

Sharing: The Integration of Intimate Economies

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RÉSUMÉ

Le partage est défini comme une forme de distribution économique sans calcul de ce qui est obtenu en retour; à l'intérieur d'un groupe social; et selon la structure des rôles du groupe par sexe, âge et capacité. C'est une forme de distribution prédominante au niveau de la bande et dans les ménages et autres "économies intimes" dans toutes les sociétés. Le partage est décrit comme (1) un écoulement "asymétrique", (2) ordinairement entre des gens essentiellement différents, (3) qui ont des relations internes communes, et (4) qui est fondé sur des liens émotionnels aussi bien que rationnels.

INTRODUCTION

The original Greek meaning of economy (*oikonomia*) was "household management." This concept of a dynamic material and labor system operated by the occupants of a house was usefully applied to larger scale phenomena, such as business enterprises, cities, and states. However, the economy of the household itself and the economic implications of sex and age roles are still insufficiently understood. This is an examination of the economic behavior that is most characteristic of households and other *intimate economies*, such as a group of hunters or a small commune. It is called *sharing* here and is seen as the most universal form of human economic behavior, distinct from and more fundamental than *reciprocity*.

The term "sharing" has long been used as a general term for common use or distribution. The present purpose is to sharpen the term for the analysis of the intimate economy and to place it in the context of theory in economic anthropology. Sharing is seen here as an integrative or coordinating process that makes the parts of the intimate economic system congruous and effective in concert. It is the allocation of economic goods and services without calculating returns, within an intimate social group, and patterned by the general role structure of that group. It is an economic behavior with a heavily weighted social dimension.

"Intimate" here means a social system which is small in scale and personal in quality, such that the members have extensive knowledge of each other, inter-personal sentiments have developed, and changing the identity of the persons would change their relationships. There is usually face-to-face interaction of the same people over an extended period of time. In an intimate economy the particular patterns of personal inter-dependency significantly influence the patterns of economic production and distribution.

Many social scientists have recognized the need for descriptions and analyses of intimate economies, but have found it very difficult because they are so "embedded" in other behavior. We have tended to concentrate instead on institutions that are more completely economic in character. This bias for obviously economic institutions has led us away from intimate economies and away from the simple hunting and gathering societies, where households and other intimate economies are the dominant economic institutions. Thus the foci of economic anthropology have been such spectacular phenomena as the trade rings of Papua, the Northwest Coast Indian potlatch, and peasant marketing. These orientations have distorted our theoretical assumptions toward thinking that reciprocity and redistribution are the simplest modes of economic allocation. When we review the literature on such things as the division of labor we realize that there are more fundamental bases for economic allocation.

Working from a background in small groups research in social psychology, Homans (1958:597) discussed "the view that interaction between persons is an exchange of goods, material and

non-material." At the psychological level, there is a pattern of rewards or reinforcements, an "operant conditioning", that goes on in interpersonal relations whereby certain collective values are acquired and exchanged, values that are mutually reinforcing to individuals in the social group. In process, there tends to be a proportionality in the giving and receiving of values, although these values are somewhat different for each individual. This "proportionality" itself takes many different forms through sharing systems, reciprocity systems, and redistribution systems.

Sahlins (1972) comes close to giving us a workable cultural theory for intimate economics when he writes that the concepts of "reciprocity" and "redistribution" can be applied to such things as the familial pooling of food. The weakness in his theory comes from overextending the concepts. Thus, he uses "generalized reciprocity" to describe even continuous one-way flows, which would be better considered as sharing while gift exchange should be seen as a syncretism of sharing and reciprocity. Also band organized societies can be demonstrated to be more integrated by sharing patterns than by reciprocative patterns. Reciprocity is a rationalistic, egalitarian exchange pattern that was probably born of band organized societies, but sharing is even more fundamental and was probably born of early hominid societies. The concept of redistribution was created to cover the large scale, centrally organized allocations that are an inherent part of chiefdoms and state societies.

SHARING AS AN ALLOCATION SYSTEM

Sharing is an allocation system that is closely related to man's biological nature. It is particularly dependent upon such bio-social attributes as the division of labor according to sex, age, and differing physical propensities among people who are intimately associated with each other over a long period of time. It is dependent upon such bio-social behaviors as the "mothering" of children by adults. It is dependent upon the emotional and sentimental bonds that develop between people: husband and wife, parents and children, friends, etc. Sharing is as much emotional as it is rational.

The unity of primitive production and distribution is much greater than in complex societies. There is less time and fewer steps, less space is involved, and the producers are much more often also the consumers. This tightness of the production-distribution-consumption pattern, the proximity and propinquity of events, the personal knowledge of the individuals involved of each other's participation in the process promotes sharing. Sharing is born out of social contexts with a high degree of mutual responsiveness, but it does not have to involve "conscious intent" (cf. Crook 1966).

