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Preface

The papers in this volume, except for the concluding papers, were presented to an interdisciplinary colloquium arranged by the African Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles, and held in the spring of 1966. They deal with the nature and social consequences of pluralism, and with problems of social cohesion and change in plural societies. The contributions have been arranged in four parts: Part I is introductory and consists of theoretical papers; Part II presents case studies in pre-colonial, white settler, colonial, and independent African societies; Part III is a discussion of general perspectives; and Part IV presents our conclusions in regard to theories of pluralism and conceptual approaches. While the case studies deal with pluralism in African societies, the theoretical interest extends beyond the boundaries of Africa to a general concern with the relations between groups under conditions of structural, social, and cultural pluralism.

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Chapter 2  Institutional and Political Conditions of Pluralism

M. G. Smith

Pluralism is a condition in which members of a common society are internally distinguished by fundamental differences in their institutional practice. Where present, such differences are not distributed at random; they normally cluster, and by their clusters they simultaneously identify institutionally distinct aggregates or groups, and establish deep social divisions between them. The prevalence of such systematic disassociation between the members of institutionally distinct collectivities within a single society constitutes pluralism. Thus pluralism simultaneously connotes a social structure characterized by fundamental discontinuities and cleavages, and a cultural complex based on systematic institutional diversity. In this paper I try to isolate the minimal conditions essential and sufficient to constitute pluralism. I try also to show how such conditions generate and sustain social cleavages that distinguish pluralities, while other combinations of institutional and social differences differ in their structural expression. Having summarily indicated some of the principal forms that social pluralism may take, I review briefly the modes and conditions by which it may be stabilized or transformed.

Pluralism may be defined with equal cogency and precision in institutional or in political terms. Politically these features have very distinctive forms and conditions, and in their most extreme state, the plural society, they constitute a polity of peculiar though variable type. Specific political features of social pluralism center in the corporate constitution of the total society. Under these conditions the basic corporate divisions within the society usually coincide with the lines of institutional cleavage, reinforcing and generally converting them into deep and rigid inequalities in social and political life. The enforcement and maintenance of these corporate divisions and inequalities are then normally identified
with the preservation of social order and stability. Any modification in the political and social relations between these corporate divisions involves corresponding changes in the conditions of social structure. To seek out the conditions essential for this coincidence of corporate boundaries and institutional discontinuity, we have therefore to discover the minimal degrees and forms of institutional divergence which are required to facilitate, promote, or enjoin the sectional closures that plural polity incorporates; and conversely, we need to inquire how various alternative forms of corporate organization may establish, preserve, or foster institutional differentiation, or reduce or deny its public significance, while permitting its persistence or dissolution equally. In effect, we need first to determine the circumstances and ways in which these modes of corporate organization and institutional differentiation interact to support, reinforce, dislocate, or modify one another, and then to identify the conditions requisite for their stabilization or transformation.

I

To analyze the institutional and political conditions of pluralism, it is first necessary to distinguish pluralism from its principal alternatives, and to indicate how its variable range governs its structural significance.

Since institutions are collective modes of action, organization, and orientation, both normative and cognitive, institutional differentiation correspondingly distinguishes collectivities that differ in organization, standardized procedures, norms, beliefs, ideals, and expectations. Quite commonly, all the members of a distinct society share an identical system of institutions. The boundaries of such societies are defined by the maximum span of the institutional system on which their social organization and cohesion are based. Such conditions of institutional homogeneity, which are characteristic of simple societies, represent the polar opposite of the systematic institutional diversity that constitutes pluralism.

Many societies, including the most highly developed industrial societies, seem to stand midway between these extremes. In these societies the entire population, or at least the overwhelming majority, share a common system of basic institutions, while being systematically differentiated at the secondary level of institutional organization in which alternative occupational, political, and religious or ethnic structures predominate. Societies with this combination of common and exclusive institutional affiliations are properly distinguished by their pervasive heterogeneity from the conditions of homogeneity and pluralism already described. These types of societies differ significantly in structure, complexity, modes of integration, and in their capacities for self-generated develop-
Institutional and Political Conditions

ment. Though institutional homogeneity and high levels of organizational complexity are mutually exclusive, and no industrial society is ever institutionally homogeneous, social heterogeneity or pluralism is equally consistent with industrial or preindustrial levels of economic and technological organization. Thus the institutional classification is independent of economic or technological criteria.

The most extreme and politically significant expression of pluralism is to be found in the “plural society,” as J. S. Furnivall appropriately labeled internally autonomous and inclusive political units ruled by institutionally distinct numerical minorities. The subjugated majority of the population in a plural society may or may not share a single common system of institutions; often the people are internally subdivided by their differing institutional allegiances; but in all cases they simultaneously differ in their political status and in their institutional practice and organization from the discrete minority who rule them. In their colonial phase, all recently independent African states were plural societies; and despite independence, most of these ex-colonies retain their plural character with marginal alteration. Thus pluralism and colonialism are not homologous. Colonialism is merely one mode of pluralism, characteristically instituted in the form of a plural society. However, pluralism is by no means confined to plural societies, although it is in those units that it has its purest expression and most profound effects.

