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The Elementary  
Structures of Kinship

*(Les Structures élémentaires de la Parenté)*

*Revised Edition*

*Translated from the French*

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and from exchange to intermarriage, and the exchange of brides is merely the conclusion to an uninterrupted process of reciprocal gifts, which effects the transition from hostility to alliance, from anxiety to confidence, and from fear to friendship.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lévi-Strauss, 1943a; 1943b, pp. 398–409.

## CHAPTER VI

# Dual Organization

### I

The fundamental characteristic of marriage as a form of exchange is seen particularly clearly in the case of dual organizations. This term defines a system in which the members of the community, whether it be a tribe or a village, are divided into two parts which maintain complex relationships varying from open hostility to very close intimacy, and with which various forms of rivalry and co-operation are usually associated. These moieties are often exogamous, that is, the men of one moiety can choose their wives only from the other, and vice versa. When the division into moieties does not regulate marriages, this rôle is frequently assumed by other forms of grouping. There may be a second bipartition of the group, parallel or perpendicular to this earlier division, the moieties may embrace exogamous clans, sub-clans or lineages, or, lastly, the modalities of marriage may depend upon specialized forms called marriage classes.

Dual organizations have numerous features in common apart from this direct or indirect exogamy. Descent is most often matrilineal; two culture heroes, sometimes older and younger brothers, sometimes twins, play an important part in the mythology; the bipartition of the social group is often continued into a bipartition of the universe into animate and inanimate objects, and the moieties are connected with such characteristic opposites as Red and White, Red and Black, Clear and Dark, Day and Night, Summer and Winter, North and South or East and West, Sky and Earth, Terra Firma and Sea or Water, Left and Right, Upstream and Downstream, Superior and Inferior, Good and Evil, Strong and Weak, Elder and Younger. Along with dual organizations there is sometimes a dichotomy of power between a secular chief and a sacred chief, or a secular chief and a military chief. Finally, the moieties are linked not only by the exchange of women, but by the furnishing of reciprocal prestations and counter-prestations of an economic, social and ceremonial nature. These links are frequently expressed in ritual games, which clearly show that double attitude of rivalry and solidarity which is the most striking feature of relationships between moieties. Sports races in North-east and Central Brazil, and ball games, with exactly the same function, in Australia and North, South and Central America

provide examples of these. These similarities in detail have often suggested the hypothesis that dual organizations have spread from a single point of origin. We believe rather that these similarities rest on a common basis, reciprocity, which has a functional character and which must have an independent existence in countless human communities. As we shall try to show, the dual system does not give rise to reciprocity, but merely gives it form. This could at times have been a local discovery, subsequently imposed by conquest or borrowed for its convenience. It could never have spread if the basic conditions making its adoption desirable or facilitating its imposition had not been present everywhere.

The distribution of dual organizations has features which make this type of organization particularly remarkable. These features are not apparent among all peoples but are encountered in all parts of the world, and generally at the most primitive levels of culture. This distribution therefore suggests a functional character peculiar to archaic cultures rather than a single unique origin. Naturally, there are exceptions, but in support of this view it may be pointed out that in more numerous cases still it is possible to discern vague outlines or survivals of dual organization among neighbours evolved from groups which exhibit this organization more definitively. Thus in Indonesia, traces of dual organizations may be found among the Sakai of Sumatra, in the Macassar region, and in central and southern Celebes, on Sumba, Flores, Timor, and in the Moluccas. There is evidence and some suggestion that they existed, and still exist, in the Carolines and Palau of Micronesia. They are found in New Guinea, in the Torres Straits and the Murray Islands. In Melanesia, Codrington, Rivers, Fox and Deacon express their agreement in almost the same words, that dual organizations are the most archaic social structure. Finally, traces or embryonic forms have been observed in the Banks Islands, the New Hebrides, Fiji (by Hocart), Samoa, Tahiti, and perhaps even on Easter Island: 'The ten tribes or *mata* were split into two groups that were probably nothing more nor less than two hostile confederations', writes Métraux of the former social organization of this island.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, in another work, the same author points to the belief in a mythical dichotomy which accounts for the very origin of these tribes,<sup>2</sup> and he describes the forms of ritual co-operation between *Tuu* and *Hotu-iti*.<sup>3</sup> It is unnecessary to dwell on Australia, for the division into exogamous moieties is known to be a frequent feature of Australian aboriginal cultures and has nowhere else been subject to such refinements.