Sharing patterns are largely unconscious to the society. Because of this the language and analysis of sharing is poorly developed. However, sharing is expressed in ethical systems, in religions, and in many social forms and rituals. Admonitions are made about such social values as generosity and charity without expectation of reward. *The economic roles of parents, husbands, wives, and children are usually framed as explicit social values in terms of sharing, rather than in terms of reciprocity or redistribution.* The ritual sharing of large game animals is usually made in sharing terms, rather than in reciprocity terms. In fact, meat tends to be shared not only among men, but among social carnivores generally, while food sharing is uncommon among herbivores and fruit-eaters, such as non-human primates. Some primitive societies inculcate a cultural compulsion to immediately give as "gifts" things which are asked for. Primitives often incorporate supernaturals into their sphere of sharing through ritual sharing. The Washo Indians, for example, often threw away a pinch of pinenut meal to feed a supernatural before dining themselves.

As a relationship between people, *sharing is usually an unequal exchange*, because some people are consistently in a better position to give. *Sharing is characterized by the attitude that each person will do what is appropriate, not by an expectation of equivalent return as in reciprocity.* The ideal of "from each according to his ability and to each according to his needs" draws from this mundane, household arrangement of sharing.

Such old ideas as primitives living in communism usually refer to the ideal of intimate sharing in bands. However, sharing

is a principle that cannot be applied very well to large integrated populations because it is socially based on intimate linkages and bio-social attributes. Thus, small enough size is an important factor in the viability of communes. They must be small enough to be sensitive to individual differences and to develop personal ties that override inequities. It can be argued that large scale yet still "personalized" sharing systems are being operated with the aid of computers, but these are new and relatively unstudied systems, mostly of universities, commercial cooperatives, and similar organizations. That is, the number of persons a human may be personal with is limited by the limited human brain. A much more intelligent computer brain can in certain ways be sensitive to the individual differences (and in this sense can be "personal") of a much larger number of people. Computer dating services, like intimate sharing systems, help us to integrate people in terms of abilities and needs, but the similarity seems only analogical.

Sharing is capable of infinite expansion as an *ideal* and it can have some integrative influence wherever it is held. However, its character changes so much as it is used in the design of well integrated society-wide systems, that it is better to say that in that "public" sector sharing is transformed into a redistributive system.

Redistribution has centricity, sharing does not. Redistribution is usually patterned by explicit rules or even laws as in taxes, corvee labor, or the military draft on the input side and the government programs for defense, public construction, and welfare on the output side. Redistribution is a public system of unequal, centralized allocation that draws some of its ideals and patterning from sharing. Redistribution is also based on the social advantages of such things as the specialization of labor, the development of storage facilities, and long range planning for large "social overhead" projects such as long distance trade, common defense, and public works.

The general flow of goods is asymmetrical and direct in sharing, symmetrical and direct in reciprocity, and asymmetrical and indirect (through a centrally organized flow) in redistribution. Reciprocity involves "sides" while sharing is a "within" relation-

ship. Reciprocity calls for the intellectual calculation of returns while sharing calls for the emotional acceptance of people in their complementary roles. Reciprocity (from the Latin *reciprocus*, "returning the same way") is exchange based on equal return or counteraction by each of two sides. Reciprocity is somewhat incompatible with intimate personal relations, although it can contribute to the integration of economic allocations in the intimate sector. It is just that sharing dominates as the transactional mode that integrates the *intimate* sector. Reciprocity dominates in the *private* sector of the wider society, while redistribution dominates in the *public* sector of the wider society. Reciprocity is (at least ideally) equal exchange based on the private advantages of the parties to a trade. Reciprocity in primitive societies provided patterns that were incorporated in the market as it evolved into a separate institution. Thus, the intellectual, calculating, explicit returns of reciprocity were preconditions of the market.

Money helps to depersonalize and concretize the ownership and movement of wealth. Money is thus highly compatible with impersonal calculation that is characteristic of reciprocity and markets. A market is a system of economic allocation in which the supplies, demands, and prices of goods and services fluctuate in a determinative relationship to each other. The market generally has little influence on the economic allocation mechanisms of the intimate sector, but does influence both the private and public sectors. Karl Polanyi was concerned that market systems would dominate society so much that they would integrate and then destroy intimate life by tying it to the market forces. The same concern can be held for too great an integration through redistributive systems, such as extreme socialism or communism, which tie intimate economies to the state-wide redistributive system.

We tend to think that the breakdown of sharing relationships in the intimate sector of life is a central sign of the dehumanization of a society. Thus, Alan Holmberg felt that the deculturated Siriono of Bolivia were so pressed by the problems of survival that they acquired an inhumane grasping selfishness in family relations. Colin Turnbull made a similar analysis of the IK of East Africa, although deteriorating ecological relationships were also seen as involved.

