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Chapter 7

'Philoprogenitiveness', through the cracks

On the resilience and benefits of
kinship in Utopian communes

Christoph Brumann

Whether there is a complete correspondence of the fortunes of these several Communities to the strength of their anti-familism, is an interesting question which we are not prepared to answer. Only it is manifest that the Shakers, who discard the radix of old society with the greatest vehemence, and are most jealous for Communism as the prime unit of organization, have prospered most, and are making the longest and strongest mark on the history of Socialism. And in general it seems probable from the fact of success attending these forms of Communism to the exclusion of all others, that there is some rational connection between their control of the sexual relation and their prosperity.

(Noyes 1961 [1870]: 141–2)

Of course we shall not be understood as propounding the theory that the negative or Shaker method of disposing of marriage and the sexual relation, is the only one that can subordinate familism to Communism. The Oneida Communists claim that their control over amativeness and philoprogenitiveness, the two elements of familism, is carried much farther than that of the Shakers; inasmuch as they make those passions serve Communism, instead of opposing it, as they do under suppression. They dissolve the old dual unit of society, but take the constituent elements of it all back into Communism.

(Noyes 1961 [1870]: 142–3)

Oneida Community

The preceding quotes are taken from one of the first contributions to the research on Utopian communes, *History of American Socialisms*. Its author, John Humphrey Noyes (1811–86), was the charismatic

leader of what he was writing about – one of the most radical social experiments in American history, namely Oneida Community in upstate New York. Educated as a Protestant minister, Noyes converted to Perfectionism, a dissident creed that found numerous adherents in the religious excitement that welled up in the New England of the 1840s. According to Perfectionism, the Second Coming of Christ and the Advent of the Millennium had already occurred so that it was within the reach of true believers to lead a sinless life. Moreover, Noyes's idiosyncratic exegesis of Matthew 22: 30 – 'For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven' – convinced him that in the millennium, celestial love was no longer bound by the shackles of monogamous marriage. In a private letter, he wrote:

The marriage supper of the Lamb is a feast at which every dish is free to every guest. ... In the holy community, there is no more reason why sexual intercourse should be restrained by law, than why eating and drinking should be.

(quoted in Parker 1973: 44)

Understandably, these convictions – although he presented them guardedly at first – provoked resistance, and Noyes lost his pulpit and retired to his family's holdings in Putney, Vermont. Among the small band of followers he assembled there, he felt particularly attracted to one Mary Cragin. In 1846, he decided to put his ideas into practice and convinced Cragin's husband and his own wife to start a four-person marriage. Gradually, the other followers joined in this arrangement, and 'complex marriage', as Noyes termed it, was born. This alliance was not to be confounded with unrestrained free love, however, since men were to practice 'male continence' or *coitus reservatus*. Thereby they spared their supply of semen, which Noyes equated with life force, and saved the women from unnecessary child-births – Noyes's wife had had four stillbirths. It supposedly also contributed to a purer sexual experience – suffused with the spirit of 'amativevness' – which could even serve as an instrument for the veneration of God. Sexual activity was closely monitored by the group, and any exclusive attachment ('special love') between two particular members was punished by their separation.

In 1848, the group moved to New York State where it merged with another Perfectionist community that had settled in Oneida County. After two more years membership exceeded 200 persons, never to fall

below this number again. The Oneida Perfectionists built themselves the impressive, still existing Mansion House and subsisted on the manufacture and sale of animal traps, soap, silk, fruit preserves and a host of other products, becoming prosperous enough to employ many outsiders in their factories. It was only in the 1870s that religious enthusiasm cooled and Noyes's leadership capacity dwindled, although membership continued to grow until 1878 when it peaked at 306. The experiment ended in 1881 when the commune was transformed into a joint-stock corporation based on the private ownership of shares. Yet for many members, the Mansion House remained the hub of their social life during the following decades (Carden 1969; Dalsimer 1975; Kern 1981; Parker 1973; Robertson 1972, 1977, 1981; Thomas 1977).

Except for a brief celibate interlude, complex marriage was continued throughout the more than three decades of Oneida's existence. 'Male continence' worked reasonably well at first, with on average less than two children born annually (Carden 1969: 51) in a community of around 200 adults. Since experiences with outside recruits left something to be desired, however, 'stirpiculture' was introduced in 1869, meaning that, henceforth, member couples matched by the group for their spiritual quality were to produce offspring for the community. From these unions, altogether fifty-eight children were born (Carden 1969: 63). They were raised in a children's house, and while their relationships with their parents were severely restricted, those with other adults were actively encouraged. 'Philoprogenitiveness' – Noyes's word for nepotism (Robertson 1981: 75–6) – should thereby be eradicated, or, rather, transferred from the family level to that of the entire commune. Uncommon though this arrangement appeared to contemporary observers, it apparently worked to the satisfaction of the members. This is attested to not only by the long duration of the community but also by the fact that more than 80 per cent of the adult founding members either died in the community or stayed with it until the end (Carden 1969: 77).

Commune and family: born rivals?

As demonstrated by Oneida, intentionally formed property-sharing communes are not always bound to immediate failure – contrary though this may seem to those that expect our egoistic nature to thwart all well-meant attempts towards voluntary sharing.¹ And neither must communes collapse quickly if they try to suppress monogamous marriage, family and kinship. Oneida's group marriage, however, is not

the only way to do so; more impressive still are the achievements of a number of communes of male and female celibates. Harmony was a group of German Separatists that, after several clashes with State authorities and Lutheran orthodoxy, emigrated to the United States in 1804. They built up thriving communities at three successive locations in Pennsylvania and Indiana, basing themselves on agriculture and some industry, and did not disband until 1905 (Arndt 1965, 1971). A whole century longer still is the history of the Shakers (or United Society of Believers). This off-split of the English Quakers formed around the charismatic Ann Lee and then emigrated to New England where it gathered adherents and became communal in 1787. Also supporting themselves with agriculture, handicrafts and industry, the Shakers lived in up to eighteen communal villages throughout New England and the Midwest. Although the Shakers are often regarded as a thing of the past – and are remembered warily for their outstanding material culture – their history of more than 200 years has by no means ended, since there is one last village in Sabbathday Lake, Maine, which still functions (Brewer 1986; Stein 1992).