Writers of the sixteenth century had already pointed out forms of dualism in Central America and Mexico, and during the same period similar indications were forthcoming for Peru. In North America, moieties extend widely throughout the whole eastern zone, notably among the Creek, Chickasaw, Natchez, Yuchi, Iroquois and Algonquins. They are found in the cultures of the Plains, distinctly or as survivals, among the Sauk-Fox,

<sup>1</sup> Métraux, 1941, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* 1940, pp. 124-5.

Menomoni, Omaha, Kansas, Osage and Winnebago, and as less and less clear vestiges among the western groups. They are lacking in particular among the Arapaho and the Cheyenne, but reappear in the primitive cultures of central California. Finally, it has been only in the last ten years or so, but with a richness which has all the force of a proof, that dual organization has been observed in the most primitive cultures of South America. If dual organization, which is present at least in principle among the Nuer, the tribes of the Lobi branch, and the Bemba of Northern Rhodesia,<sup>1</sup> nevertheless seems less common in Africa than elsewhere, it could be shown that even where there is no dual organization certain mechanisms of reciprocity persist which are functionally equivalent to this type or organization. Among the Nuer of the White Nile, whose clans are still split even today into exogamous pairs, their origin is explained in the following myth:

'A certain Gau, who descended from heaven, married Kwong (according to one account an even earlier arrival from heaven), by whom he had two sons, Gaa and Kwook, and a number of daughters. As there was no one with whom these could marry, Gau assigned several daughters to each of his sons, and to avert the calamities that follow incest he performed the ceremony of splitting a bullock longitudinally, decreeing that the two groups might intermarry but that neither might marry within itself.'<sup>2</sup>

This myth obviously accounts for the theoretical origin of exogamous pairs. The same author tells us that among the Bari, where this dichotomy is unknown, the same 'splitting ceremony' is observed when there is some uncertainty as to the kinship relationships of the two who are engaged to be married. Here then, the theoretical risk of incest is avoided by an ideal reconstitution of a correlative and antagonistic couple. Moreover, the sacrifice of the bullock or goat to ward off an abnormal relationship between the spouses is widely spread throughout Africa, and elsewhere it has significant equivalents.

It is true that we might be guilty here of begging the question, since we seem to assume, instead of proving, as is our object, the basic identity of dual organization and customs which on the surface vary greatly. Nothing is more dangerous to a sound method of research than to adopt such a vague and elastic definition of the institution under examination that afterwards it is difficult not to read everything into it. The study of dual organization has especially suffered from this type of excess.

Wherever dual organization appears, it has a certain number of consequences. The most important of these is that individuals are defined in relationship to each other essentially by whether they belong or do not belong to the same moiety. This feature does not change, whatever the mode

<sup>1</sup> Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Labouret, 1931; Richards, 1937, pp. 188-93; Haekel, 1938, p. 654.

<sup>2</sup> Seligman and Seligman, 1932, p. 207.

of transmitting the moiety's name may be. Whether it be through the male or the female line, the mother's collaterals will always be grouped in one category, and the father's in another. Consequently, a single term will usually serve to designate the mother and her sisters, and likewise another for the father and his brothers. This system, which is usually far more complex, has been called 'the classificatory kinship system', and it can be seen that its specific nature is very readily accounted for by dual organization. For this reason, Tylor and Frazer have suggested that dual organization can always be postulated at the origin of the classificatory system. As the classificatory system exists, or can be found in almost all human societies, the seriousness of this hypothesis can be seen, since it implies nothing less than the universality of dual organization. We believe it impossible to hold this hypothesis in such a strict form, for we have already indicated that the essential thing, as we see it, is not dual organization but the principle of reciprocity of which it constitutes, in some way, the codification. But we agree that the classificatory system can be seen as proof of the generality, if not of dual organization itself, then at least of mechanisms, potentially more flexible and capable of functioning independently of any systematic apparatus, which none the less attest to the fundamental rôle of this principle of reciprocity.

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Where does dual organization begin and where does it end? Moieties have this in common with clans, that descent is always unilineal. But we know of societies divided into clans and being without dual organization, societies with clans grouped into moieties, and lastly, societies with moieties not subdivided into clans. The principal difference between moieties and clans seems then to be one of size.

Let us take the simplest hypothesis – and the most favourable one – viz., that in which both clans and moieties are exogamous. An immediate distinction has to be made. For a clan to be exogamous does not inform us as to the marriage rules in the society considered. We would only know that an individual cannot seek his spouse in his own clan. To which clan should he turn? What degrees of closeness are permitted? Do preferential unions exist? This we do not know. The Crow Indians are divided into thirteen exogamous clans. All we learn from this is that a man can regard twelve out of every thirteen women as a possible spouse. Apart from the scale, the marriage rule is as indeterminate as in our own society.

