P. Mayer declared in 1939, "the great prophet of the Mass Age."[29] His prophecies influenced many of the more foreboding responses to U.S. culture of the time. But if the famously ambivalent Tocqueville saw danger in the homogenizing force of democracy, he also saw cause for hope in the flourishing associational life of the United States. Never having had a violent social revolution, Tocqueville argued, the United States had been able to preserve the "local institutions" standing between the individual and the state that were a "necessary guarantee against the tyranny of the majority."[30] It was natural, then, for students of small groups and communities to turn to Tocqueville. And it was in this capacity that Dwight Eisenhower began invoking Tocqueville in his speeches—the first president to do so.[31] It is a marker of the durability of the Tocqueville renaissance that every president since has also worked Tocqueville into his speeches.[32]

Tocqueville's warning that the real danger in society came from masses, not classes, resonated strongly with a new approach to class urged by sociologists in the midcentury decades. In the Victorian era, class had been a fairly straightforward business: the rich lived lives vastly different from the poor, as both defenders and opponents of stratification readily acknowledged. But by the 1940s intellectuals, in part influenced by Tocqueville's observations about the lack of a feudal system in the United States, began to see U.S. class as a much gentler affair—"really a classification based on a ladder, up which people are expected to move, rather than upon orderly stratification or classification of society," as Margaret Mead put it.[33] The premier study of the subject, W. Lloyd Warner's five-volume *Yankee City* series (1941–1959), presented class as a relatively "soft" and porous form of affiliation. In contrast to Marx,

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sharp attack from Tocqueville specialist Matthew J. Mancini. Mancini's careful consideration of Tocqueville's reception in the United States is now required reading for anyone concerned with the subject. See Matthew J. Mancini, *Alexis de Tocqueville and the American Intellectuals: From His Time to Ours* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006) and Matthew J. Mancini, "Too Many Tocquevilles: The Fable of Tocqueville's American Reception," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69 (2008): 245–268.

[28] Nisbet, "Many Tocquevilles," 67.

[29] J. P. Mayer, *Alexis de Tocqueville: A Biographical Essay in Political Science*, trans. by M. M. Bozman and C. Hahn (New York: The Viking Press, 1940), xvii. Although Mayer's book was written in German in 1939 (Mayer was a German-born Jewish socialist), it was first published in an English-language London edition under the title *The Prophet of the Mass Age* (1939) and pointedly pitched by Mayer as a response to Hitlerism.

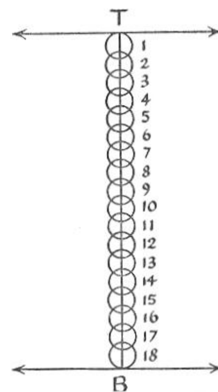
[30] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. J. P. Mayer, trans. George Lawrence (1835; New York: Perennial Classics, 2000), 63, 192.

[31] Dwight Eisenhower, "Science: Handmaiden of Freedom," New York City, 14 May 1959 and "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the European Trip," 10 September 1959, available online at http://www.eisenhowermemorial.org/speeches.

[32] James Kloppenberg, "Life Everlasting: Tocqueville in America," *The Tocqueville Review* 17 (1996): 24.

[33] Margaret Mead, *And Keep Your Powder Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1942), 58.

who insisted that modern society was separating itself into two classes with irreconcilable economic interests, Warner distinguished no fewer than six basic classes: upper-upper, lower-upper, upper-middle, and so forth down to lower-lower.[34] Warner's classes, moreover, had little direct connection to wealth. Class was, for Warner, a form of local culture, and he believed that the best way to assess a man's class was not to examine his accounts but rather to interview his neighbors—to determine his position in "social space."[35] Not all communities on this understanding would have the same class structure and, indeed, a stranger entering a town for the first time might have considerable difficulty in decoding local status markers. Like Moreno and the sociometrists, Warner also took an interest in the role of private associations and informal cliques. These small, informal groups were important in his understanding for two reasons. First, they mediated between large-scale social forces and the needs of communities, allowing individuals to adapt to a changing society. Second, they blurred class divisions by providing inter-class social networks through which individuals could learn the norms of the immediately adjacent superior classes and rise on the class ladder. Indeed, for Warner, a class system was by definition a system in which "movement up and down is constantly taking place in the lives of many people."[36] So fluid was Warner's notion of class that some of his followers could come dangerously close to claiming that class was merely a voluntary form of cultural identification—a decision about whether to put on airs or not.[37]



Small Groups and the Class System: Warner's representation of the way in which informed cliques (numbered 1 through 18, three for each of the six classes) create a network of associational ties spanning the class ladder (Warner and Lunt, *Social Life of a Modern Community*).

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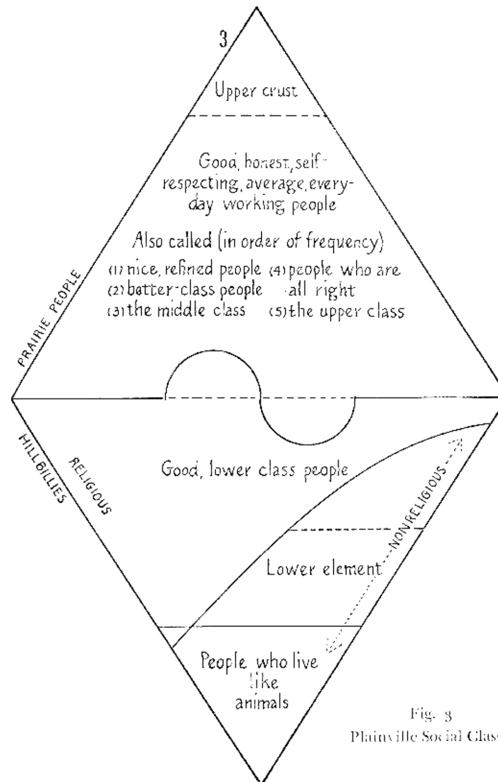
[34] W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), 87. Warner's classic six-type model was designed for Yankee City, which was selected precisely for its relative simplicity among modern communities. But as Warner conceded, "class varies from community to community," and some areas might have more than six tiers while others may have fewer. W. Lloyd Warner, *Social Class in America: A Manual of Procedure for the Measurement of Social Status* (1949; New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 23.

[35] Warner and Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, 26. Warner's non-economic conception of class can be gleaned from his own definition: "By class is meant two or more orders of people who are believed to be, and are accordingly ranked by the members of the community, in social superior and inferior positions" (ibid., 82). See also Warner, *Social Class in America* (1949).

[36] Warner and Lunt, *Social Life of a Modern Community*, 91.

[37] That position is taken explicitly, with citations to Warner, in Alan F. Klein, *Society—Democracy—and the Group: An Analysis of Social Objectives, Democratic Principles, Environmental Factors, and Program in the Practice of Social Group Work* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1953), see esp. 95. Despite his optimism about the U.S. class system, Warner himself acknowledged that culture could serve as an impediment to interclass mobility, such as in the Deep South.



Class as an Artifact of Local Culture: A Warner-influenced diagram from 1945 depicting class categories in a small Midwestern town, as they appeared to "better-class" people (Carl Withers, *Plainville, U.S.A.*, 1945).

If class in the United States was, for Warner and his followers, a gentle form of social differentiation tempered by a multitude of small-group affiliations, it was not always to be so. In the fourth volume of his *Yankee City* series, *The Social System of the Modern Factory* (1947), Warner noted with alarm the effect of bureaucratization upon social class. In Yankee City's leading industry, shoemaking, new technological developments had replaced the "continual hum of conversation" among fellow workers with deadening social isolation and replaced the old hierarchy of skill with a flattening out of working-class jobs under a new managerial class based in "central offices in distant large cities."[38] The effect of mass society upon the old class system in Yankee City was, for Warner, akin to the "impact of white civilization" upon the aboriginal cultures of Melanesia and North America.[39] Like the natives of those regions, Yankee City factory operatives, torn from the social web in which the class system had enmeshed them, began to express their frustrations through mass movements, in their case CIO unionism. For Warner, the unionization of Yankee City did not promise new hope but only the further breakdown of local community, as the workers, like the managers, yielded autonomy to mass organizations headquartered in far-off cities. The human worker was being reduced to a "digit in a vast series," whose life was to be planned by unions, corporations, and the state.[40] Such an enlargement and rationalization of the economic system, Warner warned, could never

[38] W. Lloyd Warner and J. O. Low, *The Social System of the Modern Factory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), 78, 108.

[39] Ibid., 88.

[40] Ibid., 190.

be sustained, as flesh-and-blood humans could never be entirely subjugated to the rule of remote managers. In his worries about the rise of a managerial class, Warner echoed clearly the diagnoses of James Burnham and Peter Drucker, both of whom had warned, just a few years earlier, of an impending convergence of capitalist and socialist societies upon a new form of mass society in which power would be held by managers rather than owners and in which existing social institutions would be swept away by a totalitarian industrial order.[41] To thinkers like Burnham, Drucker, and Warner, the hierarchical division of society into social classes might actually be beneficial, serving, in the words of Robert Nisbet, as "a bulwark against political power."[42] In other words, even those who continued to insist upon the importance of class during this time did so not from a Marxian hope for a proletarian revolution but from a Tocquevillean fear that classes would be replaced by masses.

The replacement of Marx with Tocqueville suggested a new approach toward industrial relations. What little management theory there had been before the 1930s was dominated by the work of F. W. Taylor, whose scientific management approach was chiefly concerned with extracting the maximum amount of productive labor from every worker through the standardization of tasks. Workers, however, never fully acquiesced to Taylorism, and factories continued to suffer from lost time, high turnover, sickness, and variable output, all of which were collectively grouped under the problem of "industrial fatigue." But in a series of experiments carried out by researchers from Harvard's Business School in Western Electric's Hawthorne Works plant (with W. Lloyd Warner serving as an adviser), Taylor's rationalistic approach to human labor began to fall apart. In the first experiment, a small group of women was isolated from the rest of the factory and subjected over a period of five years to various combinations of wage incentives and changes in their working environment to see which factors might improve their output. To the experimenters' surprise, nearly *all* changes led to increased output. It did not matter whether incentives were added or taken away, whether rest breaks were provided or not—the upward trend in productivity seemed largely independent of any action on the part of the experimenters. The real source of the increased output, the researchers decided, was the initial placement of the small group of women away from the factory floor into their own room where they could converse freely and develop social ties.[43]

For Elton Mayo, the most prominent theorist associated with the Hawthorne group, this experiment was the key to a new approach to corporate management. Taylorism had failed for being too rigid, organized around authoritarian manager and obedient workers. Such an approach was unsustainable, though, because it destroyed morale by destroying the social setting that was so important for human flourishing. Instead, managers must learn to create a

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[41] James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution: What is Happening in the World* (New York: The John Day Company, 1941); Peter F. Drucker, *The Future of Industrial Man: A Conservative Approach* (New York: The John Day Company, 1942).

[42] Robert A. Nisbet, "The Decline and Fall of Social Class," *The Pacific Sociological Review* 2 (1959): 11. Nisbet disagreed strongly with Warner's diagnosis that the United States was a class society—for Nisbet, it had been a mass society since the early twentieth century—but he shared Warner's worry that without classes social hierarchy would become much more stark and oppressive.

[43] Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1933). The definitive account of the Hawthorne experiments is F. J. Roethlisberger and William J. Dickson, *Management and the Worker: An Account of the Research Program Conducted by the Western Electric Company, Hawthorne Works, Chicago* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939). Mayo's circle at Harvard was closely connected to the circle of W. Lloyd Warner. In fact, Warner served as an advisor to the Hawthorne experiments and the first volume of Warner's *Yankee City* series was dedicated to Mayo.

workplace marked by dialogue, friendliness, and teamwork.[44] Just as Mayo was preaching the lessons of Hawthorne, another member of his circle, president of New Jersey Bell Telephone Company Chester Barnard, offered a similar argument, in his well-known *The Functions of the Executive* (1938). There, Barnard chided executives for adhering to an overly formalistic understanding of business, grounded in the "highly erroneous" theory that "man is an 'economic man' carrying few non-economic appendages."[45] A more socially aware approach to business would reveal that the formal institution of the corporation only functioned because it rested on an invisible but essential structure of informal relations—group ties—that endowed it with a flexibility, creativity, and vitality without which it would be immediately crippled. To operate effectively, Barnard argued, a corporation must have not only a formal hierarchy but also an informal structure of authority that granted legitimacy to that formal hierarchy.[46] Thinkers like Barnard and Mayo insisted that to avoid the pitfalls of mass society, the workplace must cultivate the active consent and participation of its workers, something it could only achieve by devolving some decision-making power to them and by creating a functional social environment—community in the factory.[47]

There is something remarkable about what Mayo and Barnard had done. One motivation for the rise of groupism was the perception that capitalism, with its vision of economic man standing apart from society like Robinson Crusoe, had reached a crisis. But Mayo and Barnard rescued capitalism from this perception by arguing that corporations, rather than blindly following profit motives, could and would promote group life. Peter Drucker, similarly, argued that, in the United States, corporations should be understood not simply as economic institutions but as sociocultural ones, which were largely responsible for setting the rhythms of life.[48] In this vision, the corporation appeared to be a sort of tribe unto itself, and the phrase "corporate culture," although now a cliché, is an artifact of this groupist approach to capitalism. Even F. A. Hayek, the author of *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) and one of the chief defenders of free-market individualism at the time, reconciled himself to groupist principles. In *Individualism and the Economic Order* (1948), Hayek defended himself against the charge that he was simply reviving Victorian laissez-faire economics. The virtue of the market, he explained (drawing on Tocqueville to do so), was not that it promoted economic efficiency, but that it acted as motor of decentralization. A well-organized market would support "all the common efforts of the small community and the group," whereas centralized planning would "dissolve all these smaller groups into atoms which have no cohesion other than the coercive rules opposed by the state."[49] The new defense of capitalism, whether from corporate managers like Mayo or economists like Hayek, was now based on its ability to promote small group life.

At the same time as those on the right reconceived of capitalism as a form of groupism, those on the left turned to groupism as a way to rejuvenate the socialist project. But, as in

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[44] Mayo's theory is further developed in Elton Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (Boston: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1945).

[45] Chester I. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), x.

[46] A similar theory was advanced by Peter Drucker, a few years later, in *Concept of the Corporation* (New York: The John Day Company, 1946).

[47] Two excellent articles critical of Mayo, Barnard, and the Hawthorne researchers are Daniel Bell, "Adjusting Men to Machines: Social Scientists Explore the World of the Factory," *Commentary* 3 (1947): 79-88 and Reinhard Bendix and Lloyd H. Fisher, "The Perspectives of Elton Mayo," *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 31 (1949): 312–319.

[48] Drucker, *Concept of the Corporation*.

[49] F. A. Hayek, "Individualism: True and False," in *Individualism and Economic Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 23.

the case of capitalism, a certain reconfiguration was required of socialism in order to make it compatible with groupism. For when groupists complained about Victorian thinkers who had seen the world only through the utilitarian marketplace and only in terms of economically motivated individuals and formal regulatory institutions, they were talking about Karl Marx just as much as they were talking about Herbert Spencer. Soviet-style Communism, with its emphasis on the guidance of a revolutionary vanguard and its reliance on mass institutions, was certainly inimical to the whole groupist project. Nevertheless, some of those within the Communist orbit proved eager to jettison the centralist elements in their political philosophy and replace them with groupist ones. One particularly active group of leftists in this regard was the small Trotskyist splinter group based around Max Shachtman. Although the Shachtmanites were few in number and inconsequential players in the world of international Communism, it is remarkable how many serious intellectual passed through their ranks. C. L. R. James, Dwight Macdonald, Irving Howe, James Burnham, Hal Draper, and Michael Harrington were all Shachtmanites, if only briefly. Shachtman's followers had broken with Trotsky over the question of Stalin; while Trotsky saw the Soviet Union as a "degenerated worker's state"—i.e., the right idea in the wrong hands—Shachtmanites thought that the rot ran deeper and that the problem with the Soviet Union was "bureaucratic collectivism."[50] In *The Managerial Revolution* (1941), the book that was to become the basis for George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), James Burnham argued that both socialist and capitalist institutions were growing unmanageably large, and that their size and bureaucratic character was becoming more important than their basis in the public or private ownership of property.[51] Burnham offered little by way of solution, but to other Shachtmanites (and to Orwell), the answer was clear. "We must begin way at the bottom again, with small groups of individuals," wrote Dwight Macdonald.[52] Whereas traditional Marxism had called for the workers to organize large collectives capable of fighting corporations and the state, Macdonald worried that such affiliation would be counterproductive and instead advocated "guerrilla operations," the formation of small, participatory political communities.[53]

The Shachtmanites are interesting for their creativity and for their continued commitment to a Marxist framework even after they had broken with both Trotsky and Stalin. But they were certainly not the only leftists to promote decentralist and communitarian forms of socialism. The middle decades of the twentieth century were the period when left thinkers such as Lewis Mumford, Karl Polanyi, Paul and Percival Goodman, Scott Nearing, Erich Fromm, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ella Baker, and Jane Jacobs turned their critical energies against mass society and, in various ways, explored the potential of human communities. For many, like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., adopting the tenets of groupism came at the cost of abandoning the Communist Party altogether. A prominent case in point is that of Granville Hicks, who, as editor of the *New Masses*, was the Party's foremost literary critic. Hicks's wariness about the growth of the centralized state during the Roosevelt years and his increasing discomfort with the Soviet Union, led him to abandon both the Party and New York City for small-town life in Grafton, New York. Hicks hoped that small towns such as Grafton could serve as "a kind of bulwark against the onslaught of mass society," and he devoted his old partisan zeal toward participation in the life of his town: organizing a community league, attend-

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[50] Max Shachtman, *The Fight for Socialism: The Principles and Program of the Workers Party* (New York: New International Publishing, 1946), 164.
[51] Burnham, *Managerial Revolution*.
[52] Dwight Macdonald, *The Root is Man* (1946; New York: Autonomedia, 1995), 136.
[53] Ibid., 148.

ing PTA meetings, editing the town bulletin, and serving in the fire company.[54] Hicks documented his experience at length in *Small Town* (1946), which was widely reviewed and almost unanimously well received. "I hardly know where to begin to set down my enthusiasm for *Small Town*," David Riesman wrote to Hicks; he had distributed it so frequently that he was becoming a "one-man Gideon Society" for the book.[55] The radio program Town Meeting of the Air—itself an artifact of the renewed interest in the political power of small groups—recruited Hicks to defend country living in a debate against the urbanite author of *Lost Weekend*, Charles Jackson. *Life* magazine transformed that discussion into a multi-page "pictorial debate," with the ex-Communist Hicks exemplifying the values of small-town life.[56]

Hicks's identification of the virtues of the small group with the small, rural town was a common one. The heyday of groupism was also a time when a great deal of cultural attention was given to small-town living. It is tempting to assume that the small town has always been with us as a potent political symbol, but that is not exactly the case. Rather, the symbol of the small town, like everything else, has a history. In the nineteenth century, it was as likely to represent a sort of yeoman independence as it was to represent communal virtues. And the early decades of the twentieth century one could see what Carl Van Doren called the "revolt from the village," a sudden cultural attack on small-town life, as exemplified in texts such as Mark Twain's "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" (1899), Edgar Lee Master's *Spoon River Anthology* (1915), Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1918), and Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street* (1920) and *Babbitt* (1922—the same year the *New Yorker* debuted).[57] But, remarkably, the trend reversed itself in the 1930s, and if we were to think of prominent presentations of small-town life from the midcentury decades we would not think of Sinclair Lewis's depictions ("It is slavery self-sought and self-defended. It is dulness made God"[58]) but rather something along the lines of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* (1937) or the films of Frank Capra. Starting in the 1930s, an impressively large and influential cadre of writers and intellectuals cut against the demographic grain and moved away from cities *to* small towns: Bernard DeVoto, Lewis Mumford, E. B. White, Granville Hicks, Norman Rockwell, and Aldo Leopold. Even Sinclair Lewis moved to a small town—Barnard, Vermont—where he wrote *It Can't Happen Here* (1935) and *The Prodigal Parents* (1938), the first about the triumph of small-town values over Hitlerism, the second about their triumph over Bolshevism. Similarly, the harsh portrayals of village life offered in Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* (1918) and *Poor White* (1920) subside in his final novel, a reconciliation entitled *Home Town* (1940).[59]

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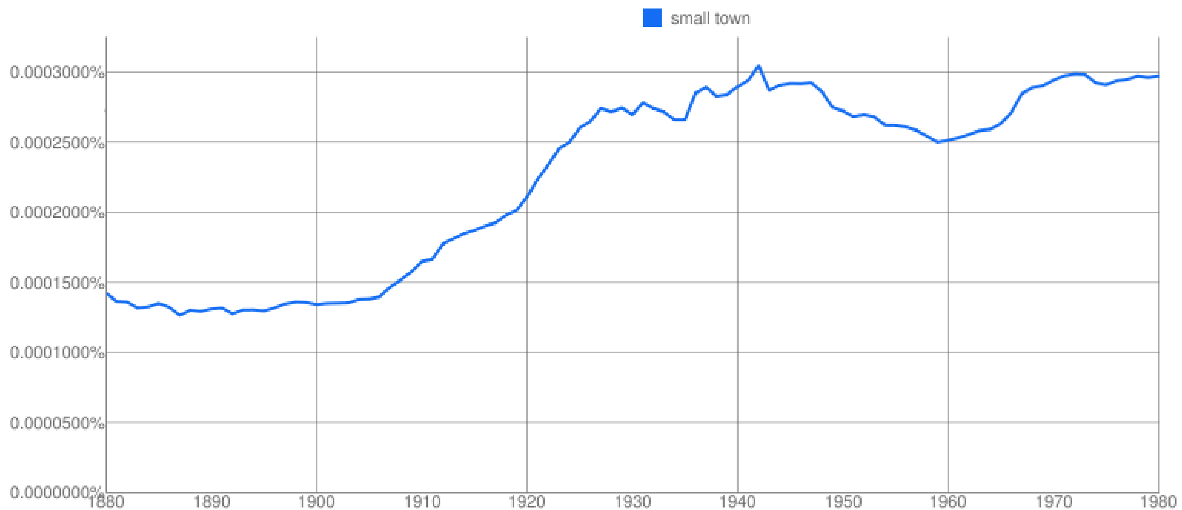
[54] Granville Hicks to Baker Brownell, 6 June 1950, in Baker Brownell Papers, box 34, folder 2, Northwestern University.
[55] David Riesman to Granville Hicks, 27 February 1948 and Riesman to Hicks, 16 February 1949, in Granville Hicks Papers, box 51, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library. Robert K. Merton, Margaret Mead, Pearl Buck, and Malcolm Cowley are among the other of Hicks's correspondents and reviewers who expressed a high regard for the book.
[56] "City v. Country," *Life*, March 1947.
[57] Carl Van Doren, "Contemporary American Novelists: The Revolt from the Village: 1920," *The Nation*, 12 October 1921, 407–412.
[58] Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street: The Story of Carol Kennicott* (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1920), 265.
[59] For details on the return to the village in U.S. letters, see Anthony Channell Hilfer, *The Revolt from the Village, 1915–1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1969); Richard Lingeman, *Small Town America: A Narrative History, 1620–The Present* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1980), chap. 9; and Frank M. Bryan, *Real Democracy: The New England Town Meeting and How it Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), chap. 2.



New Interest in Small Towns: Incidence of the phrase "small town" as a percentage of all two-word phrases in U.S. books from 1880 to 1980 (Produced with Google Labs Books Ngram Viewer).

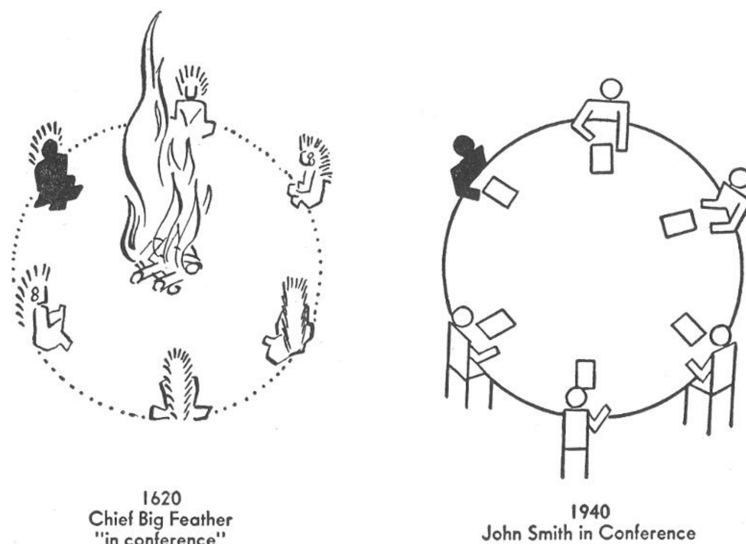
Even more marked than the revalorization of the small town at home was the new interest taken, starting in the 1930s, in villages abroad. If one of the most distinctive aspects of twentieth-century U.S. intellectual history is the prominence of anthropologists in public life, then one of the reasons why they were so highly regarded is that anthropologists were among the most forceful and articulate defenders of the ideals of the small group. Both Warner and Mayo had explicitly adopted anthropological methods in their studies of industrial societies (Warner had trained as an anthropologist under Robert Lowie, Bronislaw Malinowski, and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and began his career researching the aboriginal tribes of Australia). The foundation for anthropology's turn to groupism was a series of changes that the discipline experienced in the first decades of the twentieth century. Whereas anthropological studies were formerly taken primarily as indicants of the large gap dividing "advanced" societies from "primitive" ones, by the middle of the century they came to be regarded as valuable also because they demonstrated with such clarity the universality of the human condition. And as anthropologists demonstrated, few universals were so genuinely universal as the organization of humans into small groups. Not only had the little community been the "very predominant form of human living throughout the history of mankind," as Robert Redfield noted, but it continued to predominate in the world's population even in the twentieth century.[60]

In such a perspective, modern industrial civilization began to appear less as the apex of human history than as an aberration, and potentially a dangerous one. Certainly, the notion of humans as profit-maximizing egoists, based on the study of economically advanced societies, lost much of its luster as anthropologists showed, in study after study, that most societies were not organized around the pursuit of individual self-interest at all.[61] Taking the argument

[60] Robert Redfield, *The Little Community: Viewpoints for the Study of the Human Whole* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 3.

[61] The research on this subject is summed up in Melville J. Herskovits, *The Economic Life of Primitive Peoples* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940). Of interest also is a debate between Herskovits and Chicago economist Frank Knight, consisting of Frank H. Knight, "Anthropology and Economics," *The Journal of Political Economy* 49 (1941): 247–68 and Melville J. Herskovits, "Economics and Anthropology: A Rejoinder," *Journal of Political Economy* 49

further, Karl Polanyi wrote that the economistic conception of human nature was a "stark utopia" that never even existed in Western society for any length of time. If it had, he argued, it "would have physically destroyed man and transformed his surroundings into a wilderness."[62] Not everyone citing anthropological data shared Polanyi's catastrophist outlook, but most agreed that non-industrial societies, by embedding their governments and markets firmly within small groups and communities, offered a model from which Western civilization might learn. As John Dewey's notion of democracy as consisting not of formal voting but of extensive and substantial participation took root, it occurred to more than one critic that, by Deweyan standards, non-industrial societies were more democratic than industrially ones. Non-Western and ancient communities may have lacked ballot boxes, explained TVA chairman Arthur E. Morgan, but the small size of their decision-making bodies enabled "the free play of discussion and opinion, out of which gradually arises a consensus that guides social action without compulsion or violence." Morgan further went on to suggest that perhaps the directors of modern corporations could learn something from "the elders of a West African village, sitting today in a . . . circle of stone seats around the village tree and passing on the problems of the village."[63] The local customs of nonindustrial peoples, then, came to appear no longer as evidence of barbarism but rather as important safeguards against the impositions and social dislocations of mass society.



Anthropology as the Study of Universal Human Needs: Illustrations from a 1945 management theory book, originally bearing the caption, "Individual Change, Problems Change, but the Ageless Small Group Goes On" (George B. de Huszar, *Practical Applications of Democracy*, 1945).

The anthropological frame of mind, the surge of interest in both small towns and remote villages, the backlash against cities—all of this was evidence for what the sociologist Robert Nisbet called "the quest for community" in a 1953 book of that title. "The concern for

(1941): 269–78. See also Margaret Mead, ed., *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1937).

62 Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1944), 3.

63 Arthur E. Morgan, "Is Democracy 'Losing Her Voice'?" *Community Service News* 5, January–February 1947, 2 and "Village Elders and Their Modern Counterparts," *Community Service News* 12, July–December 1954, 78.

community, its values, opportunities, and means of access, is the major intellectual fact of the present age," he wrote.[64] Within the social sciences, Nisbet explained, the quest for community could be understood as a reaction to new ideas about states and markets and a reflection of the historical experience of the modern age. But a desire for community was also felt by the population at large, on a visceral level, and could be seen in everyday behaviors such as marriage and religion, in magazine advertisements and popular music, and in the symbolism of Hollywood movies. For Nisbet this was a promising development. Modernization, from the industrial revolution on, had been one of the "one of the bitterest chapters in the history of Western civilization," full of "calamitous dislocations" and an erosion of the social glue that had held groups together.[65] But community life was not, in Nisbet's view, a quaint feature of bygone times. It was a necessity, that must be acquired in some form or another. Totalitarian governments had preyed upon atomized populations desperate for belonging. Freedom, then, meant fulfilling the human need for community within the modern age.

Nisbet's plea was not all that different from those issued by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Jacob Levy Moreno, W. Lloyd Warner, Elton Mayo, Granville Hicks, or any of the other groupists already mentioned. But its promotion of community-building as a political necessity can helpfully serve to introduce a strain of groupist thought that provided some of the intellectual framework for community development. Whereas many of the groupists whom I have discussed thus far were most active in the realm of ideas rather in the political arena, there were a few who took the promotion of community life to be a political project. Many of their experiences will be discussed in the chapters that follow, but for the current purposes we may focus on one such activist, Baker Brownell, a philosopher whose reflections on concrete community-building experiments are among the most articulate defenses of the purposes and ideas behind community development.

Baker Brownell was, among philosophers, an unusual type. He had trained at Harvard under Josiah Royce and George Santayana and held a post at Northwestern University, but he considered himself to be a "more or less a marginal member" of academia.[66] Rather than making strides in any well-defined problem within his field, Brownell established himself as a generalist, a determined enemy of any attempt to segregate thought and experience into discrete parts. At Northwestern, he oversaw for twenty years the Contemporary Thought course, which aimed to do away with disciplinary constraints entirely by drawing its lecturers not from any academic department but from a pool of prominent figures, many of them outside of the academy. Jane Addams, Sherwood Anderson, Clarence Darrow, Paul H. Douglas, Richard T. Ely, Melville Herskovits, Rufus Jones, Philip La Follette, Bertrand Russell, Carl Sandburg, Norman Thomas, Henry A. Wallace, and Frank Lloyd Wright were among Brownell's lecturers during his twenty-year directorship of the course.[67] Brownell's holism took on a new cast, however, in 1944 when he was invited by the chancellor of the University of Montana to establish the "Montana Study," an adult education program that would take place not in the university itself but in the small communities of Montana, and that would cover not the normal curriculum of higher education but the basic principles of democratic life. For Brownell,

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[64] Robert A. Nisbet, *The Quest for Community: A Study in the Ethics of Order and Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 30.
[65] Robert A. Nisbet, *Man and Technics* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1956), 15.
[66] Baker Brownell, *The Human Community: Its Philosophy and Practice for a Time of Crisis* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 219.
[67] Baker Brownell, *The College and the Community: A Critical Study of Higher Education* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), 190–191. Brownell's course was also a first in public education: the first lecture series to be broadcast on the radio.

this was an invitation to confront directly the effects of mass society upon rural life. "We live in a time when small communities all over America are losing the significant place they once held in our national life," Brownell declared in a speech to the town of Lonepine, Montana. "And yet we don't think that mass city life is conducive to real American democracy. . . . We of the Montana Study believe that vigorous small communities as America once knew them, provide the only atmosphere in which democracy can thrive and remain a powerful force in our country."[68] Brownell pursued this end not by instructing the Montanans with whom he worked, but by encouraging them to set up study groups to examine local problems and to begin to act to solve them. Some of the fourteen towns that established such groups attempted local economic reforms—such as building more sustainable lumber mills—but others, to Brownell's pleasure, staged theatrical performances and held folk dances. While for Brownell economic recovery was an important goal of the Montana Study, his holism prevented him from seeing that as separate from cultural, political, and intellectual growth. The Montana Study, though short-lived (it lasted only three years before its funding was cut), later became the subject of a series of *Reader's Digest* articles and a book by Richard Waverly Poston, himself an important figure in the community movement.[69]

Katherine Hadden's *Barn Dance* (1942), illustrating the theme of rural sociability, was elicited as part of an effort by Baker Brownell's ally John Rector Barton to encourage local painters in Wisconsin (Barton, *Rural Artists of Wisconsin*, 1948).

After completing the Montana Study, Brownell collected his thoughts on the process in his *The Human Community* (1950), a book that remains the fullest exposition of the broad goals of community development. For Brownell, the ills of modern times could all be ex-

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[68] Quoted in Richard Waverly Poston, *Small Town Renaissance: A Story of the Montana Study* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 46.

[69] Poston, *Small Town Renaissance* (1950). In 1950, the Montana Study was also covered by Brownell's own *The Human Community*, where it was described at length, and Earle Hitch's *Rebuilding Rural America: New Designs for Community Life*, where it occupied a chapter. All three books were published by Harper and Brothers.

plained in terms of a vast trend of centralization. Cities, large universities, corporations, labor unions, national governments, industrial farms, and even the modernist culture of artistic genius were to Brownell all facets of the increasing collection of land, labor, money, ideas, and power into the hands of a few people living in a few places. At the heart of this process was a great competition between two modes of organization, rural and urban. In the rural way of life that had defined most of world history, humans lived in small, face-to-face groups in which they performed a number of activities. But as markets and cities developed, those villagers lost their land and were sucked into the growing metropolis. There, they associated with others as parts of mass institutions, where sheer scale required that each member be considered not in his or her human fullness but only with respect to a single role: as a laborer, a voter, a churchgoer, a consumer, a student, or a spectator. Organized by function rather than by place, by class rather than by community, the urban man was for Brownell "a cluster of uncoherent fragments, and what unity he has tends to be abstract and fictitious or the unity of a bright grain of sand, a broken bit of glass, glittering for a moment as it clatters down into the irrelevant contiguity of a concrete mixer. He belongs to many publics but to no community."[70] A mass organization, even a seemingly benevolent one such as the American Medical Association or the March of Dimes, was thus no more than "a fragment many times multiplied," an institution built around a single aspect of human experience to the exclusion of others.[71] The most successful mass organizations had proved, in fact, to be the ones best able to stick rigidly to their given goals and to impose those goals on others. Whereas rural villages resolved the tension between divergent interests by deliberating and seeking to adapt each to the other, urban societies could express that tension only in the form of open conflict and competition. Class struggle, war, colonialism, and every other sort of modern conflict could thus be explained, for Brownell, by the replacement of means-directed small communities with large, interest-based urban agglomerations. The task ahead was obvious: turn back the tide and rebuild all of the small groups and local communities that had been so recklessly damaged by the centralist trends of modern culture. Although Brownell continued to participate directly in community organization through a community development program he helped to establish at Southern Illinois University, his main role in the movement was intellectual. As an editor at Harper and Brothers, he oversaw many of the nearly two dozen volumes on community development that the publishing house put out between the late 1930s and the early 1960s, and a number of Harper and Brother's related books on small groups besides.[72]

For Brownell, the plea for community emerged directly from the pragmatism of William James and John Dewey. It was the process of centralization, he maintained, that was responsible for the human propensity to make abstractions, develop rigid classifications, and subject the world to a "linear logic."[73] That artificial flattening out of the world was like "an intellectual Mercator's projection"—useful for certain calculations, perhaps, but ultimately a dangerous distortion.[74] Although linear thinking could see the world only through clean dis-

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[70] Brownell, *The Human Community*, 128–129.
[71] Ibid., 106.
[72] Among the books in Harper and Brother's remarkable community development catalogue were Morgan's *The Small Community* (1942), Jean and Jess Ogden's *Small Communities in Action* (1946), Claire Huchet Bishop's *All Things Common* (1950), Brownell's *The Human Community* (1950), Earle Hitch's *Rebuilding Rural America* (1950), William Biddle's *The Cultivation of Community Leaders* (1953), H. Clay Tate's *Building a Better Home Town* (1954), Elmore McKee's *The People Act* (1955), and Richard Waverly Poston's *Democracy Speaks Many Tongues* (1962)—about as close to a community development canon as one is likely to find.
[73] Brownell, *The Human Community*, 226.
[74] Ibid., 231.

tinctions and orthogonal lines, a philosophy rooted in the small-scale community could, by contrast, recognize "fusions, shiftings, rounded things and deposits"—the irreducible complexities of nature.[75] Such a philosophy would refuse to "soar irresponsibly in the accustomed manner into realms of the abstract and the universal" but would rather remain grounded in the empirical and the concrete. In its epistemological humility and emphasis on empirical investigation and experimentation, Brownell's philosophy of community bore a deep resemblance to pragmatism, a resemblance that Dewey himself noticed. Dewey had had some limited exchanges with Brownell prior to Brownell's communitarian turn—Dewey had offered a modestly praiseful blurb for Brownell's *The New Universe* (1926) and the two corresponded a few times over the following decades. Brownell's work on the Montana Study and his publication of *The Human Community*, however, changed the tenor of their relationship entirely. Dewey first read Poston's *Small Town Renaissance* with enthusiasm, despite an illness that restricted him to bed. Upon reading *The Human Community*, though, Dewey became ecstatic. "I am too nearly overwhelmed to express myself about it in a way that would begin to do justice to it all," he wrote Brownell. "I hope it will mean something to you when I say you have renewed hope & courage in me."[76] To Harold Taylor, Dewey wrote of Brownell, "one bright light of an intellectual-moral sort has appeared above the horizon"; four other friends also received letters from Dewey advising them to read Brownell carefully.[77] Brownell gushed back, confessing to Dewey that "I doubt if any one has influenced my thinking more."[78] The two began to correspond with some frequency, sharing references and expressing further thoughts on the theme of community. For Dewey, Brownell had made him aware of aspects of his own thought that were present but that had been "left penumbral," brought to light only in Brownell's articulation of them.[79] The more he reflected on Brownell's work, the more enthused he became, declaring *The Human Community* in 1951 to be "one of the truest philosophical books ever written" and "*the* book of the present age."[80] Unfortunately, Dewey's various illnesses and death ended their correspondence.

Dewey was not the only one excited by the possibility of Montana-style community building. Some sense of the public interest in it can be glimpsed in the Frank Capra film *Meet John Doe* (1941) and the response to it. The film begins with a small-town newspaper that has been bought out by an oil tycoon, D. B. Norton, and is firing all members of its staff who cannot produce sensationalistic copy. One of the fired writers, Ann Mitchell, played by Barbara Stanwyck, publishes in her parting column a fabricated letter from "John Doe," who threatens to commit suicide in protest of all the ills "of what we laughingly call a civilized world."

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[75] Ibid., 225. Brownell illustrated his preference for nonlinear thought with a remarkable examination of the writing of his one-time co-author Frank Lloyd Wright—someone typically said to have a frustratingly impenetrable prose style. "On the background of the thousands of fully written books and articles, raised like a screen to filter the sun, produced with endless competence in all the professionally tested modes, Wright's prose is somehow naked and revelatory. It is direct, whole, abruptly real. . . . It is integral rather than linear. It lacks the marching rhythms and proximate coherence of a style that goes, as it were, from one place to the next. His words shift and run like quicksilver under his hands. They bulge beyond his control, and their damned plasticity makes fixation of meaning for him, or definition, impossible. But his style has the kind of spherical continuity, wholeness, the mystical or spiritual coherence, that often mark great work" (236).

[76] John Dewey to Baker Brownell, 29 September 1950, in Larry Hickman, ed., *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, electronic edition, vol. 3 (Charlottesville, Va.: InteLex Corporation, 1999).

[77] John Dewey to Harold Taylor, 30 September 1950, in ibid.

[78] Baker Brownell to John Dewey, 6 October 1950, in ibid.

[79] John Dewey to Baker Brownell, 29 September 1950, in ibid. .

[80] Reprinted in Llewellyn Jones to Baker Brownell, 27 March 1951, Brownell Papers, box 34, folder 10; John Dewey to Baker Brownell, 2 January 1951, in Hickman, ed., *Correspondence of Dewey*.

The hoax sells papers, so Mitchell is rehired and recruits a down-on-his-luck migrant worker, played by Gary Cooper, to assume the role of John Doe. In his speeches, Doe inveighs against the loneliness of modern society and exhorts the people of the country to get to know their neighbors, tear down the fences that separate them, and unleash "a tidal wave of good will." The message catches on and towns across the nation create John Doe clubs to discuss and solve their problems informally, without the help of politicians. As neighbors meet for the first time, they are overjoyed to discover how easily their difficulties are overcome—work is found for jobless men and longstanding feuds are revealed to be based on simple misunderstandings. The movement is nearly stopped when Norton attempts to use the mass media to unite the John Doe clubs into a national organization and then use that as the basis for the formation of a fascistic third party, but Doe blocks Norton and the clubs persist, although this time as grassroots organizations, uncoordinated by any central office. The movie landed Gary Cooper, as Doe, on the cover of *Time* and provoked a number of moviegoers to write to Capra demanding that he initiate a national movement to form real John Doe clubs (a few correspondents reported to Capra that such clubs were already being formed).[81] Capra politely demurred, but community life remained a theme in his work, particularly in his most famous film, *It's a Wonderful Life* (1948).

"The people—try and lick that": The town of Millville comes together in Frank Capra's *Meet John Doe* (1941).

If the John Doe clubs never took off, a real-life movement along the same lines did spring up around Elmore McKee's radio program, *The People Act* (1950–53). McKee had traveled to Germany in 1946 with the American Friends Service Committee to help rebuild the country. There, he was shocked by the faith of the Germans he met in technocratic leadership and conversely by their low opinion of "the inner power of the people."[82] Returning to the

[81] Eric Smoodin, "'This Business of America': Fan Mail, Film Reception, and *Meet John Doe*," *Screen* 37 (1996): 111–128.

[82] Elmore M. McKee, *The People Act: Stories of How Americans Are Coming Together to Deal with Their Community Problems* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), 3.

United States, he was disappointed to see the same mindset was growing there as well. To combat this, McKee secured funding from the Ford Foundation to document and encourage "the vast number of Americans who realize that local community is the testing ground of a free society."[83] The result was a four-year radio series, which Margaret Mead called "one of radio's great achievements," each episode chronicling the successful efforts of some community to come together and solve its economic and political problems.[84] The series was so popular that it provoked nearly 10,000 letters or visits to the program's central offices, requests for the use of scripts and recordings from over four hundred educational institutions, and the establishment of a National Committee for *The People Act*, with Milton Eisenhower as chair and a board that included the eminent sociologist Charles S. Johnson as well as numerous community specialists, including Brownell's colleague Richard Waverly Poston. Recognizing the power of the radio series, the Voice of America and the Armed Forces Network rebroadcast the show overseas as a propaganda effort.[85] A similar although less successful television series, *The Whole Town's Talking*, aired around the same time, also with funding from the Ford Foundation.[86]

Groupism within the social sciences and a focus on the small town within popular culture all spoke to Nisbet's "quest for community." The quest for community could offer a counter to German totalitarianism, to laissez-faire economics, to managerial capitalism, to Soviet Communism, or to all at once. The extent of its success can be measured not only, as above, by the number of prominent thinkers and artists who adopted its tenets but also by the prominence and character of the inevitable backlash against it. Starting in the 1950s, and spurred on by a reaction to the mob mentality that many intellectuals perceived to be at the root of McCarthyism, a social scientific vision that had focused on and privileged community and status began to give way to one that privileged dissent, conflict, and individualism. That transformation urged thinkers to reconsider groupism, and to register its extent. An early and important critic was David Riesman, whose *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) and *Individualism Reconsidered* (1954) suggested the virtues of "inner-directed" individualism as against "other-directed" groupism. The problem with groupism, Riesman argued, was that it sought to erase all conflict from daily life, whereas conflict, both psychological conflict within the individual and the friction between the individual and society, were of supreme value to progress and adaptation.[87] William H. Whyte, Jr., took the complaint slightly further in *The Organization Man* (1956). The defining condition of the titular organization man, according to Whyte, was the social ethic that governed his life. At his job and in his suburban home, the organization man was surrounded by institutions that exalted belongingness, group processes, and sociability above conflict, individuality, and idiosyncrasy. "He is imprisoned in brotherhood," Whyte wrote.[88]

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[83] Ibid., xiii.

[84] Margaret Mead and Muriel Brown, *The Wagon and the Star: A Study of American Community Initiative* (St. Paul: Rand McNally, 1966), 71.

[85] The success of the show is discussed and sample episodes are presented in McKee, *The People Act*. A similar story might be told about *The New Dominion Series*, a popular series of pamphlets on community development in Virginia towns, published between 1941 and 1957. Some of those stories are presented in Jean and Jess Ogden, *Small Communities in Action: Stories of Citizen Programs at Work* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946). See also Bertis Lee Jones, "The History of Community Development in American Universities with Particular Reference to Four Selected Institutions" (PhD diss., UCLA, 1961).

[86] Otto G. Hoiberg, *Exploring the Small Community* (Madison: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), 4.

[87] Besides in *The Lonely Crowd* and *Individualism Reconsidered*, Riesman's rather subtle views on this subject are expressed, in clear form, in a correspondence between Riesman and Robert A. Nisbet in the Robert A. Nisbet Papers, box 2, folder 5, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[88] William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956), 12.

Creativity at the individual level had been entirely subordinated to what Whyte pejoratively called "groupthink."[89] Perhaps most striking of all was the attack on groupism from Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who, in *The Vital Center* (1949), had called for the revival of "widespread and spontaneous group activity" as a matter of great necessity.[90] By 1958, however, Schlesinger, citing Whyte, felt that the pendulum had swung too far. "One the most sinister of present-day doctrines is that of *togetherness*," he warned. What was required was to "recover a sense of individual spontaneity. And to do this a man must visualize himself as an individual apart from the group."[91]

There are two things worth pointing out about these 1950s attacks on groupism. The first is their prominence. Riesman appeared in 1954 on the cover of *Time* magazine—the first sociologist to be so celebrated. Both Whyte's *Organization Man* and Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* were period-defining works whose terms were quickly adopted into both social scientific and popular discourse. The great amount of attention that they garnered is a marker of the degree to which groupist ideas had dominated conversations. But the second thing worth pointing out about the attack on groupism is that it came from critics who were themselves imbricated within groupism and who retained great sympathy for it even as they lamented its excesses. Schlesinger, as already noted, had been a groupist. Riesman had been something of one as well. As a young scholar, he had taken an interest in community studies and joined W. Lloyd Warner's team for a study of Kansas City.[92] He participated in the Tocqueville renaissance and professed great admiration for books like Granville Hicks's *Small Town* (1946) and Robert Nisbet's *The Quest for Community* (1953). Tellingly, his criticisms of groupism were always measured and indeed ambivalent. Although "groupism" in his judgment had "become increasingly menacing," he also felt that the "the older brands of ruthless individualism are still a social danger."[93] The groupists had been absolutely right in their criticisms of the Victorian mentality and its conception of the entirely autonomous individual. The trick, then, was to strike a balance. "We must skeptically question the demands for greater social participation and belongingness among the group-minded while, on another front, opposing the claims of those who for outworn reasons cling to individualism as a (largely economic) shibboleth."[94] If Riesman mainly emphasized the dangers of the group ideal, it was only because he felt that the ideological momentum was too much on the side of groupism, and that the tools needed to "escape from groupism" were more important to cultivate than those needed to escape from individualism.[95] In remarkably similar language, Whyte endorsed the basic insights of the groupists. "The side of the coin they have been staring at so intently is a perfectly good one, but there is another side and it should not be too heretical at least to have a peek at it."[96] What was needed was not an abandonment of groupism but a "middle way": the development of "individualism *within* organizational life."[97]

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89 William H. Whyte, Jr., "Groupthink," *Fortune*, March 1952, 114–117, 142, 146. .

90 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 244, 253.

91 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "The Crisis of American Masculinity," 1958, in *The Politics of Hope* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1963), 244.

92 Mildred Warner, "W. Lloyd Warner: Social Anthropologist," 1980, p. 227, W. Lloyd Warner Papers, Box 4, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

93 Riesman, *Individualism Reconsidered*, 26.

94 Ibid., 32.

95 Ibid., 37.

96 Whyte, *Organization Man*, 400.

97 Ibid., 11.

The obeisance that groupism's strongest critics paid to its basic ideas are a reminder of the popularity of groupism and of the way in which it functioned: not as the doctrine of any particular faction but as a field effect. Few were completely free from its magnetic pull, so that even its critics were also, in some ways, part of the groupist moment. Groupism was neither of the left nor of the right, and although it could be mobilized by interest groups such as large corporations, it could be used just as well by rival groups. The difficulty of mapping groupism onto political space as we typically imagine that space is one reason why groupism has receded from historical view, despite its importance in the middle decades of the twentieth century. And yet, bringing it back into view illuminates a number of topics in midcentury history. It helps us to understand how that period could both experience a widely recognized political consensus and yet still experience great anxiety. The combination of consensus and anxiety is the result of an ideological configuration in which perceived dangers come not so much from opposing parties but from universal perils: centralization, bureaucratization, atomization, and the rise of "mass society." Hardly anyone was cheered by the advent of mass society, even as many participated in it. And yet, as they participated, they also reflected on their experience, and sought ways to respond. Some retreated to individualism but far more latched onto the small group and the small community. Both as a form of social scientific analysis and as a political practice, groupism swept across the thought and culture of the United States. Where a previous generation had dwelt on the conflict between the individual and society, midcentury thinkers came to recognize a different set of fault lines, dividing the small group from both anarchic individualism and centralized collectivism. It was this vision, when applied to the problem of underdevelopment, that begat community development.

Chapter Two: Development without Modernization

The theory and practice of U.S. overseas development have many roots. Imperial projects in the Caribbean and the Philippines, post-WWI aid to Europe, and the activities of missionaries in China and India were all important precursors to the heavy investment that the United States made in the global South after World War II. But scholars seeking the origins of development have tended to look to one place above all to understand the shape that U.S. development took after the Second World War: the New Deal. Then, for the first time, the United States employed state power not just to encourage general economic growth but to lift specially targeted impoverished regions from poverty. Chief among these targets for development was the South, which Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared to be the United States' "number one economic problem."[1] A government report issued in 1938 described the South as effectively an underdeveloped country within the borders of an industrial nation.[2] Such descriptions were somewhat self-serving, for the South was the one region for which the government had a solution in hand. In 1933, Congress established the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a regional agency charged with erecting a series of dams on the Tennessee River, simultaneously ending the regular flooding to which the river valley was victim, irrigating land, generating hydroelectric power, facilitating riverine transportation, and providing the basis for rural electrification. In its first dozen years of operation, the TVA employed tens of thousands of workers to build thirty dams, clear over 175,000 acres of land, pour 113 million cubic yards of concrete and other material (more than twelve times the amount of material required to build all seven of Egypt's pyramids, the agency boasted), and build or relocate over 1,200 miles of highway and 140 miles of railroad.[3] Over 125,000 residents of the Tennessee Valley were displaced in the process, most of them to make room for the dams.[4]

In its ability to mobilize vast amounts of labor and material within its own borders for a purpose other than war, the TVA represented a quantitatively new level of state capacity for the U.S. government, which had historically featured a weak executive power.[5] On hand to explain to the nation why such an emboldened state was not only permissible but indeed highly desirable was David Lilienthal, one of the directors of the TVA and the public face of the agency. "I believe in the great potentialities for well-being of the machine and technology and science," explained Lilienthal in the preface to his blockbuster book, *TVA: Democracy on the March* (1944).[6] Industrial technology, he continued, carried the potential to release the toiling farmers of the globe from "spoliation and poverty," mainly through rural electricity, chemical fertilizers, and man-made irrigation.[7] But the fruits of industry could not simply be placed in the hands of farmers. They must be brought there by experts, who "have a central role to play . . . in every facet of modern living. . . . For the people are now helpless without the experts—the technicians and managers."[8] To bring the experts to the people would require substantial

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[1] Franklin D. Roosevelt, quoted in Bruce J. Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938–1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 37.

[2] David L. Carlton and Peter A. Coclanis, eds., *Confronting Southern Poverty in the Great Depression: The Report on Economic Conditions of the South with Related Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1996).

[3] David Lilienthal, *TVA: Democracy on the March* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 11.

[4] David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 57.

