
CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY

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Abstract: “Citizenship” is a complex concept. It is usually considered as an individual’s relationship to a nation-state, the duties, obligations and rights that come with residence in a given polity. However, historically, “citizenship” was concerned with the community or city state, the word (from *civis*) implies this. This paper argues that this local vision of the concept is still vitally important and one’s emotional links to larger institution are usually stronger with the local community than with the nation, especially in countries such as Brazil where national feelings were never strong.

Keywords: citizenship, community, identity, police.

Resumo: Cidadania é um conceito complexo. É normalmente considerada em termos da relação entre um indivíduo e a nação-estado, os deveres e obrigações que acompanham a residência numa determinada unidade política. Historicamente, no entanto, a cidadania dizia respeito à comunidade ou à cidade-nação. A própria palavra (oriunda de *civis*) tem estas implicações. Neste artigo sugerimos que esta visão local do conceito ainda é de suma importância e que os vínculos de um indivíduo com sua comunidade local são em geral mais fortes do que seus vínculos com a nação, especialmente em países como o Brasil onde o sentimento nacional nunca foi forte.

Palavras-chave: cidadania, comunidade, identidade, polícia.

States and communities

“Citizenship” is an illusive concept. By convention it means association with a state, or enjoying the protections of the power of a state, classically a city-state, as the word itself implies. But citizenship, in this sense, is a two way street, it implies services to the state along with its protection. In the Greek, and Roman, city-state, the “Free” or “Sovereign” citizen – and strangers, slaves, women and children were not citizens – not only dealt directly

with the government but was obliged, by virtue of his citizenship, to serve in that government and in its military. “[T]he citizen’s personal contacts were directly with the government – the legislators, the executive, the courts – because there was no mediating bureaucracy.” (Finley, 1991, p. 8). The same author notes:

The ambiguity of the word *demos* is directly relevant: on the one hand, it meant the citizen-body as a whole, as the opening words of the formal decrees of a democratic Greek assembly – ‘the *demos* has decided’; on the other hand, it meant the common people, the many, the poor, ... the Latin *populus* had the same double connotation. (Finley, 1991, p. 1-2).

The concept of citizen became especially important in Roman times, when the Republican government was (formally) the citizens – the adult males in military cohorts – assembled annually to elect their officials. Further, in keeping with the ancient concept of citizenship all citizens – and only citizens – could be elected to the governing offices. This gave the idea of Roman Citizenship, — *Civis Romanus sum* – an exceptional force, even when it was very true in the Republic, as in the Empire, that not all citizens were equal.¹ The rich, despite considerable constitutional efforts on the part of the common citizens, were always favored by the state and government. According to Michael Grant (1992, p. 114), full citizenship, even for the sons of slaves, “was made possible, in part – and its limitations, too were imposed – by the Roman clientele system, in which the citizen world was divided between patrons and their clients, who owed each other mutual obligations”. As we can see the Latin, and Mediterranean, World has not changed all that much, patronage and clientage is still a dominant form of organization in Italy and Latin America.²

¹ In Rome from the very earliest times, the wealthy had much more say in government than the poor. Even in the ancient Roman assembly, where voting was by military centuries, wealthier citizens, those who could afford their own armor, or the equestrian class, who could afford to maintain horses, had many times the voting power than the poor plebes, or proles, who had only their physical selves to give to the army. The important element, was that all citizens felt at least some *coniaci*, through voting, with the vast apparatus of the state and army, a feeling which was very important in a society which depended for its existence on the fighting dedication of its soldiers. As Andreski (1968) noted Republics are often dangerous to their neighbors.

² The protection of Roman citizenship is noted in the New Testament (Acts 16) when St. Paul uses his citizenship to protect himself from punishment by the authorities of Philippi during his mission activities

The Greek city-state, the *polis*, was at once a city and primary face to face community (if not an equalitarian one), as well as a state, the social, political, economic and legal center of life for its ‘citizens’ – the adult, free born males. The independent city state seems to be one of the more stable forms of community life. It can be found all over the world, from China, Mexico and Europe. From its classical beginning in Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean, it developed into the multiple cities of Italy and Northern Europe, in Germany and Scandinavia, during the middle ages. In late medieval Europe, most of the population was made up of peasants, serfs, tied to the estates of the military nobility. At the same time, being a freeman of an independent, defended, city [city – citizen, burg – burgher, cité – citoyen, cidade – cidadão] implied much greater freedom through general involvement with the society, economy, law and politics of the city-state (Molho; Raaflaub; Emlen, 1991; Kitto, 1991; Osborne, 1987).