PRIMATE SHARING

Sharing is minimal among living primates and presumably this was also true of man's primate ancestors. The primate child is of course nursed, carried, and protected and the child's dependency on the mother is extreme and long in duration in man, compared to other primates. In several species the mother is assisted by juvenile and adult females who are without their own infants (called "aunts") (Kummer 1971:80). Mutual grooming is common, expressing both the personal affection of primates and their busy, semi-sexual, fondling habits (Jolly 1972). A primate group shares information about the presence of food, water, or the dangerous approach of predators. Then too, there is some division of labor by sex, age, and dominance. Mature males tend to lead a group in its foraging and to defend the group from predators. Dominance behavior helps to smooth the social functioning of the group, although dominant members may also "supplant" inferiors from the best feeding and sleeping places.

Antagonism toward individuals that are not members of the group is common, while individuals within the group, in a loose sense, share each other. The primate group has economic advantages for its members and some of these are comparable to human sharing. Human sharing, however, involves much more interdependence and cooperation than we find among the non-human primates. Sharing is "organic" in the sense of an integration of different parts, rather than a "mechanical" integration of like parts. Sharing is the economic reciprocal of the social "organic solidarity" within intimate economies. Cooperation and food-sharing, in fact, is more prevalent among the social carnivores than among the mainly vegetarian non-human primates. This has led some people to speculate that it was man's early adaptation to hunting that led him into more cooperation and food sharing (Pilbeam 1970:196-7).

Man diverged from the herb and fruit eating primate line as a social carnivore. Carnivorous mammals generally cooperate in food production and share in food distribution more than other mammals, largely because in the production stage animals can defend themselves and in the consumption stage are themselves

concentrated sources of food. Vegetable food is inert and scattered, requiring far less cooperation and sharing in its use. Cooperative hunting is in turn far more common than sharing the spoils of the hunt. There are important exceptions, however, of extreme sharing, particularly between adults and infants, in some species, such as the wild dog (Shaller and Lowther 1969). Human sharing behavior in intimate contexts apparently lies within the range of other social carnivores, although human sharing behaviors are far more variable through cultural patterning.

Pilbeam (1970:197) wrote that "The first result of the adoption of hunting would have been a considerable sharpening in the division of labor between males and females, with the males doing the hunting while females were responsible for gathering vegetable food and taking care of the largebrained, relatively helpless, highly malleable, hominid infant. It is possible, too, that permanent pair formation would also have evolved at about this time, each female having 'her' mate to provide for her while she could not do so herself." Sharing would then be emphasized due to this division of labor.

SHARING IN BAND SOCIETIES

Forde and Douglas (1956:333-336) summarized the primitive economy.

The economic unit is small and, save for occasional bartered specialties, does not transcend the population of a small village... The sharing of tools and of supplies to meet individual shortages are matters of moral obligation between kinsfolk and neighbors... Such skills as are practiced are known to everyone of the appropriate age and sex in the community... The household provides for its daily needs from its own production... A man does not normally earn his right to a particular share of output by contributing a particular piece of work. His claim to a share is based on his membership and on his status in the social group, household, camp, club, et cetera for which the work is being done. He works in order to fulfill his social obligations, to maintain his prestige and the status to which his sex, age, rank et cetera may entitle him.

Food processing greatly expanded the range of human foods over those of non-human primates, but this technology also brought a greater division of labor, with men usually hunting

and women doing the food processing, particularly of plants. Non-human primates gather food items which can be eaten immediately and involve relatively little variety, thus making the population more susceptible to ecological limitations. In the Upper Paleolithic and particularly the Mesolithic, humans learned to process foods by grinding, shredding, boiling, soaking, leaching, smoking, and so forth. Since these are usually women's tasks, women probably developed most of this and such accompanying technology as basketry and pottery. Men hunting large animals and women gathering and processing plants (and slow animals such as insects, turtles, and shellfish) come together to share their products at the hearth.

Within a household it is easy to share the stable home base with its firehearth, its food, its shelter, and its adaptive advantages over the continuously ranging primate life. *Familial sharing*, from a more biological base, flourishes alongside the *task group sharing* of cooperative hunting, the occasional cooperative fishing, and the rare cooperative plant gathering. Familial sharing is more related to distribution while task group sharing is more related to production.