[5] Jason Scott Smith, *Building New Deal Liberalism: The Political Economy of Public Works, 1933–1956* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[6] Lilienthal, *TVA*, xii.

[7] Ibid., 74.

[8] Ibid., 120.

public investment. Development in Lilienthal's view would require the concerted efforts of state and federal agencies. In sum, then, Lilienthal envisioned a state-directed, large-scale, industry-centered development scheme in which experts would play a central role. That is precisely the vision that historians have taken to be at the heart of postwar development, and some scholars have understandably latched onto Lilienthal as a founding father of modernization.[9]

The Urge to Modernize: A TVA dam

It might seem that the TVA, with its public worship of expertise and technology and its faith in the power the expanded state, would have little to offer to the groupist movement, which privileged the social over the material and the small over the large. But the TVA had another side. At the same time as it pursued a mission of top-down industrialization, it also prominently invoked the values of bottom-up participation. Indeed, when he summed up the core value of the TVA ten years after the publication of his book, Lilienthal did not nominate the importance of experts or managers, but "of self-government, of decentralized grass-roots administration, of local and individual participation in the valley's development."[10] It was that side of the TVA that distinguished it in the eyes of liberals from similar Soviet development projects such as Stalin's Dneprostroi dam and power plant. As the eminent British biologist and future Director General of UNESCO Julian Huxley saw it, the TVA's importance stemmed not from its demonstration of what could be done with machines but rather from demonstration of "the possibility of obtaining the efficiency of a co-ordinated plan without totalitarian regimentation."[11]

Although Lilienthal eagerly adopted the rhetoric of grassroots democracy, the decentralism of the TVA was not his invention. It came, rather, from Arthur E. Morgan, the first chair of the TVA's board of directors and, consequently, Lilienthal's superior. The relationship

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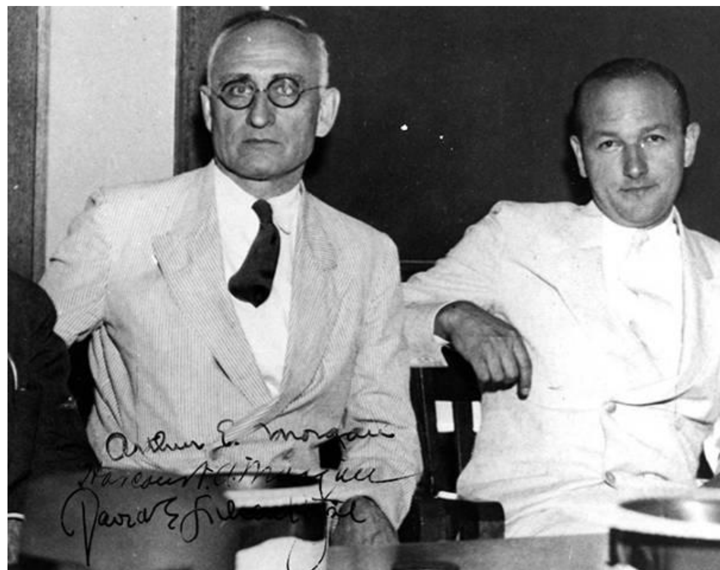
[9] See especially James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); James C. Scott, "High Modernist Social Engineering," in Lloyd I. Rudolph and John Kurt Jacobsen, *Experiencing the State* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 3–52; Daniel Klingensmith, *'One Valley and a Thousand': Dams, Nationalism, and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*.

[10] David Lilienthal, *TVA: Democracy on the March*, 20th anniversary edition (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), ix.

[11] Julian Huxley, *TVA: Adventure in Planning* (Surrey: The Architectural Press, 1943), 7.

between the two men was a study in contrast. Lilienthal was a child of Jewish immigrants and was a Harvard graduate. Morgan was largely self-educated, identified closely with the agrarian Midwest, was a strongly spiritual Protestant, and had been a charter member of the American Eugenics Society.[12] Lilienthal, a lawyer, moved smoothly within the halls of power whereas Morgan, an engineer and an educator, lacked both the ability and inclination. Moreover, the visions of the two men for the TVA were entirely different. Whereas Lilienthal emphasized the economic aspects of development and sought to use his position on a large government agency to discipline monopolistic utilities providers, Morgan continually stressed the social side of the development and sought to create a cooperative economic system featuring local currency and based around small and economically autonomous towns. The differences between the two proved to be irreconcilable and, after a sensational and highly public showdown, Morgan was pushed out of the agency.[13] Disgusted by what he took to be the pervasive instrumentalism at the level of federal policymaking, Morgan retreated to Yellow Springs, Ohio, from which he wrote a series of books about the perils of centralization including one entitled, tellingly, *Dams and Other Disasters*.[14]



The Two TVAs: Arthur E. Morgan, left, and David Lilienthal.

[12] See Roy Talbert, *FDR's Utopian: Arthur Morgan of the TVA* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1987). For an astute analysis of the demographic differences among New Dealers and their ideological consequences, see Jess Gilbert, "Eastern Urban Liberals and Midwestern Agrarian Intellectuals: Two Group Portraits of Progressives in the New Deal Department of Agriculture," *Agricultural History* 74 (2000): 162–180.

[13] The Morgan–Lilienthal rivalry is best approached through Thomas K. McCraw, *Morgan vs. Lilienthal: The Feud within the TVA* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1970). But see also Steven M. Neuse, *David E. Lilienthal: The Journey of an American Liberal* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1996), chap. 5.

[14] Arthur E. Morgan, *Dams and Other Disasters: A Century of the Army Corps of Engineers in Civil Works* (Boston: P. Sargent, 1971). Morgan's other writings on the community include Arthur E. Morgan, *The Small Community* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942); Arthur E. Morgan, *The Great Community* (Chicago: Human Events Associates, 1946); Arthur E. Morgan, *Industries for Small Communities* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Community Service, Inc., 1953); Arthur E. Morgan and Griscom Morgan, eds., *The Heritage of Community: A Critique of Community Living based on Great Ways of Life Practiced by Small Communities over the World* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Community Service, Inc., 1956); Arthur E. Morgan, *The Community of the Future and the Future of Community* (Yellow Springs, Ohio: Community Service, Incorporated, 1957); Arthur E. Morgan, *The Long Road* (1936; Yellow Springs, Oh.: Community Service, Inc., 1962).

In his post-TVA writings, Morgan set forth a vision of development that was firmly and explicitly rooted in groupist principles. Like many of his contemporaries, Morgan believed that increased primary-group affiliation could protect society from the violent excesses of modernity. "On the small scale," he explained, "men can actually live by the good will, mutual respect and confidence, helpfulness, tolerance, and neighborliness which are the ideal of all human society."[15] Such good will in Morgan's view was not merely pleasant but an essential component of social relations. As Morgan saw it, society could not be governed merely by a few formal rules but must also be governed by innumerable adaptations and accommodations, large and small, to changing social forces. But those adaptations and accommodations depended on an underlying spirit of trust, sympathy, and friendly communication between neighbors. A social unit too large for its members to know each other personally could be run only on the basis of formal principles and naked self-interest, both of which would quickly wreck any society were they to go unchecked by the actions of personal and informal social groups. Even Wall Street, at the apex of a mass society, only operated effectively because it ran as a "small village, where every banker knows every other."[16] Thus, in Morgan's view, society faced a real danger from the "agencies of consolidation," which threatened—through urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization—to replace small communities with large social aggregations.[17] "The present-day community with its invaluable cultural tradition is being dissolved, diluted, and submerged by modern technology, commercialism, mass production, propaganda, and centralized government," he warned.[18]And as society became more centralized, it would become more conflict-riven, as political actors came to identify solely with their interest groups and no longer with the community at large. Morgan had little sympathy for Marx or any other socialist attempting to achieve a society through the enlargement of industry and the state—a true classless society, he contended, could only be found in a small community, where communal solidarity outweighed material interest. Just as surface tension holds together a droplet but not a gallon of water, so does the cohesive force of interpersonal loyalty hold together a village but not a city or a nation.

Morgan's political philosophy, which centered on a desire to recoup what he perceived to be the premodern virtues of small town life, struck many of his contemporaries as deeply conservative. Morgan, however, refused to accept that label. Only someone who believed that the arrows of history pointed inevitably toward centralization and bureaucratization would interpret a vigorous defense of the small community as backward-looking. But for Morgan, small-scale living was not only a "folkway which has had an interesting and useful past" but a permanent social necessity, and thus his goal was not to retard the forces of history but rather to redirect them. The community of the future, he imagined, might feature an urban-rural balance, indoor and climate-controlled communities, geographic mobility within a decentralized landscape, new forms of currency, and the diffusion of technology.[19] Communities were not only to be preserved but *developed*. To that end, Morgan established Community Services, Inc., a combination consultancy and publishing house that joined together a loose

[15] Morgan, *The Small Community*, 86.

[16] Ibid., 28.

[17] Ibid., 96.

[18] Ibid., 10.

[19] Morgan's futurology, in evidence throughout his writings for *Community Service News*, can be seen most dramatically in *The Community of the Future and the Future of Community*.

network of communitarians interested in setting up pilot projects in small towns throughout the United States.[20]

Arthur E. Morgan's career helpfully illustrates one of the major arguments of this dissertation. Although we have dedicated much attention to modernization projects and the philosophies that motivated them, not all development took the form of modernization. Running alongside the urge to modernize, although perhaps less prominently, was the quest for community. That was true during the early moments of development, in the New Deal, and it was also true after World War II, when overseas development became a major undertaking for the United States. But when we ignore that strain of developmentalist thought and practice, we miss much of the picture. The TVA, after all, was famous less for its material achievements than for the promise that it might generate democratic communities at the same time as it generated electricity.

This chapter offers an account of the early years of development, at home and then abroad, that focuses on the parts of the story that are often left out. It tells how groupists in two Roosevelt-era government agencies, the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the War Relocation Authority's Community Analysis Section, experimented with communitarian solutions to the problems of poverty and dislocation and how those same government employees were recruited after the Second World War to work abroad, as community developers. The work that these men did, this chapter will argue, relied on a groupist understanding of development that differed significantly from the vision of development sketched out by modernization theorists. The conflict between community development and modernization theory was not buried but was keenly felt on the occasions when the two approaches were brought into contact with each other. Community developers, I submit, wanted development, but they did not want modernization.

The first Roosevelt-era agency that served as a greenhouse for community development was the USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Given the affinity between groupism and a sympathy toward small towns, it is natural that the Department of Agriculture should become the vehicle for some groupist approaches to development during the New Deal. The Depression saw the emergence of a cohort of activist and thinkers whom Jess Gilbert has called "agrarian intellectuals," reformers who, like Morgan, evinced great concern for the plight of the small farming town. As Gilbert argues, the New Deal Department of Agriculture was riven by a split that greatly resembles the Lilienthal–Morgan feud at the TVA. One faction was composed of eastern urban liberals—men like Rexford Tugwell, Alger Hiss, Frederic C. Howe, and Jerome Frank—who felt no tie to any particular agricultural region and sought a rapid modernization of agriculture under the supervision of a technocratic elite. It is on those liberals and their like-minded colleagues in other federal agencies, like David Lilienthal, that historians most often focus. But while urban liberals sought to modernize U.S. agriculture, a group of midwestern agrarians sought to democratize it. That group, whose ideals resembled Morgan's, was centered around the USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Economics, an energetic agency that housed one of the largest collections of social scientists employed by the government before World War II. Although the Bureau was ostensibly dedicated to the study of economics, most of the professionals who worked there—over 140 between 1919 and

[20] A good survey of the activities of Community Service, Inc. can be found in Arthur E. Morgan, "The Story of Community Service," *Community Comments* 15 (1958): 53–75.

1945—were either sociologists and anthropologists or were economists interested in sociocultural issues.[21]

Like Morgan, the Bureau's social scientists perceived a basic tension between industrialization and the integrity of agrarian life, and like Morgan they crafted development plans aimed at protecting the countryside. The key to their plans was communal participation. If development could be channeled through the grassroots rather than through top-down agencies, farmers would be able to steer a course to prosperity that avoided the perils of centralization and mechanization. They established a Program Study and Discussion Section in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration through which some three million farmers were enrolled in discussion programs that covered topics from philosophy to federal policy. John Kenneth Galbraith, Milton Eisenhower, Charles Beard, Thurman Arnold, Ruth Benedict, George Gallup, Robert Redfield, and W. Lloyd Warner were among those public intellectuals enrolled to deliver lectures and write discussion guides.[22] They also established 2,200 committees of farmers in counties throughout the country to help the USDA plan and execute New Deal programs. Under the guidance of rural sociologist Carl C. Taylor, director of the Bureau's Division of Farm Population and Rural Life, dozens of social scientists traveled throughout the South to map the borders of its "natural communities"—a crucial task for the Bureau, which recognized that correctly identifying communities was an essential precondition for their political mobilization.

Planning by Community: A USDA-sponsored board meets in the kitchen of one of its members to discuss the distribution of the town's water supply in Taos, New Mexico (J. T. Reid, *It Happened in Taos*, 1946).

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[21] Olaf F. Larson and Julie N. Zimmerman, *Sociology in Government: The Galpin–Taylor Years in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1919–1953* (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), chap. 3.

[22] For overviews of the program, see M. L. Wilson's remarkable book-length summary of the lecture series, *Democracy Has Roots* (New York: Carrick and Evans, 1939); Jess Gilbert, "Democratic Planning in Agricultural Policy: The Federal-County Land-Use Planning Program, 1938-1942," *Agricultural History* 70 (1996): 233-250; and Andrew Jewett, "Philosophy, Deliberative Democracy, and the Cultural Turn in the New Deal USDA," unpublished manuscript, 2011.

Most employees of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics were, like Carl C. Taylor, rural sociologists. Although there are few rural sociologists practicing today, in the 1930s rural sociology was the policy wing of sociology, and its members were prominent among the profession, occasionally serving, as Carl C. Taylor did, as presidents of the American Sociological Association. In their interest in small communities, however, rural sociologists drew heavily on anthropology, the discipline that had done the most to promulgate groupist ideas. As M. L. Wilson, the USDA's undersecretary and later director of the its extension service, explained it, rural sociology's movement "beyond economics" and its adoption of a "cultural approach" came from sociologists' appreciation of the inadequacy of purely material solutions and of the importance of sociocultural matters.[23] That is precisely the message that anthropologists were broadcasting in the 1930s. There was a felicitous overlap in the goals of each field of inquiry. Rural sociologists, perceiving the perils of agricultural modernization for towns in the South and the West, developed an interest in preserving small-scale communities just as anthropologists began to write about the threats posed by broader processes of modernization for the villages of the global South.

Anthropology by the 1930s had developed into two separate institutional bases—one in New York, centered around Franz Boas and his students, and another at the University Press of Chicago based around Robert Redfield and his students—but both wings of the field had generated high-profile and highly sympathetic studies of village life. Boasian Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) made a case for the fundamental psychological health of members of village societies free from the "storm and stress" of modern social demands.[24] Leading Chicago anthropologist Robert Redfield's *Tepoztlan: A Mexican Village* (1930) also communicated the benefits of rustic values even within the context of an area that was undergoing cultural change. Other popular portraits of imperiled folk cultures written along the same lines included Stuart Chase's *Mexico: A Study of Two Americas* (1931, which drew heavily on Redfield's *Tepoztlan*), William and Charlotte Viall Wiser's *Behind Mud Walls* (1930), Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* (1931), Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* (1934), and even Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* (1936).[25]

Anthropologists made their own way into government service. At the same time as rural sociologists were laboring in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, anthropologists found work with the War Relocation Authority, the agency charged with supervising the ten Japanese internment camps in which some 30,000 Japanese families were interned during the war. The WRA had from its early months taken some interest in the communal aspect of camp life. As the camps were intended both as a form of national security and also as a breeding ground for democratic culture, the issue of local self-government came up early. The anthropologist John H. Provinse, one of Robert Redfield's students and an alumnus of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (and later to serve as a community development expert throughout Asia and the Middle East), was hired as Chief of the WRA's Community Management Division in 1942—at that point a Division with only a single employee. Provinse supplied advice

[23] M. L Wilson, "Beyond Economics," in United States Department of Agriculture, *Farmers in a Changing World: The Yearbook of Agriculture, 1940* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1940), 926.
[24] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilisation* (New York: William Morrow, 1928), 197.
[25] For helpful overviews of this moment in anthropology and culture, see George W. Stocking, Jr., "The Ethnographic Sensibility of the 1920s and the Dualism of the Anthropological Tradition," in George W. Stocking, Jr., ed., *Romantic Motives: Essays on Anthropological Sensibility* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 208–276 and Warren I. Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), chap. 9.

about how the WRA might encourage local government in the camps. Repeating the Bureau of Agricultural Economics' line, he called for the establishment of community councils, which carried "great possibilities for advancing the cause of responsible, intelligent, internal government."[26] Local democracy was a sensitive business within the context of an internment camp, of course, and Provinse conceded that "it would appear to be desirable and necessary to limit the degree of self government" so that Japanese internees would not have power over any of the non-Japanese administrative personnel.[27] Under the orders of Milton Eisenhower, Director of the War Relocation Authority and brother to General Dwight Eisenhower, the camps did establish community councils, but Provinse's perception about the contradictions inherent in such a move proved to be accurate.[28] While WRA administrators hoped that the councils would serve as means by which official policy could be explained to internees and by which small-scale issues pertaining to the administration of the camps could be reported and resolved, the Japanese members of the councils failed to fall in line. "They seemed to bicker or they seemed unable to help the administration in informing the evacuees about what the administrators had in mind," complained anthropologist Edward H. Spicer, another student of Robert Redfield's and later the author of one of the most important overseas community development manuals. "Gangs of young men formed in most centers and certain evacuees were singled out and beaten at night. The administrators could not find evacuees who would help them discover the gang leaders."[29]

The problem of extralegal violence and resistance did not end with the formation of gangs. After a riot in Manzanar at which two internees were killed and a general strike at Poston, the WRA chiefs in Washington recognized the need for a more fully developed social scientific apparatus, which might be capable of anticipating and proposing responses to such disruptions. They had a hint of what that might look like from the Poston camp. That camp, administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs because of its location on the Colorado River Indian Reservation, had incorporated from its establishment a Bureau of Sociological Research, set up at the behest of BIA chief John Collier. The Bureau's staff combined internee social scientists (including Tamie Tsuchiyama, an anthropologist from UCLA) and outside researchers, such as Spicer and Conrad Arensberg, who had been one of W. Lloyd Warner's major collaborators at Harvard and who would also, like Spicer, write an important community development manual used to train aid workers.[30] Japanese researchers were helpful because the Bureau sought to undertake the sort of fine-grained "sociometric studies" that required

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[26] John H. Provinse, "Community Government Manual," 1943, in Headquarters, Subject-Classified General Files, 66.010, box 400, War Relocation Authority Records, RG 210, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

[27] John H. Provinse, memorandum, 22 July 1942, in Headquarters, Subject-Classified General Files, 66.010, box 400, War Relocation Authority Records.

[28] In discussing the WRA motivation for pursuing local government within the camps, Milton Eisenhower explained that the agency's desire was to give "concrete expression to our purpose of allowing the evacuees themselves the greatest possible latitude in forming and administering the democratic institutions by which the various community services will be carried on." Eisenhower would later serve as Chairman for the National Committee for *The People Act*, an organization dedicated to the formation of local self-governance within the United States, on the model of Elmore McKee's *The People Act*, about which see chapter 1 of this dissertation. Eisenhower, Milton S. Eisenhower, memorandum, 5 June 1942, Headquarters, Subject-Classified General Files, 66.010, box 400, War Relocation Authority Records.

[29] Edward H. Spicer, "Final Report of Washington Community Analysis Section," 18 February 1946, Headquarters, Community Analysis Section, M1342, roll 6, War Relocation Authority Records.

[30] An account of the Bureau of Sociological Research, written by its head, can be found in Alexander H. Leighton, *The Governing of Men: General Principles and Recommendations Based on Experience at a Japanese Relocation Camp* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945). A biography of Tamie Tsuchiyama is Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, *The Politics of Fieldwork: Research in an American Concentration Camp* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1999).

more than just census tabulation.[31] After the riot and strike, the WRA asked Provinse to design a social scientific program that would cover not just one camp, as the Bureau of Sociological Research did, but all ten, with a staff in Washington. Provinse hired Robert Redfield, his mentor, as a consultant; Redfield spent the summer of 1942 touring the internment camps and participating in policy discussions, after which he wrote a report suggesting a "Reporting and Information" branch of the WRA.[32] That branch became the Community Analysis Section, with a full-time Community Life Analyst in every camp, plus a staff in Washington.

Provinse had initially explored the idea of staffing the Community Analysis Section with experts on Japanese culture. He managed to hire at least one, John Embree, but the bulk of the twenty-two social scientists—fourteen anthropologists and eight sociologists—who worked for the Community Analysis Section during its short career were experts not on Japanese culture but on community processes. That is the vantage point from which they observed camp life. When John Embree, in a celebrated report, undertook to explain the causes of unrest within the camps, he pointed to some obvious possibilities: the forced evacuation, the barbed-wire fences, the irony of having to listen to lectures on the democratic way. But the center of his analysis was Durkheimian. Uprooting evacuees from their communities and putting them in a camp had scrambled their social worlds, creating "a new society with no regular system of social controls." Worse, the camp administrators tended to privilege their fellow American-born natives, the Nisei, which had the effect of upending the traditional structures of prestige and authority in the Japanese family by marginalizing their parents, the Issei.[33] An analysis that placed at its center the problem of social disorganization offered a fairly clear solution: community building. With proper guidance from Community Life Analysts, camp administrators could create the proper conditions for communal life to stitch itself together, which would then, the reports implicitly suggested, resolve the major problems of camp life. "Crisis and disturbance were not inevitable," wrote Spicer.[34] Both the camp administrators and the internees "wanted harmony and were willing to make the basic adjustments once the sources of disharmony were understood."[35]

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[31] Conrad M. Arensberg, "Report on a Developing Community: Poston, Arizona," *Applied Anthropology* 2 (1942): 6.
[32] For Redfield's role, see Edward H. Spicer, "History of the Community Analysis Section," 30 December 1945, Headquarters, Community Analysis Section, M1342, roll 6, War Relocation Authority Records.
[33] John F. Embree, Community Analysis Report No. 2, "Causes of Unrest at Relocation Centers," February 1943, Headquarters, Community Analysis Section, M1342, roll 6, War Relocation Authority Records.
[34] Edward H. Spicer, "The Use of Social Scientists by the War Relocation Authority," *Applied Anthropology* 5:2 (Spring 1946): 24.
[35] Edward H. Spicer, quoted in Orin Starn, "Engineering Internment: Anthropologists and the War Relocation Authority," *American Ethnologist* 13 (1986): 706.

The Pathology of Social Atomization: This photograph of young internees was published in a 1945 sociological treatise with the title: "Potential delinquents—much energy and little control or guidance in a disorganized society (Leighton, *The Governing of Men*, 1945).

Such an analysis led to a fairly sanguine understanding of life in the camps. Poston was "rapidly becoming a community," Conrad Arensberg boasted to his fellow anthropologists in 1942. "There is a strong neighborliness and the almost extraordinary cooperative spirit to be seen among the families of the blocks."[36] Spicer, who came to see the camps as "ideal cities," insisted that the real challenge would not be the evacuation of the Japanese from mainstream society but rather their relocation, because the camps themselves had created a "new stability and cohesiveness" in Japanese-American life that many would be reluctant to relinquish.[37] Very little hint can be found in the official reports and even in the retrospective accounts of the camps by the members of the Community Analysis Section that there was something deeply undemocratic about their existence. As late as 1969, Spicer commended the "courage" of the men and women who worked for the CAS: "What they did under these circumstances resulted in a new chapter in American culture . . . for the process in which they participated is of great importance for understanding the foundations of American freedom."[38] The moral blindness contained in statements of this sort stemmed from the social scientists' privileging of communal organization as their primary frame, as opposed, for example, to civil rights.

The Community Analysis Section of the WRA folded when the WRA did, in 1946, having lasted only four years. In its short life span, it resembled the other communitarian New Deal programs. Arthur E. Morgan was ousted from the TVA by David Lilienthal in 1938. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics' adult education and participatory planning programs were dismantled in the early 1940s upon meeting resistance from the interests of large Southern and

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[36] Arensberg, "Report on a Developing Community," 8.
[37] Spicer, quoted in Starn, "Engineering Internment," 715; Spicer, "Final Report," 26.
[38] Spicer, quoted in Starn, "Engineering Internment," 708. Starn offers the best historical account of the complicity of social scientists in Japanese internment. For Spicer's extended retrospective moral wrestling with the complicity of his group in the interment, see Edward H. Spicer, "Anthropologists and the War Relocation Authority," in Walter Goldschmidt, ed., *The Uses of Anthropology* (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1979), 217–237.

Western farm interests.[39] Not only were the home institutions of communitarians all closed within a few years, but their effects seemed negligible. At their most successful, in the case of the Japanese internment camps, communitarians were able to smooth over the rough edges of a top-down, coercive, state-directed project. At their least, as in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, they could do little to redirect larger social forces. It is easy to see, then, in the closure of the communitarian institutions of the Roosevelt era, the condemnation of communitarian strategies to a permanent political irrelevance. That is certainly how scholars focusing on the history of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics have seen it. They typically regard the dismemberment of the BAE as the dashing the dream of participatory democracy against the cliffs of economic reality.[40] In that telling, the story becomes a tragic one, of one more thing lost in the age of mechanization and mass society.

The surprising fact of the matter is, though, that the groupists and communitarians who focused on agrarian life during the Roosevelt era did *not* fall from positions of public influence once their home bases were closed in the United States. Rather, they found themselves in great demand overseas, where they served in government agencies and with nonprofit foundations as consultants and supervisors for community development. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, like the Tennessee Valley Authority under Morgan, may have failed to achieve its ambitions for placing rural life in the United States on a participatory basis. But as a training ground for overseas community development, it succeeded tremendously: not only would Carl C. Taylor become a major figure in the community development movement, but so would his former BAE colleagues Arthur F. Raper, Morris E. Opler, M. L. Wilson, William Biddle, Irwin Sanders, John Provinse, and Douglas Ensminger.[41] The War Relocation Authority, although considerably smaller, also had a remarkable placement rate for its alumni. Edward Spicer, Conrad Arensberg, John Provinse, and Morris E. Opler all worked in community development and Solon Kimball and Robert Redfield, although not directly involved with community development, were nonetheless important reference points for members of the movement.

The key to the overseas success of rural sociologists and anthropologists was, of course, the Cold War. In the few years after the end of the Second World War, the international political system of the globe changed drastically as the United States and the Soviet Union became locked in a protracted rivalry, nationalists in a number of colonized countries (including India, Pakistan, and the Philippines) won their independence, and Communists took control of mainland China. The combination of those three events made a powerful impression on the U.S. State Department. Suddenly, it looked likely that large parts of the globe would become Communist and, if so, would be hostile to the United States. Decolonization, moreover, meant that the old lines of influence could no longer be counted on to control the

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[39] Larson and Zimmerman, *Sociology in Government*, chap. 4.

[40] That is the narrative offered in Larson and Zimmerman, *Sociology and Government*; Gilbert's various articles on the BAE (see footnote immediately below); and Sarah T. Phillips, *This Land, This Nation: Conservation, Rural America, and the New Deal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[41] The above paragraph is drawn from the research of Jess Gilbert, which can be found in the following articles: "Eastern Urban Liberals and Midwestern Agrarian Intellectuals; "Agrarian Intellectuals in a Democratizing State: A Collective Biography of USDA Leaders in the Intended New Deal," in Catherine McNicol Stock and Robert D. Johnston, eds., *The Countryside in the Age of the Modern State: Political Histories of Rural America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 213–239; and "Low Modernism and the Agrarian New Deal: A Different Kind of State," in Jane Adams, ed., *Fighting for the Farm: Rural America Transformed* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 129–146. See also Richard S. Kirkendall, *Social Scientists and Farm Politics in the Age of Roosevelt* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1966) and Larson and Zimmerman, *Sociology in Government*.

politics of the global South. Those concerned with such matters felt strongly that the United States would have to take quick steps to exert its influence in far-off places.

A glimpse of the sharp growth in the importance of rural development strategies for the United States can be gained by examining the career of Y. C. James Yen,, an early advocate of community development and one of the twentieth century's larger-than-life figures. Yen, a Protestant from Sichuan, was educated at Yale but then returned to China after World War I, where he launched a rural literacy movement. The Mass Education Movement, as it was known, was perhaps the largest and most influential interwar rural uplift program in the world, teaching a reported 27 million Chinese a simplified version of the written language and providing the young Mao Tse-tung with his first experiences as a political organizer.[42] Yen's exposure to rural problems, however, led him to gradually shift the object of his concern from illiteracy to poverty more generally, and from mass education to a community-centered approach that emphasized the value of folk cultures and traditions. By the late 1940s, Yen's movement had gained the attention of liberals in the United States, who seized upon it as a potential foil to Mao's Communism. A year before Mao took power, the U.S. Congress wrote what was known as the "Jimmy Yen Provision" into the Economic Aid Act of 1948, earmarking ten percent of the $275 million in Chinese aid for rural reconstruction to be dispensed by a five-member board that included Yen.[43] The support that Yen received from the United States, in fact, was overwhelming. He met with presidents, received large private donations from major philanthropies and corporations, was the subject of a glowing book by Pearl Buck, and, in 1943, received a Copernican Citation given to ten "modern revolutionaries" in Carnegie Hall—the other nine recipients included Albert Einstein, Orville Wright, Henry Ford, John Dewey, and Walt Disney.[44] Supreme Court justice William O. Douglas, upon bringing Yen to meet Harry Truman, described Yen as the "one man who has done more to bring about a democratic front in the world than anyone else."[45] After the Chinese Revolution, Yen fled to the United States, where he was able to depend on the aid of leading liberals like Douglas and Eleanor Roosevelt, who became his two biggest supporters. Yen's stock had, in fact, increased dramatically in the United States after the Chinese revolution. According to Paul Hoffman, administrator of the Marshall Plan and later president of the Ford Foundation, it was in the very provinces that Yen's program had gotten underway that Communists encountered the

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[42] Yen's estimate of the numbers of Chinese educated under the MEM system is drawn from his letter to George Marshall, 30 September 1947, International Institute of Rural Reconstruction Papers, box 34, Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Columbia University. The best English-language source on Yen's remarkable career in China is Charles W. Hayford, *To the People: James Yen and Village China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

[43] That board, the Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR), received an additional $15 million in 1949. It was only able to spend $9 million of its funds, however, before the Chinese Revolution forced a suspension of its operations. The JCRR retreated to China where it became a major force for development. For financial details, see Report of Y. C. James Yen, in Minutes of the Meeting of the American Chinese Committee of the Mass Education Movement, 13 January 1950, container 597, folder 4, William O. Douglas Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division. On the JCRR in Taiwan, see David Karl Francis Ekbladh, "A Workshop for the World: Modernization as a Tool in U.S. Foreign Relations in Asia, 1914–1973" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2003), chap. 2 and Nick Cullather, "Fuel for the Good Dragon: The United States and Industrial Policy in Taiwan, 1950–1965" *Diplomatic History* 20 (1996): 1–25.

[44] Yen's donors included the Carnegie Corporation, Nelson Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, Henry Ford, General Electric, and Philip Morris. Pearl Buck's book was *Tell the People: Talks with James Yen about the Mass Education Movement* (New York: The John Day Company, 1945). Although there is little about Yen's post-China career in the secondary literature, details are available in the many documents pertaining to Yen's life in the papers of William O. Douglas at the Library of Congress and in the records of the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction at Columbia University.

[45] Yen, notes on meeting with Harry Truman, 9 March 1948, IIRR Papers, box 34.

most stubborn resistance. "What a different story might have been told in China if this alternative to Communist strategy had been started a few years earlier," Hoffman reflected in the pages of *Life*.[46]

At the urging of Douglas and Eleanor Roosevelt, Yen embarked on a tour of Cold War Asia in 1952, looking for countries where he might begin another rural reconstruction movement. He traveled to Indonesia, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Lebanon, Syria, and the Philippines. Although he felt that conditions were ripe for rural reconstruction in a number of those countries (and, indeed, he visited an ongoing community development project in India), Yen chose the Philippines, and within the year had set up a development agency there.[47] In this, Yen had the full support of the liberal establishment. The board of directors of his organization had as its members not only Douglas and Roosevelt, but also, at various times, Walter Judd, Pearl Buck, Chester Bowles, Walter Reuther, Marshall Field, Henry Luce, Bruce Barton, Helen Gahagan Douglas, William E. Hocking, and DeWitt Wallace, the publisher of *Reader's Digest*.

Yen was not the only pioneer of overseas community development to receive support from the liberal establishment. In 1948, Albert Mayer, a regionalist architect who had worked closely with Lewis Mumford, began his own pilot project in Etawah, a district of Northern India. Mayer received the support of the Ford Foundation, Eleanor Roosevelt (who visited him there and wrote about it in her nationally syndicated column *My Day*), and Chester Bowles, who used his position as Truman's ambassador to India to direct the entirety of U.S. aid to India to Etawah-style community development. Philanthropic foundations like Paul Hoffman's Ford Foundation, the Near East Foundation, and CARE, began funding community development projects across the globe, in places like Iran, Korea, Pakistan, and Jordan. For those liberals who believed that their country stood for democratic participation at all levels, community development was the most promising weapon in the Cold War. "Once the American ideal is interpreted to the villages; once the American influence begins to reshape a community, to transform it, to raise even fractionally the standard of living—then democratic, not Communist, ideas of freedom will become the most powerful force in Asia," wrote William O. Douglas.[48]

The hope that men like Yen and Mayer might use community strategies to combat Communism was not restricted to the liberal establishment. It was also a part of popular culture, and more particularly of the middlebrow culture purveyed by institutions such as the *Reader's Digest* and the Book-of-the-Month Club that targeted a broad educated public.[49] The *Reader's Digest* had, in fact, made a mission of promoting Y. C. James Yen; by 1960 the magazine had profiled Yen more than any other individual and the Reader's Digest Association had given Yen's organization at least $600,000.[50] Pearl Buck, as mentioned above, wrote a short

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[46] Paul Hoffman, "Most Courageous Comeback in History," *Life*, 5 February 1951, 104.
[47] For details of Yen's trip, see "Minutes of the Meeting of the Members of the International Committee of the Mass Education Movement, Inc.," 23 May 1952, Douglas Papers, container 595, folder 5.
[48] William O. Douglas, *Beyond the High Himalayas* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1952), 313.
[49] The relationship between middlebrow institutions and public support for the Cold War in Asia is explored fruitfully in Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
[50] In a letter to Marshall Field, DeWitt Wallace refers to the *Digest*'s four articles about Yen as "a record unmatched by any other person." By the late 1960s, the *Digest* had published another two articles about Yen. See DeWitt Wallace to Marshall Field, 6 January 1959, IIRR Papers, Catalogued Correspondents Box; Minutes, Annual Meeting of the Board of the Jimmy Yen Rural Reconstruction Movement, 24 September 1968, Douglas Papers, container 601, folder 1. For information about the Reader's Digest Association's funding to Yen, see DeWitt Wallace to Y. C. James Yen, 10 January 1961, in IIRR Papers, Catalogued Correspondents Box.

book about Yen's approach to development and was reportedly planning to write a biography of Yen before she died.[51] Community development showed up as well in popular novels and films. The most influential such depiction of community development was, of course, *The Ugly American* (1958), the breakaway bestseller that was turned into a film starring Marlon Brando that is described in the introduction of this dissertation. As it turns out, *The Ugly American* was Brando's second film about community development, the first being *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (1956). Set in the fictional Japanese village of Tobiki after the end of World War II, the film, like *The Ugly American*, contrasts two forms of development. The Army, represented by the hopelessly inflexible Colonel Wainwright Purdy II ("My job is to teach these natives the meaning of democracy, and they're going to learn democracy if I have to shoot every one of them"), seeks to improve Tobiki according to "Plan B," a voluminous tome specifying every phase of development. But the man assigned to the job, Captain Fisby, a humanities professor from Muncie, meets with comically little success. Guided by the native Sakini, played in yellowface by Marlon Brando, Fisby adopts native garb, learns some Japanese, and allows the residents of Tobiki to undertake their own development. Instead of building a schoolhouse as directed, they come together to build a teahouse, where traditional cultural rituals can be performed, and use artisanal technologies to produce brandy, which they sell with some success. Fisby, who by the end of the film has fallen in love with a Japanese woman, reflects on what he has learned. "I don't want to be a world leader. I've made peace with myself somewhere between my ambitions and my limitations," he muses. "It's a step backward in the right direction."[52]

"A Step Backward in the Right Direction": Captain Fisby listens to a village elder of Tobiki while Marlon Brando as Sakini (left) looks on in *Teahouse of the August Moon* (1956).

Standing behind the support of the liberal establishment and the middlebrow public for community development stood the U.S. government itself. In 1949, Harry Truman launched, as part of his Point Four aid program, the Technical Cooperation Administration. Intended as a sort of Marshall Plan for the global South, Point Four committed the United States to major investment in the underdeveloped world. Congress approved $25 million in

[51] John C. K. Kiang, ed., *Dr. Y. C. James Yen: His Movement for Mass Education and Rural Reconstruction* (South Bend: published by author, 1976), iv.
[52] *The Teahouse of the August Moon*, dir. Daniel Mann, screenplay by John Patrick (1956; Burbank; CA: Warner Home Video, 2006).

aid for its first year. But committing to foreign aid was one thing, whereas figuring out how that aid should be distributed was another. The policymaking establishment in 1949, for all its enthusiasm about development, had little idea about how it was to be done. One thing that would clearly be needed, as the United States prepared to extend its sphere of influence into the newly independent countries of the globe, would be experts who could speak foreign languages and who could explain foreign cultures and politics to policymakers. But the recruitment and grooming of Area Studies experts would take some time, and would not have much effect on the U.S. prosecution of the Cold War in the global South until the later 1950s. Fortunately for the foreign policymaking establishment, area studies experts were not the only scholars who might help the United States understand the global South. The same countries could also be approached by social scientists whose expertise lay not in a particular country or language but rather in rural issues. In other words, rural sociologists and former Bureau of Agricultural Economics employees were just as valuable to the foreign policy administration as area studies experts and, in the early Cold War, there were far more of them. Appropriately, Truman's choice for the head of the TCA was Henry G. Bennett, the former president of Oklahoma A&M and a persistent defender of the grassroots approach that his fellow agrarian intellectuals had developed at the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.[53] With Bennett's guidance, the United States government began mobilizing New Deal agricultural expertise for the Cold War.

Sociologist Arthur F. Raper, who had worked for Carl C. Taylor at the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, was one such expert drawn into the Cold War, and his career provides a useful illustration of the process. Raper had written important studies of Southern sharecropping and is remembered today as the first white social scientist to examine lynching.[54] But his influence, like that of so many of the rural sociologists, was greater abroad than it was at home. Between 1947 and 1950, he was released from his duties at the USDA to the Department of Defense, under whose auspices he worked in occupied Japan. The next year, still on loan from the USDA, he was detailed to the Mutual Security Administration and worked in Southeast Asia on village issues. Also in that year, he took a vacation from government service to work for a month for a private organization, the American Friends of the Middle East, in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. For the next fifteen years he continued to travel widely, working for the State Department throughout Asia and Africa, three years of which he served as the International Cooperation Administration's Regional Community Development Adviser to the Middle East and North Africa and training many of its staff members. Raper also worked with two universities, Michigan State and the University of California, Berkeley, training other scholars to work on community development.[55] Raper may have had a particularly rich and long career in community development, but he certainly was not unusual in his trajectory. In 1952 Raper, counting informally, reported that he could name seventy-five of his fellow rural sociologists who had found employment abroad since the war.[56]

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[53] On Bennett, see Phillips, *This Land, This Nation*, 270–271.

[54] Daniel Joseph Singal, *The War Within: From Victorian to Modernist Thought in the South, 1919-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), chap. 10.

[55] "Bio-Data on Arthur F. Raper," 15 February 1965, Arthur F. Raper Papers, box 7, folder 289, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. See also Louis Mazzari, *Southern Modernist: Arthur Raper from the New Deal to the Cold War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana state University Press, 2006).

[56] Arthur F. Raper, "Rural Sociologists and Foreign Assignments," *Rural Sociology* 18 (1953): 264–266.

From the USDA to the Cold War: Arthur F. Raper, right, disembarks in Comilla, Pakistan (Raper Papers, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill).

Raper's career not only illustrates the way in which the rural experts of the New Deal were incorporated into the foreign policymaking establishment. It also shows the many institutional homes that community developers found both in and outside of the government. Raper worked for the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Defense, the Mutual Security Administration, American Friends of the Middle East, The International Cooperation Administration, Michigan State University, and the University of California, Berkeley. That, too, was typical of community development, which was a broad strategy rather than a single program, and which therefore operated through many agencies. Some coherence, however, was granted in 1954 when the Foreign Operations Administration (successor to Bennett's Technical Cooperation Administration and precursor to the International Cooperation and to USAID), established a dedicated Division of Community Development, headed by Louis Miniclier. The Community Development Division's budget was relatively small—at its peak in 1959 it had an annual expenditure of $16 million—because it focused mainly on consulting.[57] But its employees were spread far and wide; in 1956 it was maintaining staff members in 47 countries.[58] And the fairly small budget of the Community Development Division was complemented, and indeed dwarfed, by U.S. community development spending coming under different budget headings: bilateral aid, UN support, the Department of Defense, the Peace Corps, and so forth. U.S. support for community development in India, for example, ran entirely outside of the Technical Cooperation Administration and summed to over $50 million in the early 1950s. Any agricultural aid, in fact, was potentially handled along community development lines, and during the first decade of the Cold War community development was by far the dominant approach to rural development. Not surprisingly, when the Kennedy administration launched its highly successful Peace Corps in 1961—an agency meant to capture the popular interest in development—the Corps took up community development as a major part of its operations, as will be described in chapter five.

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[57] Louis Miniclier, "Community Development as a Vehicle of U.S. Foreign Aid," *Community Development Journal* 4 (1969): 8.

[58] William J. Caldwell, "Note to Correspondents," 28 August 1957, Max Millikan Papers, MC188, box 7, folder 192, Institute Archives and Special Collections, MIT Libraries.

Part of the reason that the United States went in so heavily for overseas community development is that, as will be described in greater detailed in the two chapters that follow, the leaders of many underdeveloped countries recognized the many ways in which they might benefit from community development programs. Those who led newly independent countries were often faced with a political problem that colonial rulers had never faced: winning legitimacy, or at least electoral support, from the countryside. Community development proved to be an effective way to demonstrate concern and to maneuver in the rural areas, where the threat of Communism was often the greatest. Despite its origins in the United States, community development was discussed at the Bandung Conference of non-aligned nations in 1955. The UN began coordinating knowledge and sending consultants to nations with community development programs through its Bureau of Social Affairs in 1951. In the 1950s, community development was easily the primary approach to rural improvement at the UN; member nations were in favor of community development uniformly and without controversy, "as they are in favour of mothers and children, or in favor of peace," remarked the director of the Bureau of Social Affairs.[59] By 1960, the UN counted over sixty nations with community development programs in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, about half of which were national in scope.[60] "Along with a flag, an anthem, a seat at the United Nations, a university, and an international hotel," wrote two observers in the 1960s, "a community-development program is an essential part of the trappings of modern nationhood."[61]

In this chapter, I have set out two tasks: explaining how U.S. social scientists made their way from Roosevelt-era domestic agencies into international community development and arguing that community development represented an approach to the problem of poverty that was distinct from modernization-based strategies. It is to that second task that I turn now. Through a close examination of the corpus of anthropologist Robert Redfield, I will explain how U.S. social scientists working on community development held the view that what was required was development without modernization.

As community developers entered a world stage and codified their techniques, they faced a problem: explaining how community-building would raise the living standards of the world's poor. Questions of that sort are never trivial, but they were particularly vexing for community developers, whose intellectual roots lay in the groupist movement. Many groupists, community developers among them, believed strong community life to be a feature of the premodern past, imperiled by the processes of centralization, market integration, technological diffusion, and urbanization. And while most in the midcentury United States could recognize the dangers inherent in such processes and the need to temper them, far fewer would suggest that they were on balance destructive. What the underdeveloped nations of the world needed, most felt as a matter of instinct, was what the United States had: modern institutions. Suggesting that even poor countries might benefit from stronger small-scale social units was the major theoretical achievement of the community development movement, and the thing that distinguished it most clearly from modernization theory.

The theorist whose work best captures the ways in which community developers grappled with the application of groupism to development is the anthropologist Robert Red-

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59 Julia Henderson, "United Nations' Community Development Programs," in International Society for Community Development, report on Washington symposium on community development, 8 September 1966, p. 19, Albert A. Mayer Papers, box 14, folder 12, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

60 Lane E. Holdcroft, "The Rise and Fall of Community Development: 1950–1965," M.S. thesis, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, 1976, 3.

61 David Brokensha and Peter Hodge, *Community Development: An Interpretation* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing, 1969), 8.

field, of the University of Chicago. Although Redfield never worked in the employ of the State Department on community development, as many community developers did, he was a sort of *eminence grise* in the field. He had worked as a consultant for the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and also, as described above, for the War Relocation Authority.[62] More important than any job he took, however, was his thought on community, modernization, and development that framed many of the key issues in the field. After recruiting W. Lloyd Warner from Harvard, Redfield established the University of Chicago as the intellectual center of the community development movement. Although some prominent community developers were rural sociologists who had been trained at places like the University of Wisconsin or Cornell, those who were anthropologists or urban sociologists tended to overwhelmingly come from the University of Chicago. Leading theorists and practitioners who graduated from Chicago include Conrad Arensberg, Edward Spicer, William F. Whyte, John H. Provinse, Frank Lynch, and McKim Marriott.[63]

Redfield came to prominence in the 1930s, as one of a number of anthropologists and ethnographically oriented writers to publish highly sympathetic portraits of imperiled folk cultures. But unlike the other anthropologists and popular writers in that moment, Redfield was firmly grounded in the Chicago School of sociology, led by Ernest Burgess and Robert E. Park, the latter of whom was Redfield's father-in-law and mentor. The main preoccupation of the Chicago School was urban life, and particularly the ways in which new migrants to the city could be incorporated into its social and cultural system. Thus, whereas Boasian anthropologists studied cultural wholes in stasis, Chicago sociologists were interested in processes of change and adaptation. But rather than envisioning a sharp dichotomy between premodern and modern patterns of living, Chicago thinkers imagined them to lie on a connected pathway, with rural peoples gradually adopting urban ways through a multi-stage process of cultural transformation. Redfield's contribution was to take the model of gradual adaptation that sociologists had forged as a tool for discussing urbanization and to apply that to the changes experienced by rural areas in the global South. Development, not abrupt change, was at the center of the Chicago way of thinking, and Redfield was one of the world's first anthropologists of development.

Redfield's Chicago roots were evident in his contribution to the village studies genre: *Tepoztlan* (1930), a study of life in a Mexican village. Rather than seeking out a remote village, unintegrated into the world economy, in which he could study in pristine form the culture of the indigenous Mexican people, Redfield chose a fairly heavily trafficked village in Morelos that had had contact with European cultures for centuries and whose folkways consequently featured a complete "fusion of Indian with Spanish features."[64] Tepoztlán, Redfield explained, occupied an intermediate position on what he would later call the "folk-urban continuum," on one end of which lay unorganized and isolated rural areas and on the other end of which lay cosmopolitan cities.[65] Within Tepoztlán itself, Redfield observed "two overlapping culture 'areas,'" a folk culture led by traditional men and women, *los tontos*, and an urban culture

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[62] On Redfield's service to the BAE, see folder 8, "USDA," in Robert Redfield Papers, box 36, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library and Robert Redfield, "Rural Sociology and the Folk Society," *Rural Sociology* 8 (1943): 68–71.
[63] The University of Chicago was also the training grounds for the urban sociologists who designed and led the Community Action Programs of the War on Poverty, discussed in chapter five. Chicago graduates important in that context include Richard Boone, Saul Alinsky, Lloyd Ohlin, and Leonard Cottrell. See Noel Cazenave, "Chicago Influences the War on Poverty," *Journal of Policy History* 5 (1993): 52–68.
[64] Robert Redfield, *Tepoztlan: A Mexican Village* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), 49.
[65] Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941).

brought by the intelligentsia, *los correctos*.[66] But "the society is not breaking down," he insisted. "It is merely changing, and the gradual process of change can be observed, it would seem, in the diffusion of tools and rational techniques from *los correctos* to *los tontos*."[67] And yet despite his value-neutral portrait of the process of change, it was not hard for Redfield's readers to detect a wistful appreciation of the folk culture that was, it seems, soon to be threatened by a more rapid and aggressive form of urbanization. "The impression given by Redfield's study of Tepoztlán is that of a relatively homogeneous, isolated, smoothly functioning, and well-integrated society made up of a contented and well-adjusted people," wrote anthropologist Oscar Lewis, who visited the village after Redfield and famously made his own study of it. In Lewis's eyes, Redfield's portrait of Tepoztlán had "a Rousseauan quality which glosses lightly over evidence of violence, disruption, cruelty, disease, suffering, and maladjustment. . . . Throughout his study we find an emphasis upon the cooperative and unifying factors in Tepoztecan society."[68]

Redfield was, in a sense, trying to have it both ways. Like the many nostalgic admirers of village life writing in the 1930s, including the Boasians, he praised the harmonious social relations of the village he studied. But he resisted their frequent suggestion that there was something timeless or primordial about village life. His Tepoztlán had a history and, more importantly, a trajectory. The pressing question was whether Tepoztlán and other villages like it could be expected to undergo further urbanization without sacrificing their communal institutions, and Redfield had largely dodged it. The question nevertheless remained on his mind, as he continued to study other Mexican communities in transition, which he wrote about in *Chan Kom: A Maya Village* (1934) and *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (1941). In 1948, a year before Truman announced his Point Four program, Redfield returned to the question of development by paying another visit to Chan Kom, a village he had first visited with a team of anthropologists in 1930–31. In the intervening seventeen years, Chan Kom had made great strides in the development of individual property rights, a bustling commercial sphere, and rural industry. One might have expected Redfield lament what Chan Kom had lost in the process, but he did not. There was a hint of nostalgia, to be sure, but, for Redfield, "the story of Chan Kom is a story of success."[69] Somehow, Chan Kom had managed to enter a larger market society without any loss of social solidarity. Family relations, religious rituals, basic thought-patterns, and common traditions remained intact. There had been, remarkably, no social stratification, nor had increased economic activity injected the element of commodification into longstanding social relations. Chan Kom had gained the rewards of the new without paying the cost of a moral or social upheaval. The implications were enticing. If other rural villages could follow Chan Kom on this toll-free road to development, Point Four would be a terrific success.

Unfortunately, Redfield's believed Chan Kom to be more of an anomaly than a model. The village was able to develop economically without discarding its long-held values only because its long-held values, by happy coincidence, turned out to be precisely those values known to promote development: industry, frugality, practicality, sobriety, clocklike punctuality, and a strong social value placed on the increase of wealth even in the absence of any outlet for expenditure. "These villagers," he wrote, "had much of the Protestant ethic before they

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[66] Redfield, *Tepoztlan*, 219.
[67] Ibid., 134–135.
[68] Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied* (1951; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 428–429.
[69] Robert Redfield, *A Village that Chose Progress: Chan Kom Revisited* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), 23.

ever heard of Protestantism."[70] Chan Kom showed that, given the proper traditional values, a community could develop without disintegrating. But how other cultural areas, lacking Chan Kom's native values, might do the same was still unanswered.

Redfield may not have yet struck on a perfect model, but all of the elements were in place. Tepoztlán had showed that, given time, a premodern village could incorporate aspects of a metropolitan area (in this case, Spanish) into its folkways without losing its cohesiveness. Chan Kom had shown that, given the right values, a village could flourish without breaking apart. The trick was then to find a way to embed development-enabling values within the Tepoztláns of the world via a gradual and non-disruptive process that Redfield called "acculturation" or "culture contact without conflict."[71]

Redfield explained how this could be accomplished in an important article written with his Chicago colleague Milton Singer in 1954. There, Redfield distinguished two processes of development, which he labeled "primary urbanization" and "secondary urbanization." Secondary urbanization was modernization as we normally conceive of it: local cultures and traditional norms were replaced by modern ones as an urban (or foreign) intelligentsia imposed on the area a new way of life "in conflict with local folk culture."[72] But the item of real interest was primary urbanization. In that form of development, urban culture was not anathema to folk culture but was rather an elaboration of it. Primary urbanization, Redfield and Singer explained, occurred when demographic growth gave rise to cities, but the culture of the cities remained "still at bottom the same" as that of the villages.[73] Such cities were not ruled by a deracinated intelligentsia with allegiance to alien cultural norms, but by a "literati" whose principal role was to develop and guard what Redfield called a "Great Tradition" and defined as "the core culture of an indigenous civilization and a source, consciously examined, for defining its moral, legal, aesthetic and other cultural norms."[74] In primary urbanization, then, the "little traditions" of village life were organically connected to the "Great Tradition" of the cities, a connection that meant that villages were not brittle holdovers from a premodern past but rather were potentially the taproots of a flourishing, cosmopolitan, sophisticated, and powerful society.