I argue here that the association of a ‘citizen’ with ‘his’ city is a very different kind of experience than that of one with the modern state. ‘Citizenship’ is much more than just a passive artifact of location of birth, but an element of a person’s life and personal identity. The emotional links that are created by long-standing, day-by-day and face-to-face engagement with specific individuals in a known space are much more powerful and ‘real’ than the largely symbolic ties that one has with a ‘country’ or ‘nation’. The classical distinction that sociologists make between ‘primary’ groups – those based upon close face-to-face interaction – and other social forms is important here (see Merton; Broom; Cottrell, 1959, p. 9-11). Primary groups are considered to be much more powerfully motivated and much stronger than others. This is as important in the theory of warfare as it is in the theory of law (see Keegan, 1977, p. 46-54; and Bayley, 1985, p. 131). Most people today are ‘citizens’ of several different kinds of organizations beyond their respective ‘countries’, from superpowers to local towns and villages in a nested series of institutions which determine one’s identity. This is seen in the constant recreation

(Wells, 1984, p. 154). But, “In the second century AD ... that equality became eroded, and the bridge virtually destroyed. ... these old civic distinction between roman citizens and the rest were being replaced by another distinction altogether. This perpetuated the division of the community into two main groups, to which the law gave entirely separate treatments. The superior class (*honestiores*) included senators, knights, landowners, soldiers, civil servants, and town councilors... Everyone else belonged to the lower category (*humiliores*), who possessed inferior legal rights and incurred heavier penalties in the courts.” (Grant, 1992, p. 78).

of community by people everywhere seeking to find support and protection among their neighbors, friends, kin and associates. Historically one belonged to kinship groups, clans and extended families, as well as 'localities' or 'communities' which gave one status with other institutions, and furnished the basic social defense in society. Legal protection, as it were, from outsiders.

I also believe that an individual's association ('citizenship') with his/her local primary community is more significant and stronger than his association with a symbolic organization.³ In other words, the links with community are stronger than one's links with that of a 'country' or 'nation'. Feelings of nationalism are emotions or feelings for specific communities rather than any abstract ideal. In the same way, emotionally loaded words such as 'father', 'mother', 'sister', 'home' or 'neighborhood' bring images of specific real individuals or places and the respective feelings associated with them. All art and all propaganda plays upon these kinds of emotional experience.⁴

The emotions created by being raised and living in a 'community', 'family' or 'neighborhood' are strong ones, based upon very real and specific spatial memories, and in anthropology the word "community" is used as a kind of catch-all term for many of these institutions. Anthropological convention defines 'community' as being small, face-to-face equalitarian groups, a farming or peasant village, for example (Redfield, 1960). We also think of cities as huge, impersonal bureaucratic organizations, where few people know anyone besides their immediate kin, and work mates. This is the classic division made by Tönnies of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* in 1887 (Tönnies, 1957). But this division, as shown above, seems to me to be too limiting. I would argue that there are intermediate forms which are both communities and states, and have great historical and contemporary relevance. The city-state offers an intermediate form, a larger scale 'community' with definite hierarchy and status differences, but one which is still a kind of primary group, where most people know most people face-to-face and everyone knows the leaders of the

³ The Imperial meaning of the word, that is classes of citizenship, can be seen in the importance that American citizenship holds today in many parts of the world. To cite Lord Palmerslon, 1850, "I therefore, fearlessly challenge the verdict which this House ... is to give ... whether, as the Roman, in days of old, held himself free from indignity, when he could say *Civis Romanus sum*; so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong". (House of Commons debate).

⁴ Brazilian Portuguese has several words for forms of home place, (*casa, rincón, lar, terreiro*), as does English: (hearth, home, sod, heath, cradle, etc., as well as 'community/comunidade')

community, even if they are of a known superior status and rank. As Finlay notes above, a citizen in Classical Greece dealt directly with government officials in person, with no intervening bureaucracy. Although the city-state is not egalitarian, it is tightly knit, tied together by friendship, patronage, and charity as well as, frequently, political mechanisms through which the average citizen feels some kind of participation in the economics and politics of the community.⁵ In other words, the leadership of the city state could be strongly legitimate and factions often unite when confronted by a common enemy. The political power of this form of organization is, I think, shown by its durability through time. Cities endure and seem to form a “natural” type of community with loyalties created through space and time to a specific place and people.⁶

But with the expansion of modern forms of politics into states and superstates the close identification of the individual with his town or village is weakened, especially in large urban aggregations. In the modern structure, as noted by many writers from Tönnies to Weber (1968) to Wirth (1938) the individual no longer deals directly with his leaders but rather with members of a professional bureaucracy who may be helpful and personal, but increasingly, with limited resources and growing demands for services, become overworked and harassed and today are frequently replaced by recordings. I think that it is hard to identify with a bureaucracy and even in modern society one still identifies with specific people, with friends, neighbours, and groups where one lives and works, even if these are no longer as tightly unified as in the past. In other words, the spatial element is still important, in the forms of neighbourhoods, houses, downtown's, etc. and the elements of place which make up an historical city.⁷

⁵ Such mechanisms were the complex political systems of the military republics of Greece, Rome and later Italian cities (Machiavelli, 1979. *The Prince*: p. 77-166: and *The Art of War*, Book 1, p. 480-507), the ‘Cargos’ or invited participation in government in the Maya cities. (Sharer, 1994, p. 508-510) the extended family organizations of all of these (see Molho; Raaflaub; Emlen, 1991 and above).