There are adaptive parallels between the organization of social carnivores and band societies (Schaller and Lowther 1969). Men usually hunt in groups, rather than alone, usually because it is more successful. Through scouting, through driving game, through simultaneously attacking the same animal, through the use of nets and traps, and so forth the division of labor and the cooperation of labor makes the hunting of large animals more efficient. The Siriono hunt cooperatively with whistle signals, by driving game, and occasionally by shooting an arrow up to a hunter in a tall tree, who in turn shoots an even higher monkey (Holmberg 1969:53). For some large animals, such as large seals or whales, the carcass is almost impossible to handle alone. Groups are able to use their food more fully than individuals. Individuals alone must often leave much of their kill behind and thus probably lose to scavengers the parts of the animal which they cannot carry. Then too, in the competition for food between groups, especially of different species, the size and cooperation of the group is important. Within the species *there must be limits to the spheres of sharing for it to operate*. It is significant, for

example, that wild dogs are both extreme in sharing and extreme in defining the limits to the social sphere of that sharing. The adaptive limitations to sharing however, beyond the size and structure of human social groups, are usually repressed (as in infanticide or geronticide) or occur only in rare periods of starvation (when sharing spheres collapse to their most minimal size).

The actual time spent in subsistence food production by man in band societies was apparently about the same for most social carnivores. Schaller and Lowther (1969:329) wrote that "when prey is fairly plentiful, the various predators can satisfy their food requirements by being active for only 1/6 of the day. This figure is similar to the 2 to 4 hours of subsistence effort per day reported as being required by hunting peoples such as the Bushmen and Australian aborigines of Arnhem Land." The impression from my own research on aboriginal Washo society is that their daily hours of subsistence effort per se would be similar. However, these band societies were still rather obsessed with food. They were involved with such things as processing the foods for final consumption, moving the camp to areas of better hunting and gathering, carrying out the religious rituals that ensure an abundance of food, and carrying out the social rituals that will maintain a social structure that will equitably distribute food.

Apparently as a cultural means to reduce conflict, hunting societies usually have a way of designating a nominal owner of large game that are hunted cooperatively. This "ownership" is only ritualistic and nominal because in each case the animal is completely shared. This nominal owner is the first person to see the animal among the Central Eskimo, the first person to inflict a wound on the animal among the Copper Eskimo, the first person to inflict a serious wound among the Andamanese, the person who kills the animal among the White Knife Shoshoni, and the person who owns the projectile that kills the animal among the Bushmen (Dowling 1968).

Sharing has probably been the basic form of economic distribution in hominid societies for several hundred thousand years. It is based in human biological behaviors, flourishes under the adaptations to hunting, and becomes a powerful force for social

solidarity between communities. Marriage, incest prohibitions, kinship systems, etc. modulate the sharing patterns. In fact, marriage in primitive societies is a sharing contract, asymmetrical, an unequal exchange of incomparables. A "conjugal solidarity" comes through the sharing that is inherent in the sexual division of labor.

The primary means of economic distribution in band societies is sharing because their intimate economies are largely self-sufficient and without significant tribal-wide integration. Band societies are economically egalitarian. Individual households are usually free to shift their residence according to the availability of resources. Usually a few households form a loose community or "band" and several bands form a "linguistic tribe", that is, a society that speaks one language and has a collective ideology and sentiment of belonging together but lacks much in the way of political or economic integration as a tribe. Band economies generate very little trade between communities or between societies.

VARIATIONS IN BAND SHARING

I have emphasized the common features of sharing in band societies, but these societies of course differed from each other. It appears from the ethnographic literature that Kung Bushmen (Marshall 1961), Bambuti Pygmies (Turnbull 1963), and Eskimo (Spencer 1959, Damas 1968) had an extreme emphasis on sharing; Andaman Islanders (Radcliffe-Brown 1958), Australians (Meggitt 1962), Washo (Price 1968), and Kaingáng (Henry 1964) had moderate sharing; and the Siriono (Holmberg 1969) had only weak sharing. Cohen (1961) did a cross-cultural study of food sharing and found that different degrees of sharing reflected different kinds of social and economic systems. He also found a significant decrease in sharing correlated with increased spacial distance between households.

At the least there is a great range of intensities of sharing among band societies. Turnbull (1963) writes of the extreme sharing of the Bambuti Pygmies. "In essence the bonds that make two brothers hunt together and share their food are not

much greater than those that obtain between a member of a band and a visiting Pygmy, even if he is totally unrelated. Any adult male is a father to any child; any woman a mother. They expect the same help and respect from all children and they owe the same responsibilities toward them." The Eskimo have very similar practices.

Food sharing intensifies in many societies in conditions of scarcity, while in others the sharing spheres become more limited and more autonomous. The Washo reported that there were starvation (*biša-baša*) times, particularly in lean winters, when the household would hide its food even from close relatives. The Siriono had sharing rules, but it appears that these were permanently narrowed by conditions of very frequent scarcity. Societies generally find ways to cut off the lazy or the stingy man from participating in a sharing sphere, usually by ostracism. Many North American Indian band societies, such as the Eskimo and the Washo, even institutionalized the abandonment of old nonproducers.

