

But our procedure has its disadvantages. Occasionally, the concepts that we have adopted after much trial and error do not exactly fit in any scientific tradition. Thus, scholars may feel that we have defined familiar terms in an unorthodox manner. It might be better if we had introduced artificial symbols for designations. Although this might have eliminated irksome connotations, the discourse would have become unnecessarily clumsy and difficult to follow. We have therefore tried to strike a middle road. As a rule, we have adopted terms whose common meaning came nearest to the one intended by us; at the same time, giving them precise denotations by way of careful definitions, and then invariably sticking to one meaning even if this did not exactly add to the elegance of diction.

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#### ETHNICITY

With all these qualifications and mental reservations, however, we cannot do entirely without at least a minimal vocabulary as a starting point for the ensuing discussion. Our key term will be *ethnicity*. By it we shall understand the ethnic aspect in social behavior. It generally expresses the fact that certain people are socially defined as belonging together by virtue of common descent. Ethnicity may be said to be dominant if it is salient in the orientation of social action, especially in determining the personnel of a social unit as well as the rights and obligations of the people involved.

A global society in which the ethnic principle of action orientation is dominant, that is, in which social action is primarily defined in ethnic terms, we shall call an *ethnic society*. Because in common parlance as well as in professional language, *society* has at least seven or eight possible meanings (cf. Francis, 1963, pp. 418f.), we shall use the term *global society* to indicate the most comprehensive type of social collectivities with which people actually identify themselves at a given place and time, and within which solidarity may be activated. Not only global societies but also their components may be dominated by ethnicity. In this sense we shall speak of *ethnic communities*, *ethnic subsocieties*, *ethnic groups*, and so on.

We shall occasionally find it difficult to determine from the outset under which class of social phenomena a particular unit of observation should logically be classified; for this reason, until the point has been clarified, we need a more general term. We shall call an *ethnic unit* any major collectivity that is socially defined in terms of common descent. Our discussion will furthermore reveal that societal units that are ethnically quite heterogeneous and actually based on territorial, economic, or political principles of social organization may be reinterpreted and socially redefined as if they were based on shared ethnicity. We shall call such units *secondary ethnic societies*. More precise definitions for each of these terms will be supplied as we go along.



Global societies are rarely completely self-sufficient and isolated. Together with other global societies, they operate within a wider social context with somewhat vague boundaries. Insofar as such a context is defined in ethnic terms, we shall speak of an *ethnie*. Obviously, the ethnic factor differentiates people as much as it identifies them. We therefore shall use the phrase *shared ethnicity* to indicate that an aggregate of people are considered as belonging together because of the belief that they are descended from one, however distant, ancestor, ancestral pair, or ancestral group.

*Genealogical Relationships.* Before we can attempt to give a more precise meaning to the notion of ethnicity, we must pay attention to two more basic and ubiquitous dimensions of social organization: genealogical and spatial relationships. A genealogical relationship exists when people are socially defined as forming a social unit or category, as "belonging together," because they are considered related to each other through consanguinity ("blood") or affinity (by marriage). Groups based on the genealogical principle of social action orientation include the family and various other kinds of kinship groups, such as the lineage and the clan.

Wherever the rule of exogamy prevails, members of one family naturally belong to different lineages and clans. Yet marriage and family bonds are the principal mechanisms by which several kinship groups are joined together into larger structures. Thus, in a given population intermarriage between members of many different kinship groups often produces an intricate web of consanguinal and affinal relationships. Even if interaction between the components of a social web primarily based on genealogies is infrequent and intermittent; even if social ties are rather loose; and if the cohesion of the whole remains so rudimentary that it can hardly be described as one "global society"—such a unit nevertheless lends itself to the social interpretation that underlies the notion of what we have called *shared ethnicity*.

*Spatial Relationships.* The second fundamental dimension of social organization is spatial relationship. It is based on the fact that people are commonly defined as forming a social unit because they live together in one place, and because they collectively make their living there, usually by exploiting its natural resources. (Spatial proximity is not only one precondition for establishing social relations, but where technology is less developed, it is the most important precondition.) Spatial relationship can also reinforce genealogical relationships. Not only do larger kinship groups tend to reside in one place and to occupy and exploit the same territory, but living in the same locality increases the chance of intermarriage, thus multiplying kinship ties. Accordingly, there is a tendency to extend the notion of shared ethnicity to the population of a definite place or territory, even if actual genealogical relationship between all its component family and kinship groups cannot be established nor clearly remembered.