⁶ My interest in the city-state come, interestingly, from my own fieldwork in a small city in Southern Brazil, Cunha, population 8,000, where it was clear to me that everyone knew everyone else, government officials, political and religious leaders were on the streets every day and were for the most part very accessible, if paternalistic. Despite endless political fights and factions, the majority of the people seemed to feel great affection for the place. Even when they had left the region for economic reasons they often returned for local festivals and to visit relatives.

⁷ Many modern cities create identity and feelings toward place, a civic feeling, although this is stronger in older and more stable cities, such as New York, Montreal and Rio de Janeiro than in newer and more mobile ones such as Toronto and São Paulo. I believe that the city of Porto Alegre had a considerable civic sense although this varied due to social class. The upper class citizens associated with the center

Nation states

Most modern states, however, are not city-states. While the latter can still be found all over the world (in Italy, Germany, Greece, China, India, Brazil, Mexico [*patria chica*] and innumerable other places) and still has great social and local political importance, the locus of central economic, legal and military power has shifted to another model of the state, the Nation-State. This has more recent historical roots. The older great states and empires, Chinese, Roman, British, Spanish, Ottoman, were basically aggregations of city states with an overarching bureaucracy, usually military, but no strong links of the ruling groups with the people (China with its mandarin system may have been a partial exception). The Nation-State, however, attempts to reestablish such links, which gives it great potential strength, but also certain limitations. While it is not exclusively a European phenomenon (Japan is a notable case) it is in Europe in the last two or three centuries that it has developed most fully in theory and practice. England, Portugal, France and Prussia all molded themselves into centralized forces in the last five centuries, systematically crushing opposition (including rival city states) and differences while creating “imagined communities” (Anderson, 1991) on an enormous scale with ability to enforce social compliance through centralized systems of law, culture and education. The Nation State is able to unify organization of political and military power with the forces of nationalism and cultural ethnocentrism in a political entity of vast potential power (see Clausewitz, 1976; Paret, 1976).

Nation State leaders have to create symbolic ties to communities in order to motivate their people to support them. In consequence in the process of nation building the aggregated rival city states were frequently repressed, though, as seen in many parts of contemporary Europe, not destroyed. The “Nation” of a Nation-State frequently represented the dominant central city (Rome – Italy; Madrid – Spain; Paris – France; Berlin – Germany) and not the country as a whole. I suspect that often an individual’s ‘love’ for his country, especially in such matters as war and taxes, is more of a feeling for a specific

and its institutions, clubs and businesses, the middle class with shopping centers (*shoppings*), work places, neighborhoods and churches while the poor formed neighborhood communities of their peers. In a Brazilian city, moreover, home (*casa*) and kinship was important for all (see DaMatta, 1991, p. 68-72).

place and community, kin, friends, neighbors, and territory, displaced upon a larger setting. Benedict Anderson's felicitous phrase "Imagined Communities" (1983) is the relevant one here.

The emotional power of nationalism was first harnessed by the leaders of the French Revolution, especially Napoleon. In a sense the French were trying to revive this kind of direct governmental link of the city state after the revolution when they revived the word *Citoyen* to reflect equal membership in the nation-state with implied rights and duties to that state. The symbolism of the destruction of classes and the building of an egalitarian nation was so powerful that Revolutionary France nearly conquered the rest of Europe, and in fact the military force of the European states was so great that they dominated most of the world until the latter part of this century (Andreski, 1968; McNeill, 1982).

Yet the Nation State is in many ways an imaginary entity. It lacks the "natural" organization of the city state which is a physical unity with many face to face elements, where class organization is mitigated by the direct participation of citizens and leaders in the day to day life of the society. Where people at least know directly their own leaders and the city is tied together with specific social, political and economic realities. While the "Nation" element has some ethnocentric appeal, especially if there is a threat or "enemy" to it, I suspect that almost all nationalist sentiments have specific roots in specific groups and communities. That is why the most conservative and nationalist peoples are usually people of rural and small town origins who are seeking to defend a way of life and their real possessions.