Henry (1964:99-101) described sharing among the nomadic hunting Kaingáng of Brazil. "In times of hunger the meat is divided among the whole group... When they are hungry, close relatives simply come and sit down where there is food... to refuse food is the most frightful sin the Kaingáng can imagine... property arrangements are not a matter of checks and balances... Their understanding of reciprocity is in terms of lifelong symbiosis, not in terms of balanced exchanges. No accounts are kept, but in the back of his mind each man knows who has been systematically helpful to him and who not."

Damas (1968:115) pointed out the systematic diversity in specific sharing patterns even among adjacent central Canadian Eskimo societies. "Among the Copper Eskimo, individual nuclear family heads formed partnerships which determined the sharing of specific parts of the seal. The network of distributions was extended in the area of consumption by the practice of communal eating on a village-wide basis." The Copper Eskimo had small nuclear families so there was an economic adjustment for the broader community through highly structured sharing and communal eating.

The Netsilik Eskimo also had seal-sharing partnerships, but in their society the meat became the property of the *extended* family. In this case the men and women ate separately in adjoining domes of the family's snowhouse compound. Since the extended family acted as a pool of resources there was less need for communal eating.

Among the Iglulik Eskimo the catch was distributed among the commensal units of the entire local community by a community leader. Technically, this approaches "redistribution" in its structure, but since the scale of goods is small, the distribution is immediate, and the distributor does not control an accumulated surplus it perhaps should be thought of as just a centrally allocated form of sharing.¹ The commensal units were variable, expedient, and ranged in size from a hunter who ate alone, the nuclear family, and the extended family. In this case seal-sharing partnerships and communal eating were unnecessary because of the community-wide distribution. Each of these three quite different forms of food sharing is integrated to other specific cultural features of community life in societies with nearly identical ecological and subsistence patterns.

THE WASHO INDIANS: A CASE STUDY IN BAND SHARING

The Washo Indians lived in the central Sierra Nevada around Lake Tahoe and the valleys immediately east of the mountains. They were culturally similar to the Western Shoshoni and Northern Paiute, except that the Washo were in a slightly richer environment. This richer environment gave the Washo a higher population density than most of the Great Basin Shoshoneans (1,500 persons in 4,000 square miles for 2.7 sq. miles per person, general Great Basin ca. 15 sq. mi. per person). They had rich spear fishing grounds on the streams that led into Lake Tahoe and abundant stands of pinenut trees in the hills. Individual households owned pinenut groves, a rare phenomenon for a band society. Washo techniques for gathering and storing pinenuts, in strips and the construction of great caches, gave

¹ The Washo have a similar custom for distributing meat during their pinenut festival.

them a relatively large and stable production of food. The household of a family and relatives in a single winter house was the basic socioeconomic unit of society.

Division of labor within the household called for the women to gather plants, cook, make baskets, and tend the children. The men hunted, carried water, gathered firewood, prepared skins, and made most of the clothing, fibres, cords, rabbit skin blankets, rabbit nets, and hunting and fishing gear. Men and women both gathered pinenuts, fished, and worked in the construction of houses, although their customary tasks were different in these cooperative activities. With old age the more sedentary crafts, such as basketry for women and net making for men, were emphasized.

Sharing (*mibEšigihi*) was practiced to some degree in every level of Washo social organization, decreasing as kinship and residence distances increased. The person who would not share with others of the same household, or who was generally stingy (*hutE tiki*) would not be included in the networks of sharing and would be "talked out" of his household. *Familial sharing*, characterized by distribution resulting from the division of labor by sex and age, accounted for roughly three fourths of all Washo economic distribution. This includes the production consumed immediately by the producer.

Older people who became a burden on the household because of blindness or other disabilities were deserted and left to die. A corollary to this was the belief that persons acquired often dangerous supernatural powers with age. Thus well intentioned gifts from grandparents to grandchildren may be inadvertently harmful. Non-producing old people and children were resented for their supposedly great appetites and in practice probably ate less than the others. Old people and children were given the boiling stones and stirring sticks to lick off the cooked meal or inferior food such as rabbit brains. In times of hunger whole households without food might move in with relatives or even unrelated neighbors. The food was shared but the two groups would cook separately.

Task group sharing among the Washo occurred in connection with the breakdown of products that resulted from efforts of hunting, fishing, and gathering parties that were larger than the

household. Mere presence with the party was generally sufficient to receive an equal share. Goods were usually divided equally among all adult members of the task group. The meat of a single deer shot by a party of hunters was divided equally, regardless of whose arrow actually brought the deer down. Variations were present in some divisions, depending on such things as ownership of a rabbit net or shamanistic powers in antelope drives.

Winter communal drives for rabbits provided most of the skins used in blankets and a great deal of meat. Several individually owned nets were tied together during the drive to form a single net, about 100 yards long. The net owner would collect the rabbits that got tangled in his section of the combined nets. The drivers would receive only those rabbits they killed before they reached the nets, but the drivers usually belonged to a household that had a net. When rabbits were abundant, surpluses were rapidly circulated out to anyone who needed them, in part because catching rabbits was the easiest part of making rabbit skin robes.