Redfield had caught glimpses of the acculturating power of a Great Tradition in studying the incorporation of Spanish culture into Tepoztecan society, but the effect of the Spanish on Mexico bore a far greater resemblance to secondary urbanization than primary urbanization, and was at any rate not an attractive model for post-World War II development. To study a real Great Tradition, Redfield decided, anthropologists must turn to India, the home of the ancient Sanskritic traditions. "Here, more than anywhere else," he wrote, "can the Western anthropologist hope to learn something about the interrelations of primitive, peasant, and urbanized life."[75] Redfield secured a series of grants from the Ford Foundation to study

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[70] Ibid., 157.

[71] Robert Redfield, "Culture Contact without Conflict," *American Anthropologist* 41 (1939): 514–517. An explanation of Redfield's concept of acculturation with some hint of its centrality for his work can be found in Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville J. Herskovits, "Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation," *American Anthropologist* 38 (1936): 149–152.

[72] Robert Redfield and Milton B. Singer, "The Cultural Role of Cities," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3 (1954): 61.

[73] Robert Redfield, *The Primitive World and Its Transformations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953), 65.

[74] Redfield and Singer, "Cultural Role of Cities," 63.

[75] Robert Redfield, "Primitive and Peasant: Simple and Compound Society," c. 1956, Redfield Papers, box 66, folder 4.

Great Traditions in 1951, and that study soon focused on India. Milton Singer traveled there in 1954 and Redfield came over himself in 1955.

Central to the Chicago school's understanding of India as the site of a Great Tradition was the work of an Indian anthropologist, M. N. Srinivas, and particularly his *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (1952). Just as Redfield had admired the social cohesion and protective institutions of Tepoztlán, Srinivas celebrated the reciprocity and mutual obligation that he believed were the products of the caste system in the villages of Southern India. But those villages were not isolated, he argued, because caste also formed the basis for ties *between* Indian villages and to cities, as caste associations linked Indians to other Indians of their same caste in different locations. "Caste ties cut across village ties," Srinivas explained, "while village ties both limit the extension of caste ties beyond the village and stress the interdependence of the various castes forming a local community."[76] Those inter-village caste ties were, Srinivas argued, getting stronger as India experienced national integration. By opening two-way channels of communication between urban cores and villages, the caste system put folk societies in conversation with the Great Tradition and allowed them to adapt to new social and economic conditions. Srinivas saw this adaptation happening through "Sanskritization," a gradual process, stretching back "for over 2,000 years all over India," by which non-elite Indians adopted the (changing) norms and rituals of Brahmin Hindus.[77] This process was not only knitting the country together with a unified but flexible culture, it was also, by non-coercively spreading the norms of the intelligentsia throughout the population, leading to greater egalitarianism and toleration. Srinivas had, in other words, identified an India-wide process that resembled Westernization in its best effects, but that operated through indigenous cultural traditions and that was alive in the villages of India.[78] That was precisely the sort of development that Redfield had been searching for, and the Chicago School quickly adopted Srinivas as an honorary member.[79]

What Redfield had identified, with the help of Srinivas, was a form of development that was not modernization. It proceeded not from the blueprints of a Western intelligentsia but from an ongoing, two-way conversation between indigenous cultural elites and the many village communities. Its basis was therefore in traditional institutions, both at the village level and in the cities, and, to the degree that development meant adaptation, that adaptation would emanate from those institutions. A foreign power like the United States could not simply arrive bearing new technology and expect to see it adopted. Redfield was, in fact, a harsh critic of the "strong continuing faith in technology and material production" of both the United

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[76] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 61.

[77] Ibid., 166.

[78] For more on the concept of Sanskritization, see M. N. Srinivas, "A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization," 1956, in *Collected Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) and Simon Charsley, "Sanskritization: The Career of an Anthropological Theory," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 32 (1998): 527–547.

[79] Milton Singer, *When a Great Traditions Modernizes: An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization* (New York: Praeger, 1972), preface. Srinivas's belief that development could be rooted in traditional institutions was further elaborated in two similar volumes by Chicago-school social scientists, each of which served as an important counter to modernization theory: Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) and Singer, *When a Great Tradition Modernizes* (1972). In each, emphasis is firmly placed on the plasticity and, indeed, the "modernity" of traditional institutions. For a critical assessment of the Redfield school's work on India see Mary Hancock, "Unmaking the 'Great Tradition': Ethnography, National Culture and Area Studies," *Identities* 4 (1998): 343–388 and Kamala Visweswaran, "India in South Africa: Counter-Genealogies for a Subaltern Sociology?" in Balmurli Natrajan and Paul Greenough, eds., *Against Stigma: Studies in Caste, Race, and Justice since Durban* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2009), 326–374.

States and of the Soviet Union.[80] Development would have to be a sociocultural process, grounded in the folk culture of rural communities. It would have to be decentralized, not only in its means but also in its ends. Redfield rejected the notion that the underdeveloped nations should seek, in course of their development, to emulate the United States and Europe. "The progressive spirit of Asia and Africa is not simply a decision to walk the road of progressive convictions that we have traversed," he insisted, "but rather in significant part an effort the 'backward' peoples to recover from their disruptive encounters with the West by returning to the 'sacred centers' of their ancient indigenous civilizations."[81]

I have given over a great deal of space to describing Redfield's career not just because he trained a number of thinkers who would become important to the world of community development but because he drew out the basic ideas animating community development with greater theoretical refinement and precision than anyone else. But those basic ideas were not original to Redfield, and they can be found, in a more rough-and-ready form, even in the field manuals of practitioners. Like groupists generally, community developers were interested in participation, which they saw as a tool for strengthening communal solidarities. Within the context of overseas development, however, they saw a clear cultural divide between the bearers of technical knowledge and the intended recipients, so much so that grassroots participation took on an anti-technocratic cast. Even such seemingly basic and universal technologies as sanitation and seeds were freighted with an "enormous amount of cultural baggage" when introduced by U.S. development professionals into the global South, explained Margaret Mead, in a UNESCO casebook that was to become a core text of the community development movement. "An alien technology, supported by forms of education and inter-personal relations which are also alien, is likely to separate the practitioners of the new skill from his cultural roots, prevent the new practice from becoming integrated in the living habits of the mass of the people, and produce populations who are confused and disoriented," she continued.[82] Change could never be directed by secular outsiders, nor even by a modernizing urban elite, but must rather come from "village leaders."[83]

The problem with the advice of Redfield and Mead is that it left community developers will little to do. Distributing seeds, building dams, or engaging in any other typical development activity would constitute a counterproductive cultural disruption. Eschewing the content of their craft, developers fell back onto its form. In Carl C. Taylor's rendition, community developers would have no subject-matter expertise but would be "catalyzers and entrepreneurs of local community change."[84] Rural society, the argument went, had admirable traditions but had for centuries been assaulted by the forces of modernization, urbanization, centralization, and colonialism. Those forces pushed the communal instincts of rural societies underground and had engendered a deep distrust of any outside agents. Community developers were then charged with leading the task of recuperation by unleashing the dormant reciprocity and mutuality that was the rightful inheritance of every community. Local leaders must be identified and encouraged, communities must be assembled and prodded to reflect upon their

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[80] Robert Redfield, "The Future of Civilization," Speech, San Francisco, 17 March 1958, p. 2, Redfield Papers, box 63, folder 11.

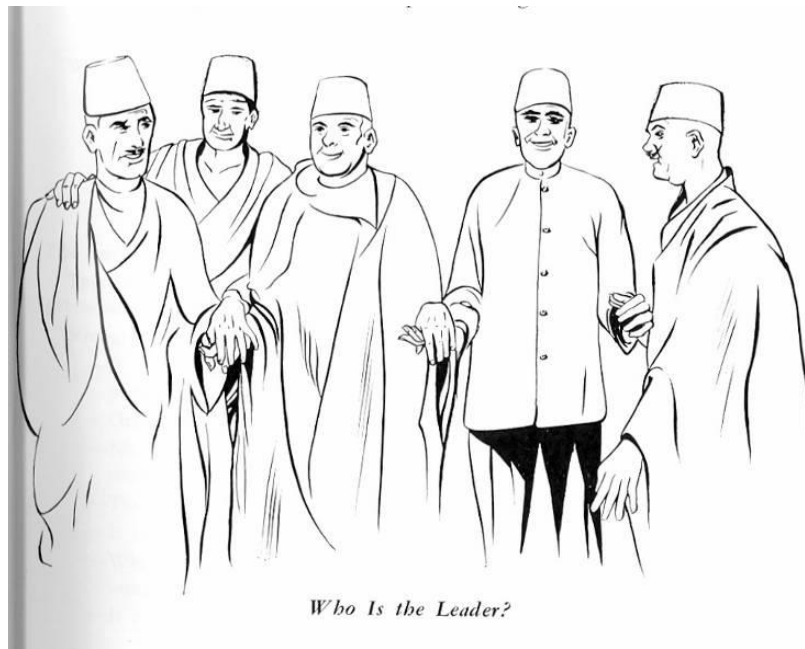
[81] Redfield and Singer, "The Cultural Role of Cities," 73.

[82] Margaret Mead, ed., *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change* (Paris: UNESCO, 1953), 309.

[83] Ibid., 314.

[84] Carl C. Taylor to Stanley Andrews, 31 December 1965, Carl Cleveland Taylor Papers, #3230, box 37, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library. There is nothing distinctive about that particular utterance: community developers, including Taylor, nearly all referred to their primary task to be acting as catalysts for communal awakening.

shared goals, and democratic institutions such as village councils must be established. To undertake these tasks, community developers did not need to know details about agriculture but rather therapeutic techniques derived from group dynamics. When Taylor was asked by the Ford Foundation to address Indian civil servants on community development (which he defined as the art of preserving "as much as possible the values of . . . folk culture" within the context of historical change), Taylor identified the central problem as "small group folk relations" and insisted that the key to Indian development lay in groupist thought such as the management theory of Elton Mayo.[85] Just as the provision of institutional space for small-group solidarities had increased efficiency at General Electric's Hawthorne plant, so too could communal institutions allow India to eradicate poverty.



Group Dynamics as a Developmental Activity: Cartoon explaining the use of small-group deliberation from a 1962 USAID manual for community developers (Jean Ogden, *Community Development: An Introduction to CD for Village Workers*, 1962).

Community development's decentralist and communitarian approach to development placed it in rivalry with another major approach to development that was gathering steam in the 1950s: modernization theory. As the term "modernization theory" is the subject of some confusion, it is worth reflecting briefly on what it is before describing its relationship to community development. In the past two decades, an influential group of historians has proposed a new way of understanding twentieth-century foreign relations. The narrative upon which they have converged is one that explains U.S. foreign policy as having been motivated not primarily by a zeal for democracy or even a desire to protect corporate investments, but by an urge to modernize: to safeguard U.S. interests by placing the nations on the global South on a path toward political stability and economic industrialization. Modernization, as a broad project, can be traced at least to the New Deal, when David Lilienthal proposed establishing

[85] Carl C. Taylor, "Community Mobilization and Group Processes," June 1957, pp. 2, 4, Carl C. Taylor Papers, box 34.

TVAs in "a thousand valleys over the globe."[86] The urge to modernize was not limited to the United States, however, and in fact many of the most ardent modernizers in the United States had been inspired by the example of Stalin's Soviet Union.[87] Modernization projects, in whatever national context, are nearly always dependent on centralized authority and tend to get imposed via planning commissions or executive branches of government rather than through deliberative bodies. In fact, one of the features of modernization projects that has received the most criticisms is the tendency of modernizers to resort to bureaucratic power and to the legitimacy gained from collaboration with scientific elites to circumvent democratic processes and to present modernization as an indisputable imperative rather than a political activity in which there will be winners and losers.[88] James C. Scott has famously described such projects as "high modernist," a term that suggests the hubris that Scott believes has attended much state-directed modernization in the twentieth century.[89]

Modernization, as a broad impulse, can be detected in many times and places, although particularly since the Enlightenment and particularly in the industrialized nations of the global North. Modernization theory, by contrast, is a social scientific framework developed in the 1950s by political scientists, sociologists, and other policy intellectuals in key Cold War universities of the United States: MIT, Harvard, and the University of Chicago.[90] Modernization theorists believed in a uniform and convergent process of development by which societies over time would come to resemble the industrialized global North, particularly the United States. In the version offered by Walt W. Rostow, the developmental process unfolded in identifiable stages, beginning with traditional society and culminating in a universal endpoint, the "stage of high-mass consumption." That final stage, not coincidentally, strongly resembled the United States of the 1950s: it featured an industrial economy, formal political democracy, cosmopolitan values, and a robust state.[91] The process of development, according to modernization theorists, was triggered by technological developments but required psychological, sociological, and political changes as well. Crucially, modernization theorists believed that such changes could be facilitated by vigorous modernization projects. As traditional institutions were replaced with modern ones and as an urban intelligentsia gained social influence, countries would release themselves from the grip of custom and acquire newfound economic prosperity and political stability. Modernization theorists found a comfortable berth within the foreign policymaking establishment, particularly in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, and played a role in shaping the War in Vietnam as well as U.S. aid efforts.[92]

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[86] Lilienthal, *TVA*, 2.

[87] David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[88] For an important articulation of this criticism, see James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

[89] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, especially chap. 3.

[90] See especially Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

[91] Walt Whitman Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

[92] Besides Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*, see Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Michael E. Latham, "Ideology, Social Science, and Destiny: Modernization and the Kennedy-Era Alliance for Progress," *Diplomatic History* 22 (1998): 199–229; Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore*; David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Mark H. Haefele, and Michael E. Latham, eds., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Bruce

The historical literature on modernization theory and on modernization in general has been so compelling that it is hard to remember that Northern countries sponsored any other kind of development *other* than modernization projects. But of course they did. Land reform advocates, of whom there were many in both the United States and the Soviet Union, understood poverty in underdeveloped nations to be the result of an unjust and counterproductive distribution of resources rather than the result of the shackles of tradition, and proposed solutions that, while consonant with modernization projects, followed a distinctly different logic. Community development, I have been arguing, also operated along different lines than modernization theory. It is therefore worth making a distinction between *development* and *modernization*. Although modernization theorists used the two terms interchangeably, and although scholars have largely followed that usage, community developers almost never spoke of themselves as modernizers. For, as Robert Redfield had explained, development in the global South did not necessarily mean emulating the United States and Europe, but may rather be a return to the "sacred centers" of indigenous civilization.

To some degree, community developers and modernization theorists were insulated from each other. Community development as a practice within the United States government reached its apex in the mid 1950s, at a time when modernization theory was still incubating in universities and had yet to fully enter the policy arena.[93] The two groups also had different bases of institutional power and domains of practice. Modernization theorists were largely economists, political scientists, and theoretical sociologists who worked mainly out of U.S. universities and Washington. Community developers, by contrast, were anthropologists and rural sociologists stationed overseas, and often working in rural areas as much as in foreign capitals. Modernization theorists derived their influence from their close connections with policy elites. Community developers derived their influence from their positional power: they were the ones actually running the development programs on the ground. One reason why modernization theory has received so much attention from students of U.S. foreign policy is that historical research based in U.S. and particularly Washington archives suggests the great influence that modernization theorists carried. By contrast, foreign archives, whose contents are concerned with the forms of development actually undertaken in the global South rather than the intellectual framework of the most powerful men in the global North, lead one to place a greater emphasis on community development.

Although modernization theorists and community developers tilled different fields, their values did come into conflict, often as funding decisions were made within Washington (community developers rejoiced in the reception they received from foreign leaders but frequently lamented the ambivalent support they received from Washington, especially by the late 1950s). The conflict between the two was most dramatically illustrated in 1957, when the leading lights of the community development movement were invited to a conference at MIT, sponsored by the International Cooperation Administration's community development division and MIT's Center for International Studies, the institutional home of modernization theorists. Forty experts showed up, including modernization theorists Max Millikan, Daniel Lerner, Lucian Pye, and Donald Blackmer and community development experts Carl C. Tay-

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Kuklick, *Blind Oracles: Intellectuals and War from Kennan to Kissinger* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006); Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission*; and Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[93] See particularly Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future* for a precise chronology of modernization theory.

lor, Louis Miniclier, Conrad Arensberg, and Paul S. Taylor.[94] Despite early enthusiasm for a meeting between modernization theorists and community developers, the run-up to the conference was not entirely smooth. Ernest E. Neal, who had worked as a community development advisor for the State Department in both India and the Philippines, wrote to Louis Miniclier to express his "reservation" about the background papers to be circulated for the conference, which offered theoretical overviews of the topic but few details. "Basic field data with historical depth can be gained only from day-to-day contact with an evolving community development program," he insisted, and yet the modernization theorists, interested only in abstractions, had done little to bring field workers into the conference or solicit reports from them.[95]

Once the conference began, the clash of ideologies came into full view. Modernization theorist Lucian Pye had circulated a paper offering his own interpretation of community development. It was, in his view, a technique by which one could create "a modern nation—in which secular and industrialized modes of behavior will be secure and dominant—out of an earthbound society, predominantly composed of a population that is fragmented into tightly ordered village units."[96] It did this by bridging the gap between the world of the modernizing elite and that of the rural people. But Pye made it clear that bridging this gap was a one-way operation. Modernizing national leaders "could not possibly" accept "the outlooks of the village people"—to do so would be to give up entirely on their dreams for progressive change. And the impossibility of national leaders adopting the village perspective was a good thing, because were they to do so "then much of the political drive for change would be eliminated from these societies."[97] Community developers refrained from endorsing Pye's notion of community development as a tool for diffusing modern norms throughout a population and argued that, if community development were to be used to bridge a gap between peasants and elites, then the goal of the program should not be to train peasants in the norms of elites but to train elites in the norms of their subjects.

The conflicts continued. One modernization theorist insisted that development must involve the transition to mechanized agriculture—precisely the transition that community developers had fought when they served in the New Deal. The economists at the conference mainly discussed community development as if it were a straightforward mechanism to increase GNP, and found it lacking. Community developers dutifully explained that the point of their practice was not really raising agricultural production but placing power in the hands of villagers so that they could cushion themselves from some of the worst shocks of economic transition. Max Millikan allowed that empowering villagers sounded nice, but he wondered whether community-based decision-making was consistent at all with modernization or whether it would have to be sacrificed as a nation approached maturity. The Princeton sociologist Wilbert E. Moore, sensing the dynamic of the debates, accused community developers of being

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[94] Irwin Sanders, *Community Development and National Change: Summary of Conference, Endicott House, December 13–15, 1957* (Washington: International Cooperation Administration, 1958), 67–70.

[95] Ernest E. Neal to Louis Miniclier, 21 February 1957, USOM Philippines; Subject Files, 1951–59; Box 120; Mission to the Philippines, Executive Office; Technical Cooperation Administration; Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–61, Record Group 469; National Archives at College Park.

[96] Lucian W. Pye, "Community Development as Part of Political Development," background paper prepared for Endicott conference, 1957, *Community Development Review*, March 1958, 2.

[97] Ibid., 18.

> peasant lovers, who have a somewhat distorted notion of peasant communities and certainly a distorted notion of the general level of health, material well-being, and general satisfaction on the part of the local people. This approach may confirm all the archaic elements in the traditional social structure, bolster them, and effect what is precisely not needed with reference to long-term, continuing economic growth.[98]

In response, the community developers issued a plea for "dynamic stability": the use of traditions in a gradual adaptation to changing conditions—basically Redfield's primary urbanization. The recorder for the conference observed that the two camps seemed to be "at cross purposes," and had conceded to each other that there "inherent disagreements" between them.[99] "I did not anticipate the confusion or lack of communication between the various disciplines," admitted the conference's organizer, and plans for future meetings fizzled.[100]

I have argued that the differences between modernization theorists and community developers ran deep. But that is not the only way to interpret the relationship between the two. One could imagine a form of community development that was perfectly consonant with modernization theory. Participatory and tradition-based methods could be lashed to a broad modernization project, functioning effectively as a "soft" form of modernization—the velvet glove encasing the iron fist. Nick Cullather, the historian who has written at greatest length about community development, has made just that argument. In *The Hungry World* (2010), Cullather describes U.S. community development efforts in India as a transitional sort of modernization, not quite the full-blown technocratic modernization of Walt W. Rostow, but a form of "modernism" nonetheless, in which the improved village would focus as a "beacon of modernity, diffusing technical and administrative innovations into the surrounding territory."[101] Such a description is in line with the prevailing historiographical trend in writing on U.S. foreign policy, which seeks to understand nearly all of U.S. policies in the global South in terms of the urge to modernize. It is also, tellingly, in line with Lucian Pye's understanding of community development. Pye actively *sought* to make community development into a form of technocratic modernization, but community developers—the people who had actually established community development programs and who played the greatest role in running those programs—resisted.

At the core of the issue was community development's theory of history. Whereas modernization theorists were forthright in their belief that the United States of the 1950s represented the future of developing countries, community developers rejected the notion of a uniform developmental path to some purportedly "modern" end-state. Rather than seeing history as a staircase, with a set of stages to ascend, they saw it as a tightrope, on which the challenge is to maintain equilibrium—to conserve communal institutions while adapting to new

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98 Sanders, *Summary of Conference*, 38.

99 Ibid., 5.

100 Louis Miniclier to Max Millikan, 17 December 1957, Millikan Papers, MC188, box 17, folder 192.

101 Cullather, *The Hungry World*, 78. A similar portrait of Indian community development as a form of technocratic modernization can be found in Matthew Hull, "Democratic Technologies of Speech: From World War II America to Postcolonial Delhi," *Linguistic Anthropology* 20 (2010): 257–282. For related treatments of the village in development in general, see James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Nick Cullather, "'The Target is the People': Representations of the Village in Modernization and U.S. National Security Doctrine," *Cultural Politics* 2 (2006): 29–48; and Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). A theoretical treatment of how community-oriented political strategies serve technocratic ends can be found in Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chap. 5.

conditions and technologies—and to avoid any sudden or catastrophic transformations. Theirs was not a triumphalist theory of history, grounded in a confident sense of their nation's own purpose, but a significantly more cautious one, learned from observing the baleful effects of modernization on rural farms and small villages.

Viewing development as a walk on a tightrope rather than an ascension of a staircase meant perceiving perilous excesses on both sides. Not only did community developers, like the modernization theorists, see the dangers that Third World villages would face should they refuse to accept any changes, but they also saw the dangers that they might face should they rush to emulate the global North. Community developers were, in fact, fairly critical of their own nation, even as they cherished the democratic spirit that they took to be its core value. Reflecting on the history of westward expansion in the United States, Carl C. Taylor argued that the United States had begun as a decent nation of self-sufficient farming communities but had become, with various land rushes, "a nation of exploiters." That spirit of exploitation had led to the Depression, agricultural debts, and war. "We can't go forward on the same old trail," he warned. "Exploitation has far overshot its mark."[102] Redfield, as already mentioned, deplored the "emphasis on technology (which we sometimes miscall 'science') and on material increase" in both the United States and the Soviet Union and suggested that the peoples of the industrialized countries would benefit from acquaintance with the "more mature philosophies" of Asia.[103] The United States, in other words, did not represent an end-point of development but an excess to be avoided in search of a balanced course.[104]

In the end, thinkers like Redfield and Taylor arrived at a solution to the problem of global poverty that was culturally pluralist, decentralist, and ambivalent about the role of the United States. This chapter has shown how such an approach was drawn from groupist principles, and how the personnel were drawn from the TVA, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and War Relocation Authority. But community development cannot be understood in full by tracing its U.S. roots alone. Community development was a global movement, whose success can best be attributed not to the hegemonic power of the United States in the postwar world but to the willingness of foreign leaders to adopt it, often for their own reasons. Because of their interest in embedding development within local cultures, U.S. community developers were unusually receptive to the ideas of residents of the Third World. The next two chapters of this dissertation, then, will examine the ways in which community development was exported to, and adapted in, two key Cold War countries: India and the Philippines. It is a story that includes Third World actors and ideas as well as U.S. ones. It is also a story of how a well-intentioned program encountered inflexible limits.

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[102] Carl C. Taylor, "Stabilizing American Agriculture and Rural Life," speech, delivered 28 January 1936, in Carl C. Taylor Papers, #3230, box 1.

[103] Robert Redfield, "The Future of Civilization," Speech, San Francisco, 17 March 1958, pp. 2-3, Redfield Papers, box 63, folder 11.

[104] Corinna Unger, who has studied German development strategies in India, suggests that Germany may also have had approaches to development that are not perfectly accurately characterized as modernization theory. Corinna R. Unger, "Industrialization vs. Agrarian Reform: West German Modernization Policies in India in the 1950s and 1960s," *Journal of Modern European History* 8 (2010): 47–65.

Chapter Three: India

In 1952, a staff member in the U.S. embassy in New Delhi named Ellery Foster wrote a series of memoranda to the embassy staff about what he perceived to be a looming crisis in India. The crisis was not one of the sort usually discussed—a failure of the monsoon, an epidemic, or a famine. It was, rather, a sociological crisis: the erosion and imminent destruction of the local community. Centuries of feudalism and colonial rule, Foster warned, had so strained the local community that it was on the brink of extinction.[1] In this regard, India was coming to resemble the United States, which had left its own communities in "disharmony and waste" in the fever of its economic expansion.[2] "The West does not have a ready-made answer for India—it does not even have one for itself."[3] If the problem could be solved at all, Foster reasoned, the solution must come from "a synthesis of the best wisdom of the East and West": the West's acumen for economic growth must be tempered by the East's regard for strong communities in a program of "decentralized development."[4]

To approach development with an eye toward protecting communities would mark a sharp shift away from prevailing development practices, the sort that had characterized U.S. reconstruction aid to Europe. Rather than stimulating the national economy of India with investment and infrastructure building, Foster argued, the United States must invest in an "emergency scheme of *community* economics."[5] Government aid agencies should be augmented or replaced by community-run folk schools, village life should be developed in order to stanch the flow of rural Indians toward cities, and generally formal institutions should be replaced by informal ones, and developmental programs should privilege not only economic growth but also "laughter and song, poetry and philosophy, art and religion."[6] Most notably, Foster called for abolishing monetary exchange where possible and replacing it with an organized system of barter based on local clearing-houses, which would prevent resources from escaping the countryside. Despite the boldness of his proposals, though, Foster remained tentative about them all, if only because he was deeply suspicious of blueprints of any sort. "Whenever you attempt to have everything planned and directed by an organization you impose rigidity and bottlenecks that stymie progress and your efforts can too easily end in a dictatorship," he noted.[7] If community economics was to become a reality, it must become so through "a grass-roots process of democratic planning and action."[8]

It is easy to dismiss Foster as a utopian, hopelessly out of step with the imperatives of foreign policy and economic development. Indeed, Foster eventually became disgusted with public life and spent the end of his life on the periphery of it, taking up countercultural causes such as organic farming, solar energy, recycling, cooperative living, yoga, and a Vedic celibacy practice known as brahmacharya.[9] But to write Foster off would be to miss important and

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[1] Ellery Foster, "On Learning to be a Community Organizer," 22 July 1952, Chester Bowles Papers, Manuscript Group 628, folder 470, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University.

[2] Ellery Foster, "Some Rueful but Relevant Recollections of a Community Development Venture of the United States Government," c. 1952, Bowles Papers, folder 470.

[3] Foster, "Learning to be a Community Organizer."

[4] Ibid.; "A Land to Live in, a Garden with Homes and Work Places," 19 August 1952, Bowles Papers, folder 470

[5] Ellery Foster, "India's Community Development Problem: A Challenge to Common Sense," 11 August 1952, Bowles Papers, folder 470.

[6] Foster, "Learning to be a Community Organizer."

[7] Ibid.

[8] Foster, "Rueful but Relevant Recollections."

[9] Ellery Foster, *The Coming Age of Conscience* (Winona, Minn.: May Sandrock and Milton Foster Memorial Foundation, 1977).

central features about U.S. participation in Indian agricultural development. For, in many ways, Foster was not the exception but the rule. Community economics was not the off-the-wall dream of a starry-eyed radical, but was only a slightly amplified version of the general set of policies that both Indian and U.S. officials pursued under the name of community development. Community-run schools, improved villages, decentralization, nonmaterial measures of welfare ("laughter and song," etc.), and informal institutions were, in fact, at the very heart of India's community development program. Even Foster's call for protecting villages from the market through clearinghouses was captured in community development's promotion of village cooperatives and local industries, and it was not unusual to hear S. K. Dey, the head of the community development program rail, like Foster, against the "evils of capitalism."[10] Foster's views, in other words, did not disqualify him from holding a high-ranking office in the foreign policy establishment; those views were precisely why Foster was hired. And after serving a full term under U.S. ambassador Chester Bowles as one of the architects of U.S. community development aid to India, Foster continued to work privately as a community development advisor in the Middle East, returning to government service in the 1960s as part of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier.

Ellery Foster, though hardly the most powerful civil servant to ever work for the State Department, is useful to consider nonetheless because he is precisely the sort of person who is *not* supposed to appear in the officialdom of development. As historians have generally explained it, in the twenty years after World War II both the United States and India were committed to a top-down, technocratic, statist model of development that prioritized heavy industry, infrastructure, urban values, and national economic growth. In the United States, the principal agents of this form of development were the modernization theorists, who have been described in the previous chapter. On the Indian side, this portrait of postwar development was most influentially painted by Partha Chatterjee, in his *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World* (1986). There, Chatterjee contrasts the political economy of Gandhi with that of Nehru, pointing out that while Gandhi sought a decentralized economy composed of self-sufficient village communities, Nehru had an unshakeable ideological commitment to a "supremely statist" economy dominated by "large-scale heavy industry."[11] Building on Chatterjee's basic insights, subsequent historians have emphasized the technocratic, centralized, urbanist, and industry-centered aspects of Nehruvian state-building, singling out for particular attention and criticism Nehru's great interest in massive dams, which he famously called "temples of a new, progressive India."[12] Ramachandra Guha's recent blockbuster synthesis of research on post-independence India has echoed the same conclusions: there was, Guha notes, "an overwhelming consensus in favour of a heavy industry-oriented, state-supported model of development" among policymakers in the Nehruvian era.[13]

Chatterjee's criticism of Nehruvian high modernism resonates strongly with the critical attacks that U.S. historians have made on the modernization impulse within U.S. foreign poli-

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[10] S. K. Dey, "Is Partyless Democracy Possible?" *Kurukshetra*, May 1962, 13.

[11] Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 160, 144.

[12] For an important general overview of the technocratic and scientistic aspects of Nehruvian planning, see Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), chap. 6. On dams, see Daniel Klingensmith, *'One Valley and a Thousand': Dams, Nationalism, and Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and Sanjeev Khagram, *Dams and Development: Transnational Struggles for Water and Power* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004)

[13] Ramachandra Guha, *India after Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy* (London: Macmillan, 2007), 225.

cy. Like Nehru—or at least like Nehru as portrayed by Chatterjee and his colleagues—U.S. modernizers favored the development of industry, science as a guiding social value, the relinquishment of traditions, national economic growth, and the emergence of a capable state dedicated to realizing universal norms. But just as I have argued for the presence and prominence within U.S. thought and culture and, more particularly, within the U.S. foreign policy apparatus, of politically important groups favoring decentralist and communitarian strategies, in this chapter I will argue that the Indian Planning Commission was never as monolithic as our historiography suggests. India invested heavily in community development and its promotion of community development was distinctively ideological. Whereas in other countries community development was accepted by policymakers as a useful strategy for dealing with the problems of development, in India it was promoted explicitly for its anti-technocratic and communitarian elements. India was thus not only the largest and most influential nation to adopt a thoroughgoing community development program, it was also the nation most committed to community development's principles.

At the heart of support of community development in India was a political vision centering on the idea of the village community. That idea received its classic formulation in 1830 when colonial administrator Sir Charles Metcalfe declared Indian villages to be "little republics, having nearly everything they can want in themselves," so autonomous that they were nearly impervious to imperial politics.[14] There was something self-serving in Metcalfe's description, which seemed to imply that the British raj posed no great threat to Indian society, and nearly every British commentator on Indian rural society after Metcalfe found reason to quote or agree with him. But the Indian village community gained another valence in the late nineteenth-century with the publication of Sir Henry Maine's *Village-Communities in the East and West* (1871), which suggested a tension between the customary economic arrangements of the village community and the liberal economics of the free market. Maine had regarded the Indian system of economy to be a primitive one and seemed to celebrate the "breaking to pieces" of the old village communities that the coming of a liberal market order would require.[15] But his detailed and open-minded presentation of the workings of village society opened the door for numerous radicals who read him as proving the practicality of socialism (J. S. Mill. Lewis Henry Morgan, Friedrich Engels, and Henry George all read Maine in this way).[16] The village, in the eyes of its defenders, was a functional system that distributed goods according to social rather than economic principles and, if it did not always do so equally, at least ensured that no one was left to starve. The village economy and the caste system that governed it was "socialistic rather than capitalistic," wrote U.S. missionary William H. Wiser in 1936, embodying "group and community concepts as opposed to individualistic concepts" and creating "a balance in the community which makes for co-operation, satisfaction, and peace."[17] Wiser continued: "We of the West may . . . learn that peace and contentment in the

[14] Charles Metcalfe, "Minute on the Settlement in the Western Provinces," 7 November 1830, in *Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company, III—Revenue, Parliamentary Papers*, 1831–32, 11:331–2.
[15] Henry Sumner Maine, *Village-Communities in the East and West: Six Lectures Delivered at Oxford* (London: John Murray, 1871), 112.
[16] An excellent review of Maine's theory and its reception is provided in Clive Dewey, "Images of the Village Community: A Study in Anglo-Indian Ideology," *Modern Asian Studies* 6 (1972): 291–328.
[17] William Henricks Wiser, *The Hindu Jajmani System: A Socio-Economic System Interrelating Members of a Hindu Village Community in Services* (Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House, 1936), 52, 136.

social and economic relationships of a community are attainable only by integrating one's own aims and purposes with those of the local groups."[18]

Between Sir Charles Metcalfe in the 1830s and William H. Wiser in the 1930s, commentators had moved from condemning the Indian village for its political inertia to celebrating it for its communal virtues. One cause of the shift was clearly changing views in Europe and the United States about the liberal system. In the 1930s particularly, the crisis of capitalism and unprecedented growth of state power that had turned many thinkers in the United States toward groupism pushed them also to recognize the virtues, as Wiser did, of the Indian village community. But such a trend was relatively small compared to the turn toward the village community within India itself. India, unlike the United States, did not experience the 1930s as a momentary crisis but as only a new episode in a much longer tragedy. The economic burden of colonialism—subjecting India to a series of devastating famines from the late nineteenth century to the Bengal famine of World War II—exposed Indians to the worst side of liberal economics and meant that, by independence, hardly any Indian policymakers placed faith in laissez-faire.[19] A similar story can be told in relation to state power. Although the depression of the 1930s pushed many thinkers in the United States toward collectivism, other global events had the opposite effect. The rise of fascism, the war against Hitler, and the increasing disillusionment with the Soviet Union led to increasing fears of what James Burnham called the "managerial revolution," in which individual liberties would be sacrificed to the cold rationality of totalitarianism.[20] Indians, by contrast, had no need to look abroad to see the dangers of authoritarian rule; the famines it suffered were, as Indian economists recognized at the time, as much state effects as market effects, and the Indian nationalist movement offered biting criticisms of the excesses of the colonial state. In reference to both markets and states, the pattern is the same: the events of the 1930s and 1940s pushed many U.S. thinkers to become newly critical of the central institutions of industrial civilization, whereas Indians, because of their colonized status, had viewed those institutions with skepticism for a significantly longer period. In a sense, the depression and war encouraged Americans to see the world through Indian eyes.

Thus, in India, where the costs of large states and integrated markets were higher, the turn to small communities was much more pronounced. It was particularly so in the writing of Mohandas Gandhi. Well-versed in the Orientalist tradition of scholarship that included Metcalfe and Maine, Gandhi insisted that the soul of the Indian nation lay in its villages and, with extraordinary success, transformed the Indian nationalist movement from a straightforward independence movement led by an urban intelligentsia into a mass movement with a rural basis and a deep appreciation for Indian customs and traditions. Gandhi felt that such an appreciation endowed Indians with a distinctive and important approach to the problems of the modern world. As Bharatan Kumarappa, a social theorist whose work carried Gandhi's endorsement, put it in 1946, the dilemma that Westerners saw between capitalism and socialism should actually be seen as a trilemma: capitalism, socialism, and "villagism." Villagism, although not always by that name, had been the central thrust of Gandhian nationalism since the 1920s. Advanced in such works as Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* (1909) and *Why the Village Move-*

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[18] Ibid., 190–191.

[19] On famines see Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlements and Deprivations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) and Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London: Verso, 2001). For a more cautious account of the colonial Indian economy, see B. R. Tomlinson, *The Economy of Modern India, 1860-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[20] James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution: What is Happening in the World* (New York: The John Day Company, 1941).

ment? (1936) by Bharatan Kumarappa's brother J. C. Kumarappa, villagism called for a decentralization of both the economy and political authority, so that production and decision-making would both happen on the level of the village. "It is only in small groups," Bharatan Kumarappa explained, "that the family tie of the individual to the group and of the groups to the individual can develop, not in the huge nation-wide groups brought about through centralised large-scale production."[21] Devolving economic and political power to the village was not an easy task. Among other things, the Kumarappa brothers and Gandhi insisted that it would require the abolition, or at least sharp restriction, of money. But for the mass of rural Indians, many of whom had lost more than they had gained by the expansion of the cash economy and by the growth of the colonial state, such radical solutions did not seem out of place. In fact, Gandhi and the Kumarappas insisted constantly that villagism had ample precedent in the economy of classical India.

The resemblance between groupists in the United States and the village movement in India is clear. Both can be explained by reference to the experience of each country in a shared global history of industrial civilization. But communitarian strains in the two countries did not develop in isolation from each other. Rather, the depth of India's commitment to villagism meant that India acted as a global beacon for anyone wishing to investigate communitarian ideas. That U.S. thinkers came to agree with Indians was in part a consequence of the fact that they had been reading and thinking about India for some time. A claim of this sort may seem odd—we are used to thinking about the influence of Europe on the United States but we rarely talk about the influence of Asia. Nevertheless, historians are now uncovering the many transnational circuits that linked the two countries. Many opinion leaders toured India at least once; besides presidents and State Department officials, visitors included Adlai Stevenson, Walter Reuther, John Kenneth Galbraith (who served as ambassador), William O. Douglas, Jacqueline Kennedy, Milton Friedman, Walter Lippmann, Sargent Shriver, Martin Luther King, Jr., Walt W. Rostow, Norbert Wiener, Norman Cousins, and David Lilienthal.

Given the general transmission of Indian ideas to the United States, it should not come as a great surprise that the U.S. community development movement looked frequently to India. Arthur E. Morgan, the former head of the TVA, traveled to India for nine months starting in 1948. He was immediately taken by the ancient Indian system of village government, which he compared to the New England town meeting.[22] Morgan fell in quickly with a group Gandhians who saw in him a kindred spirit and who would later bring out Indian editions of his writings. For his part, Morgan published in his *Community Service News* dispatches from India, excerpts from Indian works such as Bharatan Kumarappa's *Capitalism, Socialism, or Villagism?* (1946), and numerous articles on Gandhian thought. Two of Morgan's staff members, the missionaries Ralph and Lila Templin, boasted an even stronger engagement with India: for fifteen years they had run a village-level aid project in India. It was there, significantly, that they heard the term "decentralization" for the first time (they found it "in constant use" in India).[23] The Templins returned to the United States and settled near Yellow Springs, Ohio to work as consultants on community life for Morgan. There they continued to teach about India, and even managed to bring Asha Devi, the director of Gandhi's educational organization the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, to Ohio for a conference on the small community in 1952. Because of the energetic importation of Indian ideas into the U.S. community movement,

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[21] Bharatan Kumarappa, *Capitalism, Socialism or Villagism?*, 2d ed.(1946; Rajghat, Varanasi: Sarva Seva Sangh, 1965), 115.

[22] "Arthur Morgan Writes from India," *Community Service News*, May–June 1949, 66,

[23] Ralph Templin, "Significance of Decentralization for Community Life," *Community Service News* 5 (1947): 153.

even communitarians who had never traveled to India were well aware of Indian thinkers. "The thinkers of the Orient are likely still to be community-minded, or village-minded in the best sense, as over against the abstract, anonymous, cosmopolitanism of the Occident," explained Baker Brownell. "They have a great contribution to make, perhaps the saving contribution, to any stable order and peace in the world."[24] Brownell probably had Bharatan Kumarappa in mind when he wrote those words, for he discussed Kumarappa's book on villagism enthusiastically in his own major work, *The Human Community* (1950).[25]

The transnational ties of communitarianism connecting India and the United States might have remained dormant had not India's independence and the rise of the United States to the position of global hegemon impelled U.S. actors to take part in the complex process of restructuring India as a democratic nation. As the diplomatic bond between the two countries thickened, U.S. communitarians found ample opportunity for work in India. Blazing the trail was architect and urban planner Albert Mayer. As a member of the Regional Planning Association of America and a co-founder of the Housing Study Guild, Mayer was a member of a small group of influential regionalist thinkers that included Lewis Mumford, Benton MacKaye, Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, and Catherine Bauer. Like his fellow regionalists, Mayer was obsessed with the erosion of community that he believed had been brought on by the capitalist economy. As they saw it, profit-minded real estate developers, in chopping up land into small, salable, privately held parcels, had made it nearly impossible for towns to invest in green spaces, community buildings, pedestrian zones, playgrounds, local shopping areas, or any of the other public amenities that could turn a conglomeration of residences into a community. Taking up Clarence Perry's notion of the "neighborhood unit," Mayer and his colleagues sought to reverse this trend by developing not individual buildings but large lots or ideally whole towns—patches of land large enough to contain entire communities, and therefore capable of being developed with communal functions in mind.[26] For Mayer, this meant building "superblocks" in the city and, during the New Deal, planning Green Belt towns.[27]

In World War II, Mayer served in India constructing airstrips, and at the end of his tour he met Jawaharlal Nehru. The two quickly established a bond and enjoyed "intimate talks until far into the night" about model villages and about the possibility of applying Mayer's ideas to India.[28] Nehru was particularly taken by Mayer's notion that rather than focusing on one or another aspect of human welfare, a planner might conceive of "a whole with various aspects inter-linked" and seek "to build up community life."[29] Nehru invited Mayer back to India for an exploratory visit in 1946 and threw his full weight behind Mayer's project, arranging appointments for him with top Indian leaders (including Gandhi), discussing Mayer's draft proposals with Gandhi, and personally taking up such mundane topics as salary and personnel

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24 Baker Brownell to Morris L. Cooke, 1 November 1946, Baker Brownell Papers, box 30, folder 3, Northwestern University.

25 Baker Brownell, *The Human Community: Its Philosophy and Practice for a Time of Crisis* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 74.

26 A convenient place to look for Mayer's articulation of this vision is Albert Mayer, "A Technique for Planning Complete Communities," *Architectural Forum*, January 1937, 19–36.

27 For an account of Mayer's engagement with regionalist principles and his work in the United States, see Thomaï Serdari, "Albert Mayer, Architect and Town Planner: The Case for a Total Professional" (PhD diss., New York University, 2005).

28 Albert Mayer and Associates, in collaboration with McKim Marriott and Richard L. Park, *Pilot Project, India: The Story of Rural Development at Etawah, Uttar Pradesh* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), 6.

29 Jawaharlal Nehru to Albert Mayer, 17 June 1946, Albert A. Mayer Papers, box 8, folder 1, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago.

in his letters to Mayer.[30] In the United States, Mayer could count on the cooperation of his fellow regionalists. Clarence Stein, who judged Mayer's work in India to be "immensely important," described how Mayer developed his ideas in conversation with Stein and Lewis Mumford. "We all began to see that you could not start with model villages," Stein recalled. As the three mulled the problem over, they concluded that the formal principles of architecture or planning "would really play a very small part" in the development of Indian villages. The real trick, they decided, was to work with Indians to develop sustainable patterns for living, to bypass material questions and to approach directly the development of community.[31] Once he committed himself to a sociological rather than architectural approach, Mayer began to see strong connections between his work and that of the New Deal social scientists. He quickly plunged himself into the literature on Indian anthropology and rural sociology and consulted with the leading lights of the community development movement: M. L. Wilson, Carl C. Taylor, Douglas Ensminger, and Y. C. James Yen.[32] At the same time, Mayer also read the writings of Gandhians, in particular the work of J. C. Kumarappa, Gandhi's official economist and the brother of Bharatan Kumarappa.[33]

Drawing on the advice he received from Nehru, Gandhi, Mumford, and the leading community experts, Mayer established his pilot project in Etawah, a district in Uttar Pradesh. Like many development programs, the Etawah project focused on the basics of scientific agriculture and public health: distributing improved seeds, replanning public spaces, vaccinating and inoculating villagers, running hygiene campaigns, providing superior livestock, and so forth. Mayer insisted, however, that the material achievements of the program were of secondary importance. Rural aid in the past, he believed, had suffered from the overspecialization of experts capable of thinking only with their "technical lobes." Such planners had generally developed large-scale projects designed to maximize economic growth or some other abstract quantity. Schemes of that sort were sometimes necessary, but Mayer argued that they usually came at the cost of "the deterioration of small communities and face-to-face relationships." A communally sensitive development program would have to eschew top-down planning in favor of popular participation, replace large projects with ones small enough to admit of communal oversight, and sometimes reject the recommendations of experts in favor of "folk-solutions."[34] The bottom-up approach became Etawah's trademark, especially as administration of the project passed from Mayer to the folksy Tennessee extension officer Horace Holmes. Development had been ruined by "high-pressure engineers miraculously conjuring up great dam projects," Holmes complained, quipping, "the only thing you can begin doing from the top is drilling a well."[35]

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[30] Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, 23. For Nehru's close engagement with the pedestrian details of Mayer's operation, see the Nehru-Mayer correspondence in Mayer Papers, box 8.

[31] Clarence S. Stein, Address to the Conference on Economic Development and Housing Abroad, 30 April 1953, Clarence S. Stein Papers, #3600, box 15, folder 37, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University.

[32] Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, 31–32; Y. C. James Yen, "Asia Trip" diary, vol. 2, 1952, p. 40, International Institute of Rural Reconstruction Papers, box 115, Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Columbia University.

[33] Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, 32.

[34] Albert Mayer, " Research into Improvement of Rural and Urban Dwellings with Special Reference to Tropical and Underdeveloped Areas," revised draft of United Nations Pamphlet 2, 30 December 1952, pp. 12, 27, 19, Mayer Papers, box 12, folder 14.

[35] Holmes, quoted in Margaret Parton, "Aid to India with Bare Hands," *New York Herald Tribune*, March 11 1950.

Albert Mayer, center, in khaki, at Etawah (Mayer Papers, University of Chicago).

To create an organization capable of mobilizing the grassroots, Mayer augmented the usual array of developmental tactics with a new administrative structure. First, he created the position of Rural Life Analyst, a "participant observer," often with sociological or anthropological training, who would study "the People's habitual ways of doing things" in order to help aid officials understand the villagers' culture and viewpoint.[36] Then, rather than placing village work in the hands of subject-matter experts, which was the standard practice in agricultural extension, Mayer hired "village level workers" whose expertise lay in eliciting local participation. While seemingly a small change, the creation of the village level worker position was taken by many as revolutionary, signaling as it did that the priority in Etawah would not be on the knowledge of experts but rather on the "felt needs" of the people. Arthur F. Raper thought it "highly probable" that the village level worker would "go down in history as one of the great social inventions of this era."[37] Not only did Mayer fill his staff with village level workers, he also did everything in his power to give them equal status as high-ranking experts and civil officials. As part of his scheme of "inner administrative democracy," Mayer would hold long meetings, attended by village level workers and their nominal superiors, at which the

[36] Albert Mayer, "Rural Life Analyst," 15 November 1947, Mayer Papers, box 14, folder 4. Mayer read and admired accounts of the community developers' work in the Japanese internment camps, so it is likely that the Rural Life Analyst was intended as an Indian adaptation of the position of Community Life Analyst, which so many community development experts occupied in the War Relocation Authority. In a neat circle that shows the close connections between U.S. and Indian community development, Mayer's first Rural Life Analyst was Rudra Datt Singh, who left after two years to go to Cornell to study with anthropologist Morris E. Opler, the Community Life Analyst at Manzanar. Singh returned to India with Opler and became Opler's chief collaborator at Senapur, Cornell's field station for studying Indian village life.
[37] Arthur F. Raper, "The Function and Status of Community Development," lecture delivered at a meeting of the Rural Development Seminar in Tehran, 1956, p. 5, Arthur F. Raper Papers, box 6, folder 232, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

village workers would do most of the talking and serve as chairmen.[38] Each meeting also had a "bull session" written into its schedule, during which Mayer hoped an atmosphere of informality would prevail, allowing village workers to speak more frankly.[39] In a country with a rigidly hierarchical civil service inherited from the British, Mayer's administrative democratization was a direct challenge to the status quo.

To observers, the appeal of the Etawah experiment was its remarkable ability to develop an area while relying mostly on locally available resources. A visitor to Mahewa block, the first area to receive aid as part of the Etawah project, at the project's start in 1948 would have found few roads, little drainage, twenty mud schoolhouses (for nearly 100 villages), open wells, and little evidence of local industry. The same visitor returning in 1954 would have found all villages connected by roads with permanent brick or concrete culverts to avoid flooding, a fair amount of drainage, nearly thirty new brick schoolhouses and two high schools, and sanitary wells with hand pumps. The construction labor was performed by village volunteers, with the encouragement of Mayer's staff, and the bricks used were supplied not from the nearest city—which is where bricks were acquired before 1948, at considerable transportation cost—but from a flourishing local brick industry run by cooperatives. Etawah opened its first brick kiln in 1948 and by 1953 it had 520 units, mostly run by cooperatives, providing employment to over 42,000 workers. The kilns were "essentially a decentralized cooperative venture," Mayer boasted; nearly all of the raw materials for the bricks was available locally and cheaply, and the only role that the government had to play in it was to allot coal dust, an essential ingredient but one that was a controlled commodity.[40] Nor was building the only part of the story. Agricultural outputs for fields in Etawah rose as much as 50% with the adoption of new techniques, villagers banded together to purchase expensive but time-saving threshers (and eventually began to manufacture them themselves), and villages established community centers for the first time, twenty-eight of which maintained circulating libraries, all at relatively little cost to the government (for one typical development project, Mayer estimated that the government bore one-third of the cost and villagers, donating material and labor, supplied the rest).[41] Etawah's growth, significantly, had not required the introduction of any expensive new technology, but was fueled mostly by cooperative efforts to make better use of existing technologies. Most important of all, the program had "greatly lifted the morale of the villagers concerned," wrote Mayer. "For through their own work they have found that they need not remain forever as victims of blind forces."[42]

Etawah was not the only Indian experiment in community organization. Besides Gandhi's constructive work at Sevagram and a similar program of rural reconstruction at Rabindranath Tagore's Sriniketan, there were about half a dozen other tentative efforts before and during independence to reform Indian villages along communitarian and democratic lines.[43] But it was Mayer's Etawah that came to stand in as the international symbol for com-

[38] See Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, chap. 3.

[39] Albert Mayer, "To Co-Workers in the Community Projects," 12 July 1953, Mayer Papers, box 2, folder 28.

[40] Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, 277.

[41] Ibid., 243, 251, 270, 261.

[42] Ibid., 262.

[43] The projects often cited as precursors in the community development literature are the refugee camp of Faridabad, S. K. Dey's work in Nilokheri, F. L. Brayne's Gurgaon project, the Firka Development Scheme in Madras, Spencer Hatch's Martandam, and the Baroda Rural Development Program under V. T. Krishnamachari. For an excellent account of these schemes and their relation to post-independence community development, see Subir Sinha, "Lineages of the Developmentalist State: Transnationality and Village India, 1900–1965," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50 (2008): 57–90.

munity development. The *Times of India* compared Mayer to A. O. Hume, the Scotsman who founded the Indian National Congress, and Etawah received frequent front-page coverage in the Indian press.[44] In the United States as well, Etawah was often in the news, appearing in *Time*, *Life* (a four-page spread), the *New York Times Magazine*, and *Ladies Home Journal*. Truman mentioned Etawah in a speech and Eleanor Roosevelt, who visited Etawah in 1952, praised it several times in her syndicated column, "My Day."[45] Even the Harvard Business School, home of group theorists Elton Mayo and Chester Barnard, developed a case study of Etawah for its students as a lesson in democratic administration—an appropriate tribute given the commitment that Mayer shared with the Harvard theorists to flexible administration, grassroots participation, and communitarian values.[46]

A village gathering in Etawah, 1951, as photographed for *Life*.
Horace Holmes, far left, looks on (photo by James Burke).