One of the major problems that faces emergent nations with a recent colonial past consists in effecting the transition from pluralism to the heterogeneity requisite for their transformation into cohesive national units. Such transformations have not yet occurred in several Latin-American societies, despite relatively long histories of independence. Of European states that faced a similar predicament at an earlier date, we need merely mention Spain, Portugal, Russia, Germany, and France to indicate the various difficulties, processes, and outcomes involved. One of our concerns in this paper is to detect as best we can the most general conditions requisite for those processes of societal transformation and enhanced political integration on which “modernization” directly depends.

II

A society is a self-sufficient, self-perpetuating, and internally autonomous system of social relations. Such a system distinguishes a population occupying a specific territory; but as a system of social relations, the society is clearly distinct from territory or population. The society is the structure of relations through which the population of members is internally organized as joint occupants of a given area. Changes in population
mass or composition, or more obviously in territory, do not themselves directly constitute changes in the social system, although they undoubt­edly affect it in many ways. It is with differences in the systems of social relations which constitute societies that the distinctions between plural­ism, homogeneity, and heterogeneity are directly concerned.

Social relations are either institutionalized or optional in their base, individual or collective in their form. The range and conditions that govern optional relations at both the individual and collective levels are themselves institutionally prescribed and regulated. Thus the inclusive autonomous system of social relations which constitutes a society is directly or indirectly institutionalized. If the members of the society share a common system of institutions, then they will also share a common framework and pattern of social relations; and their internal differentiation by corporate and personal status will be governed by uniform criteria and principles. If the aggregate is institutionally hetero­geneous in its base, then the system of institutionalized relations in which its society consists will be correspondingly heterogeneous in character and form. In consequence, members will differ in the significance they attach to those criteria and principles that regulate their corporate and personal identity and status placement. If the society consists of collectivities divided by fundamental institutional differences, then, within the corresponding corporate divisions whose interrelations constitute the societal level of organization and integration, there will be corresponding diversity of institutionalized relations. In such conditions, members of differing social sections occupy significantly differing positions in relations with one another. In consequence, societies with homogeneous, heterogeneous, and plural institutional systems differ correspondingly in character and structure.

III

Following Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, Nadel, and others, we may define institutions as “standardised modes of co-activity,” a characteristic of social collectivities. Individual habits are subject to institutional regulation but, being personal and optional, even when common among a given primary group, they differ sharply from institutions which are essentially normative, standardized, and sanctioned modes of collective procedure. It is by virtue of sharing common institutions that an aggregate becomes an organized collectivity; and it is precisely because they are neither the only nor the majority of the collectivity that shares common institutions that local communities are not discrete societies but merely subgroups thereof. In short, its institutional foundation transforms an aggregate into a distinct collectivity even in the absence of any
inclusive common organization. Only in consequence of the structural uniformity and functional coherence that a single system of shared and coextensive institutions provides are the acephalous societies familiar to anthropologists analytically or in their members' eyes identified as distinct societal units. Lacking inclusive organization for the collective regulation of their common affairs, these acephalous societies are constituted as institutionally distinct and closed perpetual categories in consequence of their uniform institutional base. Such internal cohesion and external distinctness as they possess, these acephalous societies owe directly to the distinctiveness and homogeneity of their institutional fabric. However, as we shall see, not all homogeneous societies are acephalous; nor are all acephalous societies institutionally homogeneous. While acephalous societies retain their constitution as functionally coherent corporate categories, other societies having a representative central organization for the direction of common collective affairs, including external relations, are accordingly constituted as corporate groups.

The decisive characteristics of all corporations, categorical and other, are their presumed perpetuity, closure, determinate identity, and membership. A category lacks the coextensive organization that is requisite for its constitution as a group. The corporate group, in addition to the features already listed, possesses this inclusive organization, a set of distinctive common affairs, and the procedures and autonomy necessary to regulate them. Societies unified as corporate groups have common political institutions and regulative organs, thereby enhancing the functional integration derived from shared institutions by specializing a single collective structure authorized to administer certain common internal affairs and to represent the unit externally. This structure is itself corporate in basis and form, being presumptively perpetual, closed, with determinate identity, membership, and form, and possessing the authority, organization, and procedures to discharge its collective regulatory functions.

The authority, responsibility, and resources required for this collective regulation may be vested in a corporate office or structure of offices, or in corporate colleges such as councils, parliaments, or senates. Members of these colleges and official structures exercise political functions over the collectivity and on its behalf since these regulatory corporations are institutionalized as the appropriate agencies for political regulation and integration of the whole. If the "centralized" society shares a common system of basic institutions, and continues to derive its primary underlying cohesion and unity from this condition, the central political agencies serve merely to coordinate, mobilize, and direct collective actions and resources as various exigencies require, and to preserve the institu-
tionally requisite conditions for an orderly collective life. Such modes of political organization and activity presuppose the integration of the society concerned by virtue of the symmetrical or complementary interdependences of its corporate elements derived from their shared institutional foundations and modes of action.

Per contra, in a plural society where the rulers form a culturally distinct numerical minority, the aggregate depends for its formation, unity, order, and form primarily on the concentration and active employment of regulative powers by the ruling section through the political framework, in consequence of the institutional cleavages within it, and the exclusive, asymmetrical relations that such cleavages entail. In addition to this primary institutional bifurcation between rulers and ruled, there may be several secondary cultural divisions among the subjugated; but in either case, in the plural society the rulers typically maintain their organization as an exclusive corporate group in order that they may collectively secure and control the political institutions on which the internal order and unity of the aggregate depend, together with their own privileges of status and opportunity. Further, to minimize threats to their regime, the dominant section, through its political organization, actively discourages or suppresses extensive organizations by which the subject population could convert itself from an acephalous, institutionally disprivileged category into a coherent corporate group capable of effective political and social action. Thus the institutional and regulative responsibilities and powers of the central political agencies differ sharply in aggregates of differing institutional base and composition.