The Washo had eight main forms of economic distribution that can be arranged along a primary-secondary continuum of social distance (Price 1962:37-38) "*Primary* refers to relations between people with common goals and relations that are ends in themselves, intrinsically valued, 'personal' in that the identity of the individuals cannot be changed without disturbing the relationship, 'inclusive' in that the range of involvement of the relationship is wide, and 'spontaneous' in being relatively uninhibited... Secondary relations are... extrinsic, impersonal, exclusive, and inhibited... (1) ceremonial disposal, (2) familial sharing, (3) task group sharing, (4) gift and ceremonial exchange, (5) feasts, (6) payment for services, (7) gambling, and (8) trade." It is possible to show a correlation between social distance and the replacement of sharing by reciprocity with increases in such features as expectation of returns, explicitness of returns, the negotiation of returns, and the rapidity of returns.

RECIPROCITY, REDISTRIBUTION, AND MARKETS

Fort the Trobriand Islanders, Malinowski (1961:177-191) gave a "list of Gifts, Payments, and Commercial Transactions":

(1) pure gifts, (2) customary payments, (3) payment for services rendered, (4) gifts returned in equivalent form, (5) exchange of material goods against privileges, titles, and non-material possessions, (6) ceremonial barter with deferred payment, and (7) trade, pure and simple. He then showed the particular correspondence between these forms of economic distribution and important social relations within the Trobriand society. The Trobriand Islanders are a relatively complex society which had elaborated economic systems outside of the household. Thus, Malinowski pays very little attention to the economic system *within* the household.

He (1921:8) emphasized that economic obligations, dues, and tributes formed a network that corresponded to the social network. Thus the "rules of kinship and relationship-in-law... involve a very complex redistribution of garden produce, resulting in a state of things in which everybody is working for somebody else. ...it enmeshes the whole community into a network of reciprocal obligations and dues, one constant flow of gifts and counter-gift... By various channels, by dues and tributes, and especially through the effect of polygamy, with its resulting obligations of his relative-in-law, about 30 per cent of the whole food production of his district finds its way into the large, finely-decorated yam houses of the chief."

We have come to refer to the first type of transaction, such as *between* symmetrical parts of a kinship system, as *reciprocity* and the second type of transaction such as that which is *centrally* pooled for the chief, as *redistribution*. Malinowski was describing a relatively complex society without a strong sharing ethic. If he had lived among the Bushmen instead he probably would have perceived primitive society as operating by sharing rather than reciprocity.

Polanyi (1957) took Malinowski's ideas about the structural relationships between social and economic systems in developing his theories. He then analyzed *reciprocity*, *redistribution*, and *market exchange* as distinct principles of economic integration. Dalton, in the Introduction to a collection of Polanyi's essays (1968) wrote that "Reciprocity and redistribution are best regarded as socio-economic transactional modes... Market ex-

change transactions differ because they are not expressions of social obligation, which makes them seem especially 'economic.'” Dalton said that certain kinds of underlying social relationships are “expressed” by transactional modes. Reciprocity expresses friendship, kinship, status, and hierarchy. Redistribution expresses political or religious affiliation. Market exchange, according to Dalton, does not express social relationships. Reciprocity assumes symmetrically organized groupings; redistribution is dependent upon centrality in the group; and exchange, in order to produce integration, requires a system of price-making markets.

Malinowski, Polanyi, and Dalton tended to treat these forms of economic allocation in structural-functional ways. The parts of the system were described, shown to have certain articulations with each other, and then shown to operate in particular ways. The evolutionary implications in the theory were played down. The “social” forms in the *early* periods were seen as prior to and determinative of the “economic” forms. Polanyi (1957:256) wrote that “forms of integration do not represent ‘stages’ of development. No sequence in time is implied.” Then he turned around and gave an evolutionary statement: “Tribal societies practice reciprocity, while archaic societies are predominantly redistributive, though to some extent they may allow room for (market) exchange.” This last sentence was a statement about the evolution of these forms, but it was not developed. Instead, Polanyi dwelt on the modern rise and decline of the market system, which he saw as determining social forms. “Polanyi argues that Marx was right for laissez-faire industrial capitalism... But Marx was wrong in generalizing economic determination of social organization to early and primitive societies.” (Dalton 1968:xvi-xvii).

Reciprocity, redistribution, and the market were all seen as socially integrative transactional modes. However, according to Polanyi, the market dominates as the major mechanism of social integration only in certain modern market societies. Others have pointed out a corollary to this, that reciprocity may be dominant in some simple societies (such as tribes) and that redistribution may be dominant in some intermediate societies (such as chiefdoms). This, then is the beginning of an evolutionary theory. Also, it raises the question of the extent to which patterns of

economic integration have determined the social forms of simple societies.