Nation-States, moreover, never really represent their whole people. The Nation may simply represent one central "Metropolis" ("Mother-city" in Greek) which tries to impose its law, language, religion, political and economic system on everybody else, (often with disastrous results) or, worse, it may only represent an elite segment of the dominant state structure. Nationalist symbolism is necessarily grossly simplified for mass appeal. In more democratic states it may be able to change due to local pressures, or allow variations to continue unnoticed. Carmen Nava has shown that in Brazil, during the "Estado Novo" of Getulio Vargas from 1937-1945, the Brazilian government tried to create a "nation" through the school which was largely white, European in background and culture in which boys would receive training in

business and the military service and girls be prepared for life in the home with training in home economics. A series of civic holidays were established, the *Dia da Patria* and *Semana da Patria*, and special classes in “Moral and Civic” education which are still found today. “[Lessons] defined ethnic terminology like *caboclo*, *mameluco*, *gaúcho*, and *cafuso*. The author placed these ‘types’ in their ‘geographical domain’. [...] The lesson made being ‘white’ the goal, even for mixed race people.” (Nava, 1998, p. 45, 54). Black religion, “fetishist rites”, as well as popular celebrations and music were repressed in favor of “European” sources, but in the longer run, the deeper cultural manifestations of the “nation” were made manifest and such Afro-Brazilian manifestations such as Candomblé and the Samba became a part of Brazilian national identity.

Still, the exaggeration, ethnocentrism, crudity and outright falseness of much nationalist symbolism was exposed and suffered a severe blow during and after the Second World War with the defeat of German and Italian supernaturalism and the following disintegration of the worldwide European Empire. This led to widespread cynicism about nationalist feelings throughout Europe and the Americas and a weakening of Nation State ideals with the consequent loss of state legitimacy, shown most strongly in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. The resulting fragmentation of cultural values and ideology has led to a crisis of legitimacy for states and governments throughout the world.

A partial exception to this problem might be found in religious beliefs where the defense of an immediate, “real”, if invisible supernatural world is involved. The power of religion can be seen today in the spread of orthodox Islam in many parts of Asia and Africa, renewed orthodoxy among Jews in Israel and the United States, and the resurgence of charismatic movements in Christianity throughout the world. (The very nature of charismatic religion reflects the kind of personal values about which I have argued in this paper. They are very direct feelings of personal contact of a believer with God, or Gods – *Orixás* or Saints – without the intermediacy of a Church bureaucracy – a kind of celestial city-state in effect.)⁸

⁸ My personal experience of a religious community was spending several weeks in the Terreiro of *Pai Belo de Xango* in Cachoeirinha, Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, during an extensive series of ceremonies which created several new priests (*Pais* and *Mães do Santo*) of the Afro-Brazilian “*Batuque*” Religion in 1993. While I cannot detail the ceremonies here and at the beginning they seemed very strange to me from the “Rational” West, I do not hesitate to say that the sense of community, including for myself, was the strongest I have ever experienced.

But most national rulers do not base their support upon religious belief. It can too easily be diverted to other leaders and groups. Still there have been renewed attempts to return to religious values of a most conservative form throughout the world.

Searching for community in contemporary society

A parallel and equally important movement in the Western nations had been a return to community in the secular world. This involves a search for community by returning to local values in rural areas as well as the creation of different kinds of community in urban areas. This means an involution on the part of dominant classes to the more personalized feelings toward community, community values and even the city-state form in many parts of the world. Cases can be seen in renewed federalism found in many regions such as modern Germany, Post – Franco Spain and Canada. This has allowed a limited resurgence of the city state in the areas of art, culture, language, education and sometimes law.

There have been many manifestations of this tendency in different parts of the world. One of the most important, at least from the standpoint of Canada, has been the development and even encouragement of ethnic communities, especially in urban areas (see Berry; LaPonce, 1994; Kymlicka, 1995). Ethnic communities are a natural outgrowth of migration and refugee movements in the world. In the past few decades millions of people have moved into other countries, voluntarily or not, and the large number of people so displaced, finding themselves under governments and societies where they have no historic links, frequently seek self defense among people who speak the same language and have similar elements of the same culture. Canada as an underpopulated region has long encouraged immigration, first from Northern Europe, and more recently from all over the world. The result has been the creation of a strongly multiethnic country, although whether such a state has durability remains to be seen. Still it has strong supporters, John Porter's view of the country as a "Vertical Mosaic" was published in 1965 and in 1971 Prime Minister Trudeau officially declared Canada a Multicultural society (Tepper, 1994, p. 102).

Will Kymlicka (1995, p. 13) notes: "We should distinguish 'patriotism', the feeling of allegiance to a state, from national identity, the sense

of membership in a national group. In Switzerland as in most multination states, national groups feel allegiance to the larger state only because the larger state recognized and respects their distinct national existence". ... Prior to the 1960s, immigrants to [Australia, Canada and the United States] were expected to shed their distinctive heritage and assimilate entirely to existing cultural norms. This is known as the 'Anglo-conformity' model of immigration. Indeed, some groups were denied entry if they were seen as unassimilable. ... Assimilation was seen as essential for political stability and was further rationalized through ethnocentric denigration of other cultures. ...