But does the success of group marriage and celibate communes mean that doing away with family and kinship is the only path to communal longevity? A number of scholars have argued so, most notably sociologist Rosabeth Kanter in her seminal *Commitment and Community* (1972). Following in effect the zero-sum logic implicit in Noyes's argument, she sees family and community as antagonistic units competing for members' loyalties. What is accorded one of these units in terms of attachment cannot go to the other, so that the family must be weakened if the commune is to be strong. For this purpose, celibacy and group marriage are functionally equivalent since they both eliminate the family (Kanter 1972: 82, 87, 92). This line of reasoning has found wide support (e.g. Barrett 1974: 42; Coser 1974: 137; Muncy 1973: 229–31) and has been questioned only haltingly (Lauer and Lauer 1983: 56; Oved 1988: 413; Wagner 1986: 176), with more emphatic rejections restricted to Shenker's (1986: 220–7) and Van den Berghe and Peter's (1988) remarks. What follows is an attempt towards a more comprehensive reappraisal.

Longevity reassessed

When juxtaposing Utopian communes that were unequivocally monogamous with those which in some way tried to do away with monogamous marriage, the latter ones appear more successful at first

sight (see Table 7.1). Among the fifteen longest-lived communes encountered in my research – all with life-spans greater than sixty years – only five are monogamous. While monogamy thus beats group marriage, for which Oncida's thirty-seven years have already set the record, the celibate suppression of family ties has on the whole led to the most impressive durations.

Table 7.1 Life-spans of the most durable communes

Name	Start	End	Duration
Shakers	1787		212
Hutterites	1874		125
Abode of Love	1840	1958	118
Harmony	1804	1905	101
House of David	1902		97
Snowhill	1798	1889	91
Amarna	1843	1932	89
Kibbutzim	1910		89
Itô-en	1913		86
Atarashiki mura	1918		81
Zoar	1819	1898	79
Bruderhof	1920		79
Koreshan Unity	1880	1947	67
Ephrata	1732	1797	65
Woman's Commonwealth	1877	1940	63

Note: Somewhat consistently with their character, the non-monogamous communes are printed in bold type and the monogamous communes in ordinary type. Where no end date is given, the respective case continues to exist at present. The Hutterites have repeatedly abandoned community of goods during their history of almost five centuries. The date given refers to the last communal period beginning with their migration to the United States. Some of the dates for the remaining communes also deviate from those given in other accounts. This is because when the adoption of communal property did not coincide with the founding of a settlement, I chose the former date. Also, the date of dissolution is difficult to determine in some cases, especially in those that 'died out'. Here, I chose as the end date the earliest year when community of goods clearly must have been abolished. In Woman's Commonwealth, the third to last member died in 1940 (Kitch 1993: 110) so that what one can meaningfully call a communal group ended at this time. For a detailed discussion of the dates given, see Brumann (1998: ch. 2).

This is relativised, however, if one takes a closer look at how these durations were achieved. The Shakers still exist today as a commune, but only one of their villages has survived. Even back in 1874 they were described as 'a parcel of old bachelors and old maids' (Stein 1992: 230), and membership has hovered below one-tenth of the former maximum for more than eighty years now, with only eight Shakers remaining in 1992 (Stein 1992: 252, 435–6). In Harmony, as well, decline set in after no more than thirty years. When sixty years had passed membership had already fallen below one-sixth of the highest number, which supposedly was between 750 (Carpenter 1975: 163) and 1,050 (M.R. Miller 1972: 42–3). After eighty-six years the less than twenty members that were left – most of them rather aged – needed more than 300 outside employees to run the communal enterprises in their stead (Arndt 1971: 189; M.R. Miller 1972: 66–7). Both communes would have ended much earlier if they had not been able to live off the lasting fruits of initial prosperity. The other celibate communes – with the exception of Ammana and Zoar (see below) – show a similar pattern. It is obvious that they continued until they virtually died out. At that time, however, they had been reduced to faint shadows of their former glory, and the ageing members had abandoned all hope for continuity decades before (cf. McCormick 1965: 149–69 for Abode of Love; Treher 1968: 84–103; Fogarty 1981: 120–8; Landing 1981: 13–14; Kitch 1993: 110–12).

The five monogamous communes present a different picture. First of all, they still exist today whereas, apart from the Shakers and House of David, none of the celibate cases do. Moreover, while Itô-en and Atarashiki mura seem to have passed their prime (Brumann 1992, forthcoming), the Hutterites, the kibbutzim, and the Bruderhof communities continue to prosper and exhibit no signs of imminent decline. These three cases are in a better shape at present than any of the celibate communes were after an equal time span, so they can be assumed to continue as communes for at least several decades. Taking the diverse modes of communal survival into account, then, leads to a different result from a rank order based on sheer duration alone. There seems to be an advantage for monogamy within Utopian communes, so that a closer look at the three most successful cases is in order.

Hutterites

Hutterites

The Hutterites arose as a part of the Anabaptist movement of the Reformation. Founded in the sixteenth century in Bohemia, they were

subject to century-long religious persecution and forced migrations as far as the Ukraine, and repeatedly abandoned communal property in the process. In 1874, most Hutterites migrated to the United States and, afterwards, also to Canada, where they have prospered ever since by supporting themselves with large-scale agriculture. Their austere, conservative life-style is based on a literal understanding of biblical requirements and is opposed to most North American mainstream values; moreover, their German dialect sets them off ethnically. Presently, there are about 30,000 Hutterites living in some 400 colonies (Hartse 1994b: 110; for general descriptions see Bennett 1967; Hostetler 1974a; Peter 1987; Stephenson 1991).

The Hutterites believe in the sanctity of the indissoluble monogamous marriage bond. Divorce is not allowed, and extramarital affairs are regarded as a grave sin (Hostetler 1974a: 146). Average marriage age has risen in recent years but still not yet beyond the mid-twenties (Stephenson 1991: 107; Peter 1987: 161). Less than 5 per cent of the adults over thirty have never been married (Hostetler 1974a: 203). Men and women work on separate assignments, and communal child care leaves most of the women free for other tasks. Families, however, are the habitual units for distributing allowances and for leisure activities. Marriage ties are also acknowledged when filling positions of responsibility: the wife of a Hutterite colony 'householder', the economic manager, often holds the highest female office of head cook (Bennett 1967: 145–6). There are limits to familism: when being baptised, Hutterites have to promise to place loyalty towards the commune over that of family members (Peter 1987: 39), and they have to participate in sanctions such as ostracism against family members (Shenker 1986: 224). However, there is no principal restriction of family ties, and members are also free to choose their own marriage partners. Because of decreasing colony sizes, nurseries and kindergartens are now discontinued in some Hutterite colonies, with the mothers taking care of their smaller children. Signs of declining discipline have been reported and have been attributed to this development (Peter 1987: 65–6), but the evidence so far does not appear conclusive enough to predict a negative effect.