The situation is wholly different in a society similarly divided into several unilineal groups, each of which, however, maintains defined marriage relationships with one or several others. For example, suppose that group *A* and group *B* always intermarry, and that it is the same for group *C* and group *D*, group *E* and group *F*, and so on; or else, that group *A* gives women to group *B*, which gives its women to group *C*, which in turn gives its women

to group *D*, and so on . . . or any other analogous combination. In every instance here, the groups together represent a system, which was already true in the case of the previous hypothesis. But the system now has a stable structure, and a marriage law may be isolated for every combination, informing us completely as to the nature of the exchanges in whatever group is being considered. The term *clan* will be reserved for unilineal groupings which, in that they are exogamous, permit a purely negative definition, and the term *class*, or more exactly, *marriage class*, to those groupings which permit a positive determination of the modalities of exchange.

The distinction between the two forms is not always easy to make. There are clans which have none of the characteristics peculiar to classes. The Tupi-Cawahib of the Upper Madeira have such clans, each comprising one or more villages occupying an hereditary territory. There are twenty clans, and the only marriage rule is a recommendation to take a wife from outside. Thus each clan finds itself in the position of maintaining marriage relationships with several others, there being no limit to the number, no permanency in the alliances, and no marked preference for any particular combination. Obviously, in cases of this type, it cannot be said that the clan is not a functional unit. Its exogamous nature alone makes it such. But this functional rôle is reduced to a minimum and the factors determining the number of clans, their appearance and disappearance, their geographical location and their numerical importance, are more historical than anything else.<sup>1</sup>

With the Bororo, who have already been referred to,<sup>2</sup> the situation is more complex. The clans are unequal in number and importance. Their distribution and even their internal structure vary from village to village. Nevertheless, the clans are always distributed among two exogamous moieties and two other ceremonial moieties. Furthermore, the clans are linked in twos, or in more complex combinations, through marriage preferences which yet are not strict. Consequently, we are dealing with social categories possessing the characteristics of both clans and classes, without these characteristics completely overlapping. By contrast, among the Kachin of Burma marriage is regulated by two large groupings which are simultaneously both clans and classes.<sup>3</sup> Finally, in Australia there are marriage classes which are not clans, since the successive members of the same line of descent can be assigned to different classes.<sup>4</sup>

The distinction, however, is of great theoretical importance. If we try to interpret dual organization as a particular case of clan organization, and, more precisely, to compare moieties with a system with *n* clans in which *n* = 2, we meet with insoluble difficulties. As long as *n* > 2, the notion of

<sup>1</sup> Lévi-Strauss, 1948b.

<sup>2</sup> cf. pp. 48-9. The Mundurucu likewise have exogamous moieties, one (White Moiety) composed of nineteen clans, the other (Red Moiety) of fifteen clans. According to legend, these clans, formerly rival tribes, became 'brothers'. There are also clans which maintain closer relationships and are called *i-barip*, 'related', Kruse, 1934, pp. 50-7.

<sup>3</sup> cf. ch. XV.

<sup>4</sup> cf. ch. XI.

clan is not bound up with any positive determination, or only with very vague determinations. But when the number of groups falls to two, everything changes, negative determinations become positive, and instead of it being impossible for a man to marry into one group, he learns that he must marry into the other. Generally speaking, for every act of social life governed by dual organization, a *partner* is immediately identifiable. Hence Lowie's embarrassment in trying to treat moieties as clans: 'It is a puzzling question how this reciprocity is to be interpreted',<sup>1</sup> and his subsequent abandonment of this position.<sup>2</sup>

But moieties belong in fact, not to the 'clan' series, but to the 'class' series, and it is not enough that the number of clans be reduced to two, through demographic extinction or for any other reason, for a dual organization to emerge. Lowie rightly quotes the case of the Crow who today have only two military societies, the 'Foxes' and the 'Lumpwoods'. There were seven when Maximilian visited them.<sup>3</sup> The pseudo-dualism on this occasion has no significance from the dual organization standpoint. It would be the same if, as exemplified in South America, two clans surviving from a more complex organization together sought alliance with other villages or tribes. Thus the much discussed problem of whether clan organization resulted from a subdivision of moieties, or whether moieties were formed by an aggregation of clans has no significance whatsoever. Both are possible, as examples given below will show. Moreover, they are not the only possible methods. Dual organization may result from the establishment of organic ties between two villages, and even between two tribes. I myself have seen this happen between two tribes which did not speak the same language, and develop to such a point that only the names of the moieties were missing for there to be a characteristic and definite dual organization.<sup>4</sup>