However,, beginning in the 1970s, under pressure from immigrant groups, all three countries rejected the assimilationist model, and adopted a more tolerant and pluralistic policy which allows and indeed encourages immigrants to maintain various aspects of their ethnic heritage. It is now widely (though far from unanimously) accepted that immigrants should be free to maintain some of their old customs regarding food, dress, religion, and to associate with each other to maintain these practices. ...

But it is important to distinguish this sort of cultural diversity from that of national minorities. Immigrant groups are not 'nations' and do not occupy homelands. Their distinctiveness is manifested primarily in their family lives and in voluntary associations, and is not inconsistent with their institutional integration. They still participate within the public institutions of the dominant culture(s) and speak the dominant language(s) (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 14). "[...] So Canada is both multinational and polyethnic, as is the United States." (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 17).

Over the past generation ethnic communities have become well established in several parts of urban Canada, especially Toronto. Here the best studied of these 'communities' is that of the Italians where they number over 387 thousand or about 10% of the population of the city. The community had its own newspapers, clubs, restaurants, churches and intellectuals but still forms a firm part of the Canadian social, economic and political scene (see Harney, 1998). My impression is that Canadians are quite capable of creating a form of citizenship which respects the state for its services and is strongly politically active, at many levels, but still keeps emotional ties with their ethnic groups. In Toronto the Italians, the Chinese, the Greeks and the Portuguese all have representatives in local and provincial government.

Contemporary urban neighborhoods and communities

In all contemporary societies there are many existing communal elements of associations, reciprocity, mutual aid and self help, friendship, faith, etc. While one can try to buy friendship and love through professional services, the *Gesellschaft* is rarely satisfactory in these regards. It may be economically powerful but is personally problematic (see Putnam, 1993). People still seek community and neighborhood even in great modern cities. The elite have recognized this and responded to the market potential. There has been an enormous effort to fill the psychological gap through another set of corporations, the entertainment industry. For some the television set has replaced neighbours, friends and even family. Whether this will work in the long run is far from clear. The end result may be the creation of disassociated personalities and consequent social disintegration. Another question is whether the internet can replace people and create virtual communities. I am not convinced.⁹

There is also a practical as well as psychological side to the re-creation of communities. The “real” economy is made up of many sectors. Any recent text on developmental economics will devote considerable space to what are called “informal” economic sectors. John Rennie Short (1996, p. 244), for example, writes

The informal economy is the unrecorded sector where few, if any, taxes are paid. This sector is just as complex as the formal sector. Based on his work in Latin American cities, Ray Bromley (1988), for example, identifies nine different sectors. These include retain distribution, small-scale transport, personal service, security services, gambling services, recycling enterprises, prostitution, begging, and property crimes involving illegal appropriation through stealth (theft), the threat or use of violence (robbery) or deception (conning).

⁹ PITTSBURGH (Associated Press) – “The more hours people spend on the Internet, the more depressed, stressed and lonely they feel, according to a groundbreaking study that surprised the authors. Internet use had the same effect even for people who spent most of their time in such social activities as chat rooms or exchanging e-mail, according to the study headed by Robert Kraut, a social psychology professor at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Sociable users ended up feeling just as isolated as users who spent more time crawling the Web for information. Karut said yesterday. One reason for the negative effect may have been that using the Internet left less time for the deeper relationships of friends and family. Kraut suggested. ‘People are substituting weaker social ties for stronger ones’, he said.” (Depressed?..., 1998).

But he also describes the communal economy which “involves the cashless exchange of goods and services. It is common in neighborhoods and extended family systems. ... It can range from reciprocal favors, such as babysitting, grass-cutting and garbage removal, to a host of household chores from building maintenance to car pooling (Bromley, 1988, p. 248).” In addition he includes a key Anthropological concept: the domestic economy, or household economy (see Sahlins, 1972).

In the affluent world, and throughout much of the rest, a dominant trend has been the commodification of the household economy. More and more goods and services previously undertaken by households themselves are now part of the formal economy. Where households used to preserve their produce they now increasingly buy it from sources. Where households used to decorate their own homes they employ a professional decorator, and were they used to sing around a fire and sing songs or tell stories they now cluster around the television screen or the computer game. (Short, 1996, p. 249-250).

There has clearly been a considerable attempt to fuse *Gemeinschaft* with *Gesellschaft* by creating community out of an individual's work environment. This has seemed to have some success in nations such as Japan, where the company becomes a friend, advisor, drinking buddy and even a part of the family. This kind of fusion is often found in other cultures, but is somewhat alien to the American work ethic, where work and leisure are often wholly separated. Still the effort that many corporations make to build friendly environments is a strong sign of the importance of community in modern life (see Peters; Waterman Jr., 1982).