Beyond this emphasis on families, Hutterite society is densely interwoven by wider kin ties – a situation caused by endogamy and the fact that the colonies have attracted only a minuscule number of converts from outside. All present-day Hutterites are descendants of the 443 individuals who emigrated to the United States in 1874 (Sato *et al.* 1994: 422), and they were already well connected themselves, going

back to ninety-two individuals who had been cut off from external marriage relations since 1760 (Peter 1987: 128–9). Although first-cousin marriage is avoided, the average married couple in the 1970s was more closely related than second cousins (Hostetler 1974a: 265). Because of virilocal preferences, colonies often consist of only a few sets of brothers with their families (Bennett 1967: 108, 119, 121), and in extreme cases an entire Hutterite colony of between sixty and 180 people can be made up of a single ancestor couple, its descendants and their spouses alone (Bennett 1967: 116).

Kinship provides an important resource for individual agency. Personal help is first sought among relatives (Bennett 1967: 131–2). Kin groups, especially groups of brothers, often form factions that try to corner important offices in the communal hierarchy (Peter 1987: 45–6, 80; Bennett 1967: 257). Inheritance of such positions from father to son is not uncommon (Shenker 1986: 225–6). Even deviance seems to be kin-based when specific families are regarded as especially vulnerable for defection to outside society (Hostetler 1974a: 273). Strong kin ties between some members might alienate those who are not so deeply enmeshed, but it has been observed that colonies with many kin groups are more prone to factionalism on the basis of kinship than those with just a few kin groups (Peter 1987: 62). Marriage ties also strengthen inter-colony bonds since they often go along with economic co-operation (Bennett 1967: 124–5; Hostetler 1974a: 241, note 9). Furthermore, male members from culturally deviant or economically weak colonies will have difficulties in finding marriage partners (Hostetler 1974a: 271; Shenker 1986: 164). Although the refusals are informal and based on individual decisions, they work as a powerful sanction, forcing the respective colonies back into line. Case studies of one colony in crisis (Peter 1987: 146–8) and of another one that has been excommunicated (Holzach 1982: 174–7) show that the impossibility of finding wives is one of the harshest consequences that deviant colonies have to face. Moreover, family and relatives are usually what Hutterite defectors miss most and are what brings many of them back into the commune, often in spite of serious doubts about the way of life and religious practice. Many more members supposedly refrain from leaving for the same reason (Peter 1987: 106–7; Shenker 1986: 162, 227).

Finally, offspring is important for the maintenance of the colonies and for their spectacular expansion pushed forward by the planned division of colonies. The Hutterites once were the fastest growing human population with annual increases of more than 4 per cent around

1950 (Peter 1987: 154). While these rates have declined considerably (Nonaka *et al.* 1994; Sato *et al.* 1994; Peter 1987), they still lie around 2 per cent at present (Peter 1987: 155–6), with the natural growth far exceeding the increasing, but still small, number of permanent defections.² The Hutterites were thus able to increase the number of colonies by more than a hundred times and the number of members by almost seventy times, simply by retaining their own offspring.

Brudershof communities

The Brudershof communities model themselves closely on the Hutterites, not so much on the contemporary ones but on the idealised Hutterites of sixteenth-century Bohemia. There are important differences between the two groups, however, and the mutual relations have been rocky at times so that I consider it justified to treat them separately. The first Brudershof community was founded in Germany in 1920 by the Protestant theologian Eberhard Arnold (1883–1935) who had converted himself to Anabaptism. When he learned about North American Hutterites, he paid a visit to them and had his community acknowledged as a fourth branch alongside the three traditional branches, or *Leut*, of the Hutterites. Arnold's unexpected death in 1935 and forced migrations (first, from Nazi Germany to England; then, in 1941, from there to Paraguay) provided a serious challenge to the commune, followed by a new crisis around 1960 that resulted in the shifting of activities to the United States. Today there are about 2,500 members in eight 'brudershofs' – six in the United States, two in England – where they produce toys and equipment for handicapped children. Brudershof members are no less committed to biblical precepts than the Hutterites, but, compared with their forerunners, they have placed a greater emphasis on unity with the Divine Spirit than on established rules and rituals. At present, relations with both Hutterites and a network of former members are strained (Eggers 1985; Mow 1989; Zablocki 1973; see also the Brudershof website at <http://www.brudershof.org>).³

The status of monogamous marriage among Brudershof members is similar to that of the Hutterites. Here as well divorce and extramarital affairs are anathema (Zablocki 1973: 117), and the remarriage of divorced people entering the commune is also prohibited (Zablocki 1973: 119; Eggers 1985: 69). In the absence of precise figures, it nonetheless appears that the emphasis on marriage is equally intense. Single adults are incorporated into families with whom they share

leisure time, meals, celebrations, etc. (Zablocki 1973: 122). While concrete family limits are thereby blurred, the status of the family as the normal and natural living unit is emphasised. As among the Hutteries, the wives of Bruderhof office holders (such as 'servants of the word', 'witness brothers' and 'stewards') are often 'housemothers' – the only office open to women (Zablocki 1973: 203). While being separated during daytime, families live together in the same apartment and receive their allowances as a unit (Zablocki 1973: 26, 43, 128–9). Furthermore, they have breakfast and several other meals together (Zablocki 1973: 46–9), in contrast to the Hutteries where all meals are eaten in common. As among the Hutteries, the loyalty towards the commune should in principle be greater than that towards one's family (Zablocki 1973: 267), and the more severe sanctions separate a member from his own family (Zablocki 1973: 196–9). But as long as family life does not deviate from the commune's standards, the commune is in principle not expected to interfere with it.

Detailed kinship data on the Bruderhof communities are not available, but endogamy, the importance of the nuclear family and the high number of children (discussed below) make it very likely that the group is also cross-cut by many kin ties. While nepotism is officially frowned upon (Zablocki 1973: 28, 228), it has been reported that the family members of office holders often receive privileged treatment, even against their own wishes (Pleil 1994: 57, 226, 267; Zablocki 1973: 271). Kinship has also played a crucial role in the succession of the group's leadership. The charismatic founder, Eberhard Arnold, died early and suddenly in 1935. A power struggle ensued, with Eberhard's three sons pitted against their two sisters' husbands. The in-laws prevailed at first and went so far as to temporarily expel the sons from the commune. But the sons had their comeback and took over the leadership in a tumultuous, drawn-out crisis accompanied by substantial purges around 1960. Unbridled by accusations of instituting a 'royal family' (Mow 1990: 305), the founder's son, Heinrich Arnold, became the new 'elder' of the commune, whereas his main opponent was charged with adultery and expelled (Zablocki 1973: 104–12; Mow 1989: 109–51). When Heinrich died in 1982, his son, Christoph, succeeded him, again after a crisis (Eggers 1985: 160; Mow 1989: 289).⁴ All these events were clearly disruptive for the Bruderhof communities, and one may question their functionality for the survival of the communities. It has been observed, however, that these crises resulted in greater unity among those members who stayed (cf. Zablocki 1973: 111). Moreover, the Bruderhof has always been suspi-

cious of fixed rules and procedures, and instead emphasises harmony with the Divine Spirit, so that, repeatedly, basic policies have been completely revised. It can therefore be argued – and has been argued also by an author sympathetic to the Bruderhof (Joeringer 1995) – that the Arnold patriline has provided the crucial element of stability when almost everything else was subject to change.⁵ As with the Hutteries, it can be suspected that relatives are an important motivation to staying in the commune. Defectors suffer from being separated from their relatives, and re-establishing contact with the latter is a prime objective pursued by the dissidents' support organisation (cf., for example, Sender Barayán 1995).