These considerations perhaps provide an answer to a recent polemic on the unique or multiple origin of dual organization. Against Olson, who supports the former interpretation,<sup>5</sup> Lowie points out that institutions which are to all appearances heterogeneous are confused under the title of dual organization.<sup>6</sup> In North America alone the Iroquois have exogamous moieties consisting of several clans; the Hidatsa, non-exogamous moieties but also consisting of several clans; the Fox and the Yuchi, non-exogamous moieties, organized without any reference to clans; the Crow and the Kansas, indeterminate phratries; the Creek, ceremonial and non-exogamous moieties; the Keres and the Tewa, ceremonial moieties, tending to endogamy with the transfer of the wife to the husband's moiety if she does not belong there in the first place; and so on. In short, the one common characteristic of moieties is that there are two of them, and the duality is called upon to play

<sup>1</sup> Lowie, 1961, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* 1934, p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.* 1924, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> Lévi-Strauss, 1943*b*; legend, as has been seen, attributes the same origin to the Mundurucu clans (cf. note 2, previous page).

<sup>5</sup> Olson, 1933, pp. 351-422.

<sup>6</sup> Lowie, 1961.

highly varying rôles as the circumstances require. Sometimes it governs marriages, economic exchanges and ritual, sometimes just some of these, and sometimes only sporting contests. There would thus appear to be as many different institutions as there are distinguishable modalities. Lowie even goes so far as to treat systems with patrilineal moieties and systems with matrilineal moieties, systems with exogamous moieties and systems with non-exogamous moieties, as virtually independent 'species'.<sup>1</sup>

The American sociologist is no doubt right in attacking certain abuses. Yet this attack must extend to the very nature of these abuses. Olson and his predecessors, principally Perry,<sup>2</sup> were doubly wrong. They defined dual organization in the most complex and most developed form that it is capable of attaining, and whenever they observed a hint or embryo of dualism they interpreted it as a vestige of this complex form and as a sign of its former existence. In that case, as Lowie once jokingly observed, the duality of political parties in the United States might be the survival of a former dual organization in which Democrats and Republicans acted as moieties.

But if dual organization rarely reaches the institutional stage, it nevertheless has to do with the same psychological and logical roots as all those sketchy or partial forms, sometimes simply outlines, which are formulations of the principle of reciprocity for the same reason (though not always as systematically) as dual organization is just such a formulation. Accordingly, dual organization is not in the first place an institution. If we wished to interpret it in this way, our search for its beginning and its end would be doomed as hopeless, and we would risk being thrown back on Lowie's atomism and nominalism. It is, above all, a principle of organization, capable of widely varying and, in particular, of more or less elaborated, applications. In some cases, the principle applies only to sporting competition. In others, it extends to political life (and the question of whether the two-party system is not an indication of dualism can be put without fear of absurdity), in others again, to religious and ceremonial life. Finally, it may extend to the marriage system. In all these forms, there is a difference of degree, not of kind; of generality, and not of type. To understand their common basis, inquiry must be directed to certain fundamental structures of the human mind, rather than to some privileged region of the world or to a certain period in the history of civilization.

It has been pointed out that we are ignorant of the origin and evolution of dual organizations, as well as their forms of decomposition. However, must the edict setting them up in some particular case be known for their functional validity to be affirmed? Inversely, must certain definite cases of dual organizations having undergone changes due entirely to contingent events such as wars, migrations, internal struggles, and so on, necessarily lead to the affirmation of their historical origin? American ethnologists were pleased to show how interpretations which are too theoretical can come to grief, when

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.* 1940, p. 427.

<sup>2</sup> Perry, 1923.

it was established that the number and distribution of exogamous units in certain systems had varied in a relatively short space of time. They concluded that such unstable structures elude all systematic analysis.<sup>1</sup> But this is to confuse the principle of reciprocity, which is always at work and always oriented in the same direction, with the often brittle and almost always incomplete institutional structures continually used by it to realize the same ends. The contrast, the apparent contradiction, we might almost say, between the functional permanence of systems of reciprocity, and the contingency of the institutional matter placed at their disposal by history, and moreover ceaselessly reshaped by it, is supplementary proof of the instrumentality of these systems. Whatever the changes, the same force is always at work, and it is always to the same effect that it organizes the elements offered or abandoned to it.

In this respect, discussion is no substitute for the three examples analysed in the following pages. They are drawn from three different regions, and reveal, firstly, how dual organization can arise, secondly, the crises to which it is exposed, and thirdly, the specific modifications which it causes in a social system which may be observed independently of its action.