The contrast may be summarized most cogently by comparing plural societies and nation-states, the political forms and contexts of modernization. As Broom says, a "nation is the antithesis of plural order. A nation implies common ancestry and cultural homogeneity; a state refers to a dominant political unit, regardless of the variability of its components. A state may contain a plural society."

Analytically we may express the contrast as follows: (1) A nation is usually a single inclusive corporate group whose members—or the majority of them—share common traditions, institutions, history, and ethnic identity. (2) In the nation-state, the state is the derivative political expression of the nation's cohesion and unity. The members of the nation are citizens of the state, which provides all with equal representation, protection, and regulation. Equality of access and obligation to the political organization, and equality of opportunity for participation in the political process, are essentials of national identity and citizenship. Democratic, totalitarian, or dictatorial philosophies of the nation-state all assume these basic relations, although construing them very differently.
(3) Regulatory corporations of the nation-state are equally representative of, binding on, and accessible to all members of the nation as a corporate group.

In the plural society the state is the representative political organ of the ruling section organized as a corporate group, its exclusive and ultimate instrument for the internal domination and corporate control of the institutionally distinct subject populations, who are simultaneously denied political rights, citizenship, and opportunities for their own organization by prescriptions of state, and are accordingly paralyzed as disunited corporate categories. Thus in the plural society the mass of the people are not citizens but subjects; and the state, instead of being the collective political expression of the inclusive aggregate, is merely the external political form of the dominant corporate group, the instrumental framework of its domination, and the ultimate source and expression of prevailing sectional inequalities. Indeed, the political institutions and ideology of the plural society are almost complete antitheses to those of the nation-state, whether democratic or totalitarian. In place of the systematic congruence of representation, access, and accountability which characterizes the nation-state, within the plural society, centralized or acephalous, accessibility, representation, accountability, and power are systematically restricted; and the foundation and primary feature of the polity is its basic division between the rulers, organized as a corporate group, and the ruled, constituted as a leaderless, disorganized residual corporate category, often segmented by its own deep institutional divisions.

Political and social inequalities are as pervasive and fundamental in the plural society as they are ideologically inconsistent with the organization of a modern nation-state, whether democratic or totalitarian. Whereas the citizens of the nation-state, or at least the majority of them, normally share many other common institutions besides the government, in the plural society differential subjugation to the government is often the sole common condition that delimits the aggregate as a unit; and since such a society is established by specifically political action, its boundaries, composition, form, order, continuity, and developmental capacities are all politically codeterminate.

IV

As collectively standardized modes of coactivity, institutions have several interconnected dimensions: activity, social groupings and relations, norms, ideas, values, and orientations. Each institutional system also requires a material base, a social locus, and appropriate resources.

Analytically, the major institutional systems common to all societies,
whatever their developmental level, consist of marriage, family and kinship, education, religion, economy, law, and government. Each of these systems may distinguish and integrate several specific institutional patterns, such as inheritance, property, marketing, bureaucracy, military organization, courts, divorce, adoption, contract, and the like. The form and content of these institutional systems vary widely among societies; and so do their differentiation and interconnections. In the simplest societies, kinship institutions virtually embrace the economy, cult, governmental agencies, modes of social control, education, and law; indeed, in the extreme case there may be no separate agency other than the kinship group which is specialized to discharge these functions. At the other extreme, kinship, marriage, and family are segregated from formal economic, political, and religious planes of action, and, to an increasing degree, from education also. Whereas in the simple undifferentiated society, kinship subsumes these latter institutional relations and activities, in the highly differentiated society, each institutional sphere has its own characteristic modes of organization, procedures of action, resources, aims, rules, values, membership, and ideology; and the higher the level of institutional differentiation and specialization, the greater the complexity of these specific structures and thus of the total social order.

All institutions have two analytically distinct, intimately connected aspects: the cultural and the social. Whether culture is restrictively defined as the symbols, norms, values, and ideational systems of a given population, or more inclusively as their standardized and transmitted patterns of thought and action, all institutional organization has a cultural coefficient, since each institution involves collective norms, ideas, and symbols as well as standardized modes of procedure. But since institutions prescribe norms of social grouping and relation, as for example in law, government, cult, or family, all institutions have prominent sociological aspects in the groups they constitute, and in the structures of status and role which they enjoin.

In consequence of this duality, culture and society are equally rooted in the institutional system on which each human aggregate depends for its inner cohesion, distinctive identity, membership, and boundaries. It follows that an institutionally homogeneous aggregate is also socially and culturally homogeneous; institutional heterogeneity likewise involves social and cultural heterogeneity; and social and cultural pluralism are equally rooted in institutional pluralism.

However, these social and cultural dimensions of heterogeneity and pluralism neither necessarily nor always correspond. This is so for two major reasons. Besides ideational and procedural correlates of social relations, culture includes such systems as language, aesthetic styles,
philosophies, and expressive forms which may be transferred across social boundaries easily and with little social effect. Conversely, systems of social relations may perdure despite substantial shifts in their cultural content or explicit orientations. Thus, despite their common institutional basis and tendencies to congruence, culture and society may vary independently; indeed, their divergent alignments have special importance in contexts of pluralism, as indicated below.