Of all the observers to take an interest in Etawah, the most consequential was surely Chester Bowles, Truman's ambassador to India. Unlike Mayer and the other community developers, Bowles was not an ideological communitarian. He lacked a rural background and had no experience with agrarian issues. Bowles was, rather, a Keynesian, an advertising executive who had join the ranks of the New Deal, becoming general manager of the Office of Price Administration and contributing ideas to some of Roosevelt's speeches, including the

44 K. C. Khanna, "New Techniques in Rural Uplift Being Employed," *Times of India*, 4 May 1955.

45 See columns from 25 March 1952, 9 July 1952, and 18 September 1953, all accessible at the online archive of "My Day": http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/. A round-up of coverage of Etawah is given in "News Letter from Albert Mayer," 16 June 1952, Mayer Papers, box 13, folder 1.

46 Richard Morse, *Pilot Project in Indian Rural Development* (Cambridge: Harvard Business School, 1952). For treatments of Mayer in historical scholarship, see Nick Cullather, "'The Target is the People': Representations of the Village in Modernization and National Security Doctrine," *Cultural Politics* 2 (2006) and Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), chap. 3.

famous Economic Bill of Rights speech.[47] In 1946, Bowles wrote a forceful propaganda tract, *Tomorrow without Fear*, in which he argued simultaneously for a robust market and an active welfare state. Such enthusiasm for state-directed capitalism would seem to make Bowles an unlikely ally of community development. Nevertheless, when Bowles's support for Truman in the 1948 election cost Bowles his governorship of Connecticut, Truman repaid the favor by granting Bowles an ambassadorial position. To Truman's surprise, Bowles chose India, a post he took up in 1951. The position was an uncomfortable one but it was also, in Bowles's eyes, a key one. As he saw it, after the fall of China the stability of India was the most important factor in the survival of the free world. India possessed one-sixth of the world's population, a key strategic location, and vast natural resources, and yet, as Bowles confessed in a confidential memo to Dean Acheson, the odds of India avoiding a Communist revolution were only "slightly better than 50-50."[48] On Eleanor Roosevelt's advice, Bowles agreed before taking up his ambassadorial post to meet with Y. C. James Yen, the author of China's ambitious rural reconstruction scheme (one source for Mayer's Etawah). Bowles took in Yen's ideas with open ears, observing that Yen's holistic, community-based techniques might fruitfully be applied to Africa and India.[49] Within three weeks of arriving in India, Bowles visited Etawah, which confirmed for him the correctness of Yen's approach. "That night I went to work with pencil and paper. How many village workers would it take to cover every village in India?" he asked himself.[50]

Bowles's question was not an abstract one. As the U.S. ambassador in India, Bowles was well-placed to decide how U.S. aid money to India would be spent. The U.S. Congress had allocated $54 million in aid for India and, the day after the details of the aid package were set, Bowles met with Nehru and offered to hand over the entire sum to India if Nehru would start a nationwide community development program. Nehru accepted the offer after two hours' of discussion and within weeks the aid agreement was signed.[51] Under the Indo-U.S. Technical Agreement of 1952, 55 pilot projects, collectively covering 16,500 villages, were established, with the understanding that India expand the program and absorb an increasing share of the financial burden over time. To aid in the process, however, a number of rural experts from the United States were hired, including Arthur Raper, Carl C. Taylor, Ernest Neal, Bernard Loshbough, and Ellery Foster. With their guidance, Etawah was to become the new face of rural India.

Just at the same time that Bowles was channeling Point Four aid to Indian community development, the Ford Foundation was establishing a private aid program in India. This too, came to focus on community development, although that was not the consequence of a predisposition among U.S. actors toward community schemes but of the great enthusiasm of Jawaharlal Nehru for them. In 1951 the Ford Foundation's director, former Marshall Plan Administrator Paul Hoffman, journeyed to India to decide what activities the Foundation might take up there. Hoffman saw the world roughly as Bowles did. He considered the success of Nehru's government to be of world-historical importance but came to the field "with a completely open mind" and had few preconceived notions of what to do to bolster the Indian

[47] Howard B. Schaffer, *Chester Bowles: New Dealer in the Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 20.

[48] Chester Bowles to Dean Acheson, 26 September 1952, India; Subject Files, 1951–53; Office of the Deputy Administrator; Technical Cooperation Administration; Records of U.S. Foreign Assistance Agencies, 1948–61, Record Group 469; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

[49] Y. C. James Yen, notes on meeting with Chester Bowles, 26 February 1951, IIRR Papers, box 99.

[50] Chester Bowles, *Ambassador's Report* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), 198.

[51] Bowles, *Ambassador's Report*, 198–202.

government against Communism.[52] Nehru, by contrast, had a firm idea of what sort of aid the Ford Foundation might give. The prime minister pointed to India's Grow More Food Campaign, a four-year campaign to increase agricultural production started in 1947. The effort had failed, Nehru said, because it had been too top-down and had focused only on agriculture to the exclusion of other pressing village needs. With the failures of the Grow More Food campaign in mind, Nehru had "developed an area he wanted the Ford Foundation to assist with": community development.[53] As he saw it, the Ford Foundation could be useful to the Indian government because, as a private organization, it could try various experiments within the field, much as Albert Mayer was already doing, and generate some lessons that the Indian government could draw on when it launched an official CD program, as it was soon to do with Bowles's aid. Nehru organized a meeting between Hoffman and S. K. Dey, the administrator whom Nehru would soon tap to lead India's community development program. Hoffman and Dey quickly fell in; as Dey recounted, Hoffman shared the view prevailing among Indian policymakers that "if democracy—political, economic, and social—was to be successful in India, it was imperative that a beginning was made to energise the roots from which the saplings could grow."[54]

After Nehru suggested a community development program to Hoffman, the Ford Foundation scrambled to experts to work on it. Luckily, it did not have to look very far, as the quick decline of the USDA's innovative Bureau of Agricultural Economics had put a number of experienced rural sociologists with community organizing experience out of work and looking for jobs overseas. On the advice of Howard Tolley, the Chief of the BAE, and M. L. Wilson, Undersecretary of Agriculture, Hoffman hired former BAE head of community organization research Douglas Ensminger as the Foundation's representative in India, a post that Ensminger held from 1951 until 1970. The son of a tenant farmer, Ensminger held a doctorate in rural sociology from Cornell (where he studied under Irwin Sanders) and had already worked abroad with the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization and with the United States' Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. And, like other community-oriented thinkers in the United States, Ensminger had already had a significant exposure to Gandhian thought, by virtue of studying at Stephens College with a Bible teacher, Nellie Lee Holt, who had spent three months in India by Gandhi's side.[55] Upon arriving in India, Ensminger deepened his knowledge of Gandhism by reading widely in the field, and he acquainted himself with the fledgling community development movement by making Etawah one of his first stops.

As the Ford Foundation's representative, Ensminger was in charge of coordinating the flow of rural expertise from the United States to India. Under the Indo-U.S. agreement on community development, the Ford Foundation would set up centers to train community project officials and village level workers. To staff these training centers and to evaluate the results of early experiments with community development, the Foundation brought most of the leading lights in community studies to India. Leading rural sociologist Carl C. Taylor, who was also occasionally employed in India by the State Department, visited India six times in the 1950s and stayed there for a total of two years, most of the time in the employ of the Founda-

[52] Douglas Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, 22 February 1973, box A, folder 1, p. 9, Ford Foundation Archives.
[53] Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box A, folder 1, pp. 8–9.
[54] S. K. Dey, *Power to the People?: A Chronicle of India, 1947–67* (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1969), 20–21.
[55] Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box A, folder 13, pp. 1–2.

tion—he even became fluent in Hindi.[56] The foundation also funded research trips to India by rural sociologist M. L. Wilson, anthropologists Oscar Lewis and Morris Opler, urban sociologist Marshall Clinard, and Chicago theorists Milton Singer and Robert Redfield. Between the State Department and the Ford Foundation, there was hardly a single U.S. expert in overseas community development who did not spent at least some time in India.

For Ensminger, the "underlying goal" of India's community development program was not to build wells or modernize agriculture but "to *recreate* a significant village culture."[57] Under his guidance, then, Ford devoted most of its resources to bringing to India experts in group dynamics, the burgeoning field of study that accompanied the growth of groupism in the United States. At S. K. Dey's request, the Foundation hired Larry McLaughlin, who had attended the National Training Laboratory's institutes in Bethel, Maine, to explain group dynamics to Dey and his top staff.[58] Carl C. Taylor was similarly engaged to bring Indian practitioners up to date on Elton Mayo's Hawthorne experiments, William F. Whyte's street corner ethnography, and other foundational U.S. research on the behavior of small groups.[59] When Dey sought to establish a National Institute for Community Development that could serve as an intellectual nerve center for the program, M. L. Wilson was hired to assemble its library; the small collection included the writings of Arthur E. Morgan, John Dewey, Margaret Mead, Jean and Jess Ogden, Kurt Lewin, and, of course, the USDA rural sociologists.[60] The Ford Foundation soon became the principal promoter of democratic administrative methods within the Indian bureaucracy, sponsoring a series of seminars in which senior civil servants would participate in small group discussions with their subordinates and with non-officials.[61] All lectures at the Foundation-sponsored National Institute for Community Development were followed by question periods and then by the breaking up of the audience into discussion groups.[62] Foundation officials hoped that by training top-level community development practitioners in the art of democratic administration, the entire national program could be imbued a flexibility, creativity, and enthusiastic spirit. In other words, they were seeking to reform the Indian civil service along exactly the same lines that business theorists like Elton Mayo, Chester Barnard, and Peter Drucker had sought to reform U.S. corporations.

The strong involvement of U.S. actors like Mayer, Bowles, and the Ford Foundation would have sufficed to launch a program of significant scope in India. The program would never have come close to achieving the scale that it did, however, had not it also received strong and sustained report from high-ranking Indian policymakers and from the public. Despite its marginality within the historiography of Indian planning, the community development program was a *massive* undertaking. Launched on October 2, 1952 (Gandhi's birthday), the program started out covering 16,500 villages. But it quickly expanded. On October 2, 1953, Nehru supplemented the Community Projects Administration with the National Extension Service, a large staff of agricultural workers trained to prepare the ground for community de-

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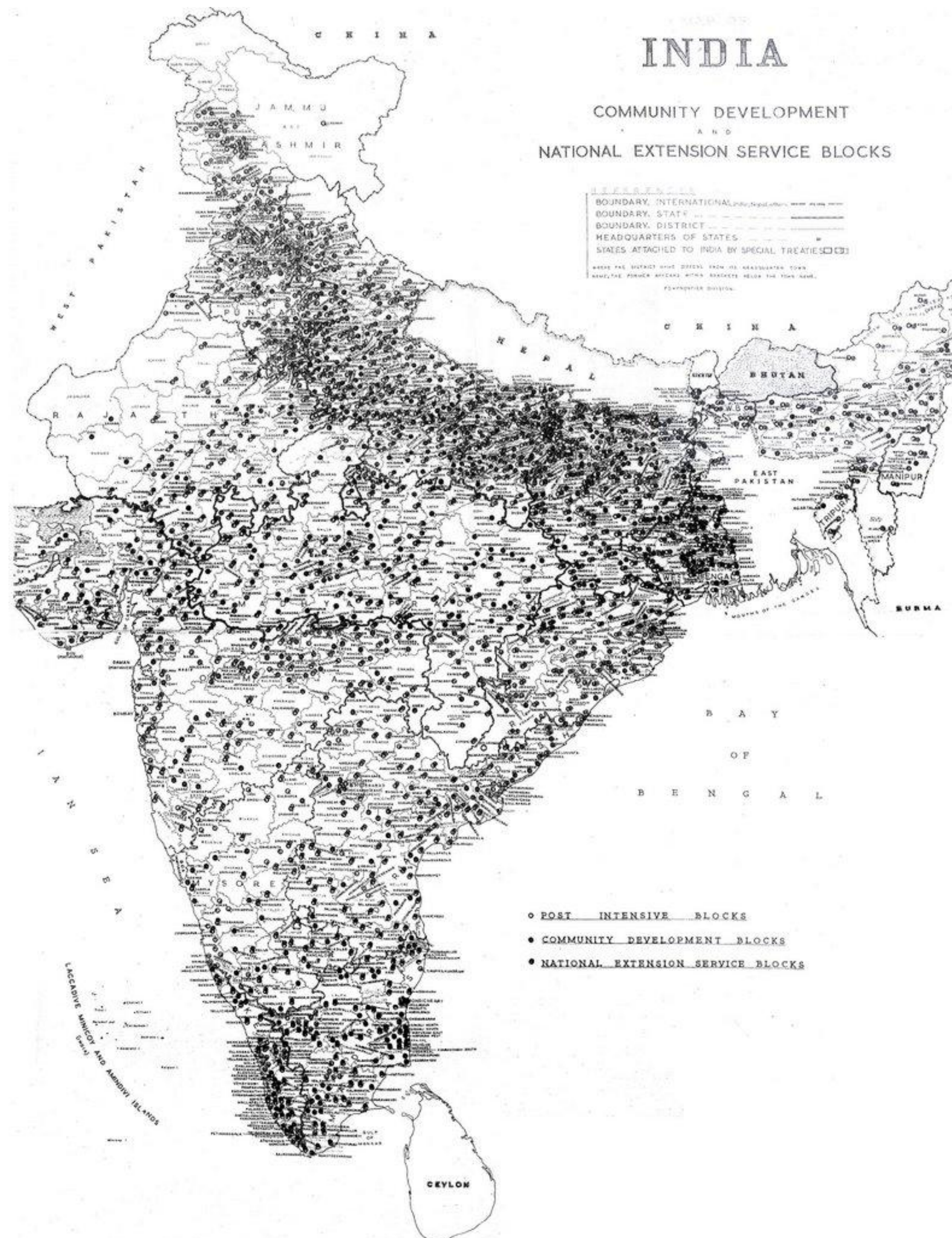
[56] Carl C. Taylor, "Sociological Analysis: Two Major Evils," *Kurukshetra*, January 1959, 379; "How Much 'Identification' with the Villagers?" *India Village Service Chronicle*, 14 May 1955, 1.
[57] Douglas Ensminger and Carl C. Taylor, "The National Development Program of India with Specific Reference to its Rural Sector," September 1954, p. 18, Report #000614, Ford Foundation Archives.
[58] Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box B, folder 21, pp. 62–63.
[59] Carl C. Taylor, "Community Mobilization and Group Processes," June 1957, Carl Cleveland Taylor Papers, #3230, box 34, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University.
[60] A list of the books available in the NICD library can be found in R. Jagannathan, "Book Review Programme," n.d., subject file 261, Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, installments I and II, Manuscripts Division, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
[61] See "The Ranchi Seminar," *Kurukshetra*, January 1957, 7–10.
[62] Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box B, folder 21, p. 135.

velopment activities and to sustain them after intensive community development work had finished. Community workers and extension workers spread across the nation and by April 1962, ten years after the program began, the community development scheme had expanded to nearly thirty times its original size, covering 446,000 villages, 2.4 million square kilometers, and 253.2 million villagers—over eight percent of the world's population.[63] By the beginning of 1965, every village in India, summing up to over ten percent of the global population, was covered by community development agencies.



An All-India Program: Map, c. 1956, showing the spread of community development blocks (Jayaprakash Narayan Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library).

[63] "A Decade of C. D. Programme at a Glance," *Kurukshetra*, October 1962, 97.

On paper, at least, the national community development program followed the basic operating procedure of Mayer's Etawah pilot project. Lines of authority connected officers in Delhi to state development officers, down to district, block, and finally village-level workers, the last of whom were, as in Etawah, the center of the program. But whereas in Etawah a single village-level worker might cover four villages, the exigencies of the national budget required workers to handle between ten and seventeen villages, with a combined population that could exceed ten thousand villagers.[64] By necessity as well as by choice, then, village-level workers, as their first order of business, identified and recruited "natural leaders" within the village who were sympathetic to the program and who could organize meetings and help initiate projects. Once he or she had a local network in place, the village-level worker would then call meetings where villagers would reflect of their "felt needs" and on ways to meet them. Technically, any need might be nominated, but in reality the community development apparatus was prepared to support a restricted array of development projects—distributing improved seeds and livestock, renovating or constructing buildings, paving roads, inoculating animals—and villagers soon learned the limits of their choices. "From among the externally determined targets they choose for adoption what appears to be beneficial to them," observed an anthropologist studying community development. "A few more items are taken up for a variety of diverse motives or because of official pressure. And a number of others are ignored."[65] Limited government support, varying from state to state, was available for the provision or subsidy of seeds, livestock, technical guidance, and construction material, but the bulk of the labor and funding was to come from the people themselves, and the principal job of the village-level worker was to elicit local participation. Workers thus spent much of their time broadcasting the benefits of development, through demonstration fields, pilot projects, posters and literature, or exhibition fairs.[66] Community development made frequent use of *shramdan* drives, campaigns to elicit volunteer labor for the completion of large projects through appeals to the commonweal.

In its first years, the program was managed by the Community Projects Administration, which reported directly to the Planning Commission. At its head, Nehru placed S. K. Dey, a former engineer who had gained some experience in community organizing by supervising Nilokheri, a camp for partition refugees, which had been run on model of Y. C. James Yen's rural rehabilitation programs.[67] In keeping with the community development movement's preference for holistic strategies, the Community Projects Administration was not to be a separate department or ministry, but rather, in Dey's words, "an organisation belonging to all the Development Ministries and the Centre."[68] Thus, some funding would go directly to the community projects—to hire village-level workers, to train staff members, to pay for some materials—but much of community development would be funded through other agencies, especially through the Ministry of Agriculture, whose seeds, livestock, and other materials would be distributed at the village level by community development workers. This strategic position meant that, in the countryside, the Community Projects Administration was not just one agency among others but was rather a meta-agency, responsible for coordinating all rural development. Planners and observers recognized the centrality of community development. Nehru referred to it frequently as "the dynamo providing the motive force for the successful

64 Hugh Tinker, "Authority and Community in Village India," *Pacific Affairs* 32 (1959): 366.
65 S. C. Dube, "Cultural Factors in Rural Community Development," *Journal of Asian Studies* 16 (1956): 27–28.
66 See S. C. Dube, "Some Problems of Communication in Rural Community Development," *Economic Development and Social Change* 5 (1957): 129–146.
67 Dey, *Power to the People?*, 5.
68 S. K. Dey to Jawaharlal Nehru, June 1954, reprinted in Dey, *Power to the People?*, 35.

implementation of the Five-Year Plan"; Chester Bowles saw it as "the most significant single part" of the plans; economist Wilfred Malenbaum described community development as "*the* vehicle of economic progress for more than 80 percent of the population"; and Dey regarded the program as "more or less synonymous with the total Five-Year Plan *minus*, perhaps, only the large-scale industries, transport, and multipurpose schemes—all other schemes, especially of the state Governments, being interwoven with the National Extension Service and the Community Development Programme."[69]

So central were the community projects to the fate of national planning that, in 1956, Nehru made community development its own ministry, despite Dey's insistence that the Community Projects Administration must remain a coordinating agency reporting directly to the Planning Commission. Nehru explained his reasoning to Dey:

> My dear friend, I thought the CPA would function as a tail attached to the Planning Commission. I wanted the dog to wag the tail. I find, the tail has begun to wag the dog. . . . I have, therefore, made my choice. I wish to separate the tail from the dog. I have decided to create a new Ministry of C.D. at the Centre. This, perhaps, would be the first Ministry of its kind in the world.[70]

Thus was S. K. Dey promoted from chief of the Community Projects Administration to Minister of Community Development. But even after the CPA became the Ministry of Community Development, it retained its status as a meta-agency tasked with coordinating all rural policy.[71] Simply put, the Ministry was the only arm of the Indian government that actually maintained personnel in villages. Even by 1972, when the bloom had gone off the rose of community development, Fakhruddin Ahmed Ali, the Minister of Agriculture (and later the President of India), noted that the community development program was "virtually the only field agency for carrying out various development activities in the rural areas."[72]

The community development program grew so large because the leading members of India's Planning Commission took a personal interest in the program, Jawaharlal Nehru most of all. As Nehru repeatedly claimed, community development was "far the most revolutionary thing that we have undertaken."[73] Few key decisions were made in the Ministry of Community Development without the participation of Nehru, and he directed the state governments to

[69] Jawaharlal Nehru, address at the Development Commissioners' Conference, New Delhi, 18 April 1953, in Ministry of Community Development, *Jawaharlal Nehru on Community Development and Panchayati Raj* (Delhi: Government of India, 1963), 23–24; Bowles, *Ambassador's Report*, 165–166; Wilfred Malenbaum, *Prospects for Indian Development* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1962), 57; S. K. Dey, paraphrased in S. N. Bhattacharyya, *Community Development: An Analysis of the Programme in India* (Calcutta: Academic Publishers, 1970), 62.

[70] Nehru, quoted in Dey, *Power to the People?*, 54. A supporting account of the event is offered in Douglas Ensminger, *Rural India in Transition* (New Delhi: All India Panchayat Parishad, 1972), 7.

[71] The Ministry of Community Development later became the Ministry of Community Development and Panchayati Raj, and then the Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj, and Cooperation, as its purview expanded. Dey remained in charge the entire time.

[72] Fakhruddin Ahmed Ali, quoted in the proceedings of the First Meeting of the Consultative Council on Community Development and Panchayati Raj, New Delhi, 28 January 1972, Records of the Planning Commission, file Q-17011/6/70–A8N, National Archives of India, New Delhi (hereafter NAI).

[73] Jawaharlal Nehru, "From the Depths of India," *Kurukshetra*, June 1958, 639. Nehru's references to community development as the most revolutionary or significant program undertaken in India were frequent throughout the 1950s. See *Jawaharlal Nehru on Community Development and Panchayati Raj*.

give the community projects "top priority."[74] "I was always amazed by the ease of getting an appointment to see Nehru," remembered Ensminger. "Never once was I asked what I wanted to see Nehru about, never once was I put off. . . . I had continuous entree to Nehru on community development."[75] Dey, too, recalled that the program "received the highest priority because Jawaharlal Nehru placed his weight behind it and wanted it to act as a catalyst to cut the Gordian knot in Government."[76] But other high-ranking Indian planners also made a pet project of community development. V. T. Krishnamachari, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission from 1953 until the middle of 1960, had been a champion of community strategies from the 1940s, when as the Dewan of Baroda he had established one of the half-dozen precursor schemes. Krishnamachari's influential report on the Grow More Food campaign had played a major role in shifting Indian planners away from material toward social strategies and he published a book on community development in 1958.[77] For him, the community development program was "the largest single contribution the Planning Commission has made to the country."[78] Tarlok Singh, Secretary of the Planning Commission, also took a "very strong interest" in the matter, Ensminger observed, "forever championing the need for . . . village institutions" and taking part in probing discussions with Albert Mayer, S. K. Dey, and Chester Bowles's staff about the nature of rural development.[79]

With the chairman, deputy chairman, and secretary of the Planning Commission all in accord about the centrality of community development, it was inevitable that the program should become an important part of India's Five-Year Plans. Scholars have tended to focus on the Second Five-Year Plan as somehow capturing the essence of Nehruvian development, and they have in particular pointed to the role played by physicist and statistician P. C. Mahalanobis in writing that plan. Mahalanobis believed that "the heavy industries must . . . be expanded with all possible speed" and pursued the development of a manufacturing core with an enthusiasm that baffled Western economists.[80] As those economists noted, Mahalanobis was greatly influenced by the Soviet and Chinese models of industrialization, which shunted resources from the countryside toward large, state-controlled industries. The adoption of such a model meant not only the privileging of industry over agriculture, but also the concentration of economic power in the hands of the few members of the Planning Commission. But, as some historians are now beginning to recognize, the Mahalanobis moment was in many ways a limited affair. It was limited first by the resistance the Planning Commission met from rival ministries, dissenting economists, and wary politicians. It was limited second in time; full-fledged pursuit of industrialization did not begin until the Second Plan and was quickly undermined by the foreign exchange crisis in 1957–58.[81] The principal concern of the First Plan

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[74] Tarlok Singh to All State Governments, 12 January 1952, Community Development; International Cooperation Administration; Records of the Agency for International Development, Record Group 286; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

[75] Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box A, folder 8, p. 3. See also box B, folder 21, p. 1.

[76] Dey, *Power to the People?*, 25.

[77] Government of India, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, *Report of the Grow More Food Enquiry Committee* (1952); V. T. Krishnamachari, *Community Development in India* (New Delhi: Government of India, 1958).

[78] V. T. Krishnamachari, quoted in Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, vol. 2 (New York: Pantheon, 1968), 870.

[79] Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box A, folder 42, p. 16.

[80] P. C. Mahalanobis, "Recommendation for the Formulation of the Second Five-Year Plan," 1955, in *Talks on Planning* (Calcutta: Statistical Publishing Society, 1961), 23. For criticisms see P. T. Bauer, *Indian Economic Policy and Development* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1961).

[81] Medha Kudaisya, "'A Mighty Adventure': Institutionalising the Idea of Planning in Post-colonial India, 1947–1960," *Modern Asian Studies* 43 (2009): 939–978.

was agriculture, the concern of the Second Plan was industry, and in the Third Plan, the Commission indicated, "the first priority necessarily belongs to agriculture."[82] An examination of the outlays for the first three Five-Year Plans helps to put the industrialization drive into perspective.

Table 2. Indian plan spending

	First Plan (1952–56)	Second Plan (1956–61)	Third Plan (1961–66)
Agriculture and CD	17.5%	11.8%	14%
Industry and mining	8.4%	18.5%	20%

Certainly, industry and mining accounted for more spending than did agriculture and community development in the Second and Third Plans, but not by an overwhelming margin.[83] What is remarkable in the figures above is not the emphasis on industrial development at the expense of agricultural development but rather the rapid *rise* of industrial development between the First and Second Plans. And even at the height of the Second Plan, the members of the Planning Commission remained openly enthusiastic about agrarian, decentralist strategies, which they pursued at the same time as they sought to develop industry. "Of course, you want steel factories," Nehru explained to the Indian parliament in 1957, "but in the final analysis growth depends on the growth of rural India, that means the growth of the villager and the villager becoming self-reliant, self-dependent and cooperative—on the development of the village panchayat, on the development of the village cooperative. Both these things are included in the community development schemes."[84]

Nehru and his colleagues on the Planning Commission could afford to place such priority on the development of village institutions because there was hardly a single coalition within Indian politics that stood against the rural village. For all of the emphasis that we have put on the technocratic, top-down, and science-driven aspects of the Nehruvian era, Indian politics throughout the twentieth century has been remarkably decentralist. Even during the years of the Second Five-Year Plan, the ruling Congress Party was not composed only of hard-line statists, but remained strongly wedded to the legacy of its most influential leader, Mohandas Gandhi, an extreme decentralist who had gone so far as to demand that the Congress Party exit politics upon independence and become a village service organization.[85] While Gandhians continued to participate in the Congress-run government after independence, they remained nervous about economic development and state-sponsored programs, particularly if the United States was to be involved. Just before the official launch of the community development program, J. C. Kumarappa excoriated the whole scheme as "the thin end of the wedge of the era of America Financial Imperialism."[86] But other key Gandhians such as India's first

[82] Government of India, Planning Commission, *Third Five Year Plan* (1961), 49.

[83] "Agriculture and Community Development" and "Industry and Mining" form united budget categories and are not broken down into their component parts in every plan period. That makes sense in the former case because, as described above, nearly all agricultural policy was routed through community development agencies.

[84] "Extract from the speech of Prime Minister in Lok Sabha on 20 November 1957," Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 254.

[85] This argument, an important corrective to the argument advanced by Chatterjee, is made in Benjamin Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History, c. 1930–50* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), chap. 4.

[86] J. C. Kumarappa to S. K. Dey, 21 August 1952, J. C. Kumarappa Papers, subject file 20, part 1, Manuscripts Division, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

president Rajendra Prasad and Gandhigram founder G. Ramachandran backed the program fully; this support helped to move the Gandhi movement quickly toward the close alliance with the Ministry of Community Development that it would enjoy by the late 1950s.[87]

On the right wing of Indian politics stood the Hindu nationalists, represented by the Rashtriya Swayamsek Sangh (RSS) and the Jana Sangh. Although a fascist-inspired yearning for a nation-sized community prevented Hindu nationalists from endorsing the pluralism of community development, the leading thinkers among them consistently called for decentralization and a reinvigoration of the ancient traditions of village self-governance. Remarkably, the Hindu right's primary political manifesto in the early independence period, K. R. Malkani's *Principles for a New Political Party* (1951), drew heavily on the same regionalist thought that influenced Albert Mayer and Lewis Mumford. In it, Malkani envisions a landscape of "small cities, neither too active nor too inert . . . where men could have the best of both—the old and the new" and incorporates a number of regionalist Patrick Geddes' signature terms, including advocacy for a "biotechnic order" and castigations against "mining civilization."[88] Similar themes can be seen in a later central work of Hindu nationalist political thought, Deendayal Upadhyaya's *Integral Humanism* (1965), which names decentralization and swadeshi as the two pillars of Hindu political economy.[89]

Decentralization was no less an ideal of the Indian left, as represented by the Socialist Party (later to merge with the Kisan Mazdoor Party to become the Praja Socialist Party). In the years directly after independence, the party engaged in experimental village work. It also issued a policy memorandum, "Socialist Solution of the Problems of Rural India," warning of the dangers of political centralization and calling for the establishment of direct democracy via village councils and "a new era in village economy."[90] Most telling in this respect was the career of leading socialist Jayaprakash Narayan. Narayan had been a hard-line Communist since his student days at the University of Wisconsin in the 1920s. Over the next two decades, though, he became increasingly disillusioned with Soviet Communism. The problems with the Soviet Union, as Narayan saw them, were not the results of "the wicked deeds of a paranoiac" but rather the predictable results of "over-centralization of political and economic authority."[91] Although Narayan continued to reside in what he called "the half-way house of democratic socialism," he soon began to doubt whether formal democracy offered any real challenge to the centripetal forces of state and market.[92] Western-style democracy rested "upon an atomized society" of individuals who played no meaningful role in decision-making and whose government was therefore at best an "elected oligarchy."[93] True democracy, which Narayan called *organic democracy* or *participating democracy*, could only be achieved on the village level, where people could genuinely participate in decision-making and where small-scale social

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[87] See Ensminger, Oral History Transcript, box A, folders 10 and 13.

[88] K. R. Malkani, *Principles for a New Political Party* (Delhi: Vijay Pustak Bhandar, 1951), 40–41. On Malkani's *Principles*, see Craig Baxter, *The Jana Sangh: A Biography of an Indian Political Party* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969), 59–62.

[89] *Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism: Documents, Interpretations, Comparisons*, ed. Devendra Swarup (New Delhi: Deendayal Research Institute, 1992). Upadhyaya's centrality to the Hindu right is discussed in Thomas Blom Hansen, "The Ethics of Hindutva and the Spirit of Capitalism," in *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 371–392.

[90] "Socialist Solution of the Problems of Rural India," c. 1949, p. 7, Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 243.

[91] Jayaprakash Narayan, "From Socialism to Sarvodaya," 1957, *Essential Writings*, ed. Bimal Prasad and Sangita Mallik (Delhi: Konark Publishers, 2002), 178.

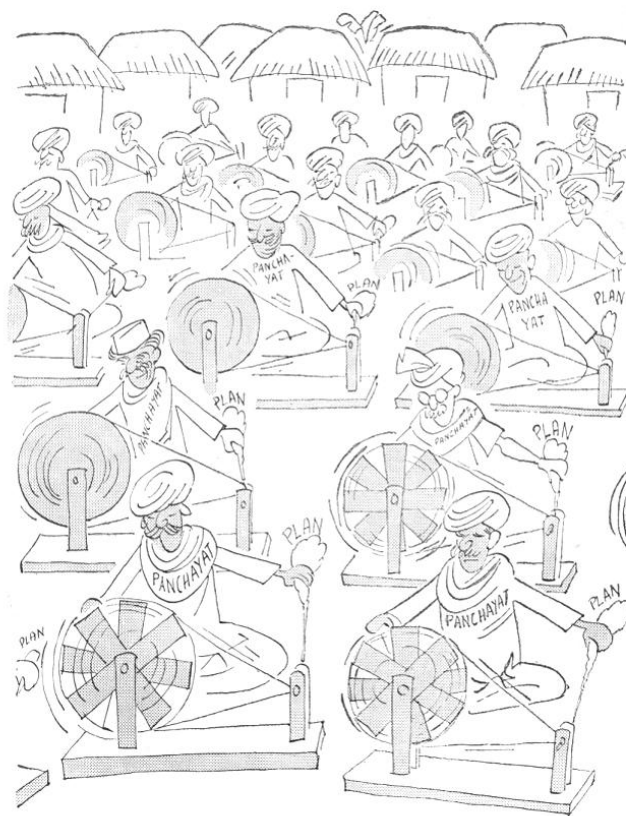
[92] Ibid., 179.

[93] Jayaprakash Narayan, "A Plea for the Reconstruction of the Indian Polity," 1959, *Essential Writings*, 201, 203.

processes could draw citizens into a communal political life. Narayan resigned his membership in the Praja Socialist Party in 1957 to pursue economic and political decentralization, which he did in close cooperation with S. K. Dey and the Ministry of Community Development.

With the Congress, Hindu nationalists, Gandhians, and even Socialists all in support of decentralization and village communities, the program expanded without facing any serious political challenges—a luxury that Nehru's scheme of state-directed industrialization did not enjoy. Nevertheless, by the five-year mark, it became clear to many observers that the hoped-for "quiet revolution" in the villages had yet to materialize. In search of a solution, the Planning Commission appointed a commission headed by prominent politician Balwantrai Mehta to investigate the community projects in 1957. The problem, Mehta and his team concluded, was indeed that the community projects were unable to inspire popular initiative. "We have found that few of the local bodies at a level higher than the village panchayat have shown any enthusiasm or interest in this work; and even the panchayats have not come into the field to any appreciable extent," the team reported.[94] But Mehta did not suggest scrapping the program. Rather, he argued, the real problem was that community development had not gone far *enough*. Too much of the responsibility for rural development still lay in the hands of government officials, and too many of them remained tied to the old colonial ways of doing business. A development program in the hands of a top-down government agencies would never be able to "adequately appreciate local needs and circumstances," nor could it elicit the participation of villagers.[95] What community development required, then, was "democratic decentralisation," a complete restructuring of Indian government such that development decisions were not directed from above by a Planning Commission but were made, to whatever extent possible, in the villages themselves. Mehta's commission thus proposed a three-tiered structure of rural government, in which elected panchayats would represent each village, panchayat samitis with membership drawn from the village panchayats would represent each block, and zilla parishads with membership drawn from the panchayat samitis would represent each district. The panchayats would be charged not only with implementing development but also with reporting the felt needs and proposals for planning of each village, district, and block to the higher levels of administration. This three-tiered system would, for the first time in Indian history, require village-level officials to be elected and would, in fact, base the entire planning apparatus on those village-level elections.

[94] Planning Commission, *Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service* (New Delhi: Government of India, 1957), 1:5.
[95] Ibid., 1:7.



Bottom-Up, Decentralized Planning: Cartoon from Ministry of Community Development's journal *Kurukshetra* depicting village panchayats spinning parts of India's Five-Year Plan (December 1959).

Mehta's proposal was a serious gamble. To save community development, he proposed a frontal assault on the top-down planning model which, if successful, would drastically shift power within the Indian government from the center to the locality. Doing so would challenge the authority of current local officials and, with its empowerment of the villages and presumably of a village-centered economy, would fly in the face of the "overwhelming consensus in favour of a heavy industry-oriented, state-supported model of development" that historians have ascribed to the Nehruvian period.[96] Of course, Gandhians had managed to write into the Constitution the injunction that states should "take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government," but this was a "directive principle" rather than a mandate and had idled unenforced.[97] Had the Nehruvian government been committed exclusively to centralist and statist strategies, Mehta would have had reason to fear that his recommendations would be rebuffed, that the Planning Commission and Indian bureaucrats would regard decentralization as a threat to their power, and that the village panchayats would remain only a dream.

In spite of all of the forces in Indian politics that might have opposed democratic decentralization, however, the fact of the matter is that the Mehta report was accepted with great

[96] Guha, *India after Gandhi*, 225.
[97] Constitution of India, part IV, article 40.

enthusiasm.[98] The Planning Commission itself agreed that "the foundation of any democratic structure had to be democracy in the village," something that was only possible with a system of village panchayats.[99] With Nehru's blessing, the Planning Commission directed the States to set up provisions for panchayati raj, which the states began to do immediately. The first state to officially make the transition to panchayati raj was Rajasthan, on Gandhi's birthday, October 2, 1959. Witnessing the ceremony in which appointed Rajasthani officials abdicated their posts to make way for elected officers, S. K. Dey reflected: "Never have I known people in the seats of power undertaking voluntary liquidation of themselves. As I watched the vast gathering under the rising and setting sun, I had a sense of history flowing in my veins."[100] By 1962, panchayati raj legislation had been fully implemented in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra and was forthcoming in every other state except for Jammu and Kashmir.[101] In that year, the Ministry of Community Development and Panchayati Raj, as it was by then called, counted 203,000 panchayats in the country.[102]

Local Democracy: Punjabi men lining up to vote in a panchayat election (*Kurukshetra,* October 1962).

That Indian planners chose to save community development via panchayati raj rather than letting it quietly die is a measure of their decentralist bona fides. So too was the official alliance between the community development program and the Gandhian bhoodan-gramdan

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98 Discussions of the democratic decentralization can be found in the summary record of the sixth meeting of the standing committee of the national development council, January 12–13, 1958, Records of the Planning Commission, file PC/CDN/29/21/57, NAI.

99 "States' Agricultural Production Programmes: National Development Council Standing Committee Discussions," 12 January 1958, in ibid.

100 S. K. Dey, *Community Development: A Chronicle, 1954–1961* (Faridabad: Government of India Press, 1962), 113.

101 "A Decade of C.D. Programme at a Glance," *Kurukshetra*, October 1962, 105.

102 Ministry of Community Development and Panchayati Raj, "Village Volunteer Force," December 1962, Ministry of Home Affairs, Emergency Cabinet Secretariat, file no. 103/62—ECS, NAI.

movement. Bhoodan-gramdan began in 1951 when Gandhi's spiritual heir, Vinoba Bhave, resolved a conflict between landlords and tenants in Telengana by remonstrating with the landlords and convincing them to donate their land to the village. Like advocates of land reform, Bhave saw the monopolization of agricultural land by the rich as a major obstacle to India's flourishing but, unlike them, he insisted that the only viable route to agrarian reform was the nonviolent one: landlords must be persuaded to part with their lands of their own free will. From the 1950s to the 1970s, Bhave traversed the subcontinent by foot, collecting pledges for donated village lands. Consonant with his Gandhian emphasis on the village community, Bhave pushed not only for individual donations (bhoodan) but also for a scheme under which local landowners would jointly surrender usufruct rights in their land to the entire village (gramdan). With the aid of Jayaprakash Narayan, who saw gramdan as the key to his organic democracy, Bhave's movement collected over 4 million in bhoodan donations by 1970 and by the next year about 30 percent of India's villages had been pledged to gramdan (it must also be mentioned, however, that many lands pledged were never delivered and much of the land donated was submarginal land of no value).[103] Bhoodan-gramdan was heavily infused with Gandhian spirituality and adopted its explicit and ultimate goal the achievement of a "stateless society" and a collective village order in which the "very possibility of conflict between the individual and the society has disappeared."[104] It was not per capita agricultural output that Bhave sought to increase, but rather the spirit of harmony and oneness amongst rural Indians. The bhoodan-gramdan movement was, then, something of a non-governmental, mystical, and utopian cousin to the Ministry of Community Development.

In a country whose development program was less committed to decentralization, indigenous traditions, and non-material outcomes than India, the bhoodan-gramdan movement might have lingered on the sidelines as an essentially private effort. But the mysticism and utopianism of the gramdan movement did not deter S. K. Dey. Discussing the matter with Jayaprakash Narayan, who by then had abandoned his socialist politics in favor of Gandhism, Dey concluded that there was "a great deal of similarity in the objectives of the two Movements" and that it would be desirable to come up with "a unified approach."[105] At the Yalwal gramdan conference in Mysore in 1957, an official alliance between the two movements was worked out. There, Bhave addressed the assembled community development officials, who "welcomed this Gramdan Movement and expressed their high appreciation of the objective underlying it" and who resolved that community development and gramdan should operate on the basis of "the closest co-operation."[106] Of course, Dey wrote to Narayan, the community development program could not "take active part" in soliciting gramdan donations. It could, however, "do a lot in promoting the idea of Gramdan through supply of topical literature on the subject which you can make available in a form easily intelligible to the village

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[103] Richard G. Fox, *Gandhian Utopia: Experiments with Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 187.

[104] Minutes of Meeting of the Sarva Seva Sangh, Officers of the Planning Commission, of the Ministry of Community Development and Other Ministries of the Central Government, 17 and 19th March 1958, *Important Letters issued by Community Projects Administration/Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Government of India, 1961), p. 110, Government Publications Section, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi; Raj Krishna, "A Note on the Draft Gramdan Act," 1958, Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 255.

[105] "Minutes of a discussion between Shri Jayaprakash Narain and Shri S. K. Dey, Minister, Community Development, on the subject of co-ordination of the Gramdan with the Community Development," 16–17 November 1957, p. 1, Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 254.

[106] Ministry of Community Development, Statement issued at the Conclusion of the Yalwal Conference, Mysore, 21 and 22 September 1957, *Important Letters issued by the Ministry of Community Development,* 1:101.

people. It can also organise discussion groups and study circles."[107] The Ministry also ordered that, henceforth, the village-level development officers would give priority to gramdan villages. The principles of bhoodan-gramdan were written into the syllabi for training community development officers and Bhave was given a regular column in *Kurukshetra*, the Ministry of Community Development's official journal. The Ministry even went so far as to rewrite its official objectives—placing additional stress on goals like "the all-sided development of the village community," the promotion of "cooperation and mutual sharing," and village self-sufficiency—in order to secure the cooperation of the gramdan movement.[108]

At the bottom of the Indian government's encouragement of an official alliance between the its rural development program and the utopian bhoodan-gramdan movement lay a desire, felt at the highest levels of policymaking, to defend Indian culture as expressed in the village community. As we have seen, the village community was also an ideological linchpin for Indian thinkers across the political spectrum. What is important to recognize is that this preoccupation with the village community among both students and inhabitants of India was rarely a minor matter. As Jayaprakash Narayan pointed out, the village community lay at the root of a worldview that was "entirely different" from the utilitarian worldview that predominated in the United States and Europe. In the West, particularly since the industrial revolution, the "atomised and inorganic view of society" had developed, one based on individuals. The other view was the "organic or communitarian view, that puts man in his natural milieu as a responsible member of a responsible community." This view, Narayan explained, "treats of man not as a particle of sand in an inorganic heap, but as a living cell in a larger organic entity." While the individualist conception of society championed individual rights, the core values of the communitarian view were "adjustment, conciliation, harmony and cooperation."[109]

Narayan generally identified the communitarian approach with India and the individualist view with the West. But there was one Indian to whom Narayan attributed the individualist view: the anti-caste activist B. R. Ambedkar. Although Ambedkar had studied with John Dewey at Columbia and was intimately familiar with communitarian philosophies, he saw that, in India, a defense of village society almost always included a defense of caste, as indeed it did for Redfield's circle (Albert Mayer referred to the caste system as a "calm and stabilizing institution").[110] And whereas upper-caste Hindus or nostalgic U.S. observers might see the caste system in the village as a miniature welfare state in which the competitive principle of capitalist economics was subordinated to the cooperative principle of mutual obligation, for untouchables like Ambedkar it appeared rather as a barely concealed form of slavery, in which the lower orders were compelled by force to undertake the least pleasant tasks, live in poverty on the outskirts of the village, and subordinate themselves to caste Hindus through a comprehensive array of humiliating material and ritual deprivations. "The average Hindu is always in ecstasy when he speaks of the Indian village," Ambedkar explained, simply because it was in

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[107] S. K. Dey to Jayaprakash Narayan, 2 October 1957, in Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 254.

[108] "Subject: Coordination of the Gramdan and the Community Development Movements," c. 1957, in Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 254.

[109] Jayaprakash Narayan, Draft Manuscript of Foreword to *Panchayati Raj as the Basis of Indian Polity*, by Dharampal, n.d., pp. 1–2, Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 399. A reflection on the same concepts as they have been imported into Indian social science can be found in Carol Upadhya, "The Concept of Community in Indian Social Sciences: An Anthropological Perspective," in *Community and Identities: Contemporary Discourses on Culture and Politics in India*, ed. Surinder S. Jodhka (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001), 32–58.

[110] Albert Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, 337.

the villages where Hindus ruled supreme over untouchables.[111] But for all the talk about the solidarity and reciprocity of the village community, for untouchables the Indian village was "not a single social unit" but geographically and social segregated into "two separate groups": touchables and untouchables. "There is nothing in common between them," Ambedkar continued; "they do not constitute a folk."[112] Nor was the vaunted village republic, with its ages-old panchayat system, worthy of praise. "The Indian village is the very negation of a Republic," he wrote.[113] "What is the village but a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism?"[114]

The disagreement between Ambedkar and Narayan about the capacities of the village community to underwrite Indian development was clearly a philosophical one. But for the community development movement, it raised an important empirical question. If allowed to take development into their own hands, would villages spread the benefits fairly, as Narayan hoped, or would local elites use village institutions to consolidate their power over the weaker sections of the village, as Ambedkar feared? Although it is impossible to give a single characterization for the entire program, which covered over half a million villages, the numerous studies of the program made by the Planning Commission, by special commissions, by U.S. social scientists, and by outside agencies like the Ford Foundation and United Nations do give a good sense of what community development looked like on the ground. And those studies generally confirm that Ambedkar's fears were warranted.

Part of the problem stemmed from the structure of India's agrarian economy. Despite frequent land reform campaigns by the central government, rural landholders succeeded in blocking any substantial redistribution of agricultural land.[115] The monopolization of village land by a relatively wealthy few meant that many Indian cultivators were landless laborers or sharecroppers, and therefore ineligible to reap the benefits of the community development programs. Sharecroppers, who had few resources to gamble, were understandably risk-averse and unwilling to try new agricultural strategies, especially as a large share of any profits such strategies yielded would go straight to their landlords as part of the crop-sharing arrangement. Landless laborers had even less incentive to maximize agricultural outputs. Of course, community development targeted aspects of life other than agriculture, but here, too, the weaker sections had less to gain. Irrigation was most useful to landowners, roads were advantageous to those who sold substantial amounts of cash crops, community centers were used by civic leaders (who sometimes excluded members of lower castes from them), and libraries were of interest only to the literate. Even the benefits of basic public goods such as clean drinking water and primary education accrued more to the powerful, as untouchables were often forbidden the use of communal wells and village schools. Noting these tendencies, Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal warned that the "net effect" of India's community development program had been "to create more, not less, inequality."[116]

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[111] B. R. Ambedkar, *Untouchables, or the Children of India's Ghetto*, unpublished, n. d., in B. R. Ambedkar, *Writings and Speeches*, vol. 5, ed. Vasant Moon (Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1989), 19.

[112] Ibid., 62.

[113] Ibid., 26.

[114] *Constituent Assembly Debates: Official Report* (New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat 1988), 7:39.

[115] See Ronald J. Herring, *Land to the Tiller: The Political Economy of Agrarian Reform in South Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), chap. 5 and Francine R. Frankel, *India's Political Economy, 1947–2004: The Gradual Revolution*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[116] Gunnar Myrdal, *The Challenge of World Poverty: A World Anti-Poverty Program in Outline* (London: Allen Lane, 1970), 105.

The skewing of community development toward the well-off did not stop there. Not only were the village elite better positioned to benefit from most developmental schemes, just in the way that the rich are usually better positioned to benefit from broad efforts to stimulate economic development, but the "grassroots" orientation of community development allowed them a near-stranglehold on the planning and implementation of local development, which could be used to block any efforts by the Ministry that might threaten their power. The community development program had always insisted on working through the local leadership structure. "The wise gram sevak [village level worker] will be always searching for leaders," instructed the official *Guide to Community Development* (1957): "It needs to be said forcefully that only as the natural leaders of the village are effectively mobilized and the gram sevak has a firm, friendly working relationship with them, will the community and national extension programmes become and remain a people's programme."[117] Persistent staffing shortages also encouraged the Ministry to accomplish its goals through locals whenever possible, a practice that was institutionalized in 1957 in the "Gram Sahayak" (Village Helper) program, under which non-officials were drafted into the community development effort. Within five years, the Ministry counted over four million such Gram Sahayaks.[118] But to no one's surprise, the leaders thus recruited were leaders precisely because they owned property or held some other form of power in the village. A 1965 survey undertaken by the National Institute of Community Development (under the supervision of rural sociologist Charles Loomis, who had been hired by the Ford Foundation) found that 55.4% of those identified as leaders by the community development agencies were Brahmins, and fewer than one percent were agricultural laborers.[119] Faced with the possibility of offending such rural elites, who were vital to the project, by doing anything to challenge the caste or land tenure systems, village level workers quickly learned to remove themselves from any potential source of conflict.[120] Albert Mayer enforced a policy of "complete impartiality and aloofness" among his workers toward any divisive issue.[121] M. R. Bhide, Secretary of the Ministry of Community Development, offered a somewhat more explicit injunction, urging that "nothing should be said or done that would embitter the relations between the so-called higher castes and the lower castes. We are trying to develop a community and therefore must secure the willing cooperation of all sections in it."[122] Of course, such neutrality in effect meant acquiescing to the status quo and the existing village leaders. As anthropologist Gerald Berreman observed, to defer to rural elites and then to expect any kind of democratic social change was "even more unrealistic than to expect rapid, orderly integration of the schools in the southern United States to result from putting responsibility for school integration in the hands of local school boards."[123]

The clash between the democratic idiom of the community development program and the rigidly hierarchical social structure of Indian rural society did not go unnoticed by Indian policymakers. It would have been impossible for them not to notice, in fact, as nearly every

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[117] [Douglas Ensminger], *A Guide to Community Development* (New Delhi: Ministry of Community Development, Government of India, 1957), 29, 126.

[118] Ministry of Community Development and Panchayati Raj, "Village Volunteer Force," iii.

[119] Lalit K. Sen and Prodipto Roy, *Awareness of Community Development in Village India: Preliminary Report* (Hyderabad: National Institute of Community Development, 1967), 43.

[120] For an illuminating discussion of this phenomenon, see S. C. Dube, *India's Changing Villages: Human Factors in Community Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958), especially 138–139.

[121] Baij Nath Singh, "Factions and What to Do About Them," 1950, reprinted in Mayer, *Pilot Project, India*, 223.

[122] M. R. Bhide, response to questionnaire sent out by the Study Group on the Welfare of the Weaker Sections of the Village Community, c. 1960, Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 259.

[123] Gerald D. Berreman, "Caste and Community Development," *Human Organization* 22 (1963): 93.

evaluation report on community development by the mid-1950s commented on it. But little was done. Many hoped that the Panchayati Raj system would democratize the villages, especially as the Mehta report had suggested reserving some seats for untouchables and women on the panchayats, but village elites proved more than capable of holding onto power, often by asserting their social privileges to command the lower orders to vote appropriately or simply to dictate terms to any potentially threatening officers who were elected. Morris E. Opler recorded the results of one panchayat election in 1960, in this note on the status of the untouchable who occupied the reserved seat:

> It soon became apparent that he was the messenger boy of the group, bearing notes from the headman to others and giving notice of meetings to members. When the group met he sat quietly on the bare ground to one side; he did not feel free to sit on the cloth with the others. Once when I was about to take a picture of some of the assemblymen, a discussion arose as to whether this man should be invited to sit on a cot with some others. It was finally decided that he should squat on the ground in the foreground, and there he appears in the picture. When the legislative body of a village observes distinctions of this kind, it is too much to expect that its deliberation will not reflect caste or class bias.[124]

To deal with problems of this sort, the Ministry of Community Development commissioned a study in 1961 of "the welfare of the weaker sections of the village community." The resultant two-volume report, written by the commission's chair, Jayaprakash Narayan, received extensive press coverage. But although Narayan readily conceded that the community development program had focused too much on "the comparatively progressive and well-to-do villager," he had little faith that material solutions such as land reform and enforcement of existing laws would suffice. What was primarily needed was "a psychological revolution among the economic, social and political elite."[125] Like the Mehta report, Narayan's study concluded that the faults of the Ministry of Community Development had been its timidity: it had not done *enough* to stir up a spirit of cooperation in the villages. The solution was thus more of the same—more participation and more power to the panchayati raj institutions, which, Narayan hoped, would finally convince rural elites of the value of the village community.