## III

The Motu and the Koita of New Guinea were originally two different tribes. Nevertheless, they tended to bring their villages together. The new village was either formed simply from two groups of houses, or the two villages remained distinct although contiguous. In certain cases, the Motu penetrated into Koita territory, and in others the opposite happened. However, marriage exchanges have in general been so frequent that it is difficult to find 'in the eastern moiety any considerable number of people of Koita blood who have remained pure for three generations'.<sup>2</sup> In particular, the social structure is so organized that one may no longer dare to distinguish the legacy of history from the conscious or unconscious ends of the system. Thus the centre of Poreporena today consists of four villages grouped into two sub-divisions, each comprising a Koita village and a Motu village.

Hohodai (K.)	}	Hanuabada	}	Poreporena
Hanuabada (M.)				
Tanobada (M.)	}	Tanobada		
Guriu (K.)				

The reasons for each particular migration are to be found in demographic, political, economic or seasonal circumstances. Nevertheless, the general result gives proof of integrating forces which are independent of such

<sup>1</sup> Lowie, 1940; Kroeber, 1938, pp. 305-7.

<sup>2</sup> Seligman, 1910, p. 45 et seq.

conditions, and under the influence of which history has tended towards system.

The Mekeo, also studied by Seligman, provide an even more striking example. The plan of their social organization is a subtle and complex symmetry, and the historical vicissitudes to which its component elements have been exposed have never succeeded in abating its strictness. Legend connects the origin of the Mekeo with successive migrations caused in the first place by a quarrel as to the *ongoye* bird's laugh, which some said was oral and others supposed to be anal. In addition to the fights between factions and migrations, apparently alluded to in this legend, Seligman cites war, revenge, and transfers of territory. The history of the Inawi and Inawae villages is crammed full of such factors.<sup>1</sup>

And yet the villages coincide with social units whose nature, number and distribution cannot be the mere results of chance. The Mekeo are divided into two groups, *Ofa* and *Vee*. Each group is in turn subdivided into two *ngopu*, meaning 'group of common descent', and named Inawi and Inawae for the *Ofa*, and Ngangai and Kuapengi for the *Vee*. Each *ngopu* consists of one, two or several *pangua*, clans or local groups within the village, while the clan is divided into sections, each characterized by a men's house or *ufu*.

To a certain extent it is known how a *pangua* subdivides and gives rise to new units. A *pangua* normally consists of several *ikupu* or enlarged families. An *ikupu* can acquire a jural personality by proclaiming itself the 'younger section' (*ekëi*) of a *pangua*, and the other *ikupu* of the *pangua* are then known as the 'older section' (*fāngiaiu*). It can also break completely with its clan and found a new *pangua*. There is a third process of subdivision whereby the *pangua* gives rise to two groups, on the one hand *fāa aui* or *lopia aui*, which is always a segment of the older section and includes the political chief, and, on the other, *io aui*, which can be a segment of the younger section but always includes the war chief. Demographic pressure, internal quarrels, economic inequalities, political ambition or the desire for prestige, seem to be the principal motives in these processes of fission, and Seligman gives detailed examples of them.<sup>2</sup>

And yet, each *pangua*, or *ikupu* group within the *pangua*, maintains a particular type of relationship with certain *pangua*, or *ikupu* groups in the same or different *pangua*. *Pangua* or *ikupu* interjoined by this special tie are called *ufuapie*, or 'men's house from the other side of the village'. The *ufuapie* exchange prestations which are economic, legal, matrimonial, religious, or ceremonial as the case may be, and it is no exaggeration to say that the *ufuapie* relationship is the regulating principle for the whole social life of the Mekeo. In one sense, then, the *ufuapie* structure is the final cause of the complex system of *ngopu*, *pangua*, *ikupu* and *ufu*. There is so much truth in this that, in referring to the native theory which reduces the disorder and apparent confusion of present-day groups to two sections (*Biofa* and

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.* pp. 315-19.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* pp. 328-46.

*Vee*), each consisting in two *ngopu* which are *ufuapie* in relationship to one another, Seligman, at the end of a detailed analysis, acknowledges that 'the conditions actually existing . . . are almost exactly those required by the hypothesis founded upon native history'.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the social structure of the Mekeo has been modified by two factors, firstly, by migratory movements which have introduced allogeneous elements, and secondly, by an internal tendency: 'There is, and apparently always has been, a centrifugal tendency which, with the absence of a central dominating authority, has permitted the formation of a large number of *pangua* by fission from the parent stock.'<sup>2</sup> The ancient organization of the *Biofa* and the *Vee*, each divided into two exogamous moieties with reciprocal prestations, has been complicated and diversified. However, it is still revealed in the *ufuapie* relationship, which can be explained less as a historical survival than as a regulating principle which, though no doubt imperfectly, has nevertheless continued to exist.