V

Those institutional systems that are common to all societies whatever their developmental level are evidently basic conditions or requisites of any societal organization. These systems include law, cult, economy, socialization, kinship, and government. Even in the most extreme context of pluralism, each aggregate is identified as a unit by its subjugation to a single common government. Beyond this, their institutional divergence may be almost total. In a heterogeneous society the majority of the members share all or most of the common basic institutions, namely, kinship, education, economy, government, law, and cult, despite institutional differences of a secondary level in the economic, educational, occupational, and even religious spheres. Such secondary differentiations are implicit in the functional specializations with which the complexity and development of these societies are inseparably linked; but as Durkheim and others point out, these institutional specializations are functionally interdependent, with the result that, given a shared institutional base, the aggregate derives cohesion from its internal differentiation at the secondary level of institutional development.

Perhaps Holland and the Scandinavian countries best represent this simple model of the heterogeneous society; such countries as Britain or Belgium contain added ethnic differentiations in consequence of their histories. Other heterogeneous societies such as the United States, the Soviet Union, Mexico, or Brazil embrace many plural features which further complicate their organization but do not alter their basic character since these differences only involve demographic minorities of the wider society.

In this context we should distinguish two modes of pluralism which may be combined with predominant societal heterogeneity. In the first and simpler case, the institutionally distinct minority or segments thereof constitute territorially discrete enclaves, as for example do the various tribal remnants on reservations in the United States or the Indians of Chiapas and other areas in Mexico. In such cases the heterogeneous society merely contains a number of plural enclaves whose members form dependent minorities.
Introduction

Alternatively, a heterogeneous society may contain several plural communities, as notably in the southern United States. In their internal organization, these plural communities satisfy all the conditions necessary to distinguish plural communities except that, lacking political and cultural distinctness and autonomy, they remain dependent and subordinate local segments of a wider society; and, lacking the corporate closure with which institutional distinctness provides societies, they are continuously subject to the various pressures and influences developed within the society that surrounds them. In short, as United States political history shows, these plural communities of the South are structurally peculiar local segments of the heterogeneous American society that incorporates them, but neither separate nor independent societies.

We should therefore distinguish heterogeneous societies with plural features from those without, and in the first category, those with plural enclaves from those with plural communities, or from others with both.

The essential criterion of the heterogeneous society is that the majority of its members share a common system of basic institutions, together with systematic differentiation at the secondary level of institutional and organizational specialization. In the plural society, a politically autonomous unit ruled by a culturally distinct and politically privileged minority, the sole institutional framework that incorporates the aggregate is government, which normally has the form of a state. Whether it is redistributive or market-based, the economy of such a unit includes the population differentially.

Plural societies vary in the institutional heterogeneity or homogeneity of their ruling sections. The dominant whites in the Republic of South Africa are institutionally and socially heterogeneous, while the Tutsi of traditional Ruanda or the Muslim Paktuns who ruled Mindus in the Swat Valley were rather the reverse. Only if the ruling section of a plural society is institutionally homogeneous, as in Swat, will the unit remain uncentralized—a polity unified by a common structure of corporate domination, but lacking the forms and integration of a state. Wherever the ruling section in the plural society is institutionally heterogeneous, as in Latin America and the Caribbean colonies, in feudal Europe or the colonial Far East, the plural society is always incorporated within the framework of a state.

VI

In addition to the distinction between centralized and acephalous societies, we should also distinguish societies with reference to their ideological basis and majority orientation as sacred (theocratic) or secular.
In the sacred centralized society, typical for example of Islam, differences of cult and belief divide believers and nonbelievers into two distinct religious and political collectivities. If Jews or Christians are also present in substantial numbers, these dhimmi are also segregated as separate collectivities. Islam prescribes the political exclusion of nonbelievers and their subordination to the community of the Faithful; and in this respect it merely systematizes the orientation that characterizes all theocratic regimes, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Islam further prescribes the organization of the Faithful into a political community with the form of a state under a ruler and a hierarchy of officials. Thus, where devout Muslims constitute the dominant minority, as in many parts of traditional India, Northern Nigeria, and the Niger Bend at various historical periods, the result is a theocratic plural society in which religion provides the basic legitimation and principle of corporate cleavage, irrespective of other shared institutions, such as kinship or economy.

In all theocratic polities the religious bases and conceptions of society as a divinely prescribed order enjoin pluralism solely on religious grounds wherever the dominant congregation is a minority, irrespective of racial, linguistic, or institutional communities across religious boundaries. Normally each ritually ordained social organization is so distinctive in its form and content that differences in religion usually entail corresponding differences in other institutional spheres. However, this was not always true of Protestants and Catholics, whose religious conflicts during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries promoted the secularization of European society. Nor have religious differences within the Buddhist or Muslim communities always involved parallel differences in secular institutions. Often rather minor differences of ritual or belief serve to set coreligionists against one another; but unless contraposed groups are also differentiated institutionally, pluralism has no place in their conflict.