For communitarians like Narayan, rural inequalities were tragic, but not enough to damn the entire project. Although many in India were quick to criticize the Ministry of Community Development when it seemed that it was failing at its assigned tasks, it was hard to find many Indian critics in whose view S. K. Dey's entire program was misconceived. The most trenchant criticisms of community development tended to come from Indian Communists or from Westerners, both of whom lacked the ideological commitment to the village community that was so widespread in India. Gunnar Myrdal, who studied India closely in preparation for his three-volume study of Asian economies, *Asian Drama* (1968), judged the community development program to be counterproductive, improving the prospects of recalcitrant landlords and doing little for anyone else.[126] Myrdal also objected to the Gandhian notion "underlying community development" that a "basic harmony of interest" existed among

[124] Morris E. Opler, "Political Organization and Economic Growth: The Case of Village India," 1960, unpublished manuscript, p. 8, Narayan Papers, installments I and II, subject file 399.
[125] Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, *Report of the Study Group on the Welfare of the Weaker Sections of the Village Community*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Government of India, 1961), 1.
[126] Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, vol. 3 (New York: Pantheon, 1968), 1344–45.

villagers—such a notion he judged to be entirely "unrealistic."[127] Barrington Moore, Jr., in his influential book, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1962), agreed entirely. "The notion of village democracy is a piece of romantic Gandhian nostalgia that has no relevance to modern conditions," he wrote. The community development program was "an out-and-out failure" that avoided any structural transformation of the countryside and thus surrendered the reins of Indian development to the landed elite.[128] Another notable critic was the anthropologist Oscar Lewis, author of the "culture of poverty" thesis that became so important to the War on Poverty. Among anthropologists, Lewis was most famous for his restudy of Robert Redfield's field site, Tepoztlán, in which he charged Redfield with focusing only on the "co-operative and unifying factors Tepoztecan society" and glossing lightly over "evidence of violence, disruption, cruelty, disease, suffering, and maladjustment."[129] Hired by the Ford Foundation to work for the Planning Commission in evaluating community development, Lewis spent nine months in India, where he made similar attacks on the village studies of Redfield's colleagues. In the Indian village he studied, Lewis found that "the community in the sense of a cohesive and united village community . . . hardly exists." Rather, caste and other divisions "split the village into separate communities," making many of the community development program's tactics futile. Just like Myrdal and Moore, Lewis came to see the structure of Indian society as fundamentally hostile to the village-community approach championed by S. K. Dey.[130]

Indian criticisms of the community development program were led by Communists and fellow-travelers who, like Marx and Ambedkar, were keenly aware of the powerful forces of oppression that existed within the village. Communists were only a marginal political force within national politics, though, and their objections to community development amounted to little more than backseat driving.[131] Where Communists did hold power was in the state of Kerala, where the election of the Communist Party of India to power in 1957 made it the first democratically elected Communist government in world history. Kerala was and remains in many ways a dramatic outlier within India. Today, it has received of great deal of attention for its high levels of education and health care despite great poverty.[132] In the 1950s, Kerala was unusual for the strength of its social movements, which is how it ended up electing a Communist government in a country that was otherwise politically dominated by the Congress Party. The Communist Party was, according to sociologist Patrick Heller, "a Leninist party, characterized by top-down organizational control over its mass organizations" and "wary of an

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[127] Ibid., 1343, 1344.

[128] Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), 394, 395.

[129] Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied* (1951; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 428–429.

[130] Oscar Lewis, *Village Life in Northern India: Studies in a Delhi Village* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965). Two other U.S. critics of Indian community development are worth mentioning: economist Daniel Thorner and anthropologist Gerald Berreman. Both agreed in the main with Myrdal, Moore, and Lewis, and both grounded their opinions in years of study in India. See Daniel Thorner, "The Village Panchayat as a Vehicle of Change," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 2 (1954): 209–215; Daniel and Alice Thorner, *Land and Labour in India* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962); chap. 1; Berreman, "Caste and Community Development"; and Gerald D. Berreman, *Hindus of the Himalayas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).

[131] A powerful example of the Communist critique of community development within the national political context is a speech by R. K. Khadilkar, MP from the Mazdoor Kisan Party, to the Lok Sabha in 1957, reprinted in "Free, Frank and Forthright: Lok Sabha Debate," *Kurukshetra*, September 1957, 16–17.

[132] See especially Patrick Heller, *The Labor of Development: Workers and the Transformation of Capitalism in Kerala, India* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) and Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

autonomous civil society."[133] Its top-down structure, combined with strong criticisms of local social hierarchies, would seem to have fitted it for a political program of statist centralism, exactly the sort of thing that community development was designed to combat. In fact, however, the Keralite Communists moved in the opposite direction. On Republic Day in 1957 Kerala's Chief Minister and major Communist theorist E. M. S. Namboodiripad announced that Kerala would undertake a massive administrative decentralization, not only devolving developmental responsibilities to village panchayats, as was standard for panchayati raj schemes, but also giving them significant responsibilities in revenue administration and regulation.[134] Although Namboodiripad's decentralization campaign was derailed when Nehru forced the Communist government from power in 1959, substituting a weak and ineffectual version of panchayati raj in its place, Namboodiripad and the Keralite Communists remained strong supporters of decentralization, eventually leading a bold People's Campaign for Decentralized Planning in the 1990s when they finally returned to power. "My faith in democratic decentralisation," Namboodiripad explained, "arises from the fact that it helps the working people in their day-to-day struggles against their oppressors and exploiters."[135]

The Keralite adoption of democratic decentralization is intriguing because it represents a forgotten alternative for India's Community Development program. Despite his own interest in decentralization, Namboodiripad was a harsh critic of the official Indian program, pronouncing it on its ten-year anniversary to be "a total failure" and "seriously defective" in its basic conception.[136] The problem, as he saw it, was the persistent notion that the rural population was grouped into natural communities in which all members could be persuaded to make common cause with each other—the idea of the village community. Interestingly, that idea held much less currency in Kerala, which did not have villages in the sociological sense. Keralite villages were, in Namboodiripad's description, "more administrative units than 'natural' residential units as the people live more or less in one continuous habitation, in individual homesteads, all over the countryside, instead of in 'clusters of habitation.'"[137] Decentralization in Kerala therefore was much less likely to mean a strengthening of local social hierarchies. Tied with Kerala's unusually forceful land reform initiative, decentralization in Kerala was intended instead as a way of channeling the energy of peasants' movements into government. Whereas Dey's movement was based on neutralizing any divisive or partisan energies within the village, Namboodiripad sought to turn the panchayats into political bodies, and welcomed the entry of peasants' organizations, students' organizations, and women's organizations into local politics.[138]

Like Dey, Namboodiripad wanted to mobilize the rural population but, unlike Dey, he had no attachment to the idea of the village community, and thus saw grassroots mobilization as a political process designed to challenge rural hierarchy, rather than as a psychological one designed to bring the powerful and weak into closer communion. By placing his hopes for

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133 Patrick Heller, "Moving the State: The Politics of Democratic Centralization in Kerala, South Africa, and Porto Alegre," *Politics and Society* 29 (2001): 153.

134 Government of Kerala, *Report of the Administrative Reforms Committee* (Trivandrum: Government of Kerala Press, 1958).

135 Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Department of Rural Development, *Report of the Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions* (New Delhi: Government of India, 1978), 163.

136 E. M. S. Namboodiripad, "What is Wrong with the C.D. Programme?" *Kurukshetra*, 2 October 1962, 29, 30.

137 Government of Kerala, *Report of the Administrative Reforms Committee* (Trivandrum: Government of Kerala Press, 1958), 1:28–29.

138 See especially E. M. S. Namboodiripad, "Note on the Report of the Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions," in *Report of the Committee on Panchayati Raj Institutions*, 154–170.

political reform in the hands of subordinated groups rather than in the hands of elite-led communities, Namboodiripad offered a starkly different vision of decentralization than the one offered by communitarians such as Gandhi, Bhave, Narayan, Dey, Mayer, and Redfield. Dey explained this logic when he was confronted with proposals to solve the problems of the "weaker sections" of the villages by creating subcommittees composed entirely of members of those sections. "A poor man does not fight, he is too involved with his poverty," Dey told the Annual Conference on Community Development in 1960. "Nor can he provide the leadership. He can line up for a cause. It is only the middle-class or the richer class that can champion a cause."[139] This belief, a consequence of an ideological attachment to the village community, is what pushed the community development program toward the bhoodan-gramdan model of voluntarist reconciliation between the social classes and away from the Keralite model of challenging class privilege.

In general, the failure of community development to uproot feudal social structures in countryside was acknowledged but not emphasized by community development leaders. But that failure had a consequence that was of prime concern to the movement: it helped to undercut active participation by villagers in development schemes. Participation was a constant sore point throughout the career of community development. Having endured for centuries the predations of imperial governments, rural Indians were understandably circumspect about the government's new attempts to reform the countryside. "We have had only two kinds of visitors before, those who collect taxes and those who come to beat us up," villagers reportedly told one community development worker as he began work. "Which are you?"[140] For Indians living outside of the law, as many forest-dwelling peoples did, the best strategy was often to mollify visiting officials by formally participating in community development activities while only actually allowing a minimum of interference in village affairs. Noting the great skill with which the residents of the Himalayan village of Sirkanda met all of the formal requirements of the CD program without ever actually *doing* anything, anthropologist Gerald Berreman judged the program to be a practical failure but a "paper success."[141] This passive nonparticipation, however, was greatly compounded by the inegalitarian features of community development. Faced with few genuine incentives, the poor tended to participate only reluctantly, for example during *shramdan* drives, when all villagers were supposed to volunteer labor but when, actually, the upper castes enlisted their social inferiors into semi-coerced *corvée* labor on behalf of projects whose benefits were clearly skewed toward the rich.[142] Over the career of the community development program, donations of labor and other resources by villagers steadily declined, leaving the government to shoulder more and more of the cost.[143]

Although participation in community development programs slackened, the programs themselves continued to expand, rapidly growing from the initial fifty-five pilot projects to cover the whole of rural India. Interestingly, this expansion deeply troubled the major figures within the community development movement, for they feared that too-rapid growth meant the death of the informal, antibureaucratic atmosphere that had typified Etawah and the other early experiments. "This rate of expansion is altogether too fast for effective work or anything

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139 Speech by S. K. Dey, in Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, *Main Recommendations and Conclusions* (New Delhi Government of India, 1960, Delhi), 57.

140 Quoted in Bowles, *Ambassador's Report*, 205.

141 Gerald D. Berreman, *Hindus of the Himalayas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 291.

142 Dube, "Cultural Factors in Rural Community Development."

143 People's expenditure as a percentage of government expenditure dropped from 54.6% during the First Plan to 21.3% at the end of the Third Plan. Garvin Karunaratne, "The Failure of the Community Development Programme in India," *Community Development Journal* 11 (1976): 101.

like effective work," Albert Mayer warned Tarlok Singh, complaining of projects "started with the merest skeleton of personnel, often of quite inadequate character and understanding."[144] As Mayer and his colleagues saw it, effective community development work depended on having a cadre of workers thoroughly ensconced in the democratic and anti-technocratic ethos. And, even with workers of that sort, the program would proceed slowly, for, as Carl C. Taylor observed, organizing a community required a "meticulousness" and sensitivity to local conditions that admitted of no economies of scale.[145] Unable to recruit and train enough workers satisfactorily in the principles of community development, the Ministry desperately filled its slots with the revenue officers and other civil servants who had staffed the Indian government for decades—the very same bureaucrats whose methods community development was meant to replace. Even in S. K. Dey's eyes, paper achievements came to replace real ones, with many projects amounting to little more than "Potemkin villages," having undertaken none of the real sociological work required to create communal solidarity.[146] Dey and his fellow thinkers called for more training, a slower rate of expansion, and a prioritizing of social achievements over material ones, but by the late 1950s they were yelling into the wind.

As community development became more bureaucratized, it developed increasingly rigid and formal models of "participation." Although programs were meant to act upon the "felt needs" of villagers, identifying those needs was a tricky business, and village level workers learned many ways of imposing the Ministry's own desired agenda, even while preserving the fiction of community development being a "bottom-up" program. An unusually candid field report from a community organizer gives some sense of the tensions that arose between community projects officials and their clients. In 1959, a worker in Delhi on a Ford Foundation pilot project overseen by Albert Mayer was given the unfortunate task of eliciting local participation for a hygiene program in which residents would be vaccinated and have their homes sprayed with DDT (DDT was a key element of the community projects in India from the very start, in Etawah). The women in the community, however, strongly objected, believing DDT and the vaccines to be poisonous. These beliefs were not irrational: the colonial state had a long history of violent and counterproductive "hygiene" campaigns in Indian cities and the women were entirely right that DDT *was* poisonous, as medical researchers were already beginning to see. As health officials moved to vaccinate the children over their mothers' objections, the women threatened violence. Pinned between the desires of the community members, who had strong and undeniable "felt needs" to protect their children from state-directed hygiene campaigns, and those of health officials, the community organizer sided strongly with the health officials. She proceeded to give lectures on hygiene (especially on the importance of trimming nails) and distribute DDT powder for the children's hair, expending great effort to secure acquiescence if not enthusiastic participation. In this, as in many other instances, the "participation" of the community did not mean local control over development programs, but rather eliciting consent for a government-designed program.[147]

[144] Albert Mayer to Tarlok Singh, 14 March 1955, *Important Letters*, vol. 2, 219.
[145] Carl C. Taylor, "Basic Roles and Objectives," *Kurukshetra*, October 1958, 28.
[146] Dey, *Power to the People?*, 97.
[147] "Changing Women's Attitudes," Field Reports Material "P," 1959, Mayer Papers, box 31, folder 16.

A village worker (in vest) leading health officials to local homes, as depicted in the Ministry of Community Development's journal *Kurukshetra* (June 1955).

Such tactics were virtually required by the structure of the community development program. In theory, community developers sought to elicit villagers' own ideas about how to improve their lot. But of course any "felt needs" that threatened village solidarity, such as a professed desire for land reform or the abolition of caste hierarchies, were immediately ruled out by the program's refusal to tolerate "factions." Equally restrictive was the need to coordinate village-level schemes into a nation-wide bureaucratic apparatus overseen by the Planning Commission. Were each village truly to operate by its own developmental logic, the result would be impossible to administer. Instead, village-level planning tended to operate by a sort of backhanded authoritarianism. According to Walter C. Neale, a close observer of the program for decades, planning meetings tended rather to be "political rallies for economic ends," the ends being dictated by the Central Ministries.[148] The village would be called to assembly by a village level worker to discuss the implementation of one of the Five-Year Plans. Typically, the officer

> presented the programs in which the development departments were interested, explained their merits, and by some mixture of persuasion, bullying, smiles, and frowns induced the meeting to pass resolutions adopting specific targets under at least some of the departmental programs. He then wrote down the resolutions on a piece of paper and got the members of the *panchayat* to append their signatures or thumbprints, but he did not leave a copy of the resolutions. Afterward the villagers had only a vague memory of what they had agreed to do—and no intention of fulfilling the plan.[149]

By 1960, Neale records, some villages had learned to argue back, but this had no effect on the content of the plans—it only produced an official who brusquely "answered" their objections.

[148] Walter C. Neale, "Indian Community Development, Local Government, Local Planning, and Rural Policy since 1950," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 33 (1985): 680. For a similar account see Alice Crawford Stone Ilchman, "Democratic Decentralization and Planning for Rural India" (PhD diss., University of London, 1964).

[149] Ibid., 681.

The pattern of village planning repeated itself on the level of the block and the district, with panchayati raj officeholders rubber stamping the work of civil servants.

The apex of bureaucratization was reached in 1962–63, during India's border war with China. Modern wars are nearly always times of national consolidation, and this war was no different. Despite the general appreciation for decentralist principles among the leaders of the Planning Commission, all agreed that the Chinese invasion called for the mobilization of a coordinated, regimented national effort. To this end, the community development program proved itself to be a valuable resource. As Nehru and his fellow planners quickly discovered, having village workers embedded throughout the Indian countryside meant that the government could recruit rural Indians into its projects as never before. Thus, on Republic Day 1963, the government launched the Village Volunteer Force, its scheme to mobilize the countryside, in a remarkable display of all-India coordination. On the morning of that day, all village assemblies in India (with the exception of some in Punjab) were called together. Via "community listening sets" that the Ministry had distributed to villages under its supervision (many of which were "pre-tuned" so that they could only be used to listen to the All-India Radio station), each village heard at 9:00 a.m. a speech by Jawaharlal Nehru about the need for a national effort. At precisely 9:30 a.m., each village unfurled the national flag.[150] The official schedule drawn up for these Republic Day rallies illustrates a remarkable tension within the Ministry between its commitment to democratic, "bottom-up" methods and the imperative for military mobilization. After the flag unfurling, the program indicated, "a tentative programme of work will be discussed and an appeal will be made to the people to donate free labour for the minimum period of twelve days in the year."[151] However "tentative" the program, open-ended the discussion, or unpersuasive the "appeal," though, next steps had already been laid out in full detail. A Village Volunteer Force and a Defence Labour Bank were to be started, a register was to be opened for community members to pledge their labor, and initial donations were to be taken. After pledging their labor, all of the members of the community were to take prewritten pledge in which they expressed their "high appreciation of the valiant struggle of the . . . martyrs who have laid down their lives defending the honor and integrity of our motherland," indicated their "firm resolve . . . to drive out the aggressor from the sacred soil of India," and pledged the "mobilisation of all our resources, both human and material, . . to the national effort."[152] On paper, at least, such tactics were remarkably successful and within a year the total number joining Village Volunteer Forces was close to 15 million, 1.8 million rupees had been donated, and Defence Labour Banks had commanded nearly 22 million person-days of volunteered labor.[153] But such success in mobilization came at the cost of some of the core principles of the community development movement: local decision-making, group-based social affiliation, and a rejection of "mass" methods.

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150 Record of discussions of the Emergency Committee of the Cabinet, 17 January 1963, Ministry of Home Affairs, Emergency Cabinet Secretariat, file no. 103/62—ECS, NAI.
151 "Village Volunteer Force."
152 Ibid.
153 Rajeshwar Dayal, *Community Development, Panchayati Raj, and Sahakari Samaj* (Delhi: Metropolitan Book Co., 1965), 207.

Villagers taking a pledge to defend the country on Republic Day, 1963 (*Kurukshetra*, March 1963).

For those most intimately involved with community development, the failure of the movement to inspire the grass roots came as a bitter disappointment, accompanied by much finger-pointing. But for many Indian policymakers, the real problem with community development was not its failure to create vibrant communities but its failure to generate abundant harvests. By the late 1950s, the shortcomings of the program in this regard became abundantly clear. A sharp drop in food-grain output in 1957–58—temporary, as it turned out—quickly drew attention to India's agricultural shortages.[154] In 1959, a pair of influential reports on community development, one by the Ford Foundation and the other by the United Nations, raised further alarms. India was facing a crisis of "overwhelming gravity" and must make agriculture the "top priority programme objective," declared the Ford commission.[155] The UN team, with equal urgency, warned that "all forces in India must be marshalled" against the "overshadowing danger of starvation."[156] To take these warnings seriously, however, meant a substantial reorientation of community development. As Nehru had explained in his speech initially unveiling the community projects scheme to the development commissioners in 1952, community projects were important "not so much for the material achievement they would bring about but much more so because they seem to build up the community."[157] In fact, one of the reasons Nehru launched the program in the first place was as a reaction to the Grow More Food Campaign which, in V. T. Krishnamachari's judgment, had failed precisely because of its narrow focus on agriculture. Now, however, calls were made to jettison the holistic orientation of the program.

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154 Neale, "Indian Community Development," 687–688.

155 Agricultural Production Team, Ford Foundation, *Report on India's Food Crisis and Steps to Meet It* (New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of Food and Agriculture and Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, April 1959), 22, 42.

156 M. J. Coldwell, René Dumont, and Margaret Read, *Report of a Community Development Evaluation Mission in India* (New Delhi: Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation, 1959), 46.

157 Jawaharlal Nehru, quoted in Government of India, Planning Commission, *Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Government of India, 1957), 1.

The story of community development in the 1960s is thus a story of decline, as the focuses on community, grassroots democracy, and social processes that made the program distinctive were gradually sloughed off and agricultural production rose as the sole imperative of the program. In 1960, the government launched an Intensive Agricultural District Program, a pilot program that focused strictly on agriculture. That year, the Ministry of Community Development instructed its village-level workers to devote eighty percent of their time to agriculture.[158] But for many, even eighty percent was not enough, and there were calls for the workers to drop *all* other activities and work exclusively on agriculture.[159] Community developers, of course, struggled with this new orientation. Although they conceded that the looming food crisis was indeed dire, they sought to save the non-agricultural components of their work when possible. Called upon to revise the government's official guide to the community development program in 1962, Douglas Ensminger offered one way of thinking about the problem. "To say that community development must give priority attention to agricultural development does not imply that no attention is to be given to the other phases of community development," he wrote. "While food is of the greatest possible importance India's own experience with the grow more food campaign provides convincing proof that man does not live by food alone."[160] In particular, farmers devoted exclusively to agriculture during the growing season might find time to join community centers, attend folk schools, build wells, and the like during the slack season.

The tipping point came with Nehru's death in 1964, which robbed the community development program of its most devoted sponsor. The role of prime minister was taken over by Lal Bahadur Shastri, who began to set India on a path toward the Green Revolution. Approaching Dey, Shastri explained that while Nehru had had "full confidence in the people" to handle development through community institutions, Shastri himself did not "share his optimism."[161] To the Chief Ministers, Shastri announced that "the Community Development Department should for the next one year do nothing except concentrate on the question of increase of agricultural production."[162] Shastri's most consequential decision, however, was to place C. Subramaniam at the head of the Ministry of Agriculture. Subramaniam, a deeply centralist thinker, sought to bring the Ministry of Community Development under control of the Ministry of Agriculture, thus turning panchayati raj and all the other aspects of democratic decentralization into auxiliaries of the agricultural program. Dey managed to stave off attempts to hijack his ministry only until the end of Shastri's brief term. When Nehru's daughter Indira Gandhi took over as prime minister in 1966, she promptly moved Dey to the dead-end Ministry of Mines and Metals and then merged the Ministry of Community Development with the Ministry of Agriculture under Subramaniam's control.[163] As the Green Revolution began, what remained of community development deteriorated. Central grants to community development blocks were steadily reduced to levels well below what was sufficient to run the pro-

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[158] Karunaratne, "The Failure of the Community Development Programme in India," 113.

[159] The National Development Council made one such suggestion in 1962. The "Ram Subhag Singh Committee" (the Inter-Departmental and Institutional Coordination for Agricultural Production working group) made a similar recommendation the next year.

[160] [Douglas Ensminger], *A Guide to Community Development, Revised* (New Delhi: Ministry of Community Development, Government of India, 1962), 97.

[161] Shastri, quoted in S. K. Dey, "Panchayati Raj in Independent India: Some Personal Reflections," in *Panchayati Raj in Karnataka Today: Its National Dimensions*, ed. George Mathew (New Delhi: Institute of Social Sciences, 1986), 38.

[162] Lal Bahadur Shastri, address at Chief Ministers' Conference at New Delhi, 24 June 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri Papers, Group V, SW 32, Private Archives Division, NAI.

[163] Dey, *Power to the People?*, chap. 13.

grams, and development officers had to look to the states, which were rarely more generous, for funds.[164] The careful balance between centralization and decentralization under Nehru was replaced by the stark authoritarianism of Indira Gandhi, culminating in her declaration of a state of emergency in 1975–77. The training centers for panchayati raj officials and for village workers were abolished or transferred to the states. What institutional presence community development retained on the ground had degenerated, in the words of one embittered development officer, into "a mere programme of distributing chemical fertilisers."[165]

India's community development program thus ended, by all accounts, as a failure. Its advocates—men like Dey, Mayer, and Taylor—believed that it had become an empty husk, exactly the sort of spiritless bureaucracy they had sought to replace. For domestic and international critics, it also suffered from a serious defect in its conception. By placing the rural community above all else (one observer described this as succumbing to the "village fetish"), community development had bolstered social hierarchies and served as a prop for the continuation of feudal social relations in the countryside.[166] But it would be a mistake to confuse community development's failure for insignificance, as we have tended to do. By any measure, the scheme was of overwhelming importance. Community development commanded a large portion of spending under the first three Five-Year Plans and enjoyed the enthusiastic support of India's top planners, who regarded it as the "dynamo" of the plans. Not only did the scheme cover an enormous population (one-tenth of the global population) but it was virtually the only on-the-ground government agency in the Indian countryside and thus served as the vehicle for any scheme of the Indian government. Through the panchayati raj system, community development restructured Indian government, introducing local elections in rural areas. And yet, despite the centrality of community development within India's development model, the program resisted for at least ten years the technocratic principles and patterns that are so often said to mark post-independence Indian development. Run by a staff of ideological decentralists strongly sympathetic to Gandhian villagism, it was directed at all times toward grassroots participation, local knowledge and practices, the consolidation of the village community, and the embedded economy. This orientation was no secret; both the panchayati raj scheme and community development's official alliance with bhoodan-gramdan publicly demonstrated the decentralist bona fides of community developers. Despite the alleged consensus among Indian planners and U.S. aid executives in favor of top-down modernization strategies, it was precisely the anti-technocratic, decentralist aspects of community development that made it so attractive to both. Indeed, it is easier to find evidence for uniform support of community development from U.S. and Indian policymakers than it is to find it for uniform support of high-modernist projects. And yet, our histories of development implicitly accept the logic of modernization theory, even as they criticize it, when they relegate alternative forms of development to the sidelines and suggest that only top-down, technocratic schemes are worthy of our attention. If we want a usable past that can inform us as we reflect upon present conditions, we must give up this prejudice and acknowledge low-modernist schemes, limited though they were, as a key part of our history of development.

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164 These issues are discussed in the proceedings of the Second Meeting of the Consultative Council on Community Development, 7 July 1970, Records of the Planning Commission, file Q-17011/6/70–A8N, NAI.
165 M. S. Haq, *Community Development through Extension* (Allahabad: Chugh Publications, 1979), vii.
166 Lewis, *Quiet Crisis in India*, 157.

Chapter Four: The Philippines

In September 1950, a former advertising executive and covert CIA agent, Colonel Edward Lansdale, disembarked in Manila. Although he was at the time an obscure figure, his work in the Philippines would soon launch Lansdale to a sort of political stardom within the world of the Cold War. In the Philippines, he would draw on his old advertising techniques to wage psychological warfare against a peasant rebellion—with remarkable success. In Cuba, he would direct Operation Mongoose, an infamous series of pranks (poisoned cigars, exploding seashells) designed to delegitimate or assassinate Fidel Castro. In Vietnam, Lansdale would become the largest booster, and one of the closest confidantes, of Ngô Đình Diêm, and a principal architect of the United States' political and military strategy there. "South Vietnam, it can truly be said, was the creation of Edward Lansdale," wrote journalist Neil Sheehan.[1] Lansdale appeared prominently in three of the most important books of the Cold War. It was largely believed, including by Lansdale himself, that the protagonist of Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* (1955) was based on Lansdale (subsequent research has suggested otherwise, but Lansdale played a crucial role in shaping the message of the film version).[2] In *The Ugly American* (1958), Lansdale appeared transparently as "Colonel Hillandale," one of the book's few heroes. Most notoriously, Lansdale played a starring role in *The Pentagon Papers* (1971), which documented at length Lansdale's covert meddling in Vietnamese politics.[3]

Lansdale believed in the Cold War. But he did not believe that it could be fought with the military tactics of World War II. In the Philippines, the government was waging a war against the Huks, a group of armed and organized peasants, with tanks and heavy artillery. But such maneuvers amounted only to "noisy fireworks," Lansdale believed.[4] To defeat the Huks, the government would need to understand them. To do that, Lansdale left the military compound and headed up the mountains to camp on the Huk trail, playing Philippine folk songs on his harmonica and chatting with anyone who would talk to him. Lansdale not only listened with sympathy to the many complaints that villagers had against the government, but he also tried to understand the culture of the rural folk. The Huks were winning, Lansdale believed, because they had embedded their cause within the folkways of the people of the Philippines and were thus outflanking the United States on the cultural front. A devotee of Mao Zedong's writings on guerrilla warfare, Lansdale believed that the U.S. success in the Philippines depended not on superior firepower but on persuasion and amicability. The United States must become "a *brother* of the people, as well as their protector."[5] Lansdale took this principle of family affiliation to great heights in his personal life by befriending and eventually marrying a Filipina reporter, Patrocino Yapcinco Kelly, who not only showed him "a lot of the backcountry the Huks went through" but was in fact a Huk accomplice.[6]

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[1] Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988), 138.

[2] Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 150, 163–173.

[3] "Lansdale Team's Report on Covert Saigon Mission in '54 and '55," in Neil Sheehan, Hedrick Smith, E. W. Kenworthy, and Fox Butterfield, *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), 53–66.

[4] Edward Geary Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 21.

[5] Edward Lansdale, "Civic Action," lecture delivered at Counter-Guerrilla School, Special Warfare Center, Fort Bragg, 24 February 1961, Edward Geary Lansdale Papers, box 45, folder 1269, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

[6] Lansdale, admitted to his authorized biographer Currey, that he knew Kelly was "helping [the Huks] out from time to time . . . and carrying messages," but he dismissed this as her "just being fellow townsmates" with the Huks. Cecil B. Currey, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), 42.

Lansdale's desire to know the people, and to win their hearts and minds, led him to favor community development techniques, although translated into a military idiom. One of his innovations was the Civil Affairs Office of the Philippine Army, which assigned personnel to units who would specialize in "brotherly behavior": talking to the villagers, assessing their needs, assisting them, and preventing Army officers from treating them with disdain.[7] That approach, which Lansdale called "civic action," was taken up in numerous countries as a way of using "community development techniques to achieve para-military objectives," the head of the ICA's Community Development explained.[8] Lansdale also successfully orchestrated for the CIA the presidential election of Ramon Magsaysay, a close collaborator of Lansdale's and the man responsible for launching the Philippines' community development program. But Lansdale was less interested in local culture for the sake of rural welfare than he was for its potential uses in the prosecution of a violent counterinsurgency operation. In one famous operation, Lansdale exploited local superstitions concerning vampires by capturing a Huk rebel, murdering him by puncturing two holes in his neck turning him upside down to drain his blood, and then leaving the corpse on the Huk trail to scare Huk sympathizers out of the area.[9] And for all of his interest in the felt needs of the people in Huk areas, Lansdale also pushed for the use of napalm, which the United States supplied to the Philippine Army.[10]

Lansdale's use of community development as part of a counterinsurgency campaign is a helpful reminder that community development was a fairly flexible program, with the capacity to plug into many political projects, including those of the Cold War. Unlike Ellery Foster, the official in the Bowles embassy with whom the last chapter started, Lansdale was not an ideological communitarian with inclinations toward mysticism. He was, rather, a violent pragmatist who recognized the value of grassroots strategies. In that, Lansdale resembled many of the policy architects who established the Philippine community development program. Whereas, from the perspective of the United States, India's program had been an artifact of the Truman years, with high hopes about development, the Philippine program was an artifact of the Eisenhower years, when the focus moved from development to more direct Cold War military concerns. Unlike the Indian program, the Philippine community development was funded largely by the Central Intelligence Agency and was closely connected to military campaigns in the countryside. It also drew much more explicitly on the capitalist elite of the Philippines—on the aid of multinational corporations with an interest in the maintenance of strong property rights. Thus, even as the day-to-day operations of the two programs bore a close resemblance to each other (in part because many of the community developers who worked in the Philippines had also worked in India), the Philippines offered a "weaponized" version of community development, which was eventually exported, by Lansdale, to Vietnam.

The Philippines that Lansdale saw when he arrived in Manila in 1950 was a country in the throes of a seemingly intractable and inarguably destabilizing agrarian crisis. Spanish colonization of the Philippines, dating from 1521, created a hacienda system of large plantations, many of which were owned outright by the various Spanish monastic orders, who operated with relative autonomy from Spain.[11] The United States wrested control of the Philippines from Spain in 1898 but did little to ameliorate conditions. Rather, the United States gradually devolved power to a set of Philippine elites, who represented the interests of landlords and

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[7] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 70.

[8] Louis M. Miniclier, "Community Development: The Current Status of A.I.D. Support," 25 March 1963, p. 7, Paul Schuster Taylor Papers, carton 30, folder 1, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[9] Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 72..

[10] Stephen R. Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 7 (1977): 163–164.

[11] Dennis Morrow Roth, *The Friar Estates of the Philippines* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977).

who used electoral fraud, machine politics, and patron-client ties to continue to continue to represent those interests even with the expansion of the franchise.[12] The effect on the Philippine economy was disastrous. Without any regulatory oversight, political elites plundered the colonial state, issuing themselves massive loans (bankrupting the Central Bank of the Philippines in the process), siphoning off domestic spending on infrastructure, and ensuring that the tax structure favored landed wealth rather than the development of industry. Meanwhile, the expansion of the colonial state with the advent of U.S. rule and the increased integration of the Philippines into larger markets allowed provincial landlords to increasingly move their resources away from their localities and toward urban centers. No longer as dependent on their tenants for political backing and no longer limiting their economic activities to their provinces, landlords had fewer and fewer reasons to maintain peace on their plantations by providing economic and physical security for their tenants. Over the course of the first half of the twentieth century, tenants saw a sharp deterioration in the terms of their relationships with their landlords—a drying up of credit, a decreasing share of the crop, greater economic insecurity, and a sudden absence of the other forms of protection that their patrons had once reliably supplied. By the 1920s and 1930s, the Philippine peasantry developed organizations for political resistance, climaxing in the Sakdal uprising of 1935.[13]

The Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1941 opened the way for a reconfiguration of agrarian relations. Those who could flee Japanese-occupied areas did so, and those people were very often landlords, who were not directly tied to the land for their immediate subsistence. Peasants, meanwhile, had a new set of masters with whom to contend: Japanese forces, bolstered by collaborationist Filipino elites. In 1942, the Hukbalahap, an anti-Japanese guerrilla army, was born out of the peasant movements. "The bearing of arms was thrilling," remembered Huk leader Luis Taruc, himself the son of a tenant farmer. "The only guns many of these people had ever seen before had been in the hands of the PC's [Philippine Constabulary officers] who threatened our picket lines. Now, standing in an armed group, running their hands down rifle barrels they felt more powerful than any picket line."[14] In the absence of both landlords and legitimate government, the Huk-led peasants created their own governmental structures. Each barrio—the Philippine term for village—had its own council with, significantly, officers elected by secret ballot.[15] Military campaigns against the Japanese were launched, criminal and civil cases were tried, and, to some degree, land was redistributed through the barrio courts' rulings in inheritance cases.[16] By the end of the war, the Hukbalahap had become a large, armed organization with governing powers, a mass peasant base, and—thanks to the Huks' successful resistance against the Japanese—a fair amount of politi-

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[12] There are many sources that deal with the elite capture of the Philippine government under U.S. colonial rule. A very good overview is Benedict Anderson, "Cacique Democracy in the Philippines: Origins and Dreams," in Vicente L. Rafael, ed., *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on Philippine Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 3–47. An important recent analysis of the relationship between the U.S. colonial state and the development of a provincial elite is Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during U.S. Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

[13] James C. Scott and Benedict Kerkvliet, "The Politics of Survival: Peasant Response to 'Progress' in Southeast Asia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 4 (1973): 241–268; James C. Scott and Benedict J. Kerkvliet, "How Traditional Rural Patrons Lose Legitimacy: A Theory with Special Reference to Southeast Asia" in Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott, eds., *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 439–457; Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

[14] Luis Taruc, *Born of the People* (New York: International Publishers, 1953), 66.

[15] Ibid., 117.

[16] Ibid., 123.

cal legitimacy. But if the rise of the Hukbalahap raised hopes for social transformation in the Philippines, those hopes were quickly dashed at the end of the war as U.S. forces led by Douglas MacArthur re-installed the old Philippine elite, despite the awkward fact that the bulk of them had been Japanese collaborators. The newly independent (as of 1946) Philippine government forcibly disarmed Huks, arrested Huk leaders, and began shelling entire barrios where residents were suspected of having given aid to the Huks. The counterinsurgency escalated, and by the 1950s the Philippine Air Force was strafing villages and dropping U.S.-acquired napalm on Huk targets.[17] Not surprisingly, the military offensive—which president Elpidio Quirino described as the "mailed fist" approach—did little to persuade the Huks to surrender and in fact pushed the insurgency, which had initially sought little more than a restoration of the *status quo ante*, toward increasingly revolutionary goals. Quirino began to keep a motorboat tied to the presidential palace so that he could escape if the Huks seized the capital. What might have been a peaceful social revolution had instead become a brutal civil war.

By 1950, the fact that the Philippine state was in an obvious crisis was not lost on the United States. Nor did U.S. officials fail to notice the increasing ties between the Huks and the Communist Party, whose members by this point composed much of the organization's leadership. Washington quickly moved to rescue the Philippine government. The Truman administration acquiesced to import and exchange controls that added some much-needed stability to the Philippine economy. The U.S. Congress approved $250 million in aid, which in turn bought Washington the ability to set Philippine policy, despite the Philippines' nominal independence. The Philippine Armed Forces were reconfigured, with resources directed away from national defense and toward counterinsurgency.

The United States enjoyed a significant degree of control in its former colony in 1950. But no amount of aid or direction could solve the problem of the Philippine oligarchy, which had a way of confounding every U.S. design for the country and of funneling U.S. aid money into private coffers. To overcome that problem, Lansdale saw, the United States would need to cultivate a new ruling class, men beholden not to the landed elite but rather to Washington. One very promising candidate to lead this new ruling class, Lansdale believed, was Ramon Magsaysay, a former Congressman appointed Secretary of National Defense under Quirino in 1950. Magsaysay came from a middling family but had the common touch and took the unusual position that a rural peace could best be achieved by "the correction of social evils and injustices" rather than by the killing of rebels.[18] Lansdale and Magsaysay immediately fell in with each other. Learning that Magsaysay was in danger of assassination, he invited Magsaysay to stay with him in his military compound. "He opened a new dimension in my life," Lansdale remembered.

> Each night we sat up late discussing the current situation. Magsaysay would air his views. Afterwards, I would sort them out aloud for him while underscoring the principles or strategy or tactics involved. It helped him select or discard courses of action. We grew accustomed to revealing our innermost thoughts to each other.[19]

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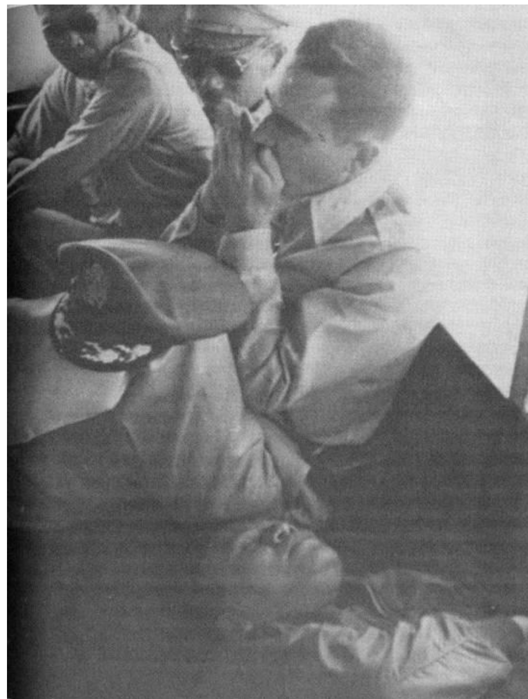
[17] Shalom, "Counter-Insurgency in the Philippines."

[18] Ramon Magsaysay, quoted in Frances Lucille Starner, *Magsaysay and the Philippine Peasantry: The Agrarian Impact on Philippine Politics, 1953–1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 28.

[19] Edward Geary Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 37.

Together, the two men developed a series of reforms, ranging from a sharp crackdown on corruption in the military to the provision of lawyers for tenants hoping to press suits against their landlords. The aforementioned Civil Affairs Office within the military was part of the Magsaysay-Lansdale reform package. But by far the most popular was the establishment within the Philippine Armed Forces of an Economic Development Corps (EDCOR), a scheme under which ex-Huks were resettled to new farm communities. The program was miniscule—fewer than 1,000 families were resettled, and only 246 were the families of reformed Huks—but as a propaganda victory it was overwhelming, and Magsaysay did not fail to broadcast its achievements through films, posters, and pamphlets.[20] Magsaysay's reforms, the continued military crackdown on the rebels, and a number of creative ploys invented by Lansdale eventually succeeded in wearing down the Huk resistance. Most Huks slipped quietly back into agricultural life and Luis Taruc, the leader of the rebellion, surrendered in 1954 and spent the next fifteen years in prison.



Lansdale playing harmonica while Magsaysay sleeps (Nashel, *Lansdale's Cold War*).

Under Lansdale's direction, the CIA launched a massive effort to promote Magsaysay through the ranks of politics, win him supporters, and, finally, get him elected president in 1953. CIA agents covertly created and ran a grass-roots organization, NAMFREL, to "reform" Philippine politics. NAMFREL engineered Magsaysay's switch to the opposition party by brokering a deal with the opposition leaders, blackmailed the ruling party's vice president to break with his party, drugged Quirino's drinks before he gave speeches, illegally gave at least a million dollars in cash to Magsaysay, drummed up campaign contributions—also illegal—from U.S. corporations like Coca-Cola to Magsaysay's campaign, planted pro-

[20] Stephen Rosskamm Shalom, *The United States and the Philippines: A Study of Neocolonialism* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1981), 79–80. The most thorough study of EDCOR, highly sympathetic to the program, is Alvin H. Scaff, *The Philippine Answer to Communism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955).

Magsaysay newspaper articles in the Philippine press, wrote speeches for Magsaysay, and smuggled guns into the Philippines for use in a coup in case of Magsaysay's defeat.[21] Such strategies, combined with Magsaysay's winning personality and the prospect that his election might mark a cleansing of Philippine politics, proved remarkably effective, and Magsaysay won in a landslide. "This is the way we like to see an election carried out," President Eisenhower declared to the press—a knowing wink to the CIA.[22]

The election of Ramon Magsaysay was also a major victory for community development. During his presidential campaign, Magsaysay had stumped extensively in the barrios, a major and much-noted departure from past political campaigns. His EDCOR program, though small, had also signaled the administration's willingness to engage with rural issues and rural people. As "barrio fever" swept the halls of government, more and more politicians, government agencies, and private elite groups turned to some version of community development, often at the urging of the United States (and even as the government continued to napalm Huk villages). The Bureau of Public Schools established community councils, first on its own and then, starting in 1953, with the assistance of a rural sociologist from the Mutual Security Agency. The Bureau of Agricultural Extension—patterned directly on the USDA's agricultural extension service and established in 1952 at the insistence of the United States—set up its own barrio councils starting in 1953. In 1954, the Social Welfare Administration's Rural Welfare Division was renamed the Division of Urban and Rural Community Development. Meanwhile, NAMFREL, the CIA's electoral reform organization that had been started to promote Magsaysay, used millions of dollars that it raised from organizations like Coca-Cola and CARE to set up a number of community centers starting in 1953. NAMFREL's turn to community development had been at the behest of a CIA agent named Gabriel Kaplan, the son of a farmer who believed strongly that democracy in the Philippines could only grow from the barrios up.

The most prominent promoter of Philippine in the community development in the early 1950s was none other than Y. C. James Yen, the Chinese Protestant who had run a mass education movement in China and who had become the darling of the liberal establishment. When, at the urging of Eleanor Roosevelt and William O. Douglas, Yen had made an exploratory tour of Asia in search of a locale where he might launch a new rural improvement project, Yen had found much to excite him in the Philippines. He had been especially taken by Magsaysay's EDCOR project and by the possibility of using community projects to fight Chinese-style Communism. In 1952 Yen moved to the Philippines and established the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), a Filipino-staffed version of his Chinese Mass Education Movement. Whereas in China, the Mass Education Movement had functioned as a general rural reform organization, in the Philippines there was no question that its major goal would be counterinsurgency. On Magsaysay's invitation, the PRRM began a pilot community development project in Nueva Ecija, the very heart of the Huk rebellion. "You have heard about the Cold War, but out here in Asia there is nothing cold about it," Magsaysay told PRRM-trained community development workers in a commencement address. "Here in the Philip-

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[21] Details on the role of the CIA in the Magsaysay election are drawn from three sources: Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*; Joseph Burkholder Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1976), and Raymond Bonner, *Waltzing with a Dictator: The Marcoses and the Making of American Policy* (New York: Times Books, 1987). Nick Cullather, however, has argued that the CIA's perception of its ability to influence Philippine politics was exaggerated and that, in fact, Magsaysay entered office beholden less to the United States than to Philippine economic and political interests. See Nick Cullather, *Illusions of Influence: The Political Economy of United States–Philippines Relations, 1942–1960* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), especially chap. 4.

[22] Quoted in Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, 113.

pines the so-called Cold War is as hot as the machine guns of the soldiers shooting Huks in their hide-outs on Mount Arayat—towering on the horizon over there—the first thing you see in the morning and the last at night. This war is a total war."[23] That war, Magsaysay continued, was to be fought on the battlefield but also on the "rice field," and that is where the PRRM would work. To drive the point home, Magsaysay proposed that the next PRRM project be based in San Luis, the hometown of Huk leader Luis Taruc, "to demonstrate to the dissidents . . . that it is possible for the barrio folks to enjoy freedom and abundant life."[24] Yen enthusiastically accepted. Like Magsaysay's EDCOR program, the PRRM did not cover very many villages, but its projects were celebrated in the Philippines and abroad. Writing for the *Reader's Digest*, the author of *The Ugly American* William J. Lederer declared them to be "the pride of their province."[25]

While the PRRM set up prominent pilot projects in Huk-controlled areas, Magsaysay began to consolidate the existing community development agencies into a national program. Thanks to Magsaysay's successful counterinsurgency campaign and the rapid expansion of community development throughout the globe, Magsaysay's administration found itself the beneficiary of a great deal of financial help and guidance from the United States as it cast about for concrete ways to extend the anti-Huk campaign into a full-blown rural development program. In 1954, Magsaysay established the Community Development Planning Council, with a young man, Ramon Binamira, in charge. Binamira had already been involved with NAMFREL's community centers project and, through that, with the CIA. Although he was not an agent, he met regularly with the CIA's man in charge of community development, Gabriel Kaplan, as did other members of the Community Development Planning Council. Initial plans for the Community Development Planning Council were drawn up in 1955 with the help of Robert T. McMillan, a rural sociologist in the employ of the U.S. International Cooperation Administration, and E. R. Chadwick, a Community Development Expert dispatched by United Nations. McMillan and Chadwick had also managed to get the United Nations' first regional conference on community development to be held in Manila, bringing representatives from Burma, India, Indonesia, Korea, and Pakistan—as well as advisors from the United States and Britain—to talk about community development theory.[26] Meanwhile, Y.C. James Yen managed to win the backing of a powerful group of U.S. Congressmen, who pushed through the House an amendment to the Mutual Security Act of 1955 authorizing up to ten percent of a planned $28.5 million in aid for the Philippines to go to Yen's work—basically, a Philippine version of the "Jimmy Yen Provision" that had channeled ten percent of U.S. aid to China into rural reconstruction. A competition between Yen's faction, backed by Congress and U.S. internationalists, and Binamira's faction, backed by the CIA and the State Department, was resolved in favor of the CIA and State Department in 1956 when Magsaysay abolished the Community Development Planning Council and established in its place a unified Philippine community development agency, the Presidential Assistant on Community Development (PACD), under Binamira's leadership. Yen, meanwhile, continued to operate as the civic—rather than official—wing of the community development project, focusing on small

[23] Ramon Magsaysay, "The Poor Man's Point 4 for the Philippines," 1954, in International Institute of Rural Reconstruction Papers, box 38, Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Columbia University.

[24] Ramon Magsaysay to Y. C. James Yen, 26 April 1954, William O. Douglas Papers, container 598, folder 6, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

[25] W. J. Lederer, "The Revolt of Juan de la Cruz," manuscript for the *Reader's Digest*, n. d., p. 10, in IIRR Papers, box 100.

[26] Jose V. Abueva, *Focus on the Barrio: The Story behind the Birth of the Philippine Community Development Program under President Ramon Magsaysay* (Manila: Institute of Public Administration, University of the Philippines, 1959), 192.

but prestigious projects and drawing in a number of leaders of Philippine civil society, as he had in the United States.

The PACD and the CIA: PACD chief Ramon Binamira, far left, with CIA agent Gabriel Kaplan, second from right, and President Magsaysay's widow Luz Magsaysay in 1957 at the dedication of a community development center in Los Baños (Gabriel L. Kaplan Papers, Cornell University).

Although the PACD was part of the independent Philippine government, it continued to look abroad for support. After Magsaysay established the agency, Chadwick brought Binamira, a senator, and two provincial governors away for a fact-finding mission that took them to the farmer cooperatives of Denmark and to the community development programs of India and Pakistan.[27] Meanwhile, the U.S. International Cooperation Administration, the predecessor to USAID, assembled a team of experts with international pedigrees to consult with PACD: Ernest E. Neal, a Southern black community developer who had worked in India and the U.S. South; Harry Naylor, a rural sociologist who had worked in Iran, and Bonard Wilson, an expert in group dynamics.[28] Other U.S. experts, like Robert Polson, Lincoln Kelsey, and Edward Lutz, taught community development as visiting professors in Philippine universities. The CIA agent Kaplan, meanwhile, continued to meet regularly with Binamira. The CIA put nearly a quarter of a million dollars a year behind Kaplan's community development work and,

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[27] E. R. Chadwick, progress report no. 26, 2 January 1957, folder S-0175-1701-01, in United Nations Archives, New York.

[28] Ernest E. Neal, *Hope for the Wretched: A Narrative Report of Technical Assistance Experiences* (Washington, DC: Agency for International Development, 1972), chap. 6.

more importantly, arranged for around $40 million to be sent through non-clandestine channels from the U.S. government to support Kaplan's work in community development.[29]

There is little mystery about why the United States would support a friendly government in an unstable country in Southeast Asia during the high Cold War. But why did so much U.S. support for the Philippines take the form of community development? After his tenure there, Gabriel Kaplan explained the rationale to a group of Dallas beef producers with investments in Latin America who were considering backing community development programs in the countries where they were investing. Non-Communist governments, Kaplan insisted, could not operate without the pathways of communication by which the needs of the people could be transmitted to the government, and by which governmental programs could be explained and implemented.[30] Local village leaders, loyal to the government, must be trained as a bulwark "against the left extremist takeover of every hamlet in Latin America, Asia, and Africa."[31] He continued:

> Gentlemen, let's face it: your future, the future of the private elite sector, the future of the believers in the free enterprise system, depends on the ability of our societies to establish adequate systems of intercommunication and action between our economic and political power centers and the mass of our people. This is your insurance for survival. You can purchase this insurance through stimulating your national, regional and local communities to install appropriate techniques of mass organization and leader development and utilization. A generation of experience with such techniques is now at your disposal. . . . But the hour is so grave that it behooves us all to speak out, and to act in concert, in organization, and with dedication.[32]

Community development, in other words, was a means of bridging the large and growing gap between the people of the Third World and their rulers. This was not to be achieved by a redistribution of wealth or power, but rather by an awakening of civil society in the countryside, which would be the key to overcoming the popular disaffection. Not surprisingly, it was the elites in the Philippines who were the most visibly excited about the program. The board of Yen's PRRM was largely composed of well-placed businessmen—the president of Republic Flour Mills, the president of the National City Bank of New York in Manila, the General Manager of the China Banking Corporation, and so forth.[33] Its president, Gregorio Feliciano, had been a top executive at Shell before taking the job.[34]

Hopes that community development could obviate the need for thoroughgoing social and economic reforms in the Philippines were high from its advent. In the crisis-ridden years before Magsaysay's presidency, the United States had seriously considered backing a program of land reform as the only way to salvage the country. Robert Hardie, an agricultural economist who had worked for the USDA during the New Deal and who had worked on land reform in Japan, was sent to the Philippines in 1951 to study rural conditions. He urged a clean sweep of existing laws and an energetic pursuit of the redistribution of land. Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared the Hardie report to be "sound, feasible, and accurate," and the

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[29] Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, 271.
[30] "How Can the Private Sector Protect Itself against the Risks of the Cold War?" 13 October 1965, p. 3, in Gabriel L. Kaplan Papers, #2898, box 2, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
[31] Ibid., p. 4.
[32] Ibid., 12–13.
[33] Abueva, *Focus on the Barrio*, 149n.
[34] Meeting of the IIRR board, minutes, 22 June 1967, in Douglas Papers, container 600, folder 6.

embassy adopted it as official policy.[35] But land reform could never be just an economic fix. The Philippine oligarchy drew its power from land, and the United States had for decades drawn *its* influence in the Philippines from that oligarchy. Any radical reconfiguration of existing agrarian relations would amount to a major shift in the political landscape, and, from the perspective of U.S. power, should not be taken lightly. Magsaysay's election the year after the Hardie report's publication and his commitment to community development was all it took to push the State Department back to its former position of opposition to land reform, and to provoke Hardie to resign in disgust. Although Magsaysay backed some legislative agrarian reforms—the Agricultural Tenancy Act, the Court of Agrarian Relations, and the Land Reform Act—these pieces of legislation were so riddled with loopholes that their effect was nearly nonexistent.[36] In the decade and a half from Magsaysay's election to 1970, as one expert on the Philippine rural economy put it, "rural income distribution became more inequitable, landlessness and tenancy increased and the average size of small farm holdings decreased, while a disproportionate percentage of agricultural land remained in very few hands."[37] Those were exactly the years when community development in the Philippines was at its height.