Finally, members' children are also a crucial source of recruits for the Bruderhof. Precise demographic data are not available, but birth control is not practised (Zablocki 1973: 115, 117; Eggers 1985: 145), and large families of eight to ten children were fairly common at the end of the sixties (Zablocki 1973: 115, 117) and continue to be so today (Bohken-Zumpe 1993: unnumbered page, opposite 1; Pleil 1994: 277, 279, 291). According to a former member, women are encouraged to have many children (Pleil 1994: 225, 362–3). Until 1965, 75 per cent of the children stayed in the commune as adults (Zablocki 1973: 268), and, nowadays, it is still one-half (Kruse 1991: 22) in a period when growth is steadier than in past decades. The reliable source of new members that their own children provide enables the communes to follow a rather rigorous policy of temporary and permanent expulsions of deviant members without endangering organisational continuity. While these sanctions can – repentance provided – always be reversed, the Bruderhof communities have never hesitated to make use of what seems to be an important means of keeping their spiritual balance.

Kibbutzim

In contrast to these two Christian communities, almost all kibbutzim are secular and socialist in orientation and have made a point of rejecting the religious ingredients of Jewishness (Bowes 1989: 129–41). The kibbutzim were a product of the migration of European Jews to Palestine where the first kibbutz was founded in 1910. Ardently patriotic, they played a pioneer role in the establishment of the state of Israel. Since its foundation in 1948, however, they have occupied a somewhat uneasy position within Israeli society and have repeatedly been haunted by slow growth rates and feelings of crisis.

Currently, there are around 270 kibbutzim with almost 130,000 members (Malan 1994: 121) that engage in a wide range of agricultural and industrial enterprises. With regard to age, gender and leadership positions, the kibbutzim are a great deal more egalitarian than the two preceding cases, although by no means perfectly so (Ben-Rafael 1988; Bows 1989; Melzer and Neubauer 1988a; Spiro 1972; Tiger and Shepher 1975).

Despite many important differences from the two preceding cases, however, marriage, family and kinship are no less salient in kibbutz life. Kibbutzniks marry early, and people still single at the age of twenty-five are already considered problematic (Bows 1980: 672-3).⁷ According to older data, less than 5 per cent of all adults never marry (Tiger and Shepher 1975: 223). Singles are socially marginal (Bows 1989: 85-6), and leadership offices are usually filled by married members, and, at least in one kibbutz, often with both partners of a married couple (Rayman 1981: 138). Divorces are permitted, although older rates were low, as compared to Israel in general (Tiger and Shepher 1975: 220-1). Extramarital affairs do occur (Bows 1989: 91), yet despite some early sympathies for free love and contempt for the institution of monogamous marriage (Bows 1989: 122-3; Blasi 1986: 25; Spiro 1972: 112-13), the alternatives, group marriage and celibacy, have never been seriously considered. Children are taken care of collectively, and the gender division of labour is no less pronounced than in Hutterite and Bruderhof communes. But families live and pass their leisure time together, and allowances are now increasingly distributed to families as a unit rather than to individuals (Liegler and Bergmann 1994: 33).

This has not always been so: strong sentiments against the bourgeois family held sway in the beginning, and when children were born they lived and slept in children's houses, meeting their parents for not more than a few hours on weekends. Thereby, they were educated as children of the entire kibbutz. However, a daily 'hour of love' in which parents could visit their children was instituted in the 1960s (Spiro 1972: 278; Tiger and Shepher 1975: 227), and in the 1980s and 1990s the children's houses were discontinued in almost all kibbutzim so that children now sleep in their parents' homes (Melzer and Neubauer 1988b: 30-1; Liegler and Bergmann 1994: 33). The necessary extensions to apartments have plunged many kibbutzim into heavy debts (Melzer and Neubauer 1988b: 30-1), but other than this no negative effects on their social fabric have been reported so far. Interestingly, kibbutzniks may take in their ageing parents or relatives

even when they do not want to become full members, so that the legitimacy of family ties superseding kibbutz loyalties is acknowledged (Anonymous 1982: 170-1).

Kinship beyond the nuclear family has also grown in importance, especially in the older kibbutzim, where large groups of relatives numbering up to twenty-five serve as power blocks lobbying for the interests of their members (Bows 1989: 102; Maron 1988: 225; Tiger and Shepher 1975: 40; Liegler and Bergmann 1994: 32). There is even a special word for these kin groups: *hamula* – interestingly, an Arabic word for patrilineally extended families (Tiger and Shepher 1975: 40).⁸ Among kibbutzniks, the presence of family and relatives is one of the most important reasons not to leave the commune (Shenker 1986: 227; Spiro 1972: 227). In a 1993 opinion survey, almost 90 per cent of the members gave as a reason to stay the opportunity to enjoy one's family life, whereas only about 50 per cent mentioned official values such as co-operation and equality (Liegler and Bergmann 1994: 33-4). It seems that family and kinship are about to replace ideology as the central motivation to be a kibbutznik, or, rather, that it is no longer controversial to admit this openly, even if nepotism is not encouraged on an official level (Blasi 1986: 112).

Most kibbutz families reach three or four children (Ben-Rafael 1988: 4) and the average in 1975 was 2.8 (Tiger and Shepher 1975: 223). Among the Jewish population of Israel, the kibbutzim had the highest birth rate of 1.8-1.9 per year in 1980-5 (Van den Berghé and Peter 1988: 526), and, generally, the birth rate has gone up since children have returned to their parents (Maron 1988: 227). While the proportion of children that leave for good has now increased to more than one-half (Ben-Rafael 1988: 131; Liegler and Bergmann 1994: 73), those remaining often bring in marriage partners from the outside (Ben-Rafael 1988: 4). About two-thirds of new members have grown up in the kibbutz (Van den Berghé and Peter 1988: 526), so that without this supply total membership would have long since been on the decline.