## IV

This respective independence of the principle of reciprocity and the temporary institutions in which it is expressed, whatever the society and whatever the moment in its history, stand out equally clearly among the Naga of Assam. Their northern and eastern representatives, the Konyak, are divided into two linguistic groups, Thendu and Thenkoh, and are also distinguished by peculiarities of clothing. Both groups are endogamous, whether they live in the same village<sup>3</sup> or in different villages.<sup>4</sup> But each village has a men's house or *morung*, some having two, others more. Each *morung* corresponds to a *khel* or subdivision of the village, and groups together several hierarchized clans among which marriage is forbidden. In certain cases at least, then, the *morung* functions as an exogamous unit. Nevertheless, the existence of clan exogamy does not prejudice the exogamy of the *morung*, and in certain villages, Wakching for example, the *morung* are coupled to form two exogamous pairs, viz., Oukheang and Thepong, on the one hand, and Balang and Bala on the other. Marriage is concluded by an exchange of gifts between the bridegroom and his parents-in-law 'which is repeated at intervals until his death and in some cases for even longer'.<sup>5</sup> This system of prestations between *morung* regulates the whole economic and ceremonial life of villages practising it. Thus, 'the *morung* of the Konyak Nagas are the centres of village life and the pillars of their social and political organization. The *morung* system regulates the relations of every man and woman with the other members of the community, and forms a framework for the numerous mutual obligations between individuals and groups. It strengthens the sense of social unity . . . and at the same time encourages competition . . . thus stimulating the activities of the whole village.'<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seligman, 1910, p. 352.    <sup>2</sup> *ibid.* p. 367.    <sup>3</sup> Hutton, 1921b, p. 114 et seq.  
<sup>4</sup> von Fürer-Haimendorf, 1938.    <sup>5</sup> *ibid.* p. 362.    <sup>6</sup> *ibid.* p. 376.

This basic system of reciprocal rights and duties is at the constant mercy of conflicts and quarrels which necessitate a complete reorganization of the structure. According to custom, the Thepong boys once rebuilt the *yo* (the girls' dormitory) for the Bala girls. They thus acquired the privilege of courting these Bala girls in the *yo*. The Thepong boys became aware that the girls also received visits from some Ang-ban boys who had no such right. Their reproaches being ineffectual, the Thepong invaded the *yo* and cut down the bamboo bed platforms. The girls, outraged, then demanded a fine, which the boys refused to pay unless the girls also paid a fine for having illegally received the Ang-ban. Tempers were lost on both sides, and relations were completely broken off between the Thepong boys and the Bala girls. The two groups no longer sing or dance together, they go separately to the fields, and they no longer exchange gifts. In these circumstances, the Ang-ban clan has maintained good relations with both the Thepong and the Bala, and by interposing itself between the two has prevented interruption of the circuit of prestations. For their part, the Bala and Thepong have opened a new cycle of relationships with other *morung*.<sup>1</sup>

Another incident, which its narrators traced back to the beginning of the century, is equally typical. The men of the Bala *morung* had made themselves unpopular because of their arrogance and quarrelsome nature. One day one of them fell into a game pit dug by a man from Chingtang, and died from his wounds. Although this was only an accident, the Bala swore to take revenge. The other *morung* intervened with the Bala, asking that they be content with a heavy fine. The Chingtang said they were quite willing to pay, but the Bala refused, lay in ambush, and inadvertently killed a Wakching woman instead of the Chingtang they were expecting.

The other *morung* then lost their patience and demanded that the Bala should deliver the two culprits to Wakching, in order to avoid a war between the two villages. However, the culprits escaped, and the Bala satisfied Wakching by buying a slave whose head served to avenge the murder.

The incident might then seem to have been settled. However, relations between Bala and Thepong continued to worsen, and a quarrel about the rights in a certain song ended in an open fight. Both *morung* fought desperately, not only with clubs, which are generally used in fights of this type, but also by throwing stones. The Bala even attacked their adversaries with spears and wounded several of them. Furious at such a violation of the rules, the Thepong killed a Bala.

From then on all hope of peace was lost. The four *morung*, Oukheang, Thepong, Balang and Ang-ban, decided to finish once and for all with the trouble-makers. But since it is forbidden to destroy a *khel* of one's own village, they asked the Ang of Chi to do the job for them. The Ang of Chi agreed on condition that the people of Wakching place one of Chi's younger

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.* p. 364.

brothers at the head of their own Ang. It was in these circumstances that the Bala *khel* was burnt down and its members driven out.