From the perspective of its U.S. backers, and from many Philippine politicians as well, the point of community development was to achieve a rural peace without acquiescing to the demands of peasant rebels. In that respect, Philippine community development differed considerably from Indian community development, where the Gandhi movement, the lack of corruption in government, the rural political stability, and the relative autonomy from the United States had put the program on a much more ideologically communitarian footing. A civil servant like Ellery Foster, working in the U.S. embassy in Delhi, might speak of the greed of the West, the wisdom of the East, and the crucial importance of non-monetary forms of exchange. Few men in the Philippines spoke that language, and many spoke the language of Gabriel Kaplan, who sought to use community development to protect the privileges of a private elite. To be sure, Kaplan believed in the power of democracy and in the grass roots. But when he touted the virtues of community development, he tended to emphasize its ability to allow political elites to shape and control their subjects rather than its ability to endow village dwellers with political autonomy. Community development, he argued, must build "a two-way channel of communication between the citizen mass and the power center," but to "insure that the channel does not veer to right or left extremism, we must carve out significant participating roles for the power center and for all of the elements that comprise the private sector."[38] In this, Kaplan sounded not unlike the modernization theorists who had sought to use community development strategies to endow rural people with the norms of their political rulers, and indeed Kaplan relied on the work of modernization theorist Lucian Pye in explaining how community development should work. "The primary function of community development is to build democratically oriented civic and political leaders and consequent political

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[35] Acheson, quoted in Paul M. Monk, *Truth and Power: Robert S. Hardie and Land Reform Debates in the Philippines, 1950–1987* (Clayton, Victoria, Australia: Centre for Southeast Asian Studies: Monash University, 1990), 20.
[36] For details see Renato Constantino and Letizia R. Constantino, *The Philippines: The Continuing Past* (Quezon City: The Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1978), chap. 9 and Amando Doronila, *The State, Economic Transformation, and Political Change in the Philippines, 1946–1972* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), chap. 4.
[37] Monk, *Truth and Power*, 83–84. Monk offers statistical evidence for this generalization, such as share of rural income going to each quintile of the population, but such statistics are, as Monk notes, highly imprecise in the case of the Philippines.
[38] Gabriel L. Kaplan, *New Horizons for the Art of Community Development* (Arlington: The Community Development Counselling Service, n.d.), 9. Originally published in 1962. In Kaplan Papers, box 2.

stability," he explained, citing Pye. "It is a way of coming to grips with some of the basic problems which must be solved if a traditional society is to become a modern political system." [39]

The differences in political valence between Indian and Philippine community development were significant. But those differences in large part lay at the upper levels, where funding decisions were made. At the village level, the Philippine program was not all that different from the Indian program. Mainly, that was because the Indian program had served as the basic model for the Philippine one, as indeed it had served as the model for nearly every community development program in Asia. As in India, the main activity of the Philippine program was sponsoring thousands of small development projects in rural areas. Projects began with PACD barrio workers, young men and women, usually college-educated, who had been undergone a six-month training course. After their training, they were assigned to a small set of barrios (three was a common number), where they would act as local development advisors. Their first task was to find a place to live, and they most often took up residence with the families of local elites in one of the villages. They would then try to get to know the barrio: learning about local conditions, participating in festivals, and identifying "natural leaders"—usually the wealthiest residents—who might be helpful in mobilizing the community. They would then initiate conversations and call meetings to discuss agricultural conditions and what could be done. At this point, it was hoped, residents would begin to identify "felt needs" that were common throughout the barrio. Barrio workers would encourage the formation of councils or other groups that could then, with advice, put together a plan to meet those needs. Ostensibly the community could propose any development plan it wanted, but in actuality the plans that were carried out tended to be limited to a set of standard projects. Feeder roads, schools, artesian wells, and community centers were built; improved seeds, fertilizer, and livestock were distributed; backyard gardens were started; and health clinics and literacy programs were established. The PACD gave grants-in-aid but adhered strictly to a "fifty-fifty" rule: at least half of the cost of the project must be supplied by the locality itself, either in the form of cash from the local government or, more usually, in the form of donated labor, materials, and money directly from the barrio residents. In reality, PACD paid for somewhere around one-third of the cost of the grants-in-aid projects, with barrio residents paying around 55 percent and the balance coming from a variety of other sources, mostly other government agencies.[40] Barrio workers also initiated "purely self-help" projects when possible—small projects that could be undertaken without any direct PACD support, such as small construction projects that used locally available materials. Between 1959–60 and 1966–67, PACD recorded over 75,000 of these, whereas PACD itself sponsored fewer than 15,000 projects in the same period through its grants-in-aid (although we must treat the official numbers with some skepticism).[41]

Along with the development projects themselves, PACD officials and their political allies pushed for a devolution of power to the barrios. A series of laws promulgated between 1955 and 1963 defined the role of barrio councils, mandated that their officials be elected, turned them into official units of government, funneled ten percent of local real estate taxes to them, and granted them their own limited powers to tax, collect license fees, and enact local

[39] Gabriel L. Kaplan, "The Art of Community Development: A Definition and an International Mission for Labor and Private Enterprise," speech, Arlington, Virginia, 1965, p. 8, in Kaplan Papers, box 2.

[40] From the start of PACD's operation until fiscal year 1966–67, 31,109 grants-in-aid projects were completed at a total cost of P42,406,284. PACD paid P15,022,001 and barrio residents paid P23,200,310. Figures, drawn from PACD's official accounting, are given in Chavalit Sukpanich, "The Role of the Presidential Arm on Community Development (PACD) in Nation-Building" (MPA thesis, Centro Escolar University, 1968), 106.

[41] Ibid., 106, 113.

ordinances. From PACD's perspective, the barrio councils were useful not just as institutions that might cooperate in rural development but as centers of local democracy and community life. In 1963, the PACD declared that its central goal was no longer encouraging small-scale projects with its grants-in-aid but rather encouraging the barrio councils themselves. All PACD activities, the agency declared, would henceforth "revolve in and be anchored with the barrio council," not necessarily because the council was the most effective mechanism but because, by working exclusively through it, the PACD could "dignify and add prestige to the barrio council," thereby "building democracy from the grassroots."[42] The grants-in-aid continued, but at a much slower pace—in the fiscal year following that decision, the PACD's projects completed dropped by 70 percent.[43]

In addition to sponsoring rural development projects and encouraging local government, the PACD invested heavily in education. The core of its program was the six-month training course for barrio workers, held at the Community Development Center at the University of the Philippines, Los Baños. Unlike the typical training course for agricultural extension agents, which would focus on technical skills such as soil analysis, animal husbandry, and agricultural economics, the PACD training emphasized the social and cultural components of development: group dynamics, rural sociology, and community organizing. Participants were required to form "T-groups"—contentless discussion groups that were meant to draw participants to an understanding of the dynamics of cooperation (T-groups had become popular forms of corporate management training in the United States and would soon become the basis of the Erhard Seminars Training and the self-actualization movement there).[44] There was a physical fitness requirement: PACD trainees did daily morning exercise as well as participating in various team sports. The trainees were also asked to organize the school as if it were a barrio, electing a council and organizing a cooperative to sell basic necessities.[45] The PACD's emphasis on form rather than content in its training courses fit the basic orientation of community development toward social processes rather than material outcomes.

That emphasis was even more pronounced in the PACD-run Lay Leadership Institutes that many elected barrio officials in the Philippines were required to attend as training for their new positions. On the first day of the four-day course, the village leaders were left alone in a room without instructions, inevitably falling into confusion, frustration, and chaos. On the second day, the trainers would return to ask them to reflect on that frustration and particularly on their experience of dealing with the others in the room. This discussion was meant to lead gradually to a more mature exploration of group dynamics and, eventually, into an examination of the various factors inhibiting the leaders from achieving their ideal villages. "Through this process," explained PACD chief Ramon Binamira, "they themselves realized that most of the problems in their villages could be met by them. They go home firmly determined to act on these problems themselves."[46] This motivational training course was a major function of the PACD, given not only to barrio officials but, through an auxiliary program, to young people and women in the barrios. In 1958, nearly the entire provincial government of

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[42] Presidential Assistant on Community Development, Circular No. 63–26, "The Focus of PACD Operations," 16 September 1963, 1, 4, Filipiniana Books Section, University Library, University of the Philippines, Diliman.
[43] In fiscal year 1962–63, the PACD completed 1,563 grants-in-aid. In 1964–64 it completed 475. In the next two years it completed 636 and 695 projects. Sukpanich, "The Role of PACD," 106.
[44] On T-groups in the United States, see Jenna Fey Alden, "Behind the Executive Mask: The Rise of Postwar Corporate Sensitivity Training" (PhD diss., Columbia University, forthcoming).
[45] For details about PACD training, see Community Development Center, *CDC Training Manual* (Manila: Presidential Arm on Community Development, c. 1966).
[46] Ramon P. Binamira, *Community Development: Answer to Communism* (Bangkok: SEATO, 1960), 12.

Batangas—including the governor, the provincial board members, and 85 percent of the mayors and barrio officials—took leave of their posts and traveled to Los Baños to undertake the training together.[47] Overall, millions of barrio residents participated in one form of PACD training or another—PACD put the number of people trained between its inception in 1956 and mid-1967 at nearly five million.[48]

The anti-technocratic aspects of community development, which had animated the Indian program, were surprisingly preserved in its transposition to the Philippines. The men and women who designed the programs and training had a profound appreciation of the perils of modernization, even if few of their political backers evinced similar anxieties. The notion that economic aid could wreak havoc with traditional cultures was something of an *idée fixe* among community development advocates. The books and articles that were written and distributed in the Philippines were full of cautionary tales of well-meaning technical assistance programs that had gone horribly awry because local norms had been ignored.[49] Rural people, in this vision, had much of value—cultural traditions, social networks, informal welfare systems—that might be lost in the process of development. What is more, because the barrio was, in the words of Binamira, "a very delicate . . . social mechanism," any change, however modest, could unbalance the whole system with catastrophic results.[50] At times, this concern for the integrity of the community could lead community development advocates to be skeptical about modernization itself. A PACD training manual from 1956, citing communitarian philosopher Baker Brownell, warned that the "age of technology" had, by drawing workers into industrial jobs, alienated them from their communities. Here is that manual's description of life in modern civilization:

> One is abstracted; one can no longer identify oneself with another. One is rather associated with his line of job, with the part of the gadget he is operating. . . . The identity of the individual takes form no longer in the capacity of his being a human being but in his various relationships within the technological context: the push button gadget, the line of work, efficiency output, and the like. And where will be the community and the values of its constituents if the constituents themselves are both spare parts of a great machine?[51]

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[47] Frances M. Cevallos, "Batangas Governor, Other Officials Go Back to School," *Manila Times Daily Magazine*, 25 June 1958, reprinted in *Community Development: The War Against Want, Hunger, Illiteracy, and Disease* (Manila: Presidential Assistant on Community Development, 1958), 80–83.

[48] Sukpanich, working with official records of PACD no longer available in libraries and working under the supervision of the PACD chief, gave the number in 1968 as 4,921,694. A PACD-issued pamphlet from the same year gave the total number of "barrio leaders" who have undergone training as 2,578,894, but it is not clear whether there were other trainees who were not counted as "barrio leaders." See Sukpanich, "The Role of PACD," 7 and Presidential Arm on Community Development, *The Philippine Community Development Program*, 1968, pamphlet, p. 25, in "Community Development" vertical file, Filipiniana Section, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola-Rizal Library.

[49] For a clear and useful statement of the dangers of technical change in the absence of cultural knowledge, see Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, "Some Principles of Culture Change and their Relation to the Philippines," *Philippine Sociological Review* 6 (1958): 1–7.

[50] Ramon P. Binamira, quoted in Presidential Assistant on Community Development, *Seminars on Community Development* (Manila: PSP Press, 1957), 37.

[51] Training Staff of the Luzon Community Development Training Center, *Understanding Community Development* (Manila: Presidential Assistant on Community Development, 1956), V–1.

To find such open discomfort with industrial life in an official pronouncement by a governmental agency in charge of overseeing economic development is almost astounding. But community development since the New Deal had always incorporated a fear that economic progress might come at the expense of communal life, that the *Gesellschaft* would replace the *Gemeinschaft* entirely, cutting individuals off from their traditions and culture.

Encouraging the concern among Philippine community developers with the integrity of rural society was an unusually active social science establishment, based in the Philippine universities and dedicated to the study of community life. In 1957, shortly after the establishment of the PACD, Ramon Binamira and his U.S. advisors convinced the University of the Philippines, Diliman, to establish an autonomous social scientific unit that would study the community development program as it unfolded and make recommendations. The Community Development Research Council (CDRC), as it was called, was no minor undertaking. It had a significant budget—the amount it gave out in research grants in its first year equaled more than five percent of the PACD's development grants that year—and in the small and cash-strapped Philippine academic system, it attracted great enthusiasm from social scientists hoping to excuse themselves from teaching and devote time to research.[52] The CDRC's resources were great enough in proportion to those of the university that two grant recipients whom I have interviewed spoke to me of scholars' substantially adjusting their topics of research or even their conclusions in order to receive continued CDRC funding.[53] By 1968, the CDRC had initiated sixty-three studies, many of them involving multiple researchers, and had published nineteen of them.[54] Even those that were not published, however, were widely circulated in mimeograph form. The dearth of social scientific literature on the Philippines was severe enough at the time that any CDRC study, published or not, that was halfway successful would show up on sociology and anthropology course syllabi.[55] It would not be an exaggeration to say that, through the CDRC, community development became a core problem that influenced the agendas of many researchers in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.[56] This set the Philippines apart from other countries with community development, such as India, in which scholars certainly studied community development but with nowhere near the same level of centralized institutional support.

The social science surrounding community development built from a foundation of U.S. anthropology and sociology, particularly the community studies pioneered at the University of Chicago and Cornell, where many Philippine scholars were trained. Not surprisingly, the first scholars to study rural society in the Philippines found, as Robert Redfield and W. Lloyd Warner had found in other places, that villages were places of social harmony. Of course, it was impossible to ignore the fact that Philippine barrios were marked by relationships of extreme inequality—"big people" who owned land and controlled municipal governments and "little people" who depended on them. But early sociology and anthropology

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52 Community Development Research Council, annual report, 1957–58, 6–7, Government Publications Division, National Library of the Philippines.

53 F. Landa Jocano, interview with the author, 1 October 2009, Asian Center, University of the Philippines, Diliman; Mary Racelis, interview with the author, 13 October 2009, Institute for Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University.

54 Gelia T. Castillo, "The Filipino Social Scientist and Rural Development," 13 March 1974, 3, Filipiniana Collection, University Library, University of the Philippines, Diliman.

55 Racelis, interview.

56 See Emmanuel M. Luna, "Rethinking Community Development in the Philippines: 'Indigenizing' and Regaining Grounds," in Virginia A. Miralao, ed., *The Philippine Social Sciences in the Life of the Nation*, vol. 1 (Quezon City: Philippine Social Science Center, 1999), 315–343.

tended to read such relationships as reciprocal. After all, landlords did not only take rent but also extended credit, sponsored local festivals, and, ideally, offered some sort of protection to their tenants. "The intense intimacy of neighborhood life and the habits of group cooperation might well be utilized in an organized effort for community improvement," suggested the sociologists of the University of the Philippines in 1954.[57] The Jesuit scholar Frank Lynch, one of the founding fathers of Philippine sociology, made the case most forcefully in his 1959 dissertation and a series of articles written shortly after. A University of Chicago graduate who was deeply influenced by Redfield and who arrived in the Philippines proudly clutching his copy of Warner's *Social Class in America* (one of two books he brought with him), Lynch was well prepared to discern the communal nature of Philippine barrio life. Referring to the relationship between elites and their subordinates, Lynch argued that "the function of these classes is to complement each other socially, economically, and politically."[58] Theirs was a symbiotic union, a "mutual understanding" that grew naturally from local conditions.[59] When asked, at a community development conference, whether the patron-client system did not amount to a "self-perpetuating tyranny," Lynch conceded that one could find injustices, "yet observation leads me to conclude that, *for better or for worse*, the two-class system *works*."[60] Such a sanguine view of barrio life was, of course, highly compatible with the PACD's efforts.

If community development theory had to be reduced to a single declarative sentence, Lynch's would not be a bad candidate: communities, despite their problems, *work*. Of course, community developers allowed that many villages and neighborhoods had fallen victim to apathy, but they hoped that, once the hard rind of inertia was pierced, the energy and enthusiasm of barrio life would once again begin to flow. Much hung, then, on the belief that rural people, when brought together to discuss their problems, would spontaneously organize themselves to solve those problems, and do a better job of it than any outside expert or authority. But such optimism could only be maintained for so long in the face of the sobering facts about postwar Philippine rural development. For it was precisely the period of the PACD's operation, 1956–1972, that the Philippines went from being one of the most promising Asian nations to being a regional laggard. During that period, population growth outpaced agricultural productivity growth, unemployment increased, tenancy increased, landlessness increased, and absentee ownership increased. More and more people, in both relative and absolute terms, slipped below the poverty level. Rural income distribution became more polarized, with the income share of the poorest fifth of the population slipping from 7.0 percent to 4.4 percent and the share of the richest fifth rising from 46.1 percent to 51.0 percent.[61] A longitudinal study comparing PACD-covered villages in the Dumaguete area between 1952 and 1966—one of the best sources for the effects of the community development program—found little for the

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[57] Chester L. Hunt, Richard W. Coller, Socorro C. Espiritu, John E. de Young, and Severino F. Corpus, *Sociology in the Philippine Setting* (Manila: Alemar, 1954), 237.
[58] Frank Lynch, "Social Class in a Bikol Town" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1959), 133. See also Lynch's famous essay of 1961, "Social Acceptance," reprinted with later reflections in *Philippine Society and the Individual: Selected Essays of Frank Lynch, 1949–1976*, ed. Aram A. Yengoyan and Perla Q. Makil (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984), 23–91.
[59] Frank Lynch, "Continuities in Philippine Social Class," paper delivered at the Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia, Manila, 1960, 4, in the Institute of Philippine Culture Collection, Pardo de Tavera Library and Archives, Rizal Library, Loyola Schools, Ateneo de Manila University.
[60] Frank Lynch, "Significance of the Nature of The Philippine Community in Community Development Programs," p. 23, May 1960, from "Community Development in the Philippines Seminar," box 23, folder 6, in Philippine Studies Program, Records, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.
[61] J. Eliseo Rocamora and Corazon Conti Panganiban, *Rural Development Strategies: The Philippine Case* (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, 1975), 140.

PACD to brag about. Although residents had mixed success getting better access to things like drinking water and roads, agricultural incomes per family had decreased considerably, educational levels were dropping, and those surveyed in 1966 were less optimistic about future conditions than those surveyed in 1952.[62] To the degree that community development was expected to lead the Philippines out of poverty, a first glance at actual trends would suggest that it failed tremendously. "Community development had promised much," wrote USAID official David Korten, summing up the general consensus in 1980, "yet delivered little."[63]

What had gone wrong? As usual, fingers were pointed. Magsaysay's sudden death in 1957 in a plane crash diminished government support, some PACD workers took up residence in towns rather than in barrios as they were supposed to, Muslim areas were drastically underserved, agricultural experts had a tendency to oversell the benefits of new seeds and livestock, and there were persistent difficulties in coordinating the activities of the various agencies involved.[64] But such faults can be found with any major endeavor and, in fact, the PACD was a relatively effective branch of the Philippine state. Full of educated young people who were willing to leave the comforts of the city for low-paying positions in the countryside, it was a bastion of idealism and reformism in a government notably beset by patronage, corruption, and cynicism. As in India, it was not the minor failures that brought community development down. It was the major ones.

The major failures, students of community development came increasingly to feel, stemmed from two related things: its vision of village society and its model of participation. In its analysis, the village was an essentially harmonious society, a place where deliberations could end in consensus and where interpersonal bonds were strong enough to mobilize the community around development projects, even in the absence of government funding or plans. That was how Lynch and the early Philippine social scientists saw matters, and that was how the PACD saw them as well. Such a vision, however, had a way of ignoring sources of conflict within the barrio. In what is probably the most famous article in Philippine sociology, Lynch had hypothesized that Filipinos, particularly rural Filipinos, were unusually committed to "smooth interpersonal relations"—the subordination of disagreement or contrary desire in order to achieve social harmony.[65] But later anthropologists and sociologists did not see it that way. F. Landa Jocano, another Chicago-trained social scientist, argued on the basis of his fieldwork that interpersonal relations among the poor were rarely smooth; they only appeared so when the powerless had reason to fear the consequences of disagreement with the power-

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[62] Agricultural incomes at constant 1966 prices had declined from P462 per family to P400. No measure was available to the researchers for total rural incomes, however. Optimism was measured by asking residents whether present conditions were better than they had been 6-7 years ago and by asking them whether they expected future conditions to be better than present conditions. Between 1952 and 1966, respondents to both questions became more polarized in their responses, with fewer of them answering "the same" and more of them answering either "better" or "worse." For both questions, however the number answering "worse" grew faster than the number answering "better." In response to the question about present conditions, "better" grew from 17 to 25 percent of respondents while "worse" grew from 9 to 19 percent. In response to the question about future conditions, "better" grew from 16 to 24 percent while "worse" grew from 5 to 17 percent. Agaton P. Pal and Robert A. Polson, *Rural People's Response to Change: Dumaguete Trade Area, Philippines* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1973), 153, 165, 240.

[63] David C. Korten, "Community Organization and Rural Development: A Learning Process Approach," *Public Administration Review* 40 (1980): 482.

[64] The quotidian obstacles faced by community development programs are detailed in Luz A. Einsiedel, *Success and Failure in Selected Community Development Projects in Batangas* (Quezon City: Community Development Research Council, 1968).

[65] Lynch, "Social Acceptance."

ful. In other words, what Lynch had taken for harmony within Philippine barrios was not an artifact of cross-class fellow feeling but rather of the plain reality that the "little people" were afraid of their social superiors and could not afford to offend them.[66] By the 1970s, arguments of this sort had taken prominence. Perhaps the most telling case was that of Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, Frank Lynch's closest colleague and the author of the CDRC's most requested research report.[67] Hollnsteiner began her career as a self-avowed "true believer" in community development and wrote an influential article on the nature of reciprocity in Philippine barrios—just the sort of thing that community development theorists were always writing.[68] By the late 1970s, however, she had made an about-face turn. Community development, she charged, had fundamentally failed to "face the major structural and institutional impediments to change: a power structure that keeps resources and decision-making in the hands of a few." Rather than facing such facts, it had adopted "the ostrich strategy of burying its head in the sand, unwilling to confront, or oblivious to, the reality of social, political and economic hierarchies."[69] A social scientific vision that had focused on community, status, and consensus was gradually being replaced by its opposite, one that gave attention to conflict, domination, and coercion.

Students of the barrio were able to identify many sources of strife: between men and women, between generations, between migrants from different regions, between competing political factions, and so forth. But one particular conflict loomed the largest in rural life: that between landlords and tenants. The Huk rebellion of the early 1950s had largely been over tenancy and land reform and whatever palliatives Magsaysay had been able to offer through his EDCOR farms, army reforms, and barrio programs may have been enough to temporarily quell outright armed revolt but they did little to change the basic structure of agrarian society. Magsaysay's legislative agrarian reforms had done nothing. Nevertheless, farmers themselves pressed for land reform, mainly through the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF), a Catholic-led peasants' organization founded in 1953 that absorbed many ex-Huks and former Communists. Despite serious problems with its leadership, the FFF was a strong voice for land reform and by the eve of martial law it had claimed somewhere on the order of 300,000 members.[70] The community development movement, by contrast, remained impervious to any scheme that might pit landlords against tenants or involve a redistribution of resources. Such conflict would immediately disable the one thing that community developers regarded as the crux of their efforts: neighborly cooperation. Thus out of the tens of thousands of local projects sponsored by the PACD or other agencies, not a single one, to my knowledge, involved redistributing land or renegotiating the sharecropping contract. Barrio councils—around which

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[66] F. Landa Jocano, "Rethinking 'Smooth Interpersonal Relations,'" *Philippine Sociological Review* 4 (1966): 282–291.

[67] The CDRC received so many "insistent requests from the PACD and the AID as well as from private individuals" for Hollnsteiner's report, *The Dynamics of Power in a Philippine Municipality*, that issued a second printing. Community Development Research Council, annual report, 1963–4, 26, Government Publications Division, National Library of the Philippines.

[68] Racelis interview, 13 October 2009; Mary R. Hollnsteiner, "Reciprocity in the Lowland Philippines," 1961, in Socorro C. Espiritu and Chester L. Hunt, eds., *Social Foundations of Community Development: Readings on the Philippines* (Manila: R. M. Garcia, 1964), 335–355.

[69] Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, "Mobilizing the Rural Poor through Community Organization," *Philippine Studies* 27 (1979): 405, 407.

[70] See Sonya Diane Carter, "The Philippine Federation of Free Farmers (A Case Study in Mass Agrarian Organizations)," 1959, in Socorro C. Espiritu and Chester L. Hunt, eds., *Social Foundations of Community Development: Readings on the Philippines* (Manila: R. M. Garcia, 1964), 449–473 and Blondie Po, *Rural Organizations and Rural Development in the Philippines: A Documentary Study* (Manila: Institute for Philippine Culture, 1977). The FFF's program can be found in its *Land to the Tiller* (Manila: Federation of Free Farmers, 1957).

the PACD based all of its activities after 1963—had no power to regulate tenancy agreements. Community development agencies rarely took up the land question and, when they did so, they were not on the side of the tenants. The PACD's handbook for barrio workers, in fact, went so far as to include a "Creed for Tenants and Landholders," under which both parties pledged to honor existing contracts (contracts weighted heavily in favor of landlords) and under which tenants pledged to maximize production and care for their landlords' property.[71] To have sided with the tenants would have been nearly impossible, anyway, as both PACD and PRRM workers tended to live in the homes of barrio officials, i.e., with landlords and their families, often accepting free food and incurring other debts to their hosts.[72] For those who believed the village to be essentially a place of concord, taking up residence with the most powerful villagers made sense—it was a way to get close to the most important people, the "natural leaders." The idea that this would count as a conflict of interest only made sense if one believed that there *were* competing interests in a barrio. But community developers did not. They saw the village, rather, as a unified social unit striving to improve itself, seeking to overcome apathy and protect itself, as a unit, from the violent dislocations that so often attend modernization and development.

Community development's first failure, in the eyes of its critics, was its mistaken belief that the village should be approached as a social whole rather than as internally divided. Its second, related failure was its model of participation. As community developers saw it, a healthy village was one in which residents participated actively in political life, with the understanding that such participation would take place through joint projects with neighbors. To the degree that villagers did not participate in this way, they were judged to be suffering from apathy, a failure of confidence, fatalism, over-dependence on government, or some similar malady. The PACD's role, as its officials saw it, was to cure barrio residents of their political afflictions by sending in barrio workers as "catalysts"—that term was used again and again—to initiate the process of community participation. Once the initial impediments to community action were overcome, through the example of barrio workers or perhaps through the therapeutic training sessions of the PACD's training center, villagers would quickly take development into their own hands and begin a grassroots movement. Or so the theory went. As thousands of projects were started without triggering any snowball effect, students of community development began to question their model of participation.

The first clear indication that Filipinos were not leaping enthusiastically to participate was the stall-out of the barrio councils. Although councils had been set up in the thousands under the various barrio acts, the available evidence suggests that they did not do much. "Apathy is quite widespread in the matter of voting for the barrio council," commented one CDRC researcher in 1959, adding that nearly one-fifth of the councils did not even meet more than once.[73] The Barrio Charter Act of 1960 and the Revised Barrio Charter Act of 1963 attempted to address this problem by allowing barrios to collect small amounts in property taxes and license fees, but it made little difference. Very few barrio councils actually collected the moneys to which they were entitled—property and business owners, it seems, were not willing to pay

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[71] Presidential Assistant for Community Development, "Philippine Community Development: Handbook for Community Development Workers," 1957, 85–6, Filipiniana Section, Library of Social Work and Community Development, University of the Philippines, Diliman.

[72] Gelia T. Castillo, Conrado M. Dimaano, Jesus C. Calleja, and Shirley F. Parcon, "A Development Program in Action: A Progress Report on a Philippine Case," *Asian Studies* 2 (1964): 45–46; Shalom, *The United States and the Philippines*, 124–125.

[73] Buenaventura M. Villanueva, *A Study of the Competence of Barrio Citizens to Conduct Barrio Government* (Quezon City: Community Development Research Council, 1959), 200, 94.

the taxes and the councils did not demand them.[74] According to E. H. Valsan, the most careful student of the subject, little was ever done through the barrio councils that was not accomplished "through the established social and religious channels," i.e., through the same patrons who had controlled rural society before the advent of community development.[75] By the late 1960s, many councils were effectively defunct. As Jocano, Hollnsteiner, and the other critics were coming to see, the barrio in the Philippines was less a free-spirited and democratic village republic than it was a playground of elites, who controlled community development projects just as easily as they had had controlled the municipal government, rural taxation, and, indeed, the national government.

When farmers did participate in barrio projects, they often wanted different things than the PACD was willing to offer. The studies available suggest that farmers were far more technically and materially oriented than the PACD expected or wanted them to be. Whereas barrio workers were keen to elicit the participation of villagers in designing and implementing local projects, the villagers themselves showed little interest in proceeding in such a manner. When a 1952 survey, made at the advent of the community development movement, asked inhabitants of barrios what measures they thought should be taken to improve their conditions, 46 percent suggested individual actions, 44 percent suggested government aid, and only 2 percent suggested "cooperative efforts."[76] Another CDRC study, made in 1959 and 1961, found a general "lukewarm attitude or indifference" among barrio residents to PACD projects, indifference stemming from the fact that while barrio residents consistently requested nuts-and-bolts material aid, PACD workers countered by offering group dynamics training, community councils, and other therapeutic measures designed to fit the people to undertake those projects themselves.[77] When non-elite residents were asked about their urgent needs, they did not mention political or cultural reforms but instead asked for roads, bridges, safe drinking water, and schools.[78] A telling anecdote circulated throughout the community development literature. During discussions about how to raise the resources to build a bridge, a village leader asked a PACD worker how much he got paid. When the worker disclosed his salary, the leader paused, did some mental calculations, and then informed the worker that if the village had just been given the PACD worker's yearly salary in cash, the village could have built the bridge and skipped the group discussions altogether.[79] A study of a multiple-barrio PACD pilot project found a similar dynamic. Farmers brought soil samples to barrio workers, hoping to have their soil analyzed by experts. The PACD workers declined—they were not

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[74] "Barrio Officials, Do your Jobs!," *Weekly Graphic*, 4 April 1962, 16; E. H. Valsan, *Community Development Programs and Rural Local Government: Comparative Case Studies of India and the Philippines* (New York: Praeger, 1970), 217; Rocamora and Panganiban, *Rural Development Strategies*, 95.

[75] E. H. Valsan, *Community Development Programs and Rural Local Government: Comparative Case Studies of India and the Philippines* (New York: Praeger, 1970), 209, 215.

[76] Pal and Polson, *Rural People's Response to Change*, 241.

[77] Luz A. Einsiedel, *The Impact of the Community Development Women and Youth and Lay Leadership Institutes of the PACD* (Quezon City: Community Development Research Council, 1966), 12.

[78] Agaton Pal found that when he asked barrio leaders in 1958 what the most urgent needs for the barrio were, 46% answered increased agricultural production and 18% nominated political reforms (learning to vote for qualified candidates, perceiving merit, etc.). By contrast, no barrio residents expressed a need for improved political culture and, interestingly, relatively few expressed a desire to increase agricultural production (11% called for better farming facilities)—presumably because tenants had far less to gain from increased production than their landlords did. Agaton P. Pal, *The Resources, Levels of Living, and Aspirations of Rural Households in Negros Oriental* (Quezon City: Community Development Research Council, 1963), 254–55.

[79] The anecdote is told, among other places, in Gelia T. Castillo, "A New Look at Old Concepts in Development: A Minority Report," *Solidarity* 3 (May 1968): 1–19.

trained in soil analysis—but suggested, in textbook Deweyan fashion, that the farmers set up field trials and controlled experiments so that they would have a better understanding of local agricultural conditions. This suggestion was met by "shoulder-shruggings on the part of the farmers." If the PACD workers are such experts, the farmers asked, why are we the ones who have to do the experiments? Tenant farmers also pointed out that no landowner would agree to apportion some land for field trials that could instead be used for production.[80] Barrio residents did participate in PACD programs, of course, but researchers began to worry that they did so as a way to tap PACD resources or in order to please its workers, who had often become their friends, rather than because of any strong felt needs. At any rate, despite local participation, many projects folded soon after the aid workers left.[81]

Of course, community development advocates wrote off such resistance to their methods as evidence of "apathy," of a pathological (but curable) lack of desire on the part of barrio residents to improve their own condition. With the benefit of hindsight, however, we may see things differently. Just because farmers balked at donating their own labor and resources to development projects chosen and undertaken by the barrio as a unit, as guided by community development workers, does not necessarily mean that they lacked interest in bettering their lives. As social scientists probed the failures of community development to ignite a grassroots betterment movement, many came to the conclusion that villagers might have legitimate reasons for non-participation in community projects. Classes and council meetings took time and energy, resources that were not often available in large supply to farm workers. Barrio councils, which remained under the thumb of landlords and village elites, may have seemed to residents to offer little as they could neither raise much by way of outside funds nor could they redistribute resources within the barrio. The innovations urged by community developers—new seeds, different crops, chemical fertilizers, and improved livestock—were often too expensive for farmers to adopt, either because they required expensive new inputs or because farmers at the margins of subsistence, where a bad year or failed experiment could be devastating, simply could not afford to replace tried methods with unknown ones. Even economic growth, if it could be guaranteed, posed a threat to some rural inhabitants, as growth tended not to be a uniform good but rather a process that benefited the better-off at the expense of the worse-off. And yet, there was in the community development movement a general lack of acknowledgement of these legitimate objections, a lack that, as Jocano saw it, "shifted the blame for the failure of projects . . . from the community development worker to the farmer."[82]

Wherever the blame was placed, the disappointments of the community development program mounted until, by the mid-1960s, it had lost much of its support. Diosdado Macapagal, elected president in 1961, had little interest in the program and let it quietly wither. Under his leadership, complained the *Philippines Free Press*, PACD had "quietly slid into limbo. . . . Some are wondering whether it still exists."[83] Macapagal further alienated community developers by vetoing a 1965 bill that would have granted PACD permanent status within the government, a veto that so angered the agency that its employees, including Ramon Binamira, planned a large protest march on Malacañang for August 31, 1965, Ramon Magsaysay's birthday. Macapagal's supporters managed to talk the organizers out of the march, but, as the

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[80] Castillo, et al., "Development Program in Action," 58.

[81] Ibid., 64–65. See also Gelia T. Castillo, *How Participatory is Participatory Development?: A Review of the Philippine Experience* (Makati: The Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 1983).

[82] F. Landa Jocano, *The Traditional World of Malitbog* (Quezon City: Community Development Research Council, 1969), 339.

[83] Napoleon G. Rama, "EEA vs. PACD," *Philippines Free Press*, 1 June 1963, 14.

PACD's newsletter reported, "demoralization spread through the rank and file."[84] Indeed, the PACD's budget and operations show a sharp contraction in Macapagal years; completed grants-in-aid projects dropped from a high of 8,213 in 1957–58 under Carlos Garcia's administration to a low of 475 in 1963–64.[85] Behind this decline was a pendular shift away from soft development strategies toward hard ones—ones concerned with technologies, infrastructure, and material resources rather than with social networks or local culture. In place of PACD-directed aid to the barrios, Macapagal created the Emergency Employment Administration, which distributed P100 million to barrios, but it spent the money through contractors on large-scale projects and it sought neither the advice nor the participation of barrio residents. USAID followed suit, pulling its funding from the PACD in 1966, a year ahead of schedule, in order to concentrate on an infrastructure- and agribusiness-heavy aid project called Operation SPREAD that made little room for local participation.[86] A devastating failure of the monsoon throughout Asia in 1965–66 highlighted the inability of previous development strategies to increase food production at a pace with population, and many countries, not just the Philippines, pulled back sharply from community development. The Asian Development Bank ratified this shift with its *Asian Agricultural Survey* (1969). "The members [of the survey team] are unanimous in the view that the only valid route to sustained rural development is a movement toward a farming based on applied science," it declared, explicitly rejecting community development's hope that production could be increased "by a judicious mixing of some aspects of modern science with the so-called realities of traditional beliefs and methods."[87] Modernization would be pursued aggressively, without concessions to the sociological or anthropological imperatives of community life. In the Philippines, this new approach was of course tightly bound to the Green Revolution and to Ferdinand Marcos's vision of transforming the countryside through dramatically increased production rather than through a grassroots revolution of democratic participation.

As the soft strategies of community development gave way the hard ones of the Green Revolution, those who remained advocates of participation began shifting their attention away from the barrios to urban slums, and from community development to a less romantic and more combative strategy, community organization. The PACD ran an almost exclusively rural program, both in its philosophy as well as in its actual geographical coverage. There were PACD projects in cities, but they were few and made few if any accommodations to the differences between rural barrios and urban slums.[88] "Rural bias," a CDRC study found, was generally considered by PACD to be "an indispensable possession of the field worker" and was actively cultivated in PACD training programs.[89] But the PACD was not the only community agency in operation. The flash point in urban community work came in 1970, when an ecumenical group of socially engaged clergy influenced by Saul Alinsky began working with

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[84] "Glancing Back," *PACD Newsette*, August–September 1967, 20.

[85] Sukpanich, "The Role of PACD," 106. Although part of this drop was surely the result of Macapagal's lack of relative lack of interest in PACD, another part stemmed, as described above, from the PACD's new focus on working through barrio councils.

[86] Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 170.

[87] Asian Development Bank, *Asian Agricultural Survey* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1969), 31–32.

[88] Aprodicio A. Laquian, *Slums are for People: The Barrio Magsaysay Pilot Project in Philippine Urban Community Development* (1968; Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1969), 57. The PACD's inattention to urban matters would change slightly with the Barrio Magsaysay pilot project in Manila, but the project did not mark any substantial reorientation on the part of the agency.

[89] Buenaventura M. Villanueva, *The Training Program, PACD* (Quezon City: The Community Development Research Council, 1966), 15.

slumdwellers in the Tondo Foreshoreland in Manila, forming the Philippine Ecumenical Committee for Community Organizing (PECCO) and the Zone One Tondo Organization (ZOTO).[90] Whereas the problems of barrio residents were widely understood to be a lack of services—they needed roads, wells, and schools—the most acutely felt problems of the Tondo Foreshoreland stemmed from the government's persistent attempts to relocate residents in order to improve Manila's port facilities, a key piece of Marcos's desired export-driven economy. "We were fighting the government from day one," explained one of PECCO's chief organizers.[91] With the government and the imperatives of national development on one side and the community on the other, it was impossible for ZOTO or PECCO to subscribe to the community development model of improving conditions by achieving consensus and solidarity. To differentiate their activities from those of the PACD, they described their practice as "community organizing."[92] Community organization quickly became the watchword for all of those who had become dissatisfied with community development over the years; it was a way of leveraging grassroots participation to challenge rather than confirm existing inequalities. "Perhaps the single most important difference between the community development movement . . . and what we are talking about today is the issue of power," explained Mary Hollnsteiner. "Our strategies today call for redressing power discrepancies in the community leading to a similar kind of social transformation at the national level and for restructuring bureaucracy to make it more responsive to the people's needs and demands."[93] And rather than looking toward scholars of community life like Redfield and Warner for guidance, the community organizers drew on a mix of Paulo Freire, Saul Alinsky, and Karl Marx.[94]

The final moment of disillusionment with the PACD was an ironic one. Although the Macapagal administration gave few resources and little attention to the PACD, Marcos, Macapagal's successor, promoted it vigorously. His first act of president, in fact, was to elevate the PACD to cabinet rank, granting it a measure of long-sought-after permanence within the government. As his new PACD chief, he appointed Ernesto Maceda, a man with no community development experience but whose film, *Iginuhuit ng Tadhana*, was largely credited with having turned the tide for Marcos in the 1965 election. He also changed the PACD's name from the Presidential Assistant on Community Development to the Presidential *Arm* on Community Development, a change intended, he explained, to lend the PACD office "the prestige, the powers, and the capabilities of the presidency."[95] The number of projects completed again began to rise, although never approaching the numbers of the 1950s. PACD employees were given presidential awards (so many that one critic joked that the true title of the agency should be the "Presidential Awards and Citations Department") and Marcos declared the first week of every year to be Community Development Week.[96] The biggest change of all, however, was Marcos's debut of a P100 million Barrio Development Fund, under which each barrio received a check for P2,000—a huge indirect boost to the PACD. Matching Macapagal's P100-million Emergency Employment Administration, the fund was taken by barrio workers as a clear sign that Marcos was intent on returning community development to its former place of

[90] ZOTO was originally ZOTTO, the Zone One Tondo Temporary Organization.
[91] Denis Murphy, interview with the author, 14 October 2009, at Urban Poor Associates, Quezon City.
[92] My account of the Tondo movement is drawn primarily from Jurgette A. Honculada, "Case Study: ZOTO and the Twice-Told Story of Philippine Community Organizing," *Kasarinlan* 1 (1985): 13–24.
[93] Mary Racelis Hollnsteiner, "Development for Whom?: People's Participation as One Answer," 12 December 1981, 4, 5, Filipiniana Collection, University Library, University of the Philippines, Diliman
[94] Murphy, interview.
[95] Ferdinand E. Marcos, "The Miracle of the Decade," *PACD Newsette*, January 1969, 4.
[96] "Incentives Awards," *PACD Newsette*, January–February 1971, 3.

privilege within national politics. "Were I to write my own epitaph," Marcos reflected in 1969, "this is what I shall choose: Ferdinand E. Marcos, who helped the barrios discover themselves and the power to change their lives."[97]

On the face of things, Marcos appeared to be pushing for local governance and participatory development. But his critics did not have to look far to see another side of the story. Senator Benigno Aquino, the president's most formidable opponent, called the Barrio Development Fund "a huge pork barrel fund exclusively for President Marcos" and there was talk among Aquino's Liberal Party colleagues of a filibuster against it.[98] Aquino was not far off the mark. Once, at the PACD's behest, the Philippines had established barrio captains in every village, it became possible for national politicians to circumvent provincial and municipal power-holders by working directly with the barrio captains. Marcos's P2,000 checks, which he and his wife delivered personally when possible, bound the barrios directly to the presidency. A partial and localized system of patronage had been replaced by a national one, under which, as Marcos promised "every barrio will have its share."[99] It was no accident that the P100 million was released in 1968, just in time for Marcos's 1969 election. Nor was it an accident that Marcos promoted PACD chief Ernesto Maceda to the concurrent position of Executive Secretary, the premier cabinet post. Maceda was, the *Examiner* explained, Marcos's "secret weapon" in the elections, "seeing to it that the rural folks stay on FM's side of the political fence."[100] That election would be the last that Marcos would face. In 1972 he declared martial law, concentrating the authority of the government under the office of the presidency and although his 1973 constitution committed the state to promoting "the autonomy of local government units, especially the barrio, to ensure their fullest development as self-reliant communities," the main thrust of his administration pointed in exactly the opposite direction.[101] The PACD was abolished in 1972 and replaced by the Department of Local Government and Community Development, which became Marcos's arm for supervising local governments. Barrio and barangay officials (in 1974 Marcos replaced the patchwork system of local government with a uniform barangay system) were directly answerable to the president's wishes and, indeed, the government sought in 1975 to turn all elective offices into appointive ones, to formalize what was already an informal relationship of subordination of local government to national government. At any rate, local politics under Marcos became rife with vote-rigging, terrorism, and repression. The institutions designed to decentralize Philippine politics had instead served the rise and rule of a dictator.[102]

Measured by its ability to improve rural lives, community development in the Philippines was, just as in India, a failure—acknowledged to be so by even its defenders. But its inability to actually improve rural conditions did not damage its ability to function as a counterinsurgency strategy. Measured by that tape, indeed, community development in the Philippines could be counted as a massive success. The heyday of community development was a time of relative rural peace, and it is likely that the PACD's attempts to channel peasant political energies through the barrio, as opposed to through peasant organizations, played a role.[103] One

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[97] Ferdinand E. Marcos, "Liberation of Our Barrios," 17 July 1969, in *Presidential Speeches*, vol. 2 (n.p., 1978), 324.
[98] Aquino, quoted in Manuel F. Almario, "Battle for the Barrios," *Weekly Graphic*, 29 May 1968, 12.
[99] "8,000 Barrios Get CD Fund," *PACD Newsette*, February 1969, 1.
[100] Ben Javier, "Maceda: The President's 'Secret Weapon," reprinted from the *Examiner* in *PACD Newsette*, October 1969, 12.
[101] Constitution of the Philippines, 1973, Article II, Section 10.
[102] On Marcos's use of the PACD institutional machinery for the centralization of power, see Rocamora and Panganiban, *Rural Development Strategies* and Po, *Rural Organizations and Rural Development*.
[103] This case is made in Shalom, *The United States and the Philippines*, chap. 5.

indicant of the U.S. government's approval of community development, even as it failed to achieve its developmental targets, was its desire to export the Philippine model to other countries in the Third World. From the perspective of the United States, the importance of the PACD's program lay only partly in its effect on the Philippines; another part lay in its function as a showcase for Cold War counterinsurgency.

In the exportation of the Philippine community development program, the dogged Cold Warrior Y. C. James Yen played a key role. Yen had never conceived of his work as constricted solely to one country and in 1960 he founded the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, which became an important base for the export of community development ideas from the Philippines. Interest was immediate. A 1961 article about Yen's work in the Spanish-language version of *Reader's Digest* (Yen received hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Reader's Digest Association and was the subject of more profiles in the *Digest* than any other figure) prompted over 750 letters, most from businessmen, plantation owners, government officials, priests and lawyers hoping that Yen might start a program in Latin America.[104] Indeed, in that year and the next Yen visited Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico for meetings with high-level officials about rural reconstruction. In Guatemala, Yen was invited by the military junta government and had a meeting with Guatemalan president Colonel Enrique Peralta Azurdia, who "gave his blessing" to a Guatemalan Rural Reconstruction Movement, which Yen established in 1964.[105] In Colombia, the invitation came not from the Colombian government but from U.S. corporations with interests in Colombia, who hoped to quell social unrest through community development. Yen established a Colombian Rural Reconstruction Movement in 1962.[106] Over the next decades, Yen continued to push for the establishment of more rural reconstruction movements and, indeed, managed to start some programs in South Korea (1966), Thailand (1966), Ghana (1972), and India (1980). Perhaps more important than its role in establishing offshoot rural reconstruction movements was the IIRR's training of community development leaders from all around the world. Besides the countries already listed, the IIRR trained government officials from Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Jordan, Ceylon, Laos, Indonesia, and Papa New Guinea as well as missionaries and Peace Corps volunteers heading to any number of countries.

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[104] Y. C. James Yen to William O. Douglas, 13 June 1962 and William O. Douglas to Henry Heald, 29 June 1962, in Douglas Papers, container 600.

[105] International Mass Education Movement, annual meeting report, 17 January 1964, in Douglas Papers, container 600.

[106] Ibid.

Y. C. James Yen with members of the Guatemalan Rural Reconstruction Movement (*Rural Reconstruction Report*, October 1966).

There is no record that Yen was himself on the CIA payroll, although that claim has been made.[107] But, as CIA operative Joseph Smith explained, one of the facets of Philippine community development that most excited the station chief was the prospect of training village-level workers in the Philippines to go work in the rest of the world.[108] With the millions of dollars that Binamira and the Presidential Assistant on Community Development received from the United States government, Binamira set up a training center at the Philippine Agricultural College at Los Baños, "one of the most complete community development training centers in the world, consisting of classrooms, a well-equipped library, an audio-visual room, offices, dormitories, and a combination dining hall and auditorium with seating capacity for five hundred."[109] After Gabriel Kaplan left the Philippines, he made it his mission to export community development to Latin America, and he was active in Colombia, Panama, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. Through his Community Development Counseling Service, he consulted with governments on the architecture of community development programs and often sent officials to the Philippines for training or to observe Binamira's work. He was particularly successful in Colombia, where he played an instrumental role in shaping the government's Acción Comunal program, which had established over 8,000 communal action boards by 1966.[110] Douglas Ensminger traveled on behalf of USAID to Colombia and the Peace Corps played an key role setting up communal action boards.[111] Kaplan saw his own particular

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[107] Shalom, *The United States and the Philippines*, 104.
[108] Smith, *Portrait of a Cold Warrior*, 272.
[109] Richard Waverly Poston, *Democracy Speaks Many Tongues: Community Development around the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 111.
[110] Robert Alexander Karl, "The Politics of International Community Development in Colombia's New Cold War, 1957–1966," paper presented at the Transnational/International History Postgraduate Intensive, University Of Sydney, July 2008.
[111] Louis Miniclier to Robert E. McCoy, 18 October 1962, Paul S. Taylor Papers, carton 30, folder 2; Robert Alexander Karl, "State Formation, Violence, and Cold War in Colombia, 1957–1966" (PhD Diss., Harvard University, 2009).

contribution to the program as convincing the community development bureaucracy to "broaden" itself to accommodate the desires of "the private economic elite."[112]

The most spectacular exportation of the Philippine community development program was to Vietnam. Edward Lansdale had left the Philippines in 1954, on instructions to do for Vietnam what he had just done for the Philippines. Again Lansdale discovered a sympathetic politician—Ngô Đình Diệm—and again he advocated a village-based, culturally particular, small-scale approach to political action. Lansdale was significantly aided in this by Diệm's own inclinations. As a believer in Personalism, a conservative and anti-individualist philosophy developed in French by Emmanuel Mounier and Jacques Maritain, Diệm agreed with much of the community development movement, and for much the same reason. In particular, Diệm was skeptical of technocratic modernization and favored a hybrid of tradition and progress based on the village community.[113] All of this made him particularly receptive to Lansdale's village-centered approach to counterinsurgency. One Lansdale project, Operation Brotherhood, drew on CIA funds to send Filipinos to South Vietnam to undertake village development. Although the program's emphasis was initially on providing medical services, it quickly grew to include all-round development activities. "The soul of this program is community development," observed one aid worker in Operation Brotherhood, two years into the program's operation.[114] The United States also drew on Yen's International Institute of Rural Reconstruction to support its activities in Vietnam. Starting in the 1960s, USAID and the Vietnamese government began sending over yearly batches of dozens of rural development officials for three months of training; many of those leaders came to hold high ranks in the Vietnamese government upon their return.[115] "At long last we have come to realize that this war cannot be won by guns alone," explained the RVN official in charge of IIRR training. "The real and ultimate victory will be won only by winning the hearts and minds of the little people in the rice fields."[116] By 1967, the PACD newsletter complained that over one hundred of its best workers had been lured away from the Philippines to Vietnam by "by lucrative pay and privileges."[117]

As in the Philippines, community development in Vietnam blurred the line between foreign aid and military campaigns. In 1955, Lansdale and Diệm initiated a campaign of "civic action"—the name that Lansdale had for the military application of community development principles. Following that approach, the RVN trained officials by having them move to villages, where they would dress like farmers, participate in local activities, and encourage villagers to set up community houses.[118] This, Lansdale, later explained, was directly modeled on his experience in the Philippines.[119] Diệm took the community approach to military action further

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112 Gabriel L. Kaplan, *New Horizons for the Art of Community Development* (Arlington: The Community Development Counseling Service, c. 1962), in Kaplan Papers, box 2.
113 See Edward Miller, "Grand Designs: Vision, Power and Nation Building in America's Alliance with Ngô Đình Diệm, 1954–1960" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2004) and Edward Miller, "Vision, Power and Agency: The Ascent of Ngô Đình Diệm, 1945–54," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35 (2004): 433–458.
114 Avelina B. Asuncion, "Practice of Community Development," *Social Work* 2 (1957): 70.
115 Y. C. James Yen to William O. Douglas, 31 October 1969, in Douglas Papers, container 601, folder 1. Positions held by IIRR trainees included Undersecretary of the Ministry for Ethnic Minorities, Training Director, Field Operations Director, and Provincial Governor.
116 Colonel Galang, quoted in minutes of the annual meeting of the board of directors, Jimmy Yen Rural Reconstruction Movement, 30 November 1967, in Douglas Papers, container 600, folder 6.
117 "Check the Brain Drain," *PACD Newsette*, October 1967, 12.
118 Edward G. Lansdale, "Civic Activities of the Military, Southeast Asia," 13 March 1959, Paul S. Taylor Papers, carton 30, folder 32.
119 Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 70.

in his 1959 agroville program, in which thousands of peasants in the Mekong Delta were to move to model settlements with model amenities—a larger version of Magsaysay's EDCOR plan for resettling Huk rebels. The agroville program had little effect but it prefigured the GVN's strategic hamlet program, launched in 1961. Based on Personalist principles, the strategic hamlet program was supposed to develop—and thus preserve from Communism—the countryside not through major aid projects but through small interventions, the growth of local cottage industries, and village elections. Whatever democratic animus had existed in the original program, however, was quickly sacrificed to military imperatives as villagers were forced to resettle, build fortifications, and submit to military guards.[120] As in the Philippines, the imperatives of the Cold War had turned a program ostensibly designed to bolster rural democracy into a tool of the authoritarian state.