VII

We can now begin to examine the relations between institutional divergences of differing degree and type and pluralism or heterogeneity. Our basic question concerns the minimal combinations of institutional or political difference which are necessary and sufficient to incorporate collectivities as separate sections of a wider society. More precisely, we must also try to show how these differing combinations of institutional or political differentiations come to take such effect. These questions are equally central to our understanding of the social processes and structures of plural and heterogeneous societies.

It is true that differences in the basic institutional systems of two
Introduction

Collectivities constitute pluralism and establish plural societies where the minority, by reason of its superior resources and organization, dominates the majority, whose institutional organization and resources reduce their capacity for resistance. The ensuing domination may be based on conquest, negotiation, enslavement, indenture, or ideological ascendancy, separately or together. It may be instituted as serfdom, helotage, peonage, slavery, or colonialism, or through restrictive political franchise. In some cases the structure of domination takes the form of caste, although, as we shall see, such "caste" differs profoundly from the Indian institution. In all contexts of pluralism, the dominant section distinguishes itself from the dominated, both politically and by means of their institutional differentiae; and where these social and cultural differences coincide with differences of "race," corporate exclusions and oppositions are frequently expressed in racial terms. Indeed, "racial" coefficients of institutional and political division are often invoked as stereotypes despite their objective absence or their marginal biological significance. The social validity of these racialist classifications and interpretations of social cleavage is obviously unaffected by their scientific status. Where institutionalized, such racial categories are generally local developments of modes of thought that formed part of the traditional culture of the dominant ethnic group.

A strictly demographic typology of pluralism is unsatisfactory because it predicates that which it should explain; explicitly, it makes no attempt to identify the particular types, degrees, or combinations of institutional difference which distinguish conditions of pluralism from heterogeneity. Empirical materials cannot directly resolve this problem. It is therefore necessary to proceed to a theoretical analysis of the implications of institutional differences and continuities of various types for the integration of the social systems in which they appear. In this analysis simple demographic ratios are initially irrelevant.

Meyer Fortes’ distinction between the kinship and politico-jural domains of social organization is especially useful in this inquiry. We may generalize this to distinguish the familial or private domain and the collective or public domain. Fortes, who applies this distinction to the analysis of descent, kinship, and affinity in segmentary lineage societies, shows clearly that in these relatively undifferentiated systems, the same institution may figure prominently in both domains of social life, though typically in different ways. Thus, to cite his own example, in tribal societies with a lineage base, marriage is simultaneously a relation between exogamous corporate lineages and the institutional basis of family life. It thus falls equally in both domains, and in either its position and
implications are qualified by its role and place in the other. In centralized societies, marriage is likewise regulated by laws of the state, while retaining its pivotal place in the private domain. As regards divorce, inheritance, paternity, family law, adoption, and the obligations of maintenance, all preeminentl y centered in the private domain, the position is essentially similar. These relations form part of the law by which the inner organization of the collectivity is regulated. In effect, the elements and organization of the private domain are common to all members of the collectivity that observes uniform institutions of marriage, kinship, family, and domestic organization. Likewise the institutionally homogeneous collectivity owes its integration and distinctness to the communities of procedure and organization which constitute its distinctive and common public domain. Among these elements of the public domain, collective organizations, forms, and modes of action are generally institutionalized in corporate form, whether in law, government, or economy. In addition, such institutions as property, markets, occupational associations, education, labor organizations, and cults are all explicitly collective phenomena which simultaneously serve to regulate relations within the collectivity and to organize and integrate its members as a structurally distinct and bounded aggregate.

Most of the basic institutional systems are represented in either domain, though unequally so, and variably, as societies differ in their modes and levels of institutional development and specialization. For example, in simple societies, routine economic action, education, and basic patterns of ritual action may be almost exclusively centered in the private domain. Commonly, in simple systems, the collective government is also based on kinship groupings. In heterogeneous differentiated societies the position differs sharply; there it is normally possible to consider collective organization and institutional structure with minimal attention to the level of family organization. Nonetheless, all societies, even the simplest, depend for their boundaries, organization, and internal order on the scope and character of their corporate structure, which is explicitly centered in the public domain. Together the corporate forms that the system includes constitute the collective frameworks of social organization for the people concerned. Thus, for example, if the unit's corporate structure includes appropriate modes of grouping for leadership, it will enjoy an explicit political unity under a representative central organization; otherwise, the prevailing corporate organization constitutes the aggregate as an acephalous body whose unity is implicit in its common institutional framework at both the private and the public levels, though without expression in a single corporate form.
VIII

Another feature of institutional systems which requires explicit recognition is their variable interconnection and autonomy. Alternative modes of relations within and between the several institutional sectors of a common system include compatibility, inconsistency, and incompatibility of structure; divergence, complementarity, or equivalence at the formal and functional levels; asymmetrical dependence of one institution on another; interdependence or indifference and autonomy; symmetrical or asymmetrical reinforcements; feedback, congruence, coherence, codetermination, and integration; and conflict or contradiction. These are only some of the more familiar modes in which the institutions of a given system may be interlinked.

Some institutions such as family or cult may have several diverse types of relationships with other institutions in the common social system; but clearly, unless there is a tolerable margin of consistency or coherence among these institutions, they can scarcely combine into a self-perpetuating system capable of supporting an orderly collective life.