However, the Bala did not entirely disappear. Some found refuge among the Balang, although the latter had participated in the conspiracy. But the Balang had attacked the Bala as a different *morung* to their own, not as their fellow-clansmen in that *morung*. As such, the Bala had a right to be protected by the Balang, and knowing this took refuge only with those *morung* with which they could not intermarry, and not with their relatives-in-law. The Bala *morung* had disappeared, but a good half of its numbers were accepted among the Balang and treated as such. Only fifteen years later was the Bala *morung* rebuilt and reopened.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that in most cases such events do account for the present-day form of a social structure, but it would be singularly shortsighted not to see beyond this. Despite incident, conflict and destruction, the structures just considered still remain structures of reciprocity. Their true nature derives from those factors which cause them to survive as such, and not from the spasmodic history which continually forces them to readapt.

## v

The Yokut and the Western Mono of California provide just as striking an example, since here is a group in which only certain elements are affected by dual organization, and then not to the same extent. In particular, where this dual organization does exist, it is superimposed upon a more general form of organization which it specifies and amplifies without being inconsistent with or replacing it. This general form of organization consists firstly in a system of patrilineages which it is agreed today is basic to the social life of Californian tribes, and secondly, in a continual demand for reciprocal prestations between persons, families, lineages, villages, or tribes: 'On all occasions of . . . jubilation or sorrow there was always a reciprocal group who supplied services or gifts which were balanced with gifts of equivalent value in the form of bead money, baskets, feather ornaments, furs, or foodstuffs.'<sup>2</sup> Roughly speaking there are, on the one hand, groups (or more exactly partners, since relationships of reciprocity exist between two groups, two persons, or even a person and a group, as in the case of propitiatory rites to the totem of an animal which has been hunted and killed), and on the other, a network of bilateral relationships between these partners. At the same time, marriage is prohibited between all the *ta.a'ti* or kin, including all cousins up to the second and sometimes even the third degree.

What happens in the Mono or Yokut tribes which superimpose a division into moieties upon this general organization? Nothing changes and nothing is omitted, but the moieties do add something: firstly, a further type of correlative opposition with a function analogous to the previous types;

<sup>1</sup> von Fürer-Haimendorf, 1938, pp. 366-7.

<sup>2</sup> Gayton, 1945, p. 416.

secondly, a principle of systematization allowing the grouping and simplification of the previous network of relationships; and, finally, a common method for handling relationships (such as marriage) which prior to this had not been consciously assimilated to reciprocity.

The moieties, like the lineages, are patrilineal, and the grouping of the lineages into moieties does not prevent them from keeping their respective totems. Nevertheless, the totems acquire an order or arrangement which they previously lacked, for they too are divided between the two moieties. 'For example, the Tachi assigned Eagle, Crow, Falcon, etc., to the *Tokelyuwis̄* moiety, Bear, Raven, Coyote, etc., to the *Nutuwis̄* moiety.'<sup>1</sup> A man whose patrilineage has the crow as its symbol is then both Crow (with respect to lineage) and *Tokelyuwis̄* (with respect to moiety). He shows the customary respect for his own symbol, and at least perfunctory respect for all other symbols of his moiety. Likewise, on ceremonial occasions, the bipartite tribes classify the products from collecting and hunting into *Tokelyuwis̄* (seeds and mushrooms) and *Nutuwis̄* (berries, birds, game). The moiety 'owning' the food would collect the first fruits and offer them to the other moiety. This second moiety must take its share in order to lift the alimentary prohibition that would otherwise be imposed upon the first group. In the tribes without moieties redemption ceremonies for an animal killed during hunting are observed by the eponymous lineage. In tribes with moieties, these ceremonies become the business of one of the two principal divisions, the interested family having no more than an officiating rôle.<sup>2</sup>

There are other changes also. The official titles ('chief' and 'messengers') are the prerogative of the Eagle and Dove lineages in the tribes without moieties. In tribes with moieties, the Eagle lineage (*Tokelyuwis̄* moiety) keeps the first place in the hierarchy. But a second chief, from the Coyote lineage, appears in the *Nutuwis̄* moiety, and the Eagle-Coyote duality becomes characteristic of the whole organization. In this way, authority acquires a dual structure that it otherwise lacks. But the marriage system merits special attention. There is no complete rupture with the rules previously described. Cross-cousin marriage remains prohibited, and marriage within the moiety is possible when there is no known relation of kinship. However, a person tends to apply the term *ta.a'ti* to all members of his moiety. Moiety exogamy, without being compulsory, corresponds to a general tendency, 70 to 75 per cent of marriages among the Yokut being exogamous. The Yokut and Western Mono observe the annual mourning ceremony in conjunction with a neighbouring tribe which acts as partner for the exchange of prestations and counter-prestations. The guest tribe does not have to be the same one every year, but in tribes with moieties the reciprocal pairing must always be a *Tokelyuwis̄* moiety of the host tribe and a *Nutuwis̄* moiety of the guest tribe, or vice versa. However, reciprocity is not all embracing. It is not one moiety accepting another, but rather a