Monogamy and communal success

None of these three most successful present-day communes espouses nepotism as a value: officially, all members are to be treated alike. In practice, however, families are taken as the natural building blocks for the wider commune in a quite matter-of-fact way, and what efforts there were to suppress 'philoprogenitiveness' among kibbutzniks have

been abandoned, finding their most vociferous opponents in precisely those second-generation mothers who had experienced children's houses for themselves (Frelling-Albers 1988: 106). Wider kinship is also clearly important in all three cases. Furthermore, the three communes depend on natural growth to an astonishing degree. Finally, where changes have occurred, these were more in the direction of familism rather than less. It must be concluded, then, that Hutterites, Bruderhof communities and kibbutzim benefit from their monogamous family and kinship patterns, very likely more so than if they were to follow their anti-nepotistic official precepts more determinedly.

A number of other, younger, present-day communes provide further support for this argument. Shinkyō (founded in 1939) and Ōyamato ajisai mura (founded in 1946) in Japan, Koinonia (founded in 1942) in the United States and the Arche communities (Communautés de L'Arche) in France and neighbouring countries (founded in 1948) will very likely exist for longer than, for example, Woman's Commonwealth. While they seem to have a larger proportion of singles and fewer mutual kin ties among their members than compared to the three most successful communes (personal visit to the Japanese communes; Day 1990: 119; Lee 1971: 172-3; Lanza del Vasto 1978: 205-6; Popenoe and Popenoe 1984: 141, 143), they also rely on monogamous marriage and the family, and do not implement alternative versions of communal family policy. Obviously, the presumed loyalty conflict between family and commune does not reach a dysfunctional level in any of these cases.⁹

Celibate communes

Even some of the communes that officially favoured celibacy were not so different from the aforementioned cases. Of the ten cases listed above, five are included among the nine nineteenth-century communes that Kanter regards as successful in her study (1972: 248-9), in which she gives celibacy as one reason for their longevity (1972: 82, 87, 92). At least for two of these cases, however, this argument appears highly dubious. Zoar, a settlement of German immigrants adhering to Protestant Separatism, was fully celibate until 1828 or 1830 (Randall 1971: 20), and members paid lip service to the supremacy of celibacy until the dissolution (Carpenter 1975: 205; Nordhoff 1960: 108). The majority, however, lived in monogamous families, and the children's houses that had been introduced were closed in 1845 (Randall 1971: 46). The Inspirationists of Amana, also German and Protestant in

origin, had much respect for celibacy in the beginning, when an unusually large portion of members remained single and when leadership positions were preferentially filled from their ranks (Andelson 1974: 439-42). Almost until the end, members were temporarily demoted in rank after marriage or childbirth (Andelson 1974: 202-3), and elders and school teachers had to remain unmarried if that was their status when nominated (Andelson 1974: 164, 341). The majority of members, however, did marry and lived and received their allowances as families (Andelson 1974: 44, 107-8). There is ample evidence for the importance of wider kinship (Barthel 1984: 43-5), e.g. in the choice of marriage partners (Yambura 1961: 176-7) and the allocation of influential positions (Andelson 1974: 64-9, 171, 176-8). Thus, Amana was much closer to the kibbutzim and the Hutterites than its official preference for celibacy would suggest. Moreover, in both Zoar and Amana it was the children and grandchildren of founding members who lived in the commune in its later years and kept it going (cf. Andelson 1974: 329, 448-9; Nordhoff 1960: 108; Randall 1971: 48). A comparison between Amana and the strictly celibate Harmony is instructive: Harmony's absolute duration is twelve years longer, but Amana was far more successful in remaining a stable and 'healthy' communal institution. Its population did not fall below 90 per cent of the former membership maximum in more than 70 years and never fell below 75 per cent (cf. Andelson 1974: 326, 329), and none of the seven villages had to be closed prematurely. In contrast, Harmony had to live with less than 20 per cent of its former maximum for its last forty years, needed throngs of outsiders to keep up its economy and was dissolved when there were only three members left. Clearly then, compromising with celibacy improved the survival chances of those communes that praised it but stopped short of its strict enforcement.¹⁰

Moreover, even in some of those communes that were strictly celibate, nepotism played a role at least for a while. In the early years of the Shakers, numerous large, often extended, families (Brewer 1986: 23, 31-2, 35-6; Paterwic 1991: 27-8, 29-30) joined the communal settlements. Some of the primary living and property units – which were called 'families' – numbered between thirty and 100 people and almost half of each unit's members had the same family name (Brewer 1986: 69). This suggests that families were not separated after joining the commune. Families also rose together: several family names appear with significant regularity among prominent Shakers of the first period (Stein 1992: 92), for example the related Wells and Young families

whose members held many important positions (Stein 1992: 31–2, 54). For a while, the two male members of the ‘central ministry’, the supreme leadership body, had the same family name (Stein 1992: 92, 122) and may have been brothers. According to Brewer, ‘[t]he stability that these kinship networks provided was considerable, and was a key factor in the early success of the sect’ (Brewer 1986: 23). She also believes that kinship was more important in the past than can be demonstrated with the remaining sources (Brewer 1986: 36), at least until the recruitment of entire families became less significant after the 1840s (Brewer 1986: 138). The other major historian of the Shakers agrees that ‘“natural relations” ... still counted in the world of Believers’ (Stein 1992: 92).

Group marriage communes

It might be expected that the more unconventional option of doing away with family and kinship that was chosen by Oneida should lead to more substantive results. However, even here family and kinship feelings were not entirely eradicated, and the commune may have profited in the end. John Humphrey Noyes made his first and most loyal converts among his own siblings (Carden 1969: 18–19, 21) and initiated marriages between these and other important but unrelated followers (Dalsimer 1975: 33; Parker 1973: 93, 95). It was only after having consolidated the group that Noyes introduced ‘complex marriage’ (Robertson 1981: 75–6).

Less successful were Noyes’s much later attempts to institute his son, Theodore Noyes, as his successor. Theodore proved incompetent for the leadership position and also held grave doubts about his father and his religion, and the ensuing opposition contributed to the demise of the commune a few years later (Robertson 1972). Yet John Humphrey Noyes believed sincerely in the superiority of his family line² (Carden 1969: 63), which made him sire nine (Parker 1973: 257) or ten children instead of the one or two that were permitted to the other male participants in the ‘stirpiculture’ programme (Carden 1969: 63). It is apparent that Noyes’s own unacknowledged nepotism blinded him to his son’s shortcomings. Ordinary members found it no less problematic to refrain from ‘philoprogenitiveness’. In documents of the commune, repeated injunctions are made against too narrow relationships between mother and child (Robertson 1981: 317–8, 319–20), and Theodore Noyes’s attempt to take the right to care for their own children’s clothing away from the mothers was answered

with stern refusal (Dalsimer 1975: 147). There are numerous hints suggesting that the commitment of many members towards the commune as supreme educator was at best half-hearted, so that a good number of mothers, children (Dalsimer 1975: 168–82; Robertson 1981: 14) and fathers (Wayland-Smith 1988: 43) suffered from the arrangement.