[120] On strategic hamlets and the philosophy behind them, see Philip E. Catton, "Counter-Insurgency and Nation Building: The Strategic Hamlet Programme in South Vietnam, 1961–1963," *The International History Review* 21 (1999): 918–940.

Chapter Five: Community Action and the War on Poverty

In 1964, in the wake of the assassination of John F. Kennedy, President Lyndon Johnson launched the War on Poverty, which would be at the center of his domestic agenda. The War on Poverty was a large and varied policy package, but at its center was the Community Action Program, which attempted to place poverty alleviation directly in the hands of the poor. It did this in a familiar way, by encouraging and funding joint, community-wide antipoverty action that stressed participation, democratic deliberation, and self-improvement. The resemblance to the community development schemes with which the United States had been experimenting abroad since the early Cold War was nearly impossible to miss. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the social scientist and politician, who had been on the task force that designed the War on Poverty, explained the connections between overseas community development and domestic community action in a six-page article in 1966. "From the time of the Point Four program the American government has been sponsoring programs of community development in backwards nations throughout the world," Moynihan explained, noting particularly the Peace Corps' adoption of it. "The program was and is a great popular success, and the idea of doing something of the sort through Community Action Programs with the 'underdeveloped peoples of the United States' came as direct and obvious carryover."[1] Community action, in other words, was community development brought back home.

Or so it seemed. Three years later, Moynihan, by then in exile from the liberal establishment and a member of the Nixon administration, published another treatment of community action, this time an influential, piercing book-length analysis entitled *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding* (1969). Here, Moynihan dwelled on the fact that many of the government-funded community projects had quickly turned radical, merging with the various social movements, especially militant black movements, that were growing in the 1960s. Moynihan lamented the social unrest and controversy that the program had stirred up and sought to explain it. As he saw it, the fault lay with social scientists and their relationship to public policy. Since the Second World War, the GI Bill–fueled explosion of social scientific knowledge, the success of Keynesian technocratic management, and the rise of the foundations all had emboldened academics to dictate terms to politicians. The "speed of the transmission process" between university lecture halls and the halls of Congress had reached such a rate that bright scholars with bold ideas were able to put their plans into action without testing them first.[2] Politicians, whose job it was to balance the demands of competing constituencies, had in Moynihan's view abdicated and handed over their responsibilities to intellectuals, who pursued their idiosyncratic pet theories with reckless abandon. The Community Action Program, Moynihan charged, was a perfect example of this dynamic in action. The idea of participatory approaches to poverty, he explained, had been cooked up by overbold social scientists and had been carried out by politicians who barely comprehended it. The tumult that resulted was a consequence of the confusion surrounding the program. "A good many men in the antipoverty program, in and about the Executive Office of the President, and in the Congress, men of whom the nation had a right to expect better, did inexcusably sloppy work," Moynihan scolded. "If administrators and politicians are going to play God with other persons' lives (and still other persons' money), they ought at least to get clear what the divine intention is to be."[3]

[1] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "What is "Community Action'?" *Public Interest,* Fall 1966, 5.
[2] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action and the War on Poverty* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), 6.
[3] Ibid., 168.

In *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*, Moynihan presented community action as if it were an entirely new and untried idea. In fact, that was the point of the book: community action had failed because politicians allowed intellectuals to run amok and to put their ideas directly into action. But Moynihan was wrong about that. Community action had been extensively tried, as a foreign aid strategy, under the name of community development. Moynihan had registered that plain fact in his 1966 article, where he described community action as a "direct and obvious carryover" from community development abroad. But in expanding that six-page article into a full-length book, Moynihan had somehow managed to say *less* about overseas community development than he had in the original article—almost omitting mention of it entirely.[4]

It is not hard to find reasons why Moynihan might have glossed over the United States' substantial experience with overseas community development and blamed the radicalization of the community action program on the hubris of intellectuals. Moynihan himself had stumbled into the firing zone of radical protest movements when his 1965 report on race relations—the "Moynihan report"—although initially receiving enthusiasm from civil rights leaders, triggered a wholly unexpected but overwhelming wave of disapprobation. In seeking to assess the effect of government policy on blacks, the Moynihan report had suggested that some features of black social life had contributed to the national subordination of blacks, and as the black power movement grew Moynihan was increasingly accused of "blaming the victim"—a phrase that was coined specifically in reference to the Moynihan. *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding* was, in many ways, Moynihan's revenge on a liberal establishment that had innocently acquiesced to and even nurtured black outrage. In attacking participatory strategies, Moynihan was implicitly defending the thesis of the Moynihan report that black life had become pathological, and in blaming it on the intellectuals and liberal politicians, he was implicitly accusing his former colleagues, who had allowed him to suffer, for being too cowardly to admit that he was right. But his charges of intellectual laziness and political cowardice were only comprehensible if his readers believed that the Community Action Program was designed and implemented *de novo* by absent-minded politicians with little desire to grapple with, or even ask about, on-the-ground realities. Thus the many concrete experiences that the United States government had with community development were quietly ignored.

Moynihan's interpretation of the origins of community action was in part the consequence of his own shifting political position, as he passed out of the orbit of the Democratic establishment and into that of Nixon administration and neoconservatism. But, remarkably, his narrative remains the dominant one today, and is widely reproduced by scholars who by no means share Moynihan's politics. There is today a healthy and wide diversity of opinions about whether the fusion of community action with social protest movements was really the disaster that Moynihan believed it to be. And we now possess much fuller understandings of the role that philanthropic foundations played in developing participatory antipoverty strategies and of the reasons why politicians may have adopted those strategies. But the basic Moynihan narrative remains intact: social scientists came up with a new approach to poverty based around the participation of communities and politicians adopted that idea without grasping the full consequences of this political innovation. Community action, in this description, popped onto the

[4] In the book, Moynihan refers offhandedly to community action as "the Peace Corps concept brought home" but has very little else to say. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*, 72.

scene somewhere in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and can be explained entirely in terms of domestic ideas and politics.[5]

The dramatic out-of-nowhere arrival of community action as described in the current scholarly literature has an intriguing parallel in the scholarship on the New Deal. Historians who study participatory approaches to poverty in that period—at the TVA, at the Bureau of Agricultural Economics within the USDA—often lament the extinction of participation in economic planning that was built into those programs.[6] So, the historical studies of the 1930s and 1940s ask why community strategies went away, and the historical studies of the 1960s ask why they suddenly appeared. Community development is the key to answering both of those questions. In chapter two of this dissertation, I have argued that community strategies did not disappear after the Roosevelt years as historians have suggested, but rather moved abroad, where they were more consequential than they had ever been. In this chapter, I will argue the other side of that: the community strategies that became the centerpiece of the War on Poverty in the 1960s did not emerge from thin air but rather were based, in large part, on overseas community development. The social scientists and government officials who designed the Community Action Program were not, as Moynihan has charged, acting out of ignorance, but were all familiar with Cold War community development. Many of them, including the most important antipoverty thinkers and reformers, not only knew about community development but had worked abroad on community development projects before tackling the problem of domestic poverty in the 1960s. Further, I will argue that the radicalization of community action took politicians by surprise not because community participation was a new idea whose consequences no one could anticipate, but rather because community participation was an old idea around which a set of expectations had arisen, and those expectations proved to be poor guides to the application of community development strategies designed for rural towns and villages to post-industrial urban neighborhoods. Adopting an international frame of reference helps us to see where community action came from, why it turned radical, and why its radicalization surprised so many people.

The development of a community action program, as historians have traditionally understood it, can be attributed to the collaboration between three groups working on related problems. One, the Ford Foundation, established a few pilot projects involving participatory approaches to urban problems, culminating in its Gray Areas Program in 1961. At the same time, a presidential committee on juvenile delinquency led by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy also funded a few small programs designed to encourage neighborhood participation. After a national spotlight was cast on the problem of domestic poverty by Michael Harrington's book, *The Other America* (1962), the Kennedy administration began to grapple with the problem of poverty head-on, and presidential staffers drew on both the work of the Ford

[5] For a bibliography of the scholarship on the origins of the War on Poverty, see footnote 7 of this chapter. One very notable exception to the trend of explaining community action in terms of its domestic antecedents is a dissertation by Alyosha Goldstein, "Civic Poverty: An Empire for Liberty through Community Action," Ph.D. Diss., Department of American Studies, New York University, 2005. In it, Goldstein faults the "conventionally myopic literature" on the War on Poverty for focusing exclusively on its domestic origins. Goldstein's dissertation, however, is principally a reflection on uses of "participation" by the liberal state and secondarily an exploration of semi-colonial spaces like Indian reservations and Puerto Rico. Although he asserts that community strategies for underdeveloped nations were incorporated into the War on Poverty, he does not trace the vectors of influence and has almost nothing to say about the Ford Foundation, India's community development program, or the International Cooperation Administration's Community Development Division. Portions of Goldstein's dissertation have been published in Alyosha Goldstein, "On the Internal Border: Colonial Difference, the Cold War, and the Locations of 'Underdevelopment,'" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50 (2008): 26–56.

[6] See chap. 2 of this dissertation.

Foundation and that of the juvenile delinquency committee in their approaches to the issue. President Kennedy's assassination only increased the urgency of the issue for the White House. Lyndon Johnson appointed Sargent Shriver, the head of the Peace Corps (and the brother-in-law of the Kennedy brothers) to oversee the drafting of an antipoverty bill. Shriver's antipoverty task force thus became the third institutional base for thought about community action. Working with the Attorney General's staff and with the Ford Foundation, Shriver's team wrote a bill that gave community action pride of place within the administration's antipoverty approach, and that bill was promptly signed into law.[7]

That account, though correct in its main thrusts, leaves out a crucial part of the story. What it leaves out is the fact that a good number of the persons and institutions involved in designing the War on Poverty were connected—some in quite direct ways—to overseas community development. The Ford Foundation had of course invested heavily in community development from the early 1950s and was integral in launching India's nationwide program. Sargent Shriver, as head of the Peace Corps, had ample experience with community development because that is what the Peace Corps did. Even Kennedy's juvenile delinquency committee was connected to community development, because the same men had been assigned the task of designing a Domestic Peace Corps, for which they researched overseas community development programs. The Community Action Program, then, was built largely according to the blueprints of international community development.

The place to start when assessing the international origins of the War on Poverty is with the election of John F. Kennedy and the establishment of the Peace Corps. Eisenhower, Kennedy's predecessor, had taken relatively little interest in development projects (unless they could be lashed to Cold War military operations) and had promulgated a doctrine of "trade not aid" that forced aid officials to find work with private foundations. Kennedy, by contrast, saw development as a central component of the Cold War, and believed that the United States must learn to practice development on the level of the village. As a senator, Kennedy had read Eugene Burdick and William Lederer's *The Ugly American* (1958) with wild enthusiasm and sent copies to every member of the Senate. Partly on the basis of its suggestions and partly on the

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[7] Accounts of the War on Poverty and particularly the origins of community action on which I have drawn include Richard Blumenthal, "Community Action: The Origins of a Government Program" (BA thesis, Harvard University, 1967); Peter Marris and Martin Rein, *Dilemmas of Social Reform: Poverty and Community Action in the United States* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967); Kenneth B. Clark and Jeannette Hopkins, *A Relevant War against Poverty: A Study of Community Action Programs and Observable Social Change* (New York: Metropolitan Applied Research Center, 1968); James L. Sundquist, *Politics and Policy: The Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson Years* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution 1968), chap. 4; Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*; Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989); Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991); Jill Quadagno, *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); James T. Patterson, *America's Struggle against Poverty, 1900–1994* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994); Gareth Davies, *From Opportunity to Entitlement: The Transformation and Decline of Great Society Liberalism* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1996); Michael L. Gillette, *Launching the War on Poverty: An Oral History* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996); Matthew F. Filner, "On the Limits of Community Development: Participation, Power, and Growth in Urban America, 1965–2000" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2001); Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Alyosha Goldstein, "Civic Poverty: An Empire for Liberty through Community Action," (PhD diss., New York University, 2005); Sidney M. Milkis and Jerome M. Mileur, eds., *The Great Society and the High Tide of Liberalism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005); and Noel A. Cazenave, *Impossible Democracy: The Unlikely Success of the War on Poverty Community Action Programs* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).

basis of proposals for a Point Four Youth Corps that were circulating in Congress, Kennedy proposed the idea of a Peace Corps during his presidential campaign. The idea proved to be enormously popular, so much so that Kennedy was obliged to follow through with it. "To those people in the huts and villages across the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery," Kennedy promised in his inaugural address, "we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves."[8]

After his election, Kennedy asked Max Millikan, a leading modernization theorist and a professor at MIT, to propose a plan for the agency. As Millikan imagined it, the Peace Corps would be part of the "broader U.S. governmental effort to assist the underdeveloped countries in building the institutions essential to self-confident and effective nationhood." Its particular contribution to that broad modernization push would be to address the "serious shortages of educated and trained people" in the global South. Thus the main job of the Peace Corps would be to supply experts, "to use young Americans in filling the interim manpower needs of the underdeveloped countries," presumably as engineers, economists, or administrators.[9] And because Millikan saw the Peace Corps as contributing to the modernization mission that he took to be the core of U.S. foreign policy, he insisted that the Peace Corps be located within the State Department, as part of the International Cooperation Administration (ICA).

What is remarkable about Millikan's proposal is how thoroughly it was ignored. Sargent Shriver, assigned by Kennedy to design the Peace Corps, received Millikan's report but largely rejected its suggestions. The Peace Corps did not become a personnel bureau to supply developing nations with young experts who would help them build modern institutions. Whereas Millikan wanted the Corps to become part of the ICA, Shriver fought hard to keep it autonomous. Its volunteers, he argued, would not go abroad "as members of an official US mission to demonstrate or advise." Rather, they should go "to teach, or to build, or to work in the communities into which they are sent. They will serve local institutions, living with the people they are helping."[10] Nor would the men and women hired to live among the people and serve local institutions in the Third World come bearing expertise. For the most part they would be "B. A. generalists" whose main talent lay in fostering intercultural understanding, and who were as eager to learn from foreign cultures as they were to instruct them. Like the heroes of *The Ugly American*, they would work on the level of village, drawing on the knowledge of the people whom they were sent to serve.

In part, the Peace Corps' orientation toward small-scale local projects requiring no expertise can be explained by Sargent Shriver's own proclivities. Shriver, John F. Kennedy's brother-in-law, was a political insider comfortable in the world of politics and business. But he also had a grounding in groupism and community organizing. His wife, the talented Eunice Kennedy, had initially set out become a sociologist and had indeed completed graduate work in that field at the University of Chicago, the mecca of community studies. In the late 1940s Shriver followed his future wife to Washington to work for the Justice Department's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency. There, they drew on the Chicago approach to community building in fashioning their approach to the issue. Campaigns against juvenile delinquency, they argued, could not be "piece-meal" or "limited to the formal agencies." Rather, they would have to be waged "by the people themselves, in their own communities, striking at their own

[8] Kennedy's speech can be found in *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States from George Washington to George Bush* (Washington, G. P. O., 1989).
[9] Max F. Millikan, "Memorandum on an International Youth Service," 30 December 1960, Papers of Max Millikan, pp. 6, 21, box 1, John F. Kennedy Library.
[10] Sargent Shriver to John F. Kennedy, Report to the President on the Peace Corps, c. 1961, Papers of President Kennedy, President's Office Files, Departments and Agencies, reference box 8, Kennedy Library.

local problems." Shriver and Kennedy called such an approach "joint community action."[11] It was a way of doing things that Shriver carried with him for the rest of his life. After leaving the Justice Department, Shriver became the president of the Catholic Interracial Council in Chicago, a typical groupist civil rights organization preoccupied with establishing interpersonal consensus.[12] To no one's shock, Shriver brought his preference for informal and community-centered activism into the Peace Corps. His hatred of red tape, shared by the Kennedy brothers, led him to oppose strongly the Peace Corps' inclusion in the State Department ("No one wants to see a large centralized new bureaucracy grow up," he explained).[13] He quickly attracted like-minded reformers to his cause, including Warren Wiggins and William Josephson, two dissenters within the International Cooperation Administration who were eager to create a more flexible, culturally sensitive agency of foreign relations. Shriver's Peace Corps was, as Harris Wofford explained, "an organization for those who don't want to be organization men."[14]

But it was not just Shriver's anti-bureaucratic sentiments that pushed the Peace Corps away from Millikan's vision. As Shriver began to piece the agency together, while he was still open to what the Peace Corps might be, he found, waiting for him, experts in the field of international development who had already been doing what Shriver and Kennedy had thus far only talked about. Earlier ideas for the Peace Corps, advocated in Congress by Hubert Humphrey and Henry Reuss, had called it the "Point Four Youth Corps," a name that signaled the continuities between Truman-era aid programs and those of the 1960s. Reuss himself had got the idea after traveling in Asia and seeing the work of International Voluntary Services, a private development agency led by seasoned experts in the field of community development: Carl C. Taylor, John H. Provinse, Stanley Andrews, and other Point Four men. By Kennedy's inauguration, IVS had launched programs, largely community development programs, in nine countries and was operating, with funding from the State Department, as a complement to official foreign aid projects.[15] IVS veterans helped Shriver and his team establish the basic operating principles of the Peace Corps and when Shriver's staff members composed a draft program for the Peace Corps, they cited IVS as a model. More importantly, they also cited the many ICA-assisted community development programs of Asia, particularly Magsaysay's program in the Philippines.[16]

With Shriver and his IVS advisers already so interested in community development, it was natural for the Peace Corps to invest heavily in it as a program area. The two jobs most often assigned to volunteers were, in fact, education and community development. In 1967–8,

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[11] Eunice Kennedy and Sargent Shriver, Prospectus for Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, 1947, quoted in Scott Stossel, *Sarge: The Life and Times of Sargent Shriver* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 99–102.
[12] Frank Mankiewicz, interview with the author, Washington, DC, 21 July 2010.
[13] Quoted in Stoessel, *Sarge*, 205.
[14] Quoted in Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 58.
[15] Information on IVS has been derived from five sources: a telephone interview with former IVS volunteer Gene Stoltzfus, 14 July 2009; Paul A. Rodell, "John S. Noffsinger and the Global Impact of the Thomasite Experience," in *Back to the Future: Perspectives of the Thomasite Legacy to Philippine Education*, ed. Corazon D. Villareal (Manila: American Studies Association in the Philippines, 2003), 63–79; Paul A. Rodell, "International Voluntary Services in Vietnam: War and the Birth of Activism, 1958–1967," *Peace and Change* 27 (2002): 225–244; Jessica Breiteneicher Elkind, "The First Casualties: American Nation Building Programs in South Vietnam, 1955–1965" (PhD diss., UCLA, 2005); and the Carl Cleveland Taylor Papers, #3230, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
[16] Peace Corps Working Group, Program for the Peace Corps; Draft, 20 February 1961, Papers of President Kennedy, President's Office Files, Departments and Agencies, reference box 8, Kennedy Library.

for example, 26% of volunteers were listed as community development workers primarily and 51% were listed as working primarily in education.[17] But classifications could be misleading. Many volunteers employed as teachers and classified within education were expected to run community development projects after-hours and during the summer.[18] The Peace Corps office in Lagos, for instance, ran community development workshops during school vacations so that volunteers working as teachers could learn and work in their communities.[19] Volunteers classified in agriculture and public health would also be expected to use community development methods, although they might have some subject-matter specialties. More importantly, community development was at the heart of the Peace Corps' self-image: it was its "raison d'être," as Louis Miniclier, the State Department's community development czar, put it.[20] New recruits imagined themselves in some far-off hamlet building schools or digging wells with the help of village natives, and they were often surprised and disappointed if they were assigned to desk jobs.[21] As one Peace Corps staffer put it, community development was more than a program area; it was "an attitude, a mystique, a movement central not only to the full spectrum of the Peace Corps programs but to the philosophy of the Peace Corps as well."[22]

Making a heavy investment in community development meant, of course, that the Peace Corps would have to lean heavily on the existing experts in the field, particularly when it needed experts to train its volunteers. Richard Waverly Poston, Baker Brownell's colleague and the author of *Small Town Renaissance*, was placed in charge of the Peace Corps community development training center in New Mexico.[23] Y. C. James Yen was given charge of the Peace Corps volunteers headed for the Philippines and there was some talk of collaboration between Yen's organizations and the Peace Corps in Latin America.[24] Then there were the training materials. Articles by experts such as Carl C. Taylor and Louis Miniclier were included in training manuals and volunteers in the field received copies of Margaret Mead's community development handbook, *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change*, to read in their spare time.[25]

The Peace Corps' commitment to community development was especially strong in Latin America, where nearly eighty percent of the volunteers were employed in community

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[17] Statement of Jack Vaughn before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, 19 April 1967, Records of Jack Vaughn, Director; box 20; Records of the Peace Corps, Record Group 490; National Archives at College Park; College Park, MD.

[18] Fritz Fisher, *Making Them Like Us: Peace Corps Volunteers in the 1960s* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 149.

[19] Director's Staff Meeting, 7 November 1962, box 2, "Director's Staff Meetings (Sept.-December 1962)," Subject File of the Office of the Director, 1961–66; Records of the Peace Corps.

[20] Louis Miniclier, "Community Development as a Vehicle of U.S. Foreign Aid," *Community Development Journal* 4 (1969): 11.

[21] Fisher, *Making Them Like Us*, especially chap. 5.

[22] The Peace Corps, *Community Development from Village to City: Charting the Course of Human Progress*, c. 1968, Peace Corps Collection, box 17, "Fogarty, Gertrude: Pamphlets, Community Planning Opportunities in the Peace Corps," Kennedy Library.

[23] Alyosha Goldstein, "Civic Poverty: An Empire for Liberty through Community Action" (PhD diss., New York University, 2005), chap. 2.

[24] Domingo C. Bascara to William O. Douglas, 22 December 1967, container 601, folder 1; William O. Douglas to Frank Mankiewicz, 8 June 1962; container 600, folder 1; and William O. Douglas to Y. C. James Yen, 8 June 1962, container 600, folder 1, all in the Papers of William O. Douglas, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division.

[25] Andres S. Hernandes, *Community Development Handbook: A Guide to Community Development Practice for Peace Corps Volunteers*, c. 1962–63, and "Peace Corps 1963 Book Locker," in Kirby Jones Papers, box 2, "Training Materials (U.S.), 4" and "Training Materials (U.S.), 1," Kennedy Library.

development in the 1960s.[26] The reason was Frank Mankiewicz, the country director of Peru who soon became regional director for Latin America (and the nephew of Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the writer and director who had, with the collaboration of Edward Lansdale, filmed *The Quiet American*). Mankiewicz had already done some work in community organizing with the Community Service Organization of East Los Angeles, a civil rights activism group organized on the Saul Alinsky model that had been the site of Cesar Chavez's political debut. When Mankiewicz was placed in charge of the Peace Corps in Peru, he knew nothing about the country, but he attended a lecture by John Kenneth Galbraith in which the economist asserted that Latin America had a feudal society and would require "revolutionary community development."[27] Putting his experience in Los Angeles together with Galbraith's suggestion, Mankiewicz decided to make community development the principal business of the Peace Corps. But for Mankiewicz, community development did not mean fostering consensus. "Our mission is essentially revolutionary," he explained to the general staff of the Corps. "The ultimate aim of community development is nothing less than a complete change, reversal—or a revolution if you wish—in the social and economic patterns of the countries to which we are accredited."[28] Mankiewicz saw the civil rights movement in the Jim Crow South as the greatest example of community development and he tried to hire SDS activist Tom Hayden to foment social change in Peru.[29] Perhaps not understanding the full thrust of Mankiewicz's point, Shriver happily acquiesced to Mankiewicz's plan of "revolutionary community development" and published Mankiewicz's address as a pamphlet.[30]

The Peace Corps, along with the space program, was President Kennedy's most popular policy initiative. It was therefore not long after its debut before public officials, journalists, and members of the public began to suggest that the Peace Corps approach be applied to the domestic problems of the United States.[31] Robert F. Kennedy was particularly keen on the plan.[32] In November 1962, he convened a cabinet-level committee drawn from departments concerned with domestic social policy to study, in the words of its director, "the best ways to adapt the overseas Peace Corps concept to this country."[33] The Peace Corps posted represent-

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[26] Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 66. In 1968, director Jack Vaughan put the number of Latin American Peace Corps volunteers in community development at the significantly lower 53%. See Jack Vaughan, Statement before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, 1968. For a useful report on community development by the regional director of the Peace Corps in Latin America, who characterizes community development as the "main thrust" of the agency's work there, see William Moffett, "Community Development Activities of Peace Corps," in International Society for Community Development, Report on Symposium "The Outlook for Community Development," 8 Sept 1966, Albert A. Mayer Papers, box 14, folder 12, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

[27] Mankiewicz, interview with author.

[28] Frank Mankiewicz, "An Explanation of Community Development as it is Practiced by the Peace Corps in Latin America," General Staff Meeting, 11 August 1964, box 14, Subject File of the Office of the Director, 1961–66; Records of the Peace Corps.

[29] Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 191.

[30] Republished in *The Peace Corps Reader* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967), 86–95.

[31] An unsigned Kennedy administration position paper on the subject from September 1962 reports that suggestions for a domestic Peace Corps had been floated not only in newspaper editorials and letters to the government but also "in the President's press conferences and in several television interviews with high government officials." "Position Report: The Need for a National Service Program to Meet Critical Needs of Disadvantaged Persons and Groups in the United States—First Draft," 24 September 1962, p. 1, Subject File of the Office of the Director, 1961–66, Records of the Peace Corps.

[32] Jack T. Conway, transcript of interview #3, interviewed by Larry J. Hackman, 29 December 1972, p. 87, Oral Histories, Kennedy Library.

[33] David Hackett, interviewed by John W. Douglas, 21 October 1970, p. 79 of transcript, Oral Histories, Kennedy Library.

atives to the committee, but the bulk of the members were drawn from Labor Department and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.[34] Heading up the effort were staffers whom Robert F. Kennedy had recruited as part of another committee, the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency.

The assignment of the Domestic Peace Corps question to members of the committee of juvenile delinquency was appropriate, as they were already interested in questions of poverty and community. The committee had started when Robert F. Kennedy, who had taken an interest in the issue of juvenile delinquency for some time, was designated attorney general. Kennedy recruited his boyhood friend David Hackett to research the issue. Although Hackett knew little about juvenile delinquency, he had a great faith that expert social scientists could be found to solve the problem. He was in particular drawn to a group of scholars working on urban issues and juvenile delinquency centered the psychiatrist Leonard Duhl of the National Institute for Mental Health. Duhl had since the mid-1950s been interested in using the NIMH to generate ideas about social rather than individual approaches to treating mental health. As it turned out, Duhl had first adopted these ideas after learning of the community development movement within the United States. By his own account, it was a visit to Granville Hicks in Grafton, New York (the subject of Hicks's influential book *Small Town*) that had "awakened" him to the possibilities of community treatment. Duhl became an avid reader of Arthur E. Morgan's *Community Service News* and of the writings of Baker Brownell. Duhl was attuned to overseas community development, at least enough to write a glowing foreword to a book by Richard Waverly Poston, *Democracy Speaks Many Tongues: Community Development around the World* (1962), in which he proposed community development as the solution to the problem of juvenile delinquency.[35]

Not all members of Duhl's group were connected in the way that Duhl was to the world of community development. Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin, the authors of a highly successful book, *Delinquency and Opportunity* (1960) that became something of a blueprint for Hackett's staff, came to their concern for community via experiments with juvenile delinquency, not with overseas development efforts (although Ohlin had been trained at the University of Chicago). But another member of the mental health circle who also, like Ohlin and Cloward, served as a broker of ideas to the White House, *did* know a lot about community development. That was Leonard Cottrell, a graduate of the University of Chicago, a sometimes mentor to Ohlin, and the executive director the Russell Sage Foundation.[36] Like Duhl, Cottrell had strong roots in the groupist milieu. Although he was a social psychologist, Cottrell had spent the earlier part of his career in Cornell's Department of Rural Sociology, where he knew Douglas Ensminger, the community development expert who later became the Ford Foundation's representative in India. In fact, Cottrell's eureka moment about the power of communal institutions came when he was driving around the small towns of upstate New York accom-

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[34] On the history and composition of the committee, see William R. Anderson to Lester Hill, 12 June 1963, White House Central Files, Subject File, box 213, folder group 999-17, Kennedy Library.

[35] Duhl to Hicks, 30 October 1949, Granville Hicks Papers, box 18, "Leonard J. Duhl" folder, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Library (see also, in the same place, letters from Duhl to Hicks on 15 December 1949 and 6 January 1955); Letter from Duhl, *Community Service News*, January–March 1955, 2; Duhl to Brownell, 17 December 1954, Baker Brownell Papers, box 39, folder 6, Northwestern University; Leonard J. Duhl, foreword to Richard Waverly Poston, *Democracy Speaks Many Tongues: Community Development around the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

[36] On the incorporation of Cottrell into the White House efforts, see especially Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 113–117.

panying Ensminger on his research.[37] In the 1940s, Cottrell worked with Samuel Stouffer on *The American Soldier*, the massive research effort that attributed soldiers' loyalty to their membership in small groups within the military. After being elected the president of the American Sociological Association in 1949, Cottrell spent the 1950s performing a number of laboratory experiments within the field of group dynamics. As such he worked closely with Jacob Levy Moreno, the founder of the study of group dynamics, and even served as the President of the Board of the Moreno Institute. After Moreno's ideas became sufficiently mainstream, Cottrell orchestrated the transition of Moreno's vaunted journal *Sociometry* from a private publication to an official journal of the American Sociological Association, with Cottrell serving as its first editor after the shift.[38] Building on what he had learned from Ensminger, Stouffer, and Moreno, Cottrell debuted in 1955 his theory of the "competent community," a set of specifications about what made a community capable of solving its own problems (these included allegiance to the community as such, a common language, strong participation, and sufficiently strong interpersonal sympathy to overcome diverging interests).[39] This was not merely a matter of improving local government for Cottrell; it was a personal and even possibly a spiritual matter. "We can be the best fed, the best housed, the best clad, the best cosmeticized, the most chrome-plated and plastic wrapped people in the world, and still be little more than contented cows, drowned in apathetic non-being, or less contented cows divided into futile destructive conflicts," he explained. The antidote to such a fate was participation, and particularly participation within local communities.[40]

In sum, the juvenile delinquency specialists who introduced ideas about community into the thinking of the Kennedy administration were, in some cases, also grounded in the community development movement. But, of course, David Hackett and his staff had a much more direct source of information about overseas community development: their work on the Domestic Peace Corps assignment, an effort led by a former Ford Foundation employee and Chicago-trained social scientist Richard Boone. It is worth stressing the importance of the Domestic Peace Corps project. Although it is rarely treated at length in scholarly accounts of the origins of the War on Poverty, Hackett and Boone both insisted in interviews that it had been a key experience. "One of the things that was never given much attention but I thought had some real impact was the formation of the task force to come up with a Domestic Peace Corps," explained David Hackett in the 1970s.[41] Richard Boone also complained that historians "never mentioned" the Domestic Peace Corps when talking about the War on Poverty.[42] That lack of historical attention to the Domestic Peace Corps is a problem in its own regard because, as David Hackett argued, the committee work that went into the Domestic Peace Corps was one of "two major experiences" that generated enthusiasm in the Kennedy administration for community action, the other being its work on juvenile delinquency.[43] It is also a

[37] Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., "The Competent Community," speech delivered 15 March 1971, Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., Papers, box 2, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
[38] See Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., 7 June 1967, "Sociometry: 1937–1955–1967," "Personal File" folder, box 7, Cottrell Papers.
[39] Cottrell's theory of the competent community appeared first in Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., and Nelson Foote, *Identity and Interpersonal Competence: A New Direction in Family Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).
[40] Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., "The Competent Community: A Long Range View," c. 1965, p. 2, box 2, Cottrell Papers
[41] David Hackett, quoted in "Poverty and Urban Policy," p. 223, Kennedy Library–Brandeis University Conference, 1973, Oral Histories, Kennedy Library.
[42] Richard Boone, quoted in ibid., 226.
[43] David Hackett, interviewed by John W. Douglas, 21 October 1970, p. 87, Oral Histories, Kennedy Library.

problem because it obscures the connections that linked the United States' overseas experience with community development to its domestic experiments with community action.

Hackett's staff could not help but reflect upon the Peace Corps' work in community development as they studied the Corps and sought to adapt it to domestic conditions. The utility of community development was reinforced as they brought reformers and activists to Washington to advise them. Boone remembers one of the most articulate consultants recruited in this manner as being Robert A. Roessel, Jr., an anthropologist working on the Navajo reservation.[44] Roessel had been a student of Robert Redfield's at the University of Chicago and, since 1951, had worked as a community developer among the Navajo. Roessel's approach to community-building was straight from the community development playbook. "Don't plan *for*, plan *with*," Roessel advised Hackett's men.[45] As Boone remembered, Roessel's advice stuck. An internal memo outlining the role of domestic corpsmen gives a sense of just how strong the connections were between the envisioned Domestic Peace Corps and earlier experiments in community development:

> Deep community involvement, above and beyond the traditional "do good" circles, is essential to the success of this program. . . . Volunteers would live in the areas they serve. In effect, they would be community development workers, "promotores," as the Latin Americans call Peace Corps Volunteers.[46]

In January 1963, the Study Group submitted official recommendations to the President. Large numbers of corpsmen—hundreds at first, growing to 5,000—would "respond to calls for assistance by American communities." Such a program would act, Kennedy's advisers hoped, like "a fuse," which, once lit, could "explode the latent desire of the American citizen to help out his countryman."[47] The president submitted a bill to establish a Domestic Peace Corps to Congress on 11 April 1963. Although the bill died in the House, it was nevertheless an important avenue through which ideas about community participation made their way into the Kennedy administration. And it was reborn, in transformed state, as Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), a core component of the War on Poverty.

There is yet another avenue that must be considered in our account of the origins of the Community Action Program. At the same time as Hackett's staff members were coordinating with Duhl's group and designing a Domestic Peace Corps, the Ford Foundation was running its own experiments with juvenile delinquency programs. Those were conducted mainly under the supervision of Paul Ylvisaker, who was hired in 1955 to direct Ford's Public Affairs program. Ylvisaker was initially interested in problems of metropolitan governance—cities, he felt, had become too large and complex to be effectively governed by the old methods. Although Ylvisaker recognized the importance of community support and local institutions in reforming the government of the city, he did not initially place a priority on them and

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[44] Richard Boone, quoted in transcript of Poverty and Urban Policy conference, 1973, 245, Oral Histories, Kennedy Library.

[45] Richard Boone, quoted in Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 195. Roessel's thoughts on planning with versus planning for, which were firmly in place by the early 1950s, can be found in Roessel's reports from that time, reprinted in Robert A. Roessel, Jr., *Indian Communities in Action* (Tempe: Arizona State University Bureau of Publications, 1967).

[46] "Proposal for a Pilot Project: National Service Corps," c. 1963, p. 3, box 1, "DPC" folder, Subject File of the Office of the Director, 1961–66; Records of the Peace Corps.

[47] "A Report to the President from The President's Study Group on National Voluntary Services," 14 January 1963, box 213, FG 999-17, White House Central Files, Subject File, Kennedy Library.

he saw the problems to be addressed as primarily matters of economic development and physical renewal rather than communal solidarity. Nevertheless, Ylvisaker's agenda began to change by 1960, when Ylvisaker came into contact with community development projects.[48]

The man to introduce Ylvisaker to community development, as far as can be determined, was Bernard Loshbough, a housing and urban planning expert working in Pittsburgh. Loshbough's career had taken a strange turn in 1951 when Chester Bowles, upon leaving for India to take up his ambassadorial post, hired Loshbough to join him in New Delhi. There, Loshbough was placed in charge of the community development program, or at least the embassy's role in it. During the Eisenhower years, like so many other aid officials, Loshbough left the government but continued his development work in the private sector, in his case as the deputy representative of the Ford Foundation in India, serving under Douglas Ensminger.[49] After four years' service with Ford in India, Loshbough left New Delhi for Pittsburgh, where he founded and became executive director of ACTION-Housing, Inc., a housing and urban renewal agency. In the 1950s, urban renewal largely meant "revitalizing" aging neighborhoods by constructing new housing stock, often destroying existing neighborhoods in the process. That was how the Ford Foundation and indeed nearly the entire urban planning profession conceived of the issue. Loshbough, however, felt that the community development approach he had learned in India might be applicable to urban problems in the United States. He described his approach as "urban extension," in reference to the modified agricultural extension technique developed by Albert Mayer at Etawah. "It is ironic—perhaps shocking—that an urbanite like myself had to travel 10,000 miles to India to learn that a homegrown product like agricultural extension can likely be adapted for effective use in urban centers," Loshbough reflected. "I guess you could call this foreign aid—in reverse."[50]

The Ford Foundation was well-placed to carry the lessons of reverse foreign aid, because of its antipoverty work both in the United States and in the Third World. Tellingly, Ylvisaker learned of urban extension not in the United States but in India, where he served on a foundation-sponsored team to draw up a plan for the metropolitan area of Calcutta. Most of the plan involved the normal business of urban renewal—building a bridge across the Hooghly river, reclaiming land around the city, creating a metropolitan development authority—but the Ford team also recommended the establishment of an "urban community development program" with local headquarters in each neighborhood.[51] (That program was presumably based on a high-profile urban community development project that the Ford Foundation had started in Delhi under the supervision of Albert Mayer.) As a Ford employee in India, Ylvisaker worked under Douglas Ensminger, who was directly involved in the Calcutta project, and Ylvisaker recalled that he had "profited immensely from the internship."[52] He also worked beside Bernard Loshbough, back briefly from Pittsburgh. While in India, Loshbough explained to Ylvisaker his idea of urban extension and began, in his words, "seriously discuss-

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[48] For a good account of Ylvisaker's work at the Ford Foundation, see Alice O'Connor, "Community Action, Urban Reform, and the Fight Against Poverty: The Ford Foundation's Gray Areas Program," *Journal of Urban History* 22 (1996): 586–625.

[49] On the important phenomenon of development officials taking refuge in foundations during the Eisenhower administration, see David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), chap. 5.

[50] Quoted in Albert Mayer, "Transplantation of Institutions in Both Directions: Examples from India and the U.S.A.," Duke University Seminar, 2 Feb 1962, p. 19, f. 41, Mayer Papers.

[51] Bernard E. Loshbough, "A Proposal for a US-AID Program for Calcutta," 22 May 1964, p. 3, Report #009238, Ford Foundation Archives.

[52] Paul N. Ylvisaker to Douglas Ensminger, 28 March 1962, Paul N. Ylvisaker Papers, HUGFP 142, f. 5, Harvard University Archives.

ing" with Ylvisaker a grant from Ford to ACTION-Housing to further develop the idea.[53] According to an internal Ford report, Ylvisaker "evidenced immediate interest."[54] Indeed, when both had returned to the United States in 1961, Ford granted Loshbough's ACTION-Housing $333,000 (later to be increased to $475,000) to employ techniques "used successfully in the community development programs in lesser developed nations" toward urban problems.[55] Loshbough launched the project with an "urban extension conference" attended by USDA stalwart and Indian community development expert M. L. Wilson and Marshall Clinard, the Ford Foundation's urban community development specialist in Delhi (Carl C. Taylor, who could not attend the conference, visited Pittsburgh later and expressed "tremendous enthusiasm").[56] There, Loshbough explained how he gained his first exposure to community development in India in 1951 and how he and M. L. Wilson had sat around Loshbough's office in New Delhi reflecting that, in spite of the vast differences separating Asian villagers from U.S. urbanites, "the processes of getting people to do things are fundamentally the same."[57] Ylvisaker, Loshbough added, "is very much interested in this technique, having knowledge of its successful application in Asia and other countries."[58]

Shortly after its grant to Loshbough, the Ford Foundation under Ylvisaker's direction began a more fully fleshed-out approach to urban problems via its Gray Areas project. Here, Ylvisaker relied on another important Ford Foundation ally: the leading urbanologist Edward Logue, who had served alongside Loshbough for Chester Bowles in the India embassy in the early 1950s and who had worked on the Ford Foundation's Calcutta project with Ylvisaker.[59] Logue had helped inaugurate a community development–styled program in Boston in 1960 and, working with Ylvisaker, began one in New Haven as part of the Gray Areas project. Between 1961 and 1963, Ford gave out $12.1 million to four cities, including New Haven, and one state (North Carolina) to launch "community-development programs" that would be "designed by and with local community leaders, not for them" and that would "encourage and assist neighborhood citizen groups to work for neighborhood improvement and to relate to the community as a whole."[60] For Ylvisaker, the purpose of these grants was not just to im-

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[53] Bernard E. Loshbough to Paul N. Ylvisaker, 6 June 1961, PA 61-222, Ford Foundation Archives.

[54] Richard M. Catalano, "ACTION-Housing Urban Extension Program," April 1964, p. 3, Report #008422, Ford Foundation Archives.

[55] ACTION-Housing, "Application for a Grant from the Ford Foundation for a Test Demonstration of Urban Extension to be Carried out In Four Neighborhoods in the Pittsburgh Area," 25 September 1961, p. ii, PA 62-160, Ford Foundation Archives. .

[56] Marshall Clinard, a Chicago-trained urban sociologist, also believed, like Loshbough, that Ford's work in India could be imported to the United States. "On many occasions, when I have read through the material [on urban development in India]," he wrote to Loshbough, "I have thought that perhaps some of it has implications for the American scene and perhaps even our specific techniques could be adapted." Clinard to Loshbough, 12 May 1961, PA 62-160, Ford Foundation Archives. For Taylor's reaction, see Carl C. Taylor to Bernard Loshbough, 23 October 1963, Carl Cleveland Taylor Papers, #3230, box 14, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

[57] ACTION, "Urban Extension: Proceedings of the Pittsburgh Urban Extension Conference," 1961, p. 4, PA 61-222, Ford Foundation Archives.

[58] Ibid.

[59] On Logue's role in Bowles's embassy, see materials in Chester Bowles Papers, Manuscript Group 628, box 109, folders 470–471, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University. One letter preserved in those papers finds Logue reflecting on which books about community development can be given to State Department staffers as a way of explaining to them what the practice is about. Logue discusses both William Wiser and Charlotte Viall Wiser's *Behind Mud Walls* and Oscar Lewis's studies. See Edward Logue to Bernard Loshbough, 26 November 1952, f. 471.

[60] Ford Foundation, *American Community Development: Preliminary Reports by Directors of Projects Assisted by the Ford Foundation in Four Cities and a State* (New York: Ford Foundation, 1964), 4.

prove conditions in target areas but to help guide federal spending, and Ylvisaker therefore encouraged strong coordination between his Public Affairs staff and the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Indeed, many Ford employees, including Richard Boone and Lloyd Ohlin, found themselves working for David Hackett or in other antipoverty roles in the White House. Many of the projects that the Ford Foundation funded were also early grant recipients from the federal government, which ended up giving funds to four of the five Gray Areas cities. After the War on Poverty was officially launched, Ylvisaker boasted, with ample justification, that "the Community Action section of the poverty program builds heavily on the experience of the Gray Areas project."[61]

By the early 1960s, then, there were a number of groups and institutions advocating community-building as the solution to poverty. And all had, in some way or another, learned from the United States' overseas experience with community development. But it was not until the Kennedy and Johnson administrations moved quickly to launch a War on Poverty that they were fused together into a single, powerful program: community action.

The sudden creation of a large, federal antipoverty program has been a confusing phenomenon to explain. Was it a movement of social workers and reformers, acting autonomously in the absence of a vocal constituency?[62] Or was it a countermovement of politicians hastily purchasing riot insurance in the face of rising black unrest?[63] A bid by the Democratic Party to capture the black vote in the aftermath of the great migration of blacks to northern cities?[64] Or perhaps just the next step in a continuous liberal agenda.[65] Much of the historical writing on the War on Poverty has sought to answer this question. The claims that I will make here, however, do not depend on favoring any one explanation for the War on Poverty over another. Rather than asking *why* the Kennedy and Johnson administrations placed an antipoverty program at the top of their agenda, I am instead asking why that program, once initiated, took the form that it did. Where did this notion come from that *community* was the thing needed? As I have been and will continue to argue, the politicians charged with designing the War on Poverty found themselves reaching for community development as a solution because that was the thing that was what was already around.

As most accounts put it, the War on Poverty began with the public exposure of ongoing poverty in the face of national prosperity in the early 1960s. A cascading series of books and articles—Michael Harrington's *The Other America* (1962), Leon Keyserling's *Poverty and Deprivation in the United States* (1962), Dwight Macdonald's "Our Invisible Poor" in the *New Yorker* (1963), Harry Monroe Caudill's *Night Comes to Cumberland County* (1963), and Homer Bigart's reporting on poverty in Eastern Kentucky for the *New York Times* (1963)—reminded the nation of the persistence of poverty in the face of sustained postwar economic growth. It was a necessary reminder, as the serious popular writing of the 1950s, including David M. Potter's *People of Plenty* (1955), William H. Whyte's *The Organization Man* (1956), Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957), and John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* (1958), had tended to stress the perils of prosperity and rather than those of deprivation. Indeed, the revelation that some areas failed to float with the rising economic tide appeared as a puzzle. With com-

[61] Quoted in Alice O'Connor, "Community Action, Urban Reform, and the Fight Against Poverty," 613. See pp. 612–613 for further details of the close integration of Ylvisaker's efforts and those of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.
[62] See Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*, especially chap. 2.
[63] For a good defense of this position, see Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, chap. 4.
[64] Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, "The Politics of the Great Society," in Milkis and Mileur, eds., *The Great Society and the High Tide of Liberalism*, 253–269.
[65] Davies, *From Opportunity to Entitlement*.

fortable careers and seemingly endless advancement coming so easily to some, why were others locked out? The most persuasive answer, discussed throughout the 1960s, was the one proffered by Michael Harrington. "The United States contains an underdeveloped nation, a culture of poverty," he wrote.[66]

Harrington's description of the poor of the United States as collectively constituting "an underdeveloped nation" is telling. It points to the fact that, by 1962, the most sustained engagement that thinkers in the United States had with material deprivation was not with poverty at home but with "underdevelopment" abroad. It was thus to the Third World that many looked to understand the dilemmas of poverty. Indeed, in referring to the "culture of poverty" Harrington was not inventing a new term but rather borrowing a concept from Oscar Lewis, the anthropologist who had studied India's community development program for the Ford Foundation in 1952. Although Lewis was a critic of community development, he was an internal critic, one deeply familiar with and sympathetic to its point of view. After completing his doctorate, he had been hired by John Collier to work for the Interamerican Indian Institute in Mexico, and while there had made a restudy of Robert Redfield's field site of Tepoztlán. Lewis was a charter member of the Society for Applied Anthropology—the institutional base within the anthropological profession for community developers—and in the 1944 he was hired by the USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Economics to study rural communities. At the BAE, Lewis worked under the supervision of Carl C. Taylor, with whom he developed a close relationship. Even his work for Ford, critical though it was, signified his membership in the community development community: he was recommended for the job by Douglas Ensminger.[67]

Lewis articulated his famous thesis in reference to Mexico; he debuted it in 1958 and began to develop it in two books, *Five Families* (1959) and *Children of Sánchez* (1961). The thesis itself was not intended as a rigorous theory but more as a reminder that not all of the deprivations suffered by the poor were material. Poverty in his view was as much a matter of outlook as income and, as he put it, "it is much more difficult to eliminate the culture of poverty than to eliminate poverty *per se*."[68] In his concern for culture rather than economics, Lewis resembled the community development theorists. Where he differed from them was in his diagnosis of existing communities. Both as a Jew, fifty-five of whose relatives were killed in the Holocaust, and as a Marxist, Lewis had little patience for the "oversentimentalization" of folk cultures that he perceived in the writings of Robert Redfield and Albert Mayer.[69] The culture of poverty, at least in its initial formulation, captured precisely his response to community development theorists. According to it, the poor were more provincial, fatalistic, authoritarian, and given to conflict than their rich neighbors—an unfortunate collection of traits, Lewis believed, that could be found with "remarkable similarities" across "regional, rural-urban, and even national boundaries."[70] The problem in his view was not poverty itself but the strain experienced

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[66] Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), 159.
[67] For details on Lewis's life, see Susan M. Rigdon, *The Culture Façade: Art, Science and Politics in the Work of Oscar Lewis* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).
[68] Oscar Lewis, *La Vida: A Puerto Rican Family in the Culture of Poverty—San Juan and New York* (New York: Random House, 1965), li.
[69] Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sánchez: Autobiography of a Mexican Family* (New York: Random House, 1961), xi. Lewis's famous response to Redfield can be found Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied* (1951; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963). For Lewis's similar views on Mayer, see Oscar Lewis, review of *Pilot Project, India*, by Albert Mayer, *American Anthropologist* 61 (1959): 534–36.
[70] Oscar Lewis, *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* (New York: Basic Books, 1959), 2.

by the poor "when a stratified social and economic system is breaking down and replaced by another."[71] In other words, the culture of poverty was a consequence of modernization. Such a skeptical view of modernization, although unusually grim in its diagnosis of existing communities, was in fact perfectly in line with the writings of Redfield and Mayer. So too was Lewis's solution: arousing the poor to become conscious of their conditions and organizing them in groups to change those conditions. Lewis did not believe that such an arousal could take place within the context of a traditional community development program, however. For him, the culture of poverty could be eradicated only when the poor identified with some "larger group," such as a trade union or a revolutionary nationalist movement, that sought "basic structural changes in society."[72] Lewis was thus offering a version of community development that was both more pessimistic in its assessment of the capacities of existing communities and more radical in its proposed solution. But the basic formula of perceiving the sociocultural perils of modernization and calling for increased solidarity among the poor as a response remained intact.

With no clearer an agenda than that, the Kennedy administration, in the summer of 1963, began to turn its attention toward designing an antipoverty program for inclusion in its 1964 legislative package. At that point, few in the administration had any experience working with domestic poverty. Hackett and his staff had broached the issue in their research on the domestic Peace Corps and juvenile delinquency, but they were only one small administrative pocket within the executive branch. Nevertheless, expertise abhors a vacuum, and after Kennedy's death the pressing need to come up with something was keenly felt by all involved. Thus, when William Capron and William Cannon, members of Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers, were charged with preparing the administration's response to poverty, they found themselves drawn to Hackett's staff. All accounts of this period in late 1963 emphasize the great speed at which it all took place. Capron and Cannon had little time to understand the ins and outs of the juvenile delinquency program, which was itself only two years old. "We were going on faith," Capron admitted. We seized on an idea "without really knowing what it would mean when it got translated."[73] It was on faith, then, that they submitted a proposal to President Johnson in late December 1963 calling for what everyone—the Peace Corps, Ohlin and Cloward, the Ford Foundation, and Oscar Lewis—had already been hinting at: a community development program. Five urban and five rural demonstration sites were to be chosen, with an eye toward expanding if the projects succeeded.

Lyndon Johnson, as it turns out, was no stranger to community development. Upon seeing the proposal, Johnson recalled his own work with the National Youth Administration during the New Deal, which had—like the TVA and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics—sought to use local action and democratic deliberation as the basis for rural improvement. Reflecting further, Johnson connected the idea to, as he put it, "one of the oldest ideas of our democracy, as old as the New England town meeting—self-determination at the local level."[74] Some mention of overseas community development must also have entered into Johnson's

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[71] Oscar Lewis, *La Vida*, xlv.