<sup>1</sup> *ibid.* p. 420.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* pp. 420-2.



general principle applying to all the constituents (families and persons) of both the respective groups. The family of the host chief receives the family of the guest chief, and, depending upon their particular relationship, the families are thus grouped into host and guest pairings. Thus the principle remains whereby the lineage continues to be the fundamental social unit, cutting across hamlet, village, homogeneous tribe, or tribe divided into moieties.<sup>1</sup>

As the author of these observations rightly says, the Californian moieties are not crystallized institutions corresponding to rigorously defined concepts. Rather, they reveal a principle of reciprocal grouping, according to associated or opposed poles, of the very same constituents found among peoples without moieties in the same region, viz., the person, the family, the lineage, or the tribe. There is a general preponderance of the patrilineage, and where there are moieties these serve only to intensify and extend the mechanisms of reciprocity which are equally characteristic of the whole region, without prejudice to the forms of organization which everywhere correspond to them.<sup>2</sup>

## VI

These facts tally with others which might have been added in revealing dual organization less as an institution with certain precise and identifiable features than as a method for solving multiple problems. It is from this multiplicity of content that dual organizations draw their apparent heterogeneity. However, it would be wrong to confuse this basic diversity with the simple and constant form imposed upon it. On the contrary, the extreme generality of this form can be recognized without falling into those two traps of purely historical ideas, viz., general history and the monographic study.

Even in societies where the clan (as defined above) is the predominant form or organization, rough outlines of classes can be seen appearing when the normal system does not provide any ready-made solution to unexpected problems. Few people seem so far removed from dual organization as the Ifugao of the Philippines, who prohibit marriage between first cousins, and, apart from exceptions, between second and third cousins. Furthermore, in the case of such exceptions, a special ritual beginning with a sham fight must be observed. The bridegroom's family would proceed in arms to the bride's village, where her family, likewise armed, were waiting for them. The two groups would then start an argument more or less as Barton has reconstructed it:<sup>3</sup>

BOY'S KINDRED: We have come for the debt you owe us.

GIRL'S KINDRED: Debt? We owe you nothing. We borrow only within our own family!

BOY'S KINDRED: Is it lost? Have you forgotten?

<sup>1</sup> Gayton, 1945, pp. 420-4.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* p. 425.

<sup>3</sup> Barton, 1946, pp. 164-5.

GIRL'S KINDRED: Yes, of course it's lost because we never borrowed.

Take your impudence to your own village and get out!

BOY'S KINDRED: What? Are you quarrelsome? Well, let's fight it out.

A sham fight would then ensue, but with real weapons, and although the weapons were not aimed at anyone in particular, the natives recount that it was best for a man 'to keep his eyes open because there might be bad shots'. A short time later someone would cry out: 'Enough, enough! Let's arrange it by an intermarriage, else a pity for our bodies.' Rites of pacification would then be celebrated, followed by invocations to the gods and ancestors: 'Ye ancestors are involved because we who were enemies are making peace . . . Let not the children who introduce an intermarriage (to terminate their enmity) become rusty or fat-sided.'<sup>1</sup> Consequently, for marriage to be possible within the exogamous group, there has to be a real, or at least, a simulated rupture of this group. This brings to mind those peoples of New Britain where the moieties are referred to as 'the boundaries of marriage',<sup>2</sup> or the people of Guadalcanal, who are divided into exogamous moieties, and who refer to marriage between members of the same division as having broken the moiety.<sup>3</sup> In Africa, as we have seen, the same mechanisms have a very general field of application.

This functional aspect of dual organization is not always as obvious as in the following example from a region where marriage is usually concluded between villages, and where the whole village helps pay the price for the marriage of each of its members. However,

'in one village where marriage within the village had occurred a row of logs across the centre of the village divided it into halves. These halves acted to each other with all the forms used between separate villages connected by marriage . . . In validating the marriage of another of their village members who had married normally outside the village both halves sank their division and worked together, the one for the other's business and reciprocally co-operating and pooling their wealth, instead of halving it and exchanging their half's respective pools, as they did when validating the marriage within the village.'<sup>4</sup>

Thus we can see emerge, on a purely empirical level, the notions of opposition and correlation basic to the definition of the dualistic principle, which is itself only one modality of the principle of reciprocity.

<sup>1</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Hogbin, 1937, p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> Trevitt, 1939, p. 355.

<sup>4</sup> Fortune, 1932, pp. 60-1.