To illustrate the variability of institutional interconnections, we may briefly compare certain processes in American and Soviet society. As evidenced by their space programs, these countries have attained similar levels of technological and scientific development. Such equivalence implies substantial convergences in the Soviet and American structures of science and education. Nonetheless, the Soviet Union and the United States differ sharply in the political and economic institutions on which the technological capacities and educational organizations of their several space programs depend, equally though in differing ways. Interestingly, both the Soviet and the American economic systems, despite frequent assertions to the contrary, likewise depend, historically and structurally, for their institutionalization, development, maintenance, and regulation on political institutions that date from creative revolutions. Although substantially similar modes and levels of scientific, technological, and educational organization are equally compatible with the differing Soviet and American economic and political frameworks, Soviet economic collectivism is no more compatible with the American form of political organization than is individualist capitalism with the Soviet political regime. It would seem here, despite Marx, whose practice supports our interpretation against his theory, that instead of the “economic system” or, more specifically, the mode of production, determining the forms and levels of social organization, a specific political structure is prerequisite for the particular economic form, since in this comparison each mode of political organization excludes the alternative form of
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economy. Thus, although similar scientific and educational institutions may prevail under these radically different social regimes, and though their technological and economic systems may have comparable capacities, these economies, being structurally dependent on the political organization, differ correspondingly in form. Comparable variations characterize the relations between religion and polity in these two industrial states.

This example illustrates the point that while each institutional complex such as kinship or cult tends to form a reasonably coherent and autonomous subsystem, the integration of these several subsystems with one another is normally more variable and indirect than the integration of elements in each. For example, the connections between marriage, family, and domestic organization are more direct and pervasive than those that link familial organization to cult or government, especially in highly differentiated heterogeneous societies. As a corollary, institutions of the same kind drawn from societies with differing cultural traditions are likely to differ in their structural requisites and in their implications, wherever they differ in their elements and inner organization.

If the elements of two societies were hypothetically shuffled together like two decks of cards, the institutional correspondences and interdependencies on which either system initially relied for its inner coherence and efficient sequences of action could scarcely be reproduced by transference to other sectors of the alternative system. The connections between institutions within a system are far too specific and complex for such substitutability, equivalence, or transfer of connections to be generally possible for institutions drawn from historically differing systems. In two societies, specific relations between family, economy, and cult can rarely be the same, given structural differences in either of these sectors. For such transferability to be generally feasible without institutional dislocation and disjunction, the interconnections within and between the different sectors of either system must perfectly replicate and correspond with one another. This is a remote probability on analytic and statistical grounds alike.

A simple imaginary experiment demonstrates that, besides the specific elements that appear to constitute each institutional subsystem, we must also give special attention to their essential interconnections and structural requirements in order to determine their relative autonomy or interdependence within the system as presently constituted or under specific but variable conditions. This condition indicates that when two or more peoples having differing institutional systems are "shuffled together" by historical circumstances into a common inclusive aggregate, the probabilities that an immediate functional correspondence can be
established between their several institutional systems is rather low, unless indeed these collectivities, falling at the same level of social development, also belong to a common wider tradition, as did the European immigrants to the United States, and thus already share a sufficiently broad frame of institutional correspondences in substance and form to permit relatively simple assimilation and intersystemic accommodations of their several distinct patterns.

Systemic tendencies toward institutional integration themselves preclude or obstruct facile substitutions and accommodations of the same or complementary institutions drawn from structurally different systems. Further, while some consistency and symmetrical reinforcement between institutions in the private and public domains of any collectivity are essential for the effective and orderly operation of its social system, institutions in either of these spheres require adequate levels of internal autonomy in order that their adjustments to developments in other institutional sectors of the social system may be effected smoothly. The higher the level of institutional differentiation and specialization within the system, the greater the specialization of each institutional sector and the greater the autonomy and flexibility requisite in each sphere to accommodate change generated elsewhere.

IX

Societies vary in the institutional differences that characterize the collectivities they incorporate. These lesser collectivities may share similar institutions of kinship, marriage, and family, while differing in their several public domains; or they may differ in both domains; or, while sharing a common mode of public organization, they may differ in other institutions of the public domain and also in their private domains. Alternatively, the collectivities may initially differ in particular public structures, such as government or cult, while sharing common patterns of organization in other areas. We must now try to determine analytically how such variable combinations of institutional continuity and discontinuity affect the organization and character of the inclusive society.

All politically unified societies possess common governments that exercise jurisdictions within them and on their behalf. This is equally true of colonies and of metropolitan states; but an autonomous exclusive jurisdiction is inconsistent with membership in an effective federation. Thus, insofar as an institutionally diverse aggregate forms a distinct and autonomous polity, whether acephalous as in the Swat Valley or Kachin Hills, or centralized, as is more usual, all its components will be subject to a common government, although often differentially so. In consequence we may exclude the common political system from initial consideration in
seeking those specific combinations of institutional divergence and community which distinguish pluralism and heterogeneity.

Employing Fortes' distinction between private and public domains, and recalling the important but variable connections among institutions in these spheres, let us consider certain specific alternatives: for example, situations in which two or more ethnic groups incorporated in a common polity do or do not share common or similar organizations of their private domains in the institutions of kinship, family, and marriage. If continuities in kinship and marriage prevail, then intermarriage and consequent social assimilation are facilitated to the degree that the associated private institutions such as domestic organization, divorce, inheritance, and the like are also common or symmetrically congruent, and insofar as such connubium is not obstructed by geographical separation or by collective regulations in either group, or proscribed in the public domain of the inclusive unit.