Finally, the break-up of the commune was preceded by a surprisingly swift and easy return to monogamy. After John Humphrey Noyes had suggested abolishing the experiment in 1879 (Carden 1969: 103), members formed thirty-seven monogamous couples in addition to those that had existed previously and were now revitalised. Most of the marriages took place within the next three months (Carden 1969: 103–4, 118–19; Parker 1973: 286; Dalsimer 1975: 282), although – because many adults had children with more than one partner – sixteen women, twelve of them mothers, remained single (Carden 1969: 119). Even when the uncertain prospect of an unmarried future is taken into account, it is still significant that after more than thirty years of complex marriage, returning to customary practices was not beyond the powers of most members.

An interesting modern parallel is provided by the AAO (‘Aktionsanalytische Organisation’), an Austrian group marriage that became communal in 1973 and built up branches in several European countries. Its charismatic leader, the former teacher and performance artist Otto Mühl, looked down with contempt on the ‘KEM’ or ‘Kleinfamilienmenschen’ (small family persons) of bourgeois society and denounced them as ‘*Detis*’ (short for ‘*denkende Tiere*’, i.e. thinking animals). Nevertheless, the women of the group sought status by being his sex partners and giving birth to his children (Schlothauer 1992: 90–1, 106, 128). When the commune disbanded, genetic testing prescribed by legal authorities showed Mühl to be the father of only eight children and not the twenty to thirty that had generally been assumed (Schlothauer 1992: 171), meaning that there must have been social advantages that encouraged the mothers to report the leader as the father in case of doubt. In the commune’s last years, Mühl tried to build up his infant son Atilia as his successor and also legally married the child’s mother (Schlothauer 1992: 125–6), causing considerable estrangement among the members who finally denoted him in 1990 and disbanded shortly after.

Alternatives to strict monogamy

It would go too far, however, to assume that familism and nepotism are the 'natural' destiny of all communes. For one, in the celibate cases not hitherto mentioned, they were apparently even less consequential than among the Shakers. And there are also monogamous communes where the bonds of blood and marriage hardly play a role, with some of them being candidates for life-spans similar to the cases listed above. One of these is Twin Oaks, a rural commune in Virginia founded in 1967 (Kinkade 1973, 1994; Komar 1983; <http://www.twinoaks.org/tohome.htm>). Most of its members come from the alternative segment of the educated middle class and hold critical attitudes towards establishment concepts and institutions. With regard to partnership and family, they are generally more tolerant and flexible than average Americans. Owing to the egalitarian nature of the commune, '[i]f any one constant does exist, it is that the absence of even a subtle group pressure allows everyone the freedom to explore their sexual natures more fully than most other contemporary settings' (Komar 1983: 262–3). Within the last decade, children have never amounted to more than one-fifth of the membership (Fellowship for Intentional Community 1995: 208; Kinkade 1994: 2; McLaughlin and Davidson 1985: 117), and families with children have been few in number throughout (personal communication from a Twin Oaks member). Despite some homosexual and occasional multiple relationships (Kinkade 1994: 177, 180), the majority of members live in stable heterosexual couples (Komar 1983: 264; information from Twin Oaks). Nevertheless, legal marriages are rare (Kinkade 1994: 117), and the ideal of a life-long relationship plays only a minor role for many members (Kinkade 1994: 177, 183–4; Komar 1983: 268). Members' love lives are regarded as their private affairs (Kinkade 1994: 177, 186). 'People do what they can for themselves, and government keeps its hands off', as one member states (Kinkade 1994: 186).

The special needs of members with children are acknowledged when educational costs up to a set limit are paid by the commune (Kinkade 1994: 146–7; information from Twin Oaks) and caring for one's children is at least in part creditable to one's personal workload (Kinkade 1994: 152). Communal child care, however, stopped a few years ago (Kinkade 1994: 143–52) and there are only few among the several households that will accept children (Kinkade 1994: 152). Despite explicit efforts towards integrating families, Twin Oaks remains a commune primarily of and for singles, and the latter often

choose communal life as an alternative to ordinary family life on the outside. This is rarely a terminal decision since in spite of a growing determination on the part of many members to stay (Kinkade 1994: 294), the average time lived in the commune has not yet risen above 5.5 years (*Leaves of Twin Oaks*, January 1993: 8). Thus, communal membership is not more than a life cycle stage for many and may be preceded or followed by family life. Twin Oaks has never attempted to raise its children as future members, and, so far, only one child that grew up in the commune has joined it as an adult (*Leaves of Twin Oaks*, Winter 1995: 15). This means that any investment in child care and education would hardly contribute to institutional survival since the continuity of the commune so far has depended on its capacity to attract single adults.

Riverside, an agricultural commune in New Zealand, presents a similar picture. It was founded by Christian pacifists in 1941 and prohibited divorce for a long time (Rain 1991: 51–2, 56, 94–5, 143; Popenoe and Popenoe 1984: 263). In 1971, however, the former religious fundamentals were dropped, and most new members in the following years came from hippie and alternative backgrounds. While marriage and family are still more important than in Twin Oaks, single and single-parent households have become the majority (Rain 1991: 143; personal communication from a Riverside member), and the general attitude towards partnership and family life increasingly resembles that of Twin Oaks (Rain 1991: 95, 143–4, 153, 156, 160; Popenoe and Popenoe 1984: 258). My more fragmentary information about younger, yet also stable and promising, communes such as East Wind (founded in 1973) and Sandhill Farm (founded in 1974) in the United States (Federation of Egalitarian Communities n.d.; <http://www.eastwind.org/>; and *Niederkaufungen* in Germany (founded in 1986; personal visit) hints at a similar situation.

All these groups tolerate partnership and family arrangements that would be unthinkable among Hutterites and Bruderhof members and would still be controversial in the kibbutzim. But nevertheless, members of Twin Oaks, Riverside and the other communes I mentioned are still mainly – though often serially and not always legally – monogamous, and none of these cases prescribes any specific practices, so that the patterns imported from counter-cultural 'peer segments' in outside society remain largely unchanged. Thus, communes must not be strictly monogamous and family-orientated if they are to remain in good shape for a long time, and as long as they stay close to the established practices of the members' cultural background.

This is corroborated by the only well-described commune from a non-monogamous setting. Aiyetoro in Nigeria was formed by a splinter group of an indigenous Yoruba-Christian church and became a communal settlement in 1948. Located on the coast, it supported itself with fishing, ferry services and small-scale manufacturing. Owing to its syncretist Christian background, members were to live in strict monogamy while the polygynous marriages of the Yoruba ambient society were reserved for the leadership alone (Barrett 1974: 24, 1978: 118–19). Moreover, men and women lived in separate quarters and could only visit each other (Barrett 1974: 25), and children were taken from their parents when they reached school age (Barrett 1974: 24–5, 31–3, 65). Twice in its history, the commune even went so far as to abolish marriage completely, bringing about a situation where lovers could be chosen freely. This did not continue for more than one and three years respectively, however, and the group returned to strict monogamy thereafter (Barrett 1974: 23–4).