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*Consciousness of Ethnicity.* We must not imagine that the people forming an ethnic unit are constantly aware of being a definite aggregate of related persons occupying a territory with definite geographical boundaries beyond which lie the lands of different ethnic units; or that their shared ethnicity is constantly evident in their thoughts and actions. Whereas the family or the local community are matters of immediate daily experience, the ethnic unit—vaguely conceived as a complex web of kinship ties (often more symbolic than real) covering a wider territory—more often than not is of latent significance but only rarely activated. A fact it is, nevertheless, and it has its definite consequences for actual behavior under certain circumstances. Moreover, it cannot be taken for granted that populations having a common language and culture, being subject to one political power structure, or exhibiting similar racial (or subracial) characteristics are necessarily identical with those real societal units which we have described as ethnic. For these can only be identified by determining how far actual social behavior is guided by the principle of ethnicity.

There are yet other circumstances that complicate the task of discovering real ethnic units. Although these latter belong to the largest order of societal units in which traces of identification and solidarity may be ascertained, there are still other units that may be activated in different situations. Thus, shared territory may serve a function similar to that of shared ethnicity in establishing a societal unit and in legitimizing it. The phrase "shared territory" refers to the fact that people are defined socially as belonging together because they occupy a circumscribed area of land and exploit its resources cooperatively. Then again, political unity may be symbolized and legitimized by reference to territorial jurisdiction. The total web of processes that makes up a societal unit may be likened to an assemblage of magnetic fields, each affecting different populations and becoming activated in different situations. Two such fields are of primary interest to us: the ethnic field, the attraction of which is exerted through the dimension of kinship in the widest sense; and the demotic field, the attraction of which is felt in the political dimension.

A further distinction will help bring order to the wealth of available ethnographic materials. Ordinarily, social scientists are dealing with politically organized societies. Yet the study of social systems having no distinct and separate political institutions is apt to throw considerable light on the nature of ethnicity. Whilst among some of them, like the Mandari, societal identity and solidarity is derived from legitimate and religiously sanctioned ownership of, and jurisdiction over, a definite territory; others, like the Nuer, stress genealogical and ethnic bonds to set themselves off from all others who do not belong. Societies in which the exercise of political power is diffused among a variety of subsocietal structures performing many other functions as well have been called "segmented political systems," "tribes without rulers," or "acephalous societies," a term coined by Max Weber.

More common, however, is the type of societal unit with differentiated political institutions where political functions and authority are vested in special

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agencies acting for the whole. When found in primitive societies, this type conforms frequently to the modern notion of a global society. There is no great difficulty in defining a politically organized tribal society in terms of identity and solidarity. As far as the first criterion is concerned, we should distinguish between synchronic identity, which answers the question of who belongs to a given society at a given time, and diachronic identity, which answers the question of how the collective identity of a society is maintained through time. In some of the cases to be discussed below, synchronic identity is based on the allegiance of individuals and groups to one definite ruler. By *allegiance* we understand the recognition of a binding obligation to support a ruler and to submit to his political authority. In such instances, the identity of the tribal society through time may be derived from the continuity through descent within the dynasty, clan, or lineage to which successive rulers belong. Although solidarity is expressed mainly through participation in some subtribal unit, sentiments of loyalty and devoted attachment to the ruler, and thereby to the tribe as such, can be readily activated in emergencies such as war or other situations involving the tribe's existence and well-being.

## PLAN OF PART I

In the following analysis of type cases we propose to progress from simpler to increasingly complex social structures; from tribes without rulers to politically organized societies; and in Part II, from tribal societies to empires and nation-states. Our primary concern is always the meaning of ethnicity and its specific role in various social interaction patterns, and the integration of ethnically diverse groups in existing societal units. We are, however, interested neither in the origin of human society nor in the goal towards which mankind is progressing. Man, in his attempt to solve the problems of his existence, to make social life possible, tolerable, and productive of higher values, has gone many different ways in the course of the ages, and has invented many different devices of social organization only to discard them again and to start out in another direction. The particular arrangement of our case studies was determined with a view towards discovering fundamental elements of social organization and of social change wherever we were able to ascertain them empirically. Thus, the logical sequence of presentation was chosen because it seemed best to serve our stated purpose not to indicate a necessary sequence from the simple to the complex.

Our first concern will be with tribes without rulers. The Nuer case serves as a paradigm of a fairly large ethnue. In proceeding to politically organized tribal societies, we are mainly interested in the manner in which ethnically diverse elements become integrated into a politically organized society. This may be achieved in several ways: (1) by establishing genealogical relationships between a paramount ruler and the chiefs of the component units (type case: the

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