European immigrants to America, sharing sufficiently common institutions of kinship and marriage and recognizing American common law as the appropriate standard to regulate these relations, are subject to no national proscriptions against intermarriage. Such groups are, however, influenced by their own collective regulations and by accidents of circumstance, location, and the order in which they entered American society. Religious barriers to intermarriage with outsiders are institutionalized in the public domains of various religious collectivities. Further, strictly ethnic considerations limit the incidence of outgroup marriage. It seems unlikely that, despite the national ideology of assimilation and the absence of any legal proscriptions on this matter, outgroup marriage ratios exceed ingroup ratios, even in the third generation of immigrants among American Catholics of differing ethnic collectivities or among American Jews.

In America, marriage between whites and Negroes or Indians is also restricted, and collective proscriptions are often present. However, in these cases initial differences in the kinship institutions of white, Negro, and Indian Americans are not in themselves wholly sufficient to account for these collective restrictions. Native Indians were originally excluded from American colonial society as enemies or as allies; societal segregation was then mutual; but, as the Indians were overrun, the status of the Indian declined until connubium between the two groups came to be disapproved. The Negro, imported as a slave, was by status initially precluded from marriage with a free person, though not from concubinage.

Among the Tutsi and the Hutu of traditional Ruanda and Burundi, kinship institutions were sufficiently similar for fictional assimilations of
Hutu and Tutsi patrilineages to develop. However, Hutu and Tutsi may not intermarry. Tutsi, the ruling section of these plural societies, proscribed such unions and thereby constituted themselves and the subject Hutu as closed perpetual endogamous castes. By these proscriptions the Tutsi maintained their sectional disassociation from the Hutu around them, and avoided compromising their relations of dominance by ties of kinship and affinity. Caste-endogamous marriage served also to reinforce the closure and the internal cohesion of the Tutsi as a corporate group controlling the administrative and political structure; for the Hutu, constituted as a corporate category under Tutsi regulation, caste endogamy merely perpetuated conditions of servitude.\textsuperscript{18}

The Fulani of Northern Nigeria fall into two distinct categories: pastoral nomads, who are nominally Muslim, and their settled cousins, who provide the Muslim intelligentsia and ruling aristocracy of most Central Sudanic emirates. The nomads and their sedentary cousins share identical kinship institutions; and settled Fulani aristocrats often marry girls of pastoral stock, though the reverse rarely occurs. However, the two Fulani communities remain quite distinct by virtue of differences in their respective public domains. Their separation persists despite long traditions of military and political symbiosis and the formal overrule by settled Fulani of the nomad communities. Special institutional arrangements were maintained by ruling Fulani to accommodate the pastoralists to their regimes without alienation or forced assimilation. In this case, divergences in their public domains served to segregate two branches of a common ethnic stock despite shared familial institutions and formal freedoms of connubium.\textsuperscript{14}

Evidently, while shared familial institutions permit the assimilation of separate groups by facilitating connubium, they do not necessarily promote or entail this result; and where the aggregates concerned are systematically differentiated in the political sphere, as by dominance and subordination in Ruanda, or by institutional differentiation among the Fulani, collective boundaries persist even without formal proscriptions of intermarriage.

On the other hand, where there are initial divergences of content, form, basis, and scope in the familial institutions of two collectivities, intermarriage is virtually precluded; and in such conditions intergroup mating typically proceeds by illicit affairs with ambiguous paternity obligations, by enforced concubinage in slavery or other forms of servitude, or by institutionalized or illegitimate hypergamy.\textsuperscript{15} Given divergent familial institutions, these appear to be the sole alternatives to collective endogamy, which perpetuates corporate divisions and is easily transformed into "caste," especially if the separate collectivities are ranked
hierarchically as corporate units and maintain separate and unequal public domains. In such cases, an asymmetrical connubium may be institutionalized as hypergamy or concubinage; but either alternative merely serves to underline the corporate division and inequality. In either case, collective differences in the private domain seal off each aggregate as a separate self-reproducing unit having its own familial and cultural traditions, a segregated collective organization in its public domain, and distinctive contexts of socialization.

The factors that underlie patterns of collective endogamy in such conditions are reasonably clear. Given divergent norms of marriage and family, symmetrical intergroup marriage generates numerous problems of personal and collective status and rights which exacerbate and often mobilize collective hostilities and actively contrapose the two groups. Whenever such unions are legitimized, these conflicts of collective norms and organization are directly evident. In consequence, juxtaposed collectivities that differ in the structure and scope of their familial institutions are generally segregated as biological and social units whose separate cultural traditions are thus preserved and entrenched in the separate contexts of socialization that each maintains.

X

Such corporate closures are basic to the Indian system of caste. Nonetheless, as Hutton remarks, caste in India differs from pluralism. First, caste is an essential dimension and organizational framework of the religion and culture all Hindus share. It identifies and unites these Hindu communities by dividing them on sacred bases. This differentiation is prescribed by a religious framework common to all castes. Second, as an effect of their occupational stereotyping, all local caste groups (jati) are directly and indirectly interdependent in the economic and ritual spheres; the various castes accordingly share several common institutions in their common public domain.