The economic tasks of getting a living seem to have been even more central to the determination of social forms in simple subsistence societies than in complex, affluent societies. This is because intimate economies were the predominate ones in primitive societies, material exchanges at the intimate level required more diffuse and complete social interaction, and with less wealth to distribute the social concern over its distribution was more intensive. Thus, for example, an important function of primitive kinship systems was to bring inter-personal regularity into the economic tasks of getting a living. Kinship systems seem in origin to be a by-product of the economic and political organizations of people although they acquire sentimental, ideological, and game-like qualities that lead to the maintenance and elaboration of them in more of their own terms.

Band organization is related to personally knowing people within limited territorial groupings, but true tribes achieve an economic integration through reciprocative institutions that becomes removed from limited territorial groups by linking people according to principles, rather than personal knowledge and inter-dependency. This is the beginning of customary codes to regulate relations between strangers. Tribes develop associations that are not territorially based (called "sodalities") and draw their membership from several different residential groups within the tribe. These "pan-tribal sodalities", such as clans, warrior's associations, curing associations, etc., collectively provide some tribal-wide economic integration. The parts of the society become so coordinated that the society as a whole is capable of some concerted action, such as large scale hunting or a rapid response to attack from outside. Band society is aware of its parts, but tribal society goes beyond this and is so organized that it can use its parts in common causes.

Along with the impersonal principles of sodality organization, reciprocity becomes important in tribal society. Reciprocity served to integrate the economic behavior between households, between communities, and between societies in a more effective way than sharing could. Bands and tribes are egalitarian societies that

developed the reciprocal principle that things should be equal in exchanges beyond the intimate sphere. This principle of equivalence underlies the later development of the market system. Redistribution emerges in the socially ranked and politically centralized chiefdoms, emphasizes unequal exchange for the public good, and evolves into the bureaucratic administration of part of the economy. In terms of dominant modes of economic allocation, the evolution of economy has been sharing in early hominid societies and bands, reciprocity in tribes, and redistribution in chiefdom. State societies continue all three modes: sharing in intimate economies, exemplified by the modern household; reciprocity in private economies, especially in the development of a market system; and redistribution in public economies, particularly in the governmental administration of the economy through taxation and government spending.

GIFTS

Even the simplest band societies gave explicit gifts, beyond sharing and without the pressure for returns that was part of barter and trade. Gift giving is probably universal among known societies and thus very early in development. Gifts seem to be an extension of sharing patterns beyond the ordinary social contexts of sharing. Thus food, which is usually shared, is very often given as a minor gift to people who are beyond the usual sphere of sharing. In fact, a kind of ritual sharing of food, or drink, or tobacco seems to be a crucial element in social intercourse. It is a way of saying "Let us behave as if we were of the same sharing sphere or "Make yourself at home".

Firth (1970:18) said "In England some people who will accept a cigarette from a friend without a thought, insist on paying for a postage stamp, a curious kind of code. Now both are of small value. What is the criterion of difference?... A gift of a cigarette is in a way an invitation to an act of social communion, whereas a gift of a stamp can lead to only a physical and technical act, that of posting a letter".

Instead of shaking hands or bowing when they greeted the early explorers, the Washo Indians immediately offered them

pinenuts and then squatted down and began to eat pinenuts. In our more chemically sophisticated culture, we offer stimulants such as tea, coffee, and tobacco for polite conversation and depressants such as alcoholic beverages for more uninhibited occasions. Gift exchange draws both the principle of sharing and the principle of reciprocity, with quite a wide continuum of the expectations of returns. There is also a continuum involved in the kinds of things which tend to be shared to the things which tend to move as gifts or bartered objects: subsistence plant foods; then the meat of large animals; then the use of tools or equipment; and finally durable objects generally. Thus, there are often social contexts in which a person would *share* food, *loan* his tools, and *give a gift* of other durable objects. It is then incumbent on the receiver to not reciprocate the food (which would insult the sharer), to return the same tools, and to return the gift in roughly equivalent value at a somewhat later time and usually in a different form.

Mauss (1954) was impressed by the reciprocal character of gift giving, the idea that what is posed at the moment as a free gift in fact carries an obligation to return. He felt that gifts were "social prestations" between social groups, even though individuals did the exchanging. He claimed that no matter how freely a gift has been given and no matter how unsought it may be, it always carries an obligation of equivalent or greater return that can be ignored only with social disapproval and loss of prestige.

Mauss was too simplistic. Every society has many kinds of gifts, with various connotations about the expectations of return. For example, the Northwest Coast Indians were very involved in gift exchanges and thus had a rich language about them. The Puyallup-Nisqually of Puget Sound had words for the following: (1) to give a gift according to the relative prestige between donor and recipient, (2) to give a gift to assuage a strained relationship, (3) to give a gift to an affinal relative, (4) to give property at a ceremony and not expect any return, (5) to give property at a ceremony and not expect a return but receive one anyway (Smith 1940:146-150).