Yet in Aiyetoro as well, the years of decline from 1966 to 1972 were accompanied by a backslide into conventional patterns – conventional to the specific cultural background. Married couples started to live together again, children returned to their parents, and it was not monogamy that was most sought after now but the polygynous marriages of high-status Yoruba (Barrett 1977: 65, 80, 137).

Conclusions

While uncommon marriage, family and kinship practices clearly do work in communes, ‘philoprogenitiveness’ in those cases that have done nothing to suppress it has not subverted, but, rather, supported an active long-term survival. Moreover, it is the three most stable and durable present-day communes that display the strongest sense of family and kinship.

Since no systematic empirical research about the effects of family and kinship on communes has been undertaken – not even for the best-studied cases (‘ethnographic study of kibbutz kinship is lacking’ (Bowes 1989: 155)) – one can only speculate about the reasons for their resilience. It appears that marriage and the family fulfil certain emotional, affective and sexual needs efficiently while, at the same time, the loyalty conflicts expected by Noyes’s and Kanter’s zero-sum logic do not occur. Rather, it seems likely that members who are allowed some degree of intimacy within the smaller social unit of a family can become all the more committed to the commune, maybe

precisely because the family allows them to find occasional relief from the wider unit. Moreover, communal property sharing frees families from the burden of economic responsibility, including the care for children. This should make communal families more carefree than those in conventional society. In any event, family and kinship have proven to be building blocks for communal longevity rather than obstacles, and they are not easily done away with even by the most determined attempts.

This result might be seen as evidence for a general nepotistic tendency of humans, leading us to the insight that – by virtue of being the kinship animal – we had better avoid any practices that contradict our ‘nature’. The examples of Twin Oaks, Riverside and Aiyetoro, however, lead me to a more careful conclusion. I suppose that, within the emotionally charged field of marriage, family and kinship, large deviations from what is considered as appropriate in a commune’s society of origin – or ‘peer segments’ therein, such as alternative culture for Twin Oaks and Riverside – are very difficult to accomplish, even more so since members remain in contact with ordinary society and are continually challenged by its orthodoxy. Therefore, in terms of long-term functionality it seems to pay off for Utopian communes to remain non-Utopian with regard to marriage, family and kinship, staying close to what members are anyway familiar with. A commune may then focus on realising other goals while saving the energy that is necessary to struggle successfully with the heavy cultural baggage that members have brought along.

Notes

- 1 Communes are also often termed ‘communal groups’, ‘communitarian groups’ (Hostetler 1974b) or ‘intentional communities’ (Andelson 1996), although the use of these words is not always restricted to cases that share their property. I consider it sound to draw such a boundary line here, however, since fully communal groups are especially interesting from a social theoretical point of view. Being one of the most extreme forms of egalitarian co-operation, they should be particularly prone to what has been called the ‘tragedy of the commons’ (Hardin 1968), i.e. the devastating consequences of widespread freeriding in the absence of effective controls. While state control or private property arrangements are often seen as the only way out of the commons dilemma, a number of theoretical contributions have argued that egalitarian co-operation and sustainable resource management can arise voluntarily (e.g. Hechter 1987; Ostrom 1990; Taylor 1982), drawing support for this argumentation also from game theoretical models (Axelrod 1984; Schüßler 1989, 1990: 61–95; Taylor 1987: 82–108). Traditional societies all over the world provide

empirical evidence for the validity of this assumption (cf., for example, McCay and Acheson 1987).

Research on communes and intentional communities – both in the strict and loose sense – has a surprisingly large number of *affirmandos* in all of the social sciences and thrived especially in the 1970s when thousands of communes were founded in Europe, North America and Japan. There is a Communal Studies Association (CSA) in the United States and an International Communal Studies Association (ICSA), which is presently based in Israel (Yad Tabenkin, PO Ramat-Eilal 52960). Both associations organise conferences and publish newsletters. CSA also publishes the academic journal, *Communal Societies*, and has a website (<http://www.well.com/user/cmty/csa>) from which further interesting links can be pursued. The University of Indiana houses a Center for Communal Studies that has recently started a master's programme. Dare (1990) and T. Miller (1990) have provided useful guides to the literature on what makes up the lion's share of the total, namely American communes. See also the more comprehensive bibliography compiled by John Goodin for CSA (cf. its newsletter and website) and the cited references of Brumann (1998).

2 According to several fragmentary data (Peter 1987: 226, note 1; Hartse 1994a: 70; Shenker 1986: 159), the permanent defecation rate should not exceed 10 per cent. The fertility decline has been caused by a higher marriage age (Peter 1987: 155–6), but also by the practice of Hutterite women to have themselves sterilised after a number of births. Hutterite men either do not object, or find themselves unable to interfere when the outside physicians that the Hutterites consult recommend surgery for health reasons (Peter 1987: 150, 170, 201).

3 The dissident's viewpoint is expressed by Bohlsen-Zumpe (1993), Pleil (1994) and at the website of the Peregrine Foundation at <http://www.perefound.org>. The latter also offers a scholarly article on the conflicts (T. Miller 1993).

4 One is tempted to interpret this outcome as the victory of patrilineally over primogeniture as the legitimate succession principle, since it was the (unfaithful) husband of Eberhard Arnold's oldest child that was demoted. The commune, however, interprets the struggle as one over religious issues. My brief sketch hardly does justice to the complexity of events. For one, the Arnold patrilineage itself has not remained free from internal divisions. One brother of Heinrich Arnold has been excluded for many years (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: 146–7), and other Arnold descendants have also become dissidents (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: 179–80, 212), so that about half of Eberhard Arnold's many grandchildren live outside the commune now, with Heinrich being the only child of five whose children have all stayed (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: unnumbered page, opposite 1). Moreover, resentment against the Arnold family has been felt repeatedly within the Bruderhof, a fact that one official historical account does nothing to hide (Mow 1989: 130, 142, 149, 174, 304–5). The Arnold family's predominance has been termed 'a problem which needs to be addressed' even in one text that the group itself has offered on the Internet (Goettinger 1995). Obviously, members' feelings about this issue are ambivalent. The Arnolds' central position as such, however, is not even questioned by the dissidents.