Poverty creates conditions which both encourage and discourage community building. While extreme poverty can bring about psychological disintegration leading to theft and violence, there is also a tendency for poor people to cooperate to help each other. This has been noted by many writers. For the 19th century Salford Robert Roberts writes (1971, p. 42-43):

The poor certainly helped the poor. Many kindly families little better off than most came to the aid of neighbors in need without thought of reward, here or hereafter. They were the salt of the earth.... Again, not all assistance sprang from the heart: in a hard world one never knew what blows fate would

deal; a little generosity among the distressed now could act as a form of social insurance against the future.

Anthony Leeds (1994, p. 215), who abandons the term “community” for “locality” notes:

Localities as loci of interaction, as I have noted above, are characterized, even in very simple localities, by a highly complex web of diverse types of relationships. The most active kinship ties -those within the nuclear family and, often, those with close relatives – are largely to be found in the locality, especially a small one. The most immediate, numerous, and lively (if not the deepest) friendships tend to be in the locality. The majority of one’s ritual kinfolk tend to be in the locality where they may be mobilized more or less instantaneously. One’s neighbors whom one may call on for various ends are by definition in the locality. A plethora of informal groups such as cliques, gangs, work groups, and the like, as well as small associations whose interests and range of action are necessarily rather limited (e.g. a town band or a samba school) are phenomena of localities.

In sum, the social organization of the locality may be seen as a highly flexible system of human adaptation. Its very flexibility and looseness of organization, its uncharted and unspecified (or, one might say, unrationalized and unbureaucratized) complexity, permits it a wide range of responses to an almost infinite variety of events, contexts, and exigencies. Its flexibility permits rapid mobilization of its social and economic resources for different ends and in diverse forms, often under the most extreme stress, in a way not achievable by any other system of organization. It is limited only by the extent of the total available resources in land, materiel, personnel and finances. (Leeds, 1994, p. 217).

While Albert Hirschman (1984, p. 79) writes:

An enormous variety of such social activist organizations have sprung up in Latin America. A good number are or were initially related to the Catholic church or to some Protestant missionary activities, but others start out with quite diverse ideological or political moorings. In general, the initiators, directors and members of the activist teams have some university or professional education.

[S]tudents of social movements, in an effort to portray movements as genuine expressions of the “real” interests of the economically exploited, culturally marginalized, and politically disenfranchised, have too often glossed over these external interventions in their analyses of movement dynamics. But to recognize and document such external interventions is not to deny that autonomy, as the proceeding essays reveal, is at once a core movement value and a shrewd political strategy. Participants view movement autonomy as essential to forging and preserving identity and community. Autonomy is also considered a strategic imperative necessitated by the persistence of very “old” social ills, such as instrumentalism on the Left, clientelism on the Right, patronage politics, political corruption and electoral fraud. (Alvarez; Escobar, 1992, p. 332).

Cooperation and mutual assistance have been noted by many others (see also Taylor, 1989).¹⁰ I have published elsewhere material on community in the Vilas of Porto Alegre (Shirley, 1990), but the evidence for cooperation in poor neighborhoods and among homeless people is overwhelming.

The manipulation of community

Manipulation of the communal forces by the state and other organizations is moreover, a constant in modern society. I have already mentioned television and the entertainment industry and there are innumerable other examples. Significant for me as an anthropologist, especially a legal anthropologist, is the increasing attempt to utilize communitarian sentiment by state and private bureaucracies. This can be found in many fields, education, politics, sports, marketing and even the performing arts, but it has been perhaps most influential in the fields of health and law.

Community health projects are really beyond the scope of this paper, but I have been interested in what I see as increasing links, especially in Canada, between the formal health bureaucracies, physicians, hospitals and the like, with alternative communal health leaders and groups in local herbalists,

¹⁰ See Stack (1974) for the United States, Fonseca (1985, 1988, 1991); Leeds (1994); Mariz (1994); Norris (1989); Nunes (1976); and Perlman (1976) for Brazilian shantytowns while Peter Lloyd (1979, 1980) has written two books on the subject. There is a distinct literature on Street Kids and their communities (see Aptekar, 1988; Collen, 1987; and the *Toronto Star* (Kids..., 1998).

religious healers, etc. While there are still some sharp antagonisms, and the formal system still has the state and law on its side, more and more there has come to be sympathetic exploration of each side's strengths. This is less obvious in Brazil where the two sets of health care groups still have strong class biases, although individuals cross the line all the time.