[72] Ibid., xlviii, lii. It is important to recognize that Lewis changed his own position with regard to the culture of poverty over the course of the 1960s and 1970s in response to its popularity with the political right, which found in it a justification for abandoning welfare programs, and to challenges from Lewis's fellow anthropologists, who found the notion of transregional "culture" of poverty incoherent. For an excellent account of the fate of Lewis's theory and his own abandonment of it, see Rigdon, *The Culture Façade*.

[73] William Capron, quoted in Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 122.

[74] Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963–1969* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 74.

deliberations about the program, because he and his staff considered calling the program Point One, in response to Truman's Point Four.[75] Whatever his thinking, Johnson grabbed onto the idea of community action with great enthusiasm and insisted that the program be expanded far beyond a few pilot projects. It must be instant and national. "Community participation would give focus to our efforts," Johnson later recalled. "The concept of community action became the first building block in our program to attack poverty."[76]

After deciding that the War on Poverty would be a war for community, Johnson tapped Sargent Shriver as the head of the antipoverty task force. Shriver, busy with the Peace Corps, initially refused. Johnson, however, proposed that Shriver perform both jobs at once. "You'll have an international Peace Corps—one abroad and one at home," he explained.[77] Like nearly every other member of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Shriver had little experience with domestic poverty policy. So he drew on the expertise of nearly everyone he could find: Oscar Lewis, Michael Harrington, Paul Ylvisaker, and all of Hackett's staff members. As his executive secretary, Shriver recruited Frank Mankiewicz, the director of the Peace Corps in Peru. Mankiewicz explained the Peace Corps' community development operations in Latin America in detail to the other members of the task force. "We were working from things that were happening on the ground," he remembered.[78] Shriver, of course, had no need for such explanations; the relevance of community development to the War on Poverty could not have been more obvious to him. When asked about the connection between the War on Poverty and community development, Shriver answered:

> There were many, many things in the Peace Corps which were applicable to the War on Poverty, and you put your finger on one of them right away. That was the approach which we in the Peace Corps called community development. Now in fact, doing community development in Ecuador is, philosophically and substantially, no different than doing the same thing in some West Virginia hollow. Now I'm not trying to say West Virginia hollows are like Ecuador, but the concept of going into Ecuador to try to help people decide their own problems, and to energize them, motivate them, assist them to be able to handle their own problems themselves, is no different than the psychology you take into West Virginia or to the South Bronx. In the Peace Corps one called this process community development; in the war against poverty, we called it Community Action.[79]

Mankiewicz had the same feeling. "The Community Action concept came really from the Peace Corps' community development work," he reflected. "In fact we thought about the poor in the U.S., at least in many ways, as an underdeveloped society."[80]

Shriver's enthusiasm for Community Action and the connections he made between it and the Peace Corps have gone unexplored in the historical record because, as many accounts of the antipoverty task force report, Shriver at first resisted the idea of community action. In-

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid., 75.

[77] Lyndon Baines Johnson, quoted in Stossel, *Sarge*, 349. It also seems likely that Johnson chose Shriver as a way of pulling control of community action away from Shriver's brother-in-law Robert Kennedy without resistance.

[78] Mankiewicz, interview with the author.

[79] Transcript, Sargent Shriver Oral History Interview I, 20 August 1980, by Michael L. Gillette, AC 05-24, p. 10, Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, Texas.

[80] Transcript, Frank Mankiewicz Oral History Interview I, 18 April 1969, by Stephen Goodell, p. 12, Johnson Library.

deed, when, at the first meeting of the task force, Cannon, Capron, and the other members of the administration who had prepared the initial proposal to Johnson presented their plan to Shriver, Shriver responded, "It will never fly," and insisted that the War on Poverty be expanded to include a wider array of programs.[81] Shriver, however, took umbrage at the implication that this meant he was opposed to community action. His resistance, he explained sixteen years later, had come from his long experience with the practice.

> Community action—which the people in community action thought was so revolutionary—was something that we had been running in the Peace Corps for four years before it ever got into the War on Poverty. So I thought community action was absolutely sort of normal. To me it was routine.[82]

His familiarity with the technique led Shriver to three conclusions: that the results of community action would come in years rather than months, that the program would be relatively cheap, and that the program must be backstopped by other approaches to poverty. All of these led him to make community action an "essential part but not the whole of the War on Poverty."[83] And, indeed, that is what it became. In 1964, Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act, authorizing Shriver's antipoverty program. A new government agency, the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), was created with Shriver at its head (although Shriver remained in charge of the Peace Corps as well). The OEO received $800 million, $300 of million which reserved for community action and the rest to go toward other programs, including the Jobs Corps and VISTA. Under the terms of the Community Action Program, funds would not be spent directly by the federal government but would be granted to community action agencies—either already existing or newly formed—that could demonstrate that they were seeking to end poverty via the mechanism of community organization. Reformers and antipoverty activists leapt at the chance to receive funding. By June 1965 there were 415 community action agencies in existence; within a year there were over a thousand, most located in large cities.[84]

[81] Adam Yarmolinsky, quoted in transcript of "Poverty and Urban Policy," Kennedy Library–Brandeis University Conference, 1973, 234, Oral Histories, Kennedy Library. Yarmolinsky's account was substantively endorsed by William Cannon and Richard Boone at the same conference.
[82] Transcript, Sargent Shriver Oral History Interview I, 20 August 1980, by Michael L. Gillette, AC 05-24, p. 36, Johnson Library.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 245.

Sargent Shriver signing grants to community action agencies, November 1964
(Shriver Papers, John F. Kennedy Library).

Let us sum up. The OEO's Community Action Program, the centerpiece of Johnson's War on Poverty, was the product of numerous separate but coordinated efforts undertaken by several groups inside and outside of the government. Nearly all of those efforts, however, were directly or otherwise closely connected to international community development. The first prominent experiments with urban community action were undertaken by the Ford Foundation's Gray Areas Program, run by Paul Ylvisaker. Ylvisaker's previous assignment for the Ford Foundation had been in Calcutta, where he worked under Douglas Ensminger, the point man at Ford for community development, and with Bernard Loshbough, the U.S. embassy employee responsible for overseeing community development and the founder of an agency whose explicit goal was to import community development as practiced in India to the United States. In India, Ylvisaker helped design a master plan for the Calcutta that included an urban community development program and, according to internal Ford documents, his enthusiasm for urban community development sprang from conversations he had with Loshbough. Working alongside Ylvisaker on that Calcutta plan was Edward Logue, another Ford employee who had also worked with Loshbough on community development as part of the ambassadorial staff and who would become, after Ylvisaker, one of the most important figures in starting the Gray Areas Program. The men who first brought community development into the White House—David Hackett's staff—drew on Ylvisaker's experience but were also exposed to the idea of community organizing through two other routes. First, they relied on the advice of Leonard Duhl's circle of social scientists, at least two prominent members of which had roots in the community development movement. Second, they had been assigned to design a domestic Peace Corps, during which task they consulted with Peace Corps employees and received advice—which they took—from a Redfield-trained anthropologist doing community development on a Navajo reservation. Their internal documents, like Ford's, show an awareness and engagement with the United States' community development projects abroad, mainly in India and the Philippines. Both the work of Ylvisaker and that of Hackett's staff

would have probably remained nascent, however, had not the problem of poverty received sudden and national exposure. That revelation of the persistence of domestic poverty was couched in the language of Oscar Lewis, yet another Ford Foundation employee, who had worked with Carl C. Taylor and Douglas Ensminger and who had in fact written a study of the community development projects of India. President Johnson, familiar with prior experiments in rural community development in the United States and almost certainly aware of the legacy of Truman's Point Four program, insisted that community action become the core of the War on Poverty. To handle the job, he tapped Sargent Shriver, head of the Peace Corps and a longtime proponent of community action from his days in the Justice Department, where he had learned about the process from his wife, who had been trained at the University of Chicago. Shriver explicitly insisted that community action was the same thing as overseas community development, which was one of the chief occupations of the Peace Corps. To help him design the antipoverty program, then, he recruited Frank Mankiewicz, the chief proponent of community development within the Peace Corps. Shriver, Mankiewicz, and Hackett's staff, with the help of Ylvisaker and Lewis, proceeded to design a program of community action that bore an obvious resemblance to community development as practiced all across the world, from Albert Mayer's Etawah to Y. C. James Yen's model villages in the Philippines.

Table 3. Personnel overlap between the War on Poverty and overseas community development

Architects of the War on Poverty	**Overseas Community Developers**
David Hackett's Staff (1961–)	*Bowles's Ambassadorial Staff* (1951–53)
- Richard Boone (head of Domestic Peace Corps effort)	- Bernard Loshbough (head of CD program)
	- Edward Logue
Ford Foundation's Gray Areas Program (1961–)	*Ford Foundation's CD program in India (1952–)*
- Paul Ylvisaker (head)	- Bernard Loshbough
- Bernard Loshbough	- Oscar Lewis
- Edward Logue	
	Ford team to design Plan for Calcutta (1959–60)
Johnson's Anti-Poverty Task Force (1964)	- Paul Ylvisaker (head)
- Sargent Shriver (head)	- Bernard Loshbough
- Frank Mankiewicz	- Edward Logue
- Richard Boone	
- With advice from:	*Peace Corps (1961–)*
o Paul Ylvisaker	- Sargent Shriver (head)
o Oscar Lewis	- Frank Mankiewicz (main advocate of CD)

To argue, as I am doing, that the War on Poverty had international roots may seem counterintuitive. Historians in the past fifteen years have made great strides in recognizing the ways in which the United States and the rest of the world have influenced each other, but during the twentieth century the lines of influence tend to be centrifugal: pointing from the United States outward. Other countries have bought the United States' goods, learned its language, adopted its form of government, accepted its currency, and subordinated themselves to the vagaries of its foreign policy, not the other way around. One might wonder why a major domestic policy effort in the United States would take a Third World program, albeit a U.S.-supported one, as its model. There are two answers one might give to that question. The first would be to point out that, by 1960, very few policy intellectuals in the United States were capable of discussing the problem of domestic poverty. Affluence, not poverty, had been the

subject of assessments of the country since World War II, to the point where it took a radical socialist like Michael Harrington to even broach the issue. Social scientists, in suddenly seeking to explain this new phenomenon, grabbed for whatever intellectual equipment they could find, and the tools that lay the closest at hand were the ones that had been designed to deal with problems that resembled domestic poverty: juvenile delinquency and, as has been described above, international development.

But there is a second, and more accurate, way to answer the question of why the United States looked to international development when confronted with the problem of domestic poverty. That is to say that, for the government officials and intellectuals working in the 1960s, domestic and international policy were not two separate realms. Rather, men like Shriver, Ylvisaker, Mankiewicz, and Loshbough were used to working in multiple national contexts. They traveled easily between domestic and foreign policy, just as they traveled easily, on jet planes, between the United States, Latin America, and Asia. Certainly, not every member of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had a well-stamped passport, but in the time of the high Cold War, as in our own times, thinking internationally came naturally to aspiring men looking to make a mark. The surprise is not that well-educated and ambitious reformers of the 1960s traveled extensively, worked in multiple countries, and acquainted themselves with foreign policy, but rather that it has been so hard for us to register the global dimensions of their careers.

But if community action had its roots in overseas community development, why was there so much confusion among the program's designers about how the program would work, and why did they fail to anticipate its radicalization? After all, one of the most compelling aspects of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's narrative of the War on Poverty is its explanation of the chaos and confusion surrounding the program, which Moynihan attributes to policymakers' complete lack of experience with participatory programs. But Moynihan had it backward. The cloud of confusion engulfing community action was not the product of the inexperience of policymakers, but rather the product of the expectations that Shriver and certain other members of his team brought to the table *as a result* of their previous engagement with community development abroad.

Shriver and his fellow thinkers made two assumptions about community development, neither of which was entirely accurate, on the basis of their experience with the practice. The first was that community development had worked. Faith in the success of community development was not hard to come by. Because it valued process over product and holistic outcomes over specifiable targets, community development could be frustratingly difficult to measure. A development project designed by an economist might take as its target a certain level of rural incomes, but when the target of development was not a concrete achievement but a feeling of solidarity, an enlivened public sphere, or the satisfaction of "felt needs," hard numbers were hard to come by. Often, the testimony of village elites, whom community developers usually regarded as "natural leaders," substituted for a more probing assessment of whether projects were actually engaging the full village community. While some community developers, like Carl C. Taylor and Albert Mayer, recognized the failures of the projects that they themselves had worked on, others persisted in their faith that the democratic power of communities. For the idealists of the Kennedy administration, it was easy to declare the Peace Corps as having successfully planted the roots of enduring democracy. After all, who was to say differently? When community development projects failed in the global South, they did so in the quietest of ways. A new schoolhouse would go unused, or a proposed well would never be finished, but such small failures in remote villages did not trigger massive environmental damage or political revolutions.

But the more critical error that Shriver and other advocates of community action made was to suppose that what they believed to have worked in Third World villages could work just as well in U.S. urban neighborhoods. In Shriver's vision, the point of community development was to weld the weak and the powerful together into a single, well-connected social unit. That hope had been at the center of groupism: landlords and tenants, workers and managers, blacks and whites, were to be reconciled by the therapeutic process of community mobilization. Shriver was, more than anyone, enamored of this conception. His idea of community action, remembered Mankiewicz, was getting the "priest, rabbi, factory owner, and worker" together to talk things over.[85] Community action might have been designed for the benefit of the poor, but it could not be undertaken by the poor alone. "I believe in community action as being communal," Shriver argued, "and that's why we should have . . . at the local level of community action, the private sector, those people in the philanthropic area, et cetera."[86] Paul Ylvisaker and William Cannon, and to a lesser degree David Hackett, regarded community action as Shriver did: as a consensus-governed process that would involve not just the poor but local elites as well.[87]

Shriver's hope that the subterranean reservoirs of communal feeling could be tapped in U.S. cities, just as they had been (Shriver believed) in Third World villages, was not absurd. In fact, it was highly compatible with a developing tradition of urban sociology that saw the urban neighborhood as comparable to the village community. The tradition began with William F. Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1943), a pioneering use of anthropological methods to study U.S. society—in Whyte's case, a gang of young boys of Italian background in Boston's North End, whose rituals, status markers, culture, and group connections Whyte described at length. Whyte had worked with many of leading groupist thinkers while a student at Harvard, including George Homans, Elton Mayo, Chester Barnard, Conrad Arensberg, and Elliott Chapple. After completing his book, he went to Chicago to study with Robert Redfield and W. Lloyd Warner and in the 1960s he left the country for Peru, where he worked with anthropologist Allan Holmberg on the Vicos community development project.[88]

Whyte's vision of the urban poor as constituting a tribe of sorts had been picked up and amplified in two important 1960s studies: Herbert Gans's *The Urban Villagers* (1962) and Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961). Gans, with funding from Leonard Duhl's National Institute for Mental Health, challenged the prevailing notion that Boston's West End was a slum or an "urban jungle," and pointed out, instead, the many ways in which urban life there resembled traditional village life. West Enders, living close together, enjoyed "a share in the life that went on around them, which, in turn, made them feel part of the group." Gans mentioned Daniel Lerner's famous articulation of modernization theory, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958), and argued that the West Enders, despite their location in a major metropolitan city in the most powerful nation on earth, bore "considerable similarity" to the premodern societies described by Lerner—a point in their favor, according to Gans.[89] The same thesis was expounded with even greater force in Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great*

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[85] Mankiewicz, interview with the author.

[86] Transcript, Sargent Shriver Oral History Interview II, 23 October 1980, by Michael L. Gillette, AC 05-25, p. 12, Johnson Library.

[87] A very good source on the ideological differences between the various factions of poverty warriors with respect to the ideal of cross-class consensus is Blumenthal, "Community Action: The Origins of a Government Program," especially around 26.

[88] See William Foote Whyte, *Participant Observer: An Autobiography* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 1994).

[89] Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), 21, 100.

American Cities, an attack on urban renewal programs that insisted on the vibrancy and vitality of neighborhood communities. Focusing particularly on the Back-of-the-Yards in Chicago, Boston's North End (which she toured with Gans), and her own Greenwich Village, Jacobs argued that urban neighborhoods, when functioning correctly, were not impersonal arenas where citydwellers acted out their various social pathologies but rather "networks of small-scale, everyday public life" where a diversity of uses and activities knitted together the lives of neighbors.[90] Whyte, Gans, and Jacobs all offered a fairly sunny portrait of urban life, one that contradicted the popular notions of urban pathology that had justified slum clearance and urban renewal. What appeared to be markers of slum conditions in the eyes of public officials—high concentration of residential units, little or no separation between commercial and residential areas, and a bustling street life—were often as not sources of small-scale social solidarities.

If Whyte, Gans, and Jacobs were right in their descriptions of city life, then Shriver's plan to fight poverty by drawing on the power of neighborhood communities would seem to be justified. But not everyone saw the city as a collection of "urban villages." The opposing viewpoint was offered by Kenneth B. Clark, the black psychologist whose research on the consequences of discrimination had played an important role in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. For Clark, impoverished urban areas were not villages, they were prisons. In *Dark Ghetto* (1965), Clark pointed to the structural and economic constraints facing the poor, particularly poor African Americans, and described the damage that such constraints wrought on the psyches of slumdwellers. Lacking economic resources and populated by recent migrants rather than by longstanding residents, the ghetto was, in Clark's eyes, "not a viable community."[91] Clark was closely affiliated with Haryou, an experimental community action agency in Harlem that had got funding from Hackett's committee on juvenile delinquency and later from Shriver's OEO. But, with his jaded view of the social capacities of ghetto neighborhoods, Clark had little faith in Peace Corps–style community development. Poor communities could not spontaneously improve themselves without confronting their lack of power, which meant organizing, as the civil rights movement had, to demand their rights from the powerful. Whereas, for Shriver, community action meant drawing together all members of a community to work on common problems, for Clark it meant organizing the powerless to confront their social betters.[92]

The debate between Kenneth Clark and Jane Jacobs as to how to view the city was in many ways simply the newest version of a longstanding debate that had accompanied community projects throughout the history of community development. Robert Redfield and Oscar Lewis had famously clashed about whether Tepoztlán was essentially harmonious or riven by conflict. Lewis entered the same debate, with Redfield's colleagues, in his ethnographic studies of Indian villages. The untouchable leader B. R. Ambedkar, the Keralite Communist E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the Marxist Barrington Moore, Jr., the Philippine anthropologist F. Landa Jocano, and the leaders of the Manila slum advocacy group ZOTO, had all taken Clark's side, arguing that what community developers regarded as natural communities were in fact the sites of power struggles and that the only effective community organization in such situations would have to be oppositional in nature: a movement of the powerless against the

[90] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961; New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 119.

[91] Kenneth B. Clark, *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 27.

[92] For a similar view of the problems of ghetto life, see Lee Rainwater, *Behind Ghetto Walls: Black Families in a Federal Slum* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970). The title of Rainwater's book is a play on and a response to William Wiser and Charlotte Viall Wiser's *Behind Mud Walls* (1930).

powerful. To some degree, whether one sided with Clark or Jacobs on such matters was a question of perception, of whether one tended to see community or conflict. But it was not just a matter of perception. Whyte, Gans, and Jacobs had all been looking at very different sorts of neighborhoods than Clark had been observing. Notably, *Street Corner Society*, *The Urban Villagers*, and *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* focused exclusively on enclaves of whites, often "white ethnics," within the larger urban fabric. But by the early 1960s, those were precisely the areas that were disappearing the fastest. In the 1940s and 1950s, millions of whites left urban cores, and with them went political resources and a tax base. Residential segregation was quickly killing the sort of economic and social diversity that had afforded places like Boston's North End a flourishing social life even in the absence of economic prosperity. Urban villages were in dwindling supply, and as local businesses, employment opportunities, and political resources left the city, areas that had been formerly well-rounded neighborhoods were now holding cells.

The worse the urban crisis got, the more it appeared that the dark ghetto, rather than the urban village, was the basic pattern of city life. And, as Clark was quick to perceive, the dark ghetto was inimical to community development of the Peace Corps variety. Whereas the villages of the Third World contained many examples of elites living side-by-side with their subordinates, urban apartheid meant that neighborhoods in U.S. cities consisted almost entirely of poor people. Whereas "community participation" in villages time and again served to bolster the power of rural elites, in U.S. cities it threatened to do the opposite: it threatened to turn the decisionmaking apparatus over to subordinated groups. When that happened, it was impossible to even pretend that U.S. urban neighborhoods operated like Third World villages.

That key fact about community action in the United States—that it operated on places that lacked the sociological characteristics of villages—goes a long way toward explaining the confusion policymakers like Shriver experienced after launching the Community Action Program. When Shriver's task force was drafting the Economic Opportunity Act, it had to set criteria for what sorts of agencies would be eligible for OEO funds. Someone, probably Richard Boone (the Chicago-trained former Ford employee who had led the push for a Domestic Peace Corps) but possibly Harold Horowitz, proposed that agencies must include the "maximum feasible participation" of the poor to receive funding.[93] It is unclear where that phrase came from, although Frank Mankiewicz remembered it as having been derived from discussions of the Peace Corps in Latin America.[94] Also unclear was what it meant. Shriver, surely reflecting on the Peace Corps' work, understood it to mean that elites and nonelites would cooperate—he compared it to the managers of a factory surveying the workers to learn their feelings.[95] But Boone and some of the more radical members of the task force assumed that "maximum feasible participation" meant that the poor would lead their own movements, movements that may well, as Clark had desired, challenge the privileges of the powerful. Two powerfully different meanings were thus tacitly ascribed to the definition of community action agencies, and, in the haste to pass the Economic Opportunity Act, no one who shepherded the bill to passage—in Congress or in the White House—recognized that the ambiguity would prove to be political dynamite.

The incendiary potential of the "maximum feasible participation" clause became apparent as soon as the EOA was passed. Urban mayors, as was expected, lined up to receive

[93] On the origins of that infamous phrase, see Gillette, *Launching the War on Poverty*, 77–83.
[94] Cobbs Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 194.
[95] Transcript, Sargent Shriver Oral History Interview II, 23 October 1980, by Michael L. Gillette, AC 05-25, p. 10, Johnson Library.

OEO funds. But first Philadelphia, then Cleveland, New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco were turned down when the OEO refused to grant funds for programs that failed to incorporate the poor in any way and differed little from the old sort of urban services. Shriver had hoped that the organizations that would spring forth in their wake would unite elites with the poor. But what came as some surprise to Shriver and all of the legislators who had expected community action to run along the lines of overseas community development was how many of the community agencies that formed to claim grants had a social protest agenda. Clark, it seemed, was right: if you organize a town meeting in an economically impoverished ghetto, the result is rarely polite. For men like Boone, that was the entire point. As director of the Community Action Program's Program Policy and Planning Division, he insisted that maximum feasible participation meant empowering the poor to form autonomous organizations and he arranged grants that he thought would do just that. One grant, of $314,000, went to an organization led by self-professed radical Saul Alinsky, who helped to organize a full-frontal attack on the municipal establishment, spending public money to organize tenant's unions in public-housing projects, to bail out protesting welfare mothers, and to run a voter-registration drive to defeat the incumbent Republican mayor. "We are experiencing a class struggle in the traditional Karl Marx style in Syracuse, and I do not like it," protested the director of the Syracuse Housing Authority.[96]

Saul Alinsky was, in fact, a fitting ally for Boone, and a fitting emblem of the radicalization of community action. Like so many other community developers, Alinsky had been a graduate student at the University of Chicago, where he worked on juvenile delinquency, and conversant with the language of groupism. From the 1940s onward, Alinsky maintained a correspondence with the French communitarian philosopher Jacques Maritain, whom Alinsky regarded as "my spiritual father and the man I love" (Maritain, one of the founders of Personalism, had also been a major inspiration to Ngô Đinh Diêm).[97] Alinsky began his career in the 1940s organizing the Back-of-the-Yards neighborhood in Chicago, work which he took up with the same regard for communal self-help and local traditions that was typical of community development.[98] But Alinsky was not like the other groupists and Chicago-trained experts on the community. Hailing from the Jewish ghetto rather than the midwestern plains, Alinsky was a lifelong radical, who regarded community organizing, as Boone and Clark would later do, as a means of organizing social protest movements. The Peace Corps, Alinsky remarked, may claim to mobilize communities but was ultimately ineffectual because "it would never be allowed to meddle in the affairs, say, of the United Fruit Company in central America."[99] Alinsky's oppositional approach to community organizing placed him on the sidelines of U.S. political life for most of his career—an inspiring figure to some but not a political force. That changed, however, in the 1960s when Alinsky, peddling the same technique he had been using for years, gained national prominence. A book on burgeoning urban problems, Charles Silberman's *Crisis in Black and White* (1964), described Alinsky's organizing techniques as "the most important and most impressive experiment affecting Negroes anywhere in the United States," and Alinsky was soon sucked into national politics.[100] "My stock split in two," Alinsky

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[96] Quoted in Matusow, *Unraveling of America*, 248.
[97] Bernard Doering, ed., *The Philosopher and the Provocateur: The Correspondence of Jacques Maritain and Saul Alinsky* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), xxvi.
[98] That experience is described in Saul D. Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945).
[99] Alinsky, quoted in Sanford D. Horwitt, *Let Them Call Me Rebel: Saul Alinsky—His Life and Legacy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 526.
[100] Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White* (New York: Random House, 1964), 318.

remembered, describing the sudden surge of interest in his work.[101] The point here is that Alinsky's rapid rise was an artifact of the changing face of urban life, which, by destroying any possibility that urban neighborhoods might function as villages, greatly facilitated oppositional and radical forms of community organizing.

With men like Alinsky suddenly in charge, accusations quickly accumulated that the OEO was using taxpayer dollars to bankroll a domestic revolution. Congress members objected that a project in Nashville had funded a "Hate Whitey Liberation School" and that a project in Houston had sought to purchase telescopic rifle sights with its OEO funds.[102] There was little truth to the more extravagant of such charges, but the main thrust was right. In the Third World, national programs to empower communities had only strengthened the hand of the rural elites who lived in them. In the United States, however, a similarly rapid national program to grant power to U.S. neighborhoods was, because of urban apartheid, always in danger of becoming insurrectionary. The Black Panther Party, is it turns out, was founded in the office of an Oakland community action agency where Bobby Seale, the chairman of the Black Panthers, held an administrative job.[103] LeRoi Jones, the revolutionary poet and political activist, created a scandal when he managed to get OEO funding for his Black Arts Theater. Civil rights activist James Farmer created another one when the OEO denied funding to his proposal. Black activists, denied meaningful participation in federal and state government for so long, were discovering that they could at least exert control at the local level.[104] Within the context of a spate of urban riots beginning with the Watts riots in the summer of 1965, it seemed to many that community action was entirely out of the government's control. Even for those who believed that maximum feasible participation *should* mean the organization of radical poor people's movements, there was little sustained success to brag about, as the more controversial and conflict-oriented programs were often the ones to fold the fastest.[105]

Community developers who had advocated consensus-building in Third World villages balked when they saw what the Community Action Program had become. Albert Mayer, the guru of Etawah, returned to New York and was commissioned to build a play park in an underprivileged area. Mayer set himself to the task, only to encounter "five strapping guys who asserted their views in what can only be called an ominous tone," who intimidated him into abandoning the plans. The community action programs, he concluded, were not giving rise to genuine community mobilization but "a sort of stand-up knock-down situation with a lot of broken bones, intimidation, general tenseness—above all, delay, cumulative delay, cumulative frustration, local cynicism, and self-backlash."[106] Richard Waverly Poston, Mayer's longtime collaborator and the head of the Peace Corps' community development training program in New Mexico, came to a similar conclusion after studying an OEO-funded project on New York's Lower East Side to empower gang members.[107] A more prominent case of the disillusionment with community development once it became a vehicle for social protest is

[101] Alinsky, quoted in Horwitt, *Saul Alinsky*, 450.
[102] Cazenave, *Impossible Democracy*, 156.
[103] Lemann, *The Promised Land*, 180.
[104] See Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008), 367–374.
[105] An important rejoinder to the prevailing view that the community action programs were largely ineffectual is offered in Cazenave, *Impossible Democracy*. Cazenave concedes that thoroughgoing participation in policymaking by the poor was, within the structural limitations of the political landscape of the 1960s, unsustainable (he compares community action to "a rock that floated") but he argues that its long-term effects can still be felt today in the remarkable proliferation of grassroots community organizations in the United States today.
[106] Albert Mayer, "A New Level of Local Government is Struggling to be Born," *City*, March/April 1971, 62.
[107] Richard W. Poston, *The Gang and the Establishment* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).

that of Edward Banfield. In 1958, Banfield had written a book about a village in Southern Italy which, having suffered for decades from poverty and exploitation, had lost its civic culture. To remedy the situation, Banfield recommended a program of community development: teachers and local leaders "should assist the villagers to undertake simple ventures in cooperation and community action," including forming sports leagues and credit unions, which would "give rise to a 'we' feeling."[108] After witnessing the urban riots and the War on Poverty, however, Banfield threw up his hands: the problems of the poor in U.S. cities were self-generated and "empowering" the poor with community action programs would only lead to disaster, since the desires of the poor were ultimately self-sabotaging.[109]

After the Watts riots, the program began to deteriorate quickly. In late 1965, Charles Schultze, the White House Budget Bureau director, wrote Johnson a memo observing that the OEO had antagonized so many local officials that the Democrats could face a crippling lack of support from their own base in the upcoming midterm elections. "We ought not to be in the business of organizing the poor politically," Schultze wrote to Johnson. "O. K. I agree," the president wrote back.[110] As the administration gradually removed funding and support for the OEO, its top staff began resigning. In 1966, Jack Conway, head of the Community Action Program, and Richard Boone left to form the Citizen Crusade against Poverty with Walter Reuther, an organization that might carry out their hopes for direct political action rooted in the discontent of the poor. When Sargent Shriver gave an address to their organization in April, his speech was drowned out by boos. "I will not participate in a riot," Shriver declared before leaving the stage, his speech unfinished.[111]

In 1967, Johnson's draft bill to reauthorize the OEO required that in each locality the highest-ranking elected official (usually the mayor) be automatically given a place on the board of every community action agency, dramatically hobbling the autonomy of the agencies. That was not enough for Congress, which modified the bill to require that all community action agencies be supervised by state or local governments. In essence, what was happening was that the political establishment, finally confronting the fact that U.S. ghettos lacked the mechanisms for local and informal social control that had existed in rural villages, was putting new ones in place. Whereas in the Third World, villages came already equipped with local elites, in U.S. cities a class of New Brahmans had to be installed in order to prevent the new local forms of political power from becoming radical. The New Brahmans were unlike the Brahmans of India or the landlords of the Philippines in that they were a policy elite, with few social connections to the population whom they were controlling. But they served a similar purpose in that they prevented community participation in poor areas from becoming the basis for a social revolution.

With the fangs of the community action agencies removed, the OEO lost much of its momentum. Shriver left the agency in 1968 to become the ambassador to France. His successor, Bertram Harding, was an archetypal manager and had little of Shriver's enthusiasm for community participation. When Richard Nixon took office, he turned to Daniel Patrick Moynihan for advice on how to handle poverty. Moynihan recommended dismantling the OEO entirely. Although Nixon was unable to do that, he placed the OEO in the hands of men who, like Harding, adopted a managerial perspective. Those included Donald Rumsfeld, Harding's

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[108] Edward C. Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1958), 173, 174.
[109] Edward C. Banfield, *The Unheavenly City: The Nature and Future of Our Urban Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968).
[110] Stossel, *Sarge*, 411.
[111] Ibid., 458.

successor as director, and Rumsfeld's special assistant, Dick Cheney. In 1973 Nixon gave instructions to OEO chief Howard Phillips to dismantle the agency by abolishing community action and moving everything else to other departments. Watergate saved the OEO for a time but Gerald Ford continued the tradition of maintaining it as a bureaucratic agency until he handed it off to Ronald Reagan in 1981, who finally abolished it (the only governmental agency that Reagan managed to entirely eliminate).[112]

As the federal government abandoned direct community action programs, it did not abandon the concept of community development altogether. Rather, programs encouraging the direct participation of citizens were replaced by urban programs over which municipal officials—the New Brahmans—could maintain control. The Model Cities program, signed by Johnson into law in 1966, was a sort of Community Action Program from the top down: city officials received funding to rescue urban life by clearing slums, erecting new construction, and providing public services. Two years later, Robert F. Kennedy and Jacob Javits created, as an amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act, a "Special Impact Program" to fund Community Development Corporations (CDCs)—primarily economic rather than political agencies that would create jobs and housing, often by working with local industries. CDCs sprang up by the hundreds in the 1970s and demonstrated that, properly disinfected, community programs could be an efficient means by which politicians could signal their commitments to impoverished urban areas. Even during the Reagan administration, when antipoverty programs in general were defunded, at least one thousand new CDCs were established.[113] In general, as the federal government has retreated from addressing unemployment, inferior housing, and deindustrialization, it has turned the responsibility over to poor people themselves.[114] Today, there are around four thousand CDCs. But as CDCs have grown they have also visibly migrated from the core values that once animated the community action agencies. Street organizing and social change remain part of the CDC rhetoric but have clearly taken a back seat to tangible outcomes and modern business practices. More and more, the role of the community organization is not that of the town hall but of the real estate development office, and the executives of CDCs are increasingly businessmen, often white, brought in for their management skills rather than local leaders in urban communities.[115]

The practice of community development today is defined by a tension between participation and control, between democracy and stability.[116] In many ways, that tension can be traced back to the midcentury decades. Groupist democratic ideals of animated overseas community development projects, but social hierarchies within villages ensured that local decisionmaking would limit itself to small and largely unimportant improvement projects and would not, for instance, threaten existing systems of landholding or ritual privilege. Community programs in developing countries had failed to raise rural incomes in any measurable way,

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112 For a useful account of the final years of the OEO see Lemann, *The Promised Land*. For a response, highlighting the continued success of community action, see Robert F. Clark, *Maximum Feasible Success: A History of the Community Action Program* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Community Action Agencies, 2000).

113 On the growth of CDCs, see Neal R. Peirce and Carol F. Steinbach, *Corrective Capitalism: The Rise of America's Community Development Corporations* (New York: Ford Foundation, 1987).

114 Thomas J. Sugrue discusses this process in *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 367. See also Matthew J. Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

115 For a helpful review of these trends, see Keith Getter and Leonardo Vasquez, "Out Front and In Sync," *Shelterforce*, Winter 2007, 9–13. See also Nicholas Lemann, "The Myth of Community Development," *New York Times Magazine*, 9 January 1994.

116 A clear summary of that tension can be found in L. Owen Kirkpatrick, "The Two 'Logics' of Community Development: Neighborhoods, Markets, and Community Development Corporations," *Politics and Society* 35 (2007): 329–359.

but their lack of effect was ironically crucial to their successful transmission back to the United States. Proponents could tout community development for its many small (and immeasurable) contributions to rural welfare and could draw comfort from the fact that community programs had "democratized" the countryside without triggering peasant revolutions. With that model of overseas community development in their heads, it was easy for members of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to envision that a similar program directed at U.S. ghettos might also ease conditions and encourage a vibrant political culture without conflict. But because of the extensive economic segregation the marked U.S. cities, the only local elites available to shape neighborhood activism were civil servants, who quickly found themselves overwhelmed by the force of social unrest whenever it seemed that decisionmaking power might be turned over to the residents of impoverished urban neighborhoods. Informal mechanisms of social control that governed rural villages had few analogues in the dark ghetto, and by the late 1960s the government had replaced the principle of "maximum feasible participation" with the rule of the New Brahmans: political elites. Thus did the central tragedy of the global community development movement—the collision of its democratic aspirations with its inability to overcome entrenched inequalities—play itself out on yet another stage.

Conclusion

On New Year's Eve in 1965, Carl C. Taylor sat down to write a series of letters reflecting on his experiences in the past few years. Taylor had been the head of the USDA's Bureau of Agricultural Economics, a president of the American Sociological Association, and had been one of the world's most prominent community developers, having worked on and observed programs in twenty-one different countries on behalf of the United Nations, the United States government, and the Ford Foundation over the course of the 1950s and the 1960s.[1] Taylor had also served on the board and executive committee of International Voluntary Services (IVS), the private community development agency that had served as a model for the Peace Corps, since its establishment in 1953. Writing to Stanley Andrews, a former director of the U.S. Technical Cooperation Agency (in charge of administering Point Four aid) and a fellow IVS board member, Taylor lamented the decline of community development. "I am afraid that we have not only become institutionalized in our procedures and our administration, but institutionalized in our thinking."[2] The countries that, like India, had tried to institute community development programs had failed because they had sought to do so by imposition. "Because they have done this, the national bureaucracy at the top has so mechanized the programs that those working at the local levels have become the chore boys of administration rather than the catalyzers and entrepreneurs of local community change."[3] Even the Peace Corps, which was designed to implement a bottom-up approach to aid, had become a mass agency that lacked "a real community development understanding."[4] Worst of all was the Vietnam War, whose expense had blocked any real chance of development in Asia and Africa.[5]

Taylor knew quite a bit about that war and the heavy toll it took, as Vietnam had been one of IVS's primary fields of operation since it began work there in 1956.[6] Taylor had hoped that IVS's close collaboration with USAID in Vietnam would allow the United States to engage seriously in development work, but he found instead that the United States was simply using IVS volunteers as "shock troops, sent into areas of what is thought to be special need, and where no one else will go."[7] At its peak, IVS had over 160 volunteers in Vietnam, at least nine of whom were killed.[8] In 1967, four of IVS's top workers, including the director of the Vietnam program, made headline news and caught President Johnson's attention by resigning in protest over the war. "We are finding it increasingly difficult to pursue quietly our main objective: helping the people of Vietnam," they wrote. "Even in our situation, normally far from the fighting, we have seen enough to say that the only monuments to this war will be the dead, the maimed, the despairing and the forlorn."[9] In the arc of his long career, Taylor had seen

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[1] Carl C. Taylor, untitled article about community development, 1966, Carl C. Taylor Papers, #3230, box 34, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.
[2] Carl C. Taylor to Stanley Andrews, 31 December 1965, Taylor papers, box 37.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Carl C. Taylor to Dr. and Mrs. Howard Beers, 31 December 1965, in Taylor papers, box 37.
[6] On IVS in Vietnam, see Jessica Breiteneicher Elkind, "The First Casualties: American Nation Building Programs in South Vietnam, 1955–1965" (PhD diss., UCLA, 2005).
[7] Taylor to Andrews, 31 December 1965.
[8] Paul A. Rodell, "International Voluntary Services in Vietnam: War and the Birth of Activism, 1958–1967," *Peace and Change* 27 (2002): 225–244.
[9] Letter signed by forty-nine IVS members, on the occasion of the resignation of four staff leaders, 19 September 1967, reprinted in Don Luce and John Sommer, *Viet Nam: The Unheard Voices* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 315, 321.

community development go from a strategy for protecting Southern and Western farmers from the worst pains to the Depression to, somehow, a means of advancing U.S. military policy in Vietnam. His conclusions were not happy. "I am sorry that what has come to be called community development has become more or less a shibboleth"—*shibboleth* being Taylor's preferred term of derision for the empty slogans of propagandists.[10] From a well-meaning attempt to allow people direct their own destinies, community development had become a convenient fig leaf, an ideological cover for whatever governments wanted to do.

The head of IVS in Vietnam, Don Luce, digs a foundation with Vietnamese villagers before Luce's resignation (Luce and Sommer, *Viet Nam: The Unheard Voices*)

Taylor was not the only disappointed community developer. Looking around him in 1961, one promoter of the strategy in USAID complained that community development was in a "recession." The aid agency was "strongly infected with 'economism'" and had been crippling its own community development programs as it moved to "put the emphasis primarily on economic development and to think of any political development as almost an automatic by-product." Such an orientation, he reported, had had "subtle and devastating effects on the morale of the whole community development group in the government," to the point where the U.S. government's Libyan community development adviser, despite achieving great success in his program, resigned simply for reasons of general discouragement.[11] Such worries were, as it turned out, warranted. In 1963, when Hubert Humphrey requested from the Community Development Division of USAID a report on the status of the aid strategy, he learned that the Philippine program was being phased out and that USAID support had been withdrawn from major countries such as India, Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Korea, and Pakistan. Scattered staff members remained in Africa and Southeast Asia but these, too were scheduled to be relieved of their duties.[12] Most field offices had been abolished entirely and, indeed, the

[10] Carl C. Taylor to Stanley Andrews, 8 September 1966, Taylor papers, box 37.
[11] William Y. Elliott, "Community Development and the New AID Approach," 15 October 1961, Edward Geary Lansdale Papers, folder 1371, box 49, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
[12] Louis Miniclier, "Community Development as a Vehicle of U.S. Foreign Aid," *Community Development Journal* 4 (1969): 9–10.

Community Development Division's headquarters was closed in 1963. The only country to see an increase in its community development aid from the United States after 1963 was Vietnam.[13] But few experienced community developers, outside of the CIA, placed any great faith in the Vietnam program. Taylor, involved via IVS, was a strong critic and Albert Mayer, whom Kennedy's advisers invited to work there, declined outright.[14]

The problem was not just that the United States was losing interest in community development, it was that everyone was. Community development's persistent lack of results, combined with a new sense of urgency about development triggered by looming food crises, shifted the interest of those concerned with development away from community building and toward the Green Revolution. Whereas by the late 1950s it was hard to find a developing nation without a community development program of some scope, by the late 1960s it was hard to find a community development program that had not been defunded, marginalized, or folded into an agricultural ministry. To the degree that governments continued to use community development, they used it not as a way to alleviate rural poverty but as a way to control rural populations, often within of the context of counterinsurgency campaigns. The few community development campaigns that seemed to genuinely devolve power to their clients—as in Kerala in the late 1950s or in U.S. cities during the mid 1960s—did so only for very short periods of time before their radical elements were purged and their operations scaled back.

In the absence of any hard evidence that community development had worked, the strategy faced vigorous assaults in the United Nations, particularly from Eastern European delegates, who favored structural and industry-centered approaches to the problem of poverty. "You are always talking about process, you are talking about definitions of something that seems vague and general, and we can't exactly put our finger on what it is it's accomplishing," is how Julia Henderson, Director of the UN's Bureau of Social Affairs, paraphrased their complaints. "Aren't you avoiding the basic problems of social reform? . . . Can you get real community development where . . . your social structure is so archaic that the people on the bottom are never going to benefit from what you do?"[15] Such questions, Henderson conceded, were increasingly hard to answer. So too were charges that community development focused on rural poverty rather than urban poverty and that it privileged group conformity over individual entrepreneurship.

It may be tempting to take the failure of community development as a reason for dismissing it. How much do we really need to know, after all, about a development scheme that failed to improve the incomes, institutions, or social lives of the peoples whom it was meant to benefit? Here, some perspective is necessary. If success were our only measure of significance in the history of development, we would have very little to talk about. Modernization projects, after all, have been colossal failures as well: they have wrecked the environment, destroyed local cultures, benefited the urban elite at the expense of marginal groups, expanded the disciplinary power of the state, and generally failed to improve conditions for most of their intended beneficiaries.[16] But we have studied those projects with the utmost seriousness,

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[13] Lane E. Holdcroft, "The Rise and Fall of Community Development: 1950–1965," MS thesis, Michigan State University, 1976, 27.

[14] Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 92.

[15] Julia Henderson, "United Nations' Community Development Programs," in International Society for Community Development, report on Washington symposium on community development, 8 September 1966, p. 21, Albert A. Mayer Papers, box 14, folder 12, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

[16] Influential criticisms of top-down modernist development include James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994);

closely examining their effects, their histories, and their intellectual foundations. In fact, we have taken their failure as warrant for studying them. How, we ask ourselves, did we miss the mark so widely? The same question can—and should—be asked about community development. To be sure, the quest for community has not produced catastrophe on the same spectacular scale as has the urge to modernize. There are no crumbling dams, flooded villages, slums filled with refugees, or acres of forest scorched by napalm. But the costs of the failure of community development, though less visible, are no less present. They can be found in the millions wasted on pointless projects, in the unabated impoverishment and social degradation faced by a large portion of the world's population and in the generations of chastened villagers who learned, yet again, not to place their hopes in their governments.

There is another reason why community development is especially worthy of our attention: it has returned with a vengeance. Only a decade after most community development programs were dismantled, development experts started speaking again about the need for participatory development and the inclusion of "local organizations" within developmental plans. This was a reaction to the perceived failures of agricultural modernization projects, particularly the emphasis on technology and science as the keys to development during the Green Revolution.[17] But participatory tactics were not the only response to the failures of state-directed modernization. More prominent were a set of developmental strategies that sought to promote market activity by rolling back the state. The "Berg Report" for the World Bank in 1981 marked the beginning of a sympathetic reconsideration of market strategies that culminated in what was for a time known as the "Washington Consensus" and is more recently known as "neoliberalism."[18] Market-based reforms were pushed on the development world with especial vigor by the International Monetary Fund, which reacted to the global debt crisis of the early 1980s by bailing out debtor nations if those nations would agree to "structural adjustments" that included reducing public expenditures, liberalizing trade, and otherwise reducing the role of public institutions in economic life.[19] But by the 1990s the perils of privatization were as clear to development officials as the perils of state-directed development had been. The development community was, then, in much the same position that the social theorists of the midcentury decades had been: they were painfully aware of both the excesses

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Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); and James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

[17] See particularly Norman Uphoff and Milton Esman, *Local Organization for Rural Development in Asia* (Ithaca: Rural Development Committee, Center for International Studies, Cornell University, 1974) and Milton J. Esman and Norman T. Uphoff, *Local Organizations: Intermediaries in Rural Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

[18] The Berg Report, written by Elliott Berg, is The World Bank, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action* (Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1981). Other key texts in the turn toward market freedoms include Robert H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Deepak Lal, *The Poverty of 'Development Economics'* (Sussex: Institute for Economic Affairs, 1983); Bela A. Balassa, *Toward Renewed Economic Growth in Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1986); and John Williamson, "What Washington Means by Policy Reform," in John Williamson, ed., *Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1990), 7-20. For a useful overview, see John Toye, *Dilemmas of Development: Reflections on the Counter-Revolution in Development Economics*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

[19] John Toye, "Structural Adjustment: Context, Assumptions, Origin and Diversity," in Rolph van der Hoeven and Fred van der Kraaij, eds., *Structural Adjustment and Beyond in Sub-Saharan Africa: Research and Policy Issues* (The Hague: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994), 18-35; Frances Stewart, *Adjustment and Poverty: Options and Choices* (London: Routledge, 1995); David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

of states and markets. And like those social theorists, they turned with great enthusiasm to communitarian solutions. Specifically, the development community latched onto the idea of "social capital," as articulated by sociologist by James S. Coleman and popularized by sociologist Robert Putnam.[20] Development, in that view, was not just a matter of physical capital, of machines and materials, but required *social* capital as well: networks of trust, voluntary organizations, and a vibrant associational life. In other words, it required community development.

Around 1995, the World Bank began to take a strong interest in social capital. Bank economist Christiaan Grootaert suggested in a much-cited paper that social capital was perhaps the "missing link" in development, the ingredient without which all projects would founder.[21] Grootaert urged the Bank to incorporate "existing associations and organizations" into its development projects and to try to create "enabling environments" for the growth of local organizations.[22] The Bank took Grootaert's advice to heart and sought to empower local organizations through a technique it called "community-driven development" or "community-based development." Community-driven development soon became "among the fastest-growing mechanisms for channeling development assistance," accounting for, by conservative calculations, $2 billion in annual lending by 2003.[23] One key to community-driven development's popularity has been its political ambidexterity. For advocates of market-based strategies, community-driven development is a way to have the necessary social supplements to the market without involving the state. For those on the left, it offers an alternative vision of bottom-up development that respects cultural diversity and indeed draws on it in the creation of a grassroots movement. There has been, as Kristian Stokke and Giles Mohan have argued, a "convergence around local civil society" from both the neoliberals and post-Marxists.[24]

What is surprising about the rapid rise of community-driven development to dominance after 1995 is how little mention is made in the process of the community development movement of the midcentury decades. Grootaert's celebrated paper for the World Bank made no mention of community development whatever, and it was hardly exceptional in that regard. There is an almost complete historical amnesia on this score. One development economist, while studying the World Bank's experiments with community mobilization, stumbled upon a master's thesis about midcentury community development written by a former USAID employee and was surprised to learn that there had *been* such a thing. Searching through the scholarly record he found "a massive literature on the topic" from the 1950s and 1960s but "virtually no references thereafter." And yet, he reflected, the similarities between the community

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[20] James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), supplement S95–S120; James S. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990); Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* 6 (1995): 65–78; and Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000). For a critical assessment of the rise of social capital and its use in development, see John Harriss, *Depoliticizing Development: The World Bank and Social Capital* (Delhi: LeftWord, 2001).

[21] Christiaan Grootaert, "Social Capital: "The Missing Link," in *Expanding the Measure of Wealth: Indicators of Environmentally Sustainable Development* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1997), 94–113.

[22] Ibid., 108.

[23] Ghazala Mansuri and Vijayendra Rao, "Community-Based and -Driven Development: A Critical Review," *World Bank Research Observer* 19 (2004): 1. Mansuri and Rao's conservative figure only accounts for lending specifically for community-based or -driven development does not include lending intended to produce an "enabling environment" for community organizations. Were such lending taken into account, 2003 lending would amount to $7 billion.

[24] Kristian Stokke and Giles Mohan, "The Convergence around Local Civil Society and the Dangers of Localism," *Social Scientist* 29 (2001): 3–24. See also Giles Mohan and Kristian Stokke, "Participatory Development and Empowerment: The Dangers of Localism," *Third World Quarterly* 21 (2000): 247–268.

development of the midcentury decades and community-directed development were striking. He found training manuals from the 1940s that, but for the "dated nature" of the photographs, "could well have been from the 1990s."[25] His observations were astute. To one familiar with the history of community development in the Cold War era, current community-driven development often looks like little more than a reanimation of old techniques. But what is alarming about that reanimation is that the failures of community development are also being revived and repeated. The chief complaint about the Bank's community-driven development strategy is that it is prone to "elite capture," the ability of landlords and other elites to use their informal power to redirect efforts ostensibly generated by the community—precisely the problem that hobbled midcentury community development.[26]

Our inability to remember what was once a major policy initiative that affected dozens of nations, including the United States, is not an accident. It is the result of our implicit sense—present as much an our historical writing as in our scholarship on development—that there is something illegitimate about communitarian solutions, something that renders them unfit as bearers of modernity. The world of the twentieth century, we feel, is an age of bureaucratization, centralization, urbanization, and industrialization. As much as we may lament those trends, we nevertheless attribute to them a binding force. Thus, while we have no difficulty recognizing the urge to modernize to be a part of our past, we are reluctant to acknowledge the presence of the quest for community as anything more than a path not taken, a forgotten alternative. There is, to be sure, a certain structural momentum that lies behind the urge to modernize. People have, on the whole, moved to cities rather than away from them, developed technologies rather than discarding them, accepted the fruits of industry rather than rejecting them, and witnessed the growth rather than the diminishment of state power. But that overall trend toward centralization has been far from uniform and, more importantly, it has never been accepted uncritically. Those who have promoted other forms of modernity, rooted in decentralization and community life, have been serious thinkers and persons of influence. They have shaped our world, if not always entirely as they would have hoped. We should then be no more surprised to find the quest for community to be an important feature of midcentury history than we should be to find it on the rise, as it indubitably is, today. Our challenge, now, is to understand our present moment as one rooted in the history of the twentieth century. To do that, we must allow ourselves to see the ways in which our past is comprised not just of the urge to modernize, but of the quest for community as well. When we relegate communitarianism and decentralism to the realm of the impossible—when we treat it as only utopian or as never having been previously tried—we not only blind ourselves to significant episodes in our own past. We also rob ourselves of the tools required to analyze such projects in their fullness. We are forced to learn old lessons anew and become, like the men and women of Santayana's proverb, ignorant of the past and doomed to repeat it.

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[25] Howard White, "Politicising Development?: The Role of Participation in the Activities of Aid Agencies," in *Foreign Aid: New Perspectives*, ed. Kanhaya L. Gupta (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), 112. White's investigations into midcentury community development were sparked by reading Lane E. Holdcroft, "The Rise and Fall of Community Development: 1950–1965," MS thesis, Michigan State University, 1976. In spite of his surprise upon discovering an earlier wave of community-driven development, White limits his comments on the matter to two pages.

[26] For reviews see Mansuri and Rao, "Community-Based and -Driven Development" and Jean-Philippe Platteau, "Monitoring Elite Capture in Community-Driven Development," *Development and Change* 35 (2004): 223–246.

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