One of their spokespersons, Elizabeth Bohlsen-Zumpe, is a daughter of the expelled son-in-law of Eberhard Arnold. In her highly critical account of Bruderhof history, she deems it appropriate to start with a genealogical tree of the Arnold family (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: unnumbered page, opposite 1), which the reader of her book could well do without. Before being expelled herself, she reports of having become the victim of an oppositional, yet kinship-orientated – and Arnold-fixated – discourse, when being accused in the following way: 'Peter replied that, "Religious exaggeration and highly-strung spiritual awareness" was all too common among the Arnolds, and, after all, I was one too' (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: 161). 'Margarette was to stay with me because "I was an Arnold," after all, and with "our emotional inheritance of unbalanced feelings," I might try to commit suicide' (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: 163). 'Arno and Peter came and stood next to my bed, saying how this was typical Zumpe or Arnold ... behavior to try and get attention through their physical ailments' (Bohlsen-Zumpe 1993: 167).

5 Hereditary succession of a commune's charismatic founder/leader may also have benefited a few other cases. Of five Japanese Utopian communes, where the charismatic leader had died, two nominated a descendant as successor: in Fukuzato Tetsugaku Jikkenjō (founded in 1970) the daughter took over when her mother died, and in Ito-en (founded in 1913) the founder was succeeded by his grandson. While the problem of transcending the charismatic leader has not been entirely solved in either case, both communes are in a comparatively better state than two others, Atarashiki mura (founded in 1918) and Shinkyō (founded in 1939), where no successor has been named and the symptoms of decline are more perceptible. Yamagishi-kai (founded in 1958) has also failed to name a successor, but in this case this seems to have worked well because the dead founder is hardly ever mentioned, in contrast to the other four communes, whose identity and public self-image – as is usually the case in communes formed around a charismatic leader (Brumann 1998) – heavily depends on the founder figure (Brumann 1996, forthcoming). Harmony might also have profited from dynastic succession. Frederick, the adopted son of the leader George Rapp, co-operated closely and, most of the time, fruitfully with his father during his lifetime but died before him (Arndt 1965: 313–14, 315, 319, 425–33, 530–1).

6 The seventeen orthodox Jewish kibbutzim (Liegle and Bergmann 1994: 45, note) amount to 6 per cent of the total number.

7 These single members may be permitted to work outside the kibbutz (Boves 1989: 40), to go on holiday trips for singles that the kibbutz federations arrange or to consult their match-making offices (Spito 1972: 274; Tiger and Shepher 1975: 39).

8 It seems that large kin groups, although now a common feature, are still a somewhat 'foreign' idea to a society that never thought of building itself on kinship in the first place.

9 Neither does another kind of extension of family-orientated behaviour towards the wider communal unit occur with the certainty that has been assumed. For the kibbutzim, it has been noted by a number of observers that members who had been reared within the same peer group of six to

eight same-aged children occupying one children's house reported sibling-like feelings towards one another. Although there was no prohibition, they rarely if ever married or even had sexual intercourse in their adult life. Shepherd takes this finding as evidence to back up an older theory of Westermarck (1891), explaining incest avoidance by the sexual uninterest or even aversion that arises when the prospective mates grow up together. Since it is normally siblings that will do so, they avoid each other for this reason and not predominantly because of their relatedness (Shepherd 1971, 1983: 51–62).

Hutterites and Amana, however, show that closeness in childhood alone need not prevent mutual attraction and the forging of marriages. Peters found one Hutterite colony where more than one-third of all marriages were within the colony (Peters 1965: 92), and, according to Stephenson, this was true for no less than 42 per cent of all marriages among the *Lehmentur* branch in 1971, with the *Darisdentur* branch being hardly any different (Stephenson 1991: 126). (These two branches add up to more than one-half of all Hutterites since there is only one more traditional branch, the *Schmidlentur*.) These figures are all the more significant since first-cousin marriage is avoided, so that the choice of marriageable members within the same settlement – in any event comprising rarely more than 160 to 170 members (Olsen 1987: 828) – is rather restricted. In the seven Amana villages, the proportion of intra-village marriages lay continually above 60 per cent until 1909, and it never fell below 40 per cent afterwards (Andelson 1974: 451). At their peak, Amana villages had on average about 260 inhabitants (Andelson 1974: 326), so that here again the number of children within any one age group was clearly limited. Since in both cases children are cared for collectively during daytime after the first two or three years (Hostetler 1974a: 208–14; Andelson 1974: 82), more than enough closeness should be able to develop between same-aged children. Nonetheless, there is no indication that intra-settlement marriages are less happy or produce less children than those between settlements, contrary to what would be predicted by Shepherd's theory (1983: 62–7). And in the case that any systematic and marked age gaps in Hutterite and Amana couples are responsible, these have not been reported in the literature.

Thus, other factors must explain the kibbutz observations. The key difference between the kibbutzim on the one hand, and the Hutterites and Amana on the other, seems to be that, first, children in the latter cases sleep in their family's apartment rather than in children's houses, and that, second, both Hutterites and Amana boys and girls are segregated in many ways from the beginning of collective education, starting with distinct dress. Moreover, this dress covers a great deal of body and hair, especially in the case of girls (Hostetler 1974a: 174; Shambaugh 1976: 143–4). In contrast, there was no gender separation in kibbutz education. On the contrary, nakedness in front of one another and sexual play were not repressed in any way during childhood. It was only after puberty that sexual shame set in and adolescents started to sexually avoid each other (Spiro 1982: 152–3). Moreover, a later study found that after single-sex bedrooms were introduced, love affairs within peer groups became much

more common (Spiro 1982: 155–6). Therefore, it seems to be the intensity of exposure rather than mere closeness alone that leads to sexual aversion. Whether the latter is subconsciously acquired, as argued by Shepherd and Westermarck, or rather must be seen as the result of a self-directed and conscious repression of desires in the face of sexual tensions, as argued by Spiro (1982: 153–7), is still a different question. In any event, the Hutterite and Amana cases deserve further scrutiny and a systematic comparison of intra- and inter-settlement marriages. Such a study should be simplified by the fact that solid demographic data are available for both groups.

¹⁰ Even strictly celibate Harmony profited from the four to seven children born per year in the first two decades when infringements still occurred (Arndt 1965: 418); these stayed on and kept the group alive in the end (Arndt 1971: 105), although on a lesser scale than in Zoar and Amana. Bethel and Aurora, another Protestant German commune similar to the aforementioned ones, was never celibate, although Kanter implicitly claims the contrary when including it among the successful cases (see above). There are hints that the charismatic leader, Wilhelm Keil – himself married and the father of many children (Hendricks 1933: 3–4, 127) – regarded the celibacy of some of the younger members with some sympathy and that the overall proportion of singles was higher than among the commune's neighbours (Heming 1990: 34). Most members, however, lived in monogamous families that were not subject to centralised control or restrictions.

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