A rough line between sharing and giving can be drawn in terms of many features. Shares tend to be accepted without comment or expressions of gratitude while gifts involve more social

formality. While patterns of hospitality extend sharing to outsiders for a short period of time, long term visitors are expected to participate in the group's economic activities and to become part of the sharing circle. Shares should not be reciprocated while gifts should be. Gifts carry specialized social messages while sharing says simply that the sharer is playing his appropriate role as a member of a group.

MODERN STATES

The economic system of modern states are highly elaborated beyond the intimate spheres with a reciprocal market system and a governmentally administered redistribution system. However, sharing is still with us and we particularly enjoy that kind of economy: familial sharing, neighborhood sharing, or sharing within a close-knit ethnic or church group. We enjoy those situations in which we can give and receive largely without calculations. In sharing there is often an open stock or store of something that can be drawn on as needed by any member of the sharing circle. In sharing there is a low level of formality or protocol and little need to acknowledge what is being contributed or taken.

In the modern household the father may be perceived as the only economic producer, the "bread winner", and the household as a consumption unit rather than both a producing and a consuming unit. However, this is a fiction that arises when the market economy is so dominant as to be seen as the only economy. The wife and children are producers primarily within the household economy so their economic roles have been ignored and not appreciated.

A food sharing ritual was described for a Zapotec-mestizo town in Oaxaca, Mexico by Kearney (1970:32). "In Intepeji when a guest enters a home, a representative of the host family offers him something to eat or drink which he will then decline until he is eventually coaxed, or literally forced, to accept. Outside of the home similar coercions are also applied to induce reluctant individuals to accept alcohol." Since the Intepejanos have a "basic food anxiety" this generosity is not materially rational. In discuss-

ing sharing, Kearney mentions a "commensualist" theory, that communal eating has a cohesive social function, and a "genetic" theory, that eating in the presence of others has a magical benefit to oneself. He also discusses explanations from the local ethnography: all drink alcoholic beverages so that no one will be in a position to take advantage of the other drinkers, drinking as an expression of masculine honor, and the presentation of food and drink as a disguised attack on an unwilling recipient. He does not reject these as influences, but for a central explanation of the specific form of the local custom he presents a theory involving a system of self-defense from envy, hostility, and witchcraft.

This Zapotec case is one of "extended" rather than "primary" sharing (Also see Beals 1970). That is, sharing beyond the intimate economy is an *extension* of a basic model of behavior. The Zapotec food sharing ritual is applied to people outside, rather than inside, the household. Because it is an extension of sharing it is not as integrated by a continuing feed-back between such bio-social dependencies as the division of labor by sex. Even the psychological reinforcement of sharing behaviors occurs primarily in continuing intimate social contents (Cohen 1961). Extended sharing is more integrated by systems outside of the economy proper, such as ideological conceptions of "limited good" and social prestige, than the primary sharing of the intimate economy. Extended sharing is thus much more variable in form than primary sharing. Also the Zapotec are a peasantry within a state society so that the intimate economies of their households or cooperative work groups operate more than in simple societies as part of a larger economic system and are significantly influenced by reciprocal, redistributive, and market subsystems. Still, this Zapotec food ritual is more influenced by the appropriate roles of sharing between host and guest than by reciprocity calculations. We do not deny that some highly calculated reciprocity arrangements, even in primitive societies, are given a social façade of sharing-like appearances, but then people also know the differences.

Sharing now seems to be weakening in the households of modern industrial states because of this penetration of outside economic forces into the household and other forces that weaken familial interdependency and the sexual division of labor. Public

institutions such as schools and churches and private institutions such as clubs have taken many traditional functions away from families, thus displacing the reasons behind the sexual division of labor. The more that familial functions are diminished and the husband and wife become equally capable in the same roles the more the form of their economic solidarity shifts from the stronger organic integration to the weaker mechanical integration. Marriage thus tends to lose the quality of sharing and traditional conjugal solidarity, which was traditionally based on the performance of inherently different roles, becomes a weaker reciprocity contract. This does not mean that sharing will disappear. It is still possible for sharing to be based on love or friendship alone. For example, MacAndrew and Edgerton (1973:135) wrote that sharing was the most noteworthy feature in the close friendship that they document of two institutionalized mentally retarded men. This is a case of sharing based purely on friendship, without a division of labor, without sexual or material factors, and without calculating ends other than friendship. To the extent that marriages and households diminish in importance we can expect to see an elaboration of other arrangements where intimate social tolerance, emotional acceptance, interdependency, and so forth are expressed through sharing.

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