In the area of community law, this paper originally derives from a recent study on the nature of community that has come out of research on the nature and operations of community policing done in Canada and the United States.¹¹ More specifically it is inspired by a recent doctoral dissertation defended at the Centre of Criminology of The University of Toronto by Benedikt Fischer entitled '*Community Policing*' – *A Study of Local Policing, Order and Control*. Fischer notes that most of these studies have been made without a serious examination of the nature of the meaning of "community" or of the groups in which people engage. One of the key elements of his work is the development of the dynamics of the urban community. He treats community as a process, not as an entity to be discovered. For him, in other words, there is no "real" 'community', but what is called this is constantly being created by different people for different reasons. While he does not deal, as I do here, with the dynamic process of community creation and inner organization, he is very interested in how concepts of community are used by the state to create entities of organization and power in an urban setting. Centralized bureaucratic legal institutions are failing in their stated goals in most parts of the world. Thus these institutions, such as the police, are seeking another model which stands a better chance of working. They are thus trying to enlist sectors of the public for aid in the tasks of law enforcement and policing.

In his work, however, Fischer demonstrates how the police, as a government agency, are not able to create communities to serve their interests, but

¹¹ See: Banton (1964); Bayley (1976, 1985a, 1985b, 1994); Bittner (1990); Brogden and Shearing (1993); Carriere and Ericson (1989); Duarte et al. (1990); Ellickson (1991); Ericson (1981, 1982); Ericson and Haggerty (1997); Fielding (1995); Goldstein (1977, 1990); Henry (1983); Johnston (1992); Kant de Lima (1994); Kelly and Kelly (1976); Manning (1977); Mawby (1990); Mingardi (1992); Monkkonen (1992); Nader (1980); Nina (1995); Reiner (1992); Santos (1977); Sewell (1985); Shearing and Stenning (1987); Skolnick (1975); Skolnick and Bayley (1986); Straud (1983); Tonry and Morris (1992).

they are able to select existing groups which they find most congenial. In his way official police choice champions the selected community leaders as 'representative' of the whole community for the purposes of law enforcement. These tend to be people who naturally ally with the police, namely, property owners.

On the basis of these socio-economic bonds likely more than anything else, it is then suggested that these 'common interests of property and place' provide a basis for collective action even in the most communally and productively denuded locality, and that, in fact, many of the issues and concerns that 'community' has become organized around have been directly or indirectly related to these contexts of material interests. (Fischer, 1998, p. 213).

Substantive evidence has been accumulated in considerable 'community' research efforts, suggesting that organized 'neighborhoods' in most instances simply "do not represent the local constituency"... In fact, there is an abundance of evidence that points to the "positive relationship among socio-economic status, neighborhood social organization, and residents' participation in neighborhood associations" (Fischer, 1998, p. 214). [...] Although most of the 'community' associations observed by Fischer rooted themselves in and claimed to represent socio-geographic jurisdictions of roughly between 5,000 and 15,000 population each, the number of involved 'community' members as reflected in the organizations' meetings and observed over about one year of research usually ranged in the neighbourhood of no more than between 10 and 50 people. This figure partly seemed to depend on the base size of the local jurisdiction covered, but also on the frequency of meetings held (with some of the associations meeting weekly, others only a few times a year), and on the degree of degree of general openness and active Outreach' with which the individual groups operated.

The majority of the more regular 'community' groups meetings observed featured an audience of somewhere between 10 and 25 people. As an interesting indicator with respect to the practical mobilization of 'community', in most instances barely half of the individuals present at such gatherings were people who primarily lived or worked within the respective 'community's' geographic boundaries. Rather, the remaining half were there in some official

or professional ‘community’ related function from outside the claimed local boundaries.

While the ‘community’ groups consistently claimed to be “open to and representative of everybody in the community”, and to be considerate of the divisional area’s diverse socio-ethnic make-up, the almost complete lack of visible ethnic minorities in such gatherings was a striking fact. Attendance in the meetings of the different local organizations generally appeared to be limited to home owners, or residents of apartments and cooperatives. In the case of one or two organizations, two people from a mental health recovery institution would occasionally be present at the meetings, but not really interact or actively participate in the process of events (Fischer, 1998, p. 232-233).

When asking the surveyed ‘community’ activists what, in their view, had necessitated and triggered their ‘community’ organizing and action in the field of crime, safety and policing, an image of absolute consensus emerged with regard to the problem, threat or a “common enemy” that was plaguing their ‘neighbourhood’. Without any exception, it was street prostitution and drug dealing in their local area that allegedly had brought their ‘community’ into decay, causing disorder and crime and generating a general disintegration of the positive aspects of local neighbourhood life. But upon a closer look, a couple of distinct themes emerged in the ‘community’ people’s accounts about the nature and causes of the perceived ‘crime’ and ‘safety’ problems in the area. First of all, hardly any of the respondents explicitly complained about ‘crime’, feeling threatened or having been victimized by major crime. Some refer to crime incidents that they have heard about from neighbours or that “that happened to somebody up the street”. In cases where crime was seen as a local problem, it was predominately interpreted as related to and explained by the increased presence, prevalence or visibility of the street prostitution and drug markets.

The neighborhood which Fisher studied is very mixed, consisting of rooming houses, public housing, some mental health homes, as well as a growing area of increasingly valuable private homes. It is an area being “gentrified,” in more recent terminology. It is by no means wholly middle class and thus conditions for community formation of many kinds exist in it, as in other parts of the city. In fact different sets of community leaders, according

to Fischer, do exist in the same neighborhood: spokesmen for the mentally ill, blacks, the homeless and even prostitutes. But these are ignored by the police in their search for a 'community' with which to ally. Fischer admits a kind of "malevolence" in the process of this kind of police manipulation of the community ideal, but he points out that it is not the end of the story. Communities are in constant creation and more representative groups can come into authority if other political groups could become interested.

Once established, however, the link between the police and the 'community' allows the police much more free reign to harass those excluded since they derive their new legitimacy from the self selected 'community' and not from formal processes of the law. The new 'community' leaders have declared war on some former residents of the neighborhood, the homeless, the poor, addicts and prostitutes and seek to drive them elsewhere in the name of a mythical former communal time when such vices were minimal. They incidentally also seek to enhance the value of their own local property.

According to Fisher there are only three police districts where such alliance of community with the police has taken place in the city of Toronto, all three are areas where the process of "gentrification" is taking place in older poor neighborhoods and the new middle class residents are seeking to "upgrade" the neighborhood by driving out former groups. In regions where such conflict does not exist, in more middle class suburban neighborhoods, such "communities", if they exist, do not seek such an alliance with the police.

In Fischer's neighbourhood, in fact, the black residents in public housing, angry at increased police harassment under new 'community policing' conditions, formed their own groups and forced a different form of policing in parts of the region. But in other parts of the region the 'community' decided to go it alone without police support and began harassing and spying on the 'undesirable' people without direct police assistance. This kind of independent community action, Fischer believes, has not been carefully examined in the community literature, nor has the possibility of creation of truly representative local groups.

The importance of enemies

The importance of a common enemy to the development of community organization can thus be seen from Fischer's work, but many others have noted it. Such enemies can be seen as an outside threat or, as in the Toronto case, internal "dangerous" groups. Hirschman, in fact, argues that communities rarely come about except in response to some kind of inimical challenge which may be social, as a specific enemy (landlords and speculators) or natural, such as different kinds of natural disasters, draught, earthquakes or floods. While I am not sure of the scope of his view, there can be no doubt that a common perceived enemy can unite people in powerful and rapid ways. There is a great deal written about this, perhaps the best known being Sahlins (1961) classic article on segmentary organization, but enemies as an element in building community or nationalist feelings is one of the most basic elements of political science (see Andreski, 1968; Clausewitz, 1976). Of course the creation of artificial enemies is an old political technique which can be, as in the Toronto case, severely crippling to the creation of a representative community leadership. Hirschman's case for the importance of natural disasters in creating community support, is, moreover, of key significance.

Conclusion

We can begin to see, therefore, a view of citizenship as a complex relationship, involving many elements. Some of these might be:

- 1 - Economic co-operation
- 2 - Reciprocity – duty
- 3 - Protection and support of individual by group, law, etc.
- 4 - Belonging – psychological support

The *locus* of these elements can vary widely from family to neighborhood, to community to city to nation and so on. In part each individual builds his or her citizenship by selecting which groups are most important to him. Thus contemporary citizenship becomes a very complex pattern of entering into different groups and strata of organizations. But one's choice is often

limited by the complex interplay between levels of state, nation, community and family. One's choice of citizenship group is often molded by the power and influence of other such groups and the existence of 'enemies' which help direct the focus of belonging and contributions. In the shantytowns of Porto Alegre, for example, the pressures of the police as "enemies" helped produce a much stronger neighborhood community than the diversity of its elements might suggest (see Shirley, 1990).

What I have tried to show in this paper is the complexity of both the concepts of citizenship and community in the contemporary world. I have argued that one is never merely a citizen of the 'world', a 'nation', or a 'country', but is, in fact the citizen of a great many organized and communal groups, all of which offer some kinds of services and demand some kinds of payback. Citizenship may belong to those who are willing to put effort into defending a state, a community group or neighborhood and this depends on a great many elements of personal and group identity. What I have also tried to show in this paper is that one's personal identity is not the only factor defining community and citizenship. The larger context, of class, ethnic identity, culture, language, and other elements may also be involved in forcing the choice of which groups we may support and identify with.

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