Familial institutions of the several castes in any region are also generally identical in form. Intercaste relations are contractual, individual, and of various kinds. These relations simultaneously differentiate the members of any given caste, and link men of different castes in elaborate contractual networks that cut across collective boundaries, dispersing personal loyalties and interests by individuating members of each caste. Such institutional arrangements all belong, like caste itself, in the common public domain. Besides jajmani relations, they include tenancy, wage labor, political alliances and factionalism, clientage, representative village councils (panchayats), and certain common village rituals, as well as common scales of ritual pollution, marriage and family ceremo-
nies of similar form, and common dependence on Brahminical rites. Further, in most rural areas the dominant caste is also the most numerous, and generally employs its numerical preponderance in the village panchayat to preserve its local dominance and control of local land. Thus in neighboring areas, local dominance is often exercised by differing castes; and frequently these locally dominant groups are ranked low in the ritual hierarchy.

Such elasticities in the structure of secular status are quite consistent with the theoretically immutable ritual stratification of the various castes, since the ritual and secular status scales are only loosely connected and remain relatively independent of each other. As an effect of these conditions, Indian caste institutionalizes communities of action, norms, and social relations based on primary divisions of the people into a series of ranked endogamous categories whose separate autonomy is limited by their prescribed interdependence in the common public domain. In any caste, socialization to Hinduism and to the social order proceeds simultaneously with the inculcation of caste-specific norms and roles. 11

Indian caste shows that, although continuities of institutional organization in the private domain permit the easy association and assimilation of collective groups by eliminating intrinsic obstacles to common connubium, these continuities are not in themselves sufficient to assure symmetrical intermarriage or the dissolution of collective boundaries; they are indeed unlikely to have such effects wherever the two collectivities are differentiated formally by their differing status and relations in the public domain of the inclusive aggregate. Conversely, as in the United States, ethnic groups and religious congregations may remain relatively endogamous despite similar familial institutions, and despite the absence of any formal proscriptions against connubium, while their members enjoy equivalent status in the inclusive public domain. However, if either collectivity is segregated spatially, its own public domain tends to become specialized, together with its relation to the inclusive society. Under such conditions, and especially if one collectivity is subordinate to the other as in Ruanda, or subsumed by its neighbor as among the Fulani, pluralism prevails through preemption of the societally regulative institutions by one unit to the exclusion of the other, with consequential differentiation of their collective domains and relations.

XI

We can learn most about the specific combinations of conditions which constitute or prevail under pluralism by examining further the varying combinations of institutional and structural diversity in American so-
society. Among American whites, Jews, distinguished by religion and descent, form an internally divided, relatively endogamous group. Adherents of the Orthodox and Catholic faiths are likewise religiously differentiated and internally divided into a number of relatively closed ethnic groups, each distinguished also by its own specific religious organizations, by deep-set tendencies toward endogamy, by ethnic traditions, and sometimes by alternate languages. Protestants, subdivided by denomination and sect and also by ethnic group, probably have the lowest general tendencies toward ethnic and religious endogamy of all major divisions in the white American population. We have to ask in what ways do these parallel Jewish, Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic differentiations differ, if at all, from the conditions of pluralism.

White Americans of Jewish, Orthodox, Catholic, or Protestant faith may participate freely and equally in common economic, educational, and political institutions; they are legally free to marry or to worship as they please; and in consequence, such closures as these ethnic and religious collectivities separately exhibit are optional and not societally prescribed. Given the institutional continuities in religious and familial institutions shared among these collectivities, individual mobility and assimilation are greatly facilitated so that uniform disassociations are restricted to such specific spheres as ethnicity or cult, where individual affiliations are also optional. Thus, neither the Orthodox nor the Jews nor the Catholics nor any of the various ethnic segments in “White America” are permanently or effectively closed. Indeed, within each group the members are extensively differentiated by various and often contraposited alignments with individuals and groups of differing kinds outside the collectivity concerned. In effect the secular organization of United States society treats religion as one of several institutional spheres in which personal affiliations are optional, expectably diverse, and formally indifferent to the central organization of the common public domain. In consequence, intra- or interethnic and denominational marriages or associations have limited significance in themselves for the wider society, or for the placement of individuals within it. The social identities and capacities of white Americans are not determined by their religious or ethnic affiliations; and, despite their undeniable significance to the individuals and religious or ethnic collectivities concerned, institutional identifications as Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish, or Protestant, or as Irish, Swedish, or Italian, are formally and substantively equivalent alternatives accommodated indifferently to the secular organization of the inclusive aggregate. By themselves, such ethnic and religious affiliations entail no direct or systematic differentiations or inequalities in the public sphere,
in the educational, economic, social, and political systems, although they provide effective bases for the organization of corporate groups in pursuit of common interests.

These patterns of social heterogeneity among white Americans presuppose equally effective and uniform segregations of the several institutional spheres—kinship, cult, polity, economy, and education—so that differentiations among the population in kinship or cult do not necessarily entail corresponding differentiations or incapacities in other spheres. Thus, given the formal equivalence in familial institutions and the uniform segregation of religious organizations required by law as a necessary condition of secular equality, collective or individual differences in family and/or cult neither entail, presume, nor systematically correspond with parallel differences in other fields of individual or collective activity. Only by rigorous prescriptive closure such as Amish or Hutterites maintain can religious enclaves achieve a truly autarchic corporate differentiation in this society. In consequence, the structural significance of these ethnic or religious divergences and corporate affiliations for the total society and for the placement of individuals within it remains limited, conditional, and variable. In effect, such differentiated collectivities are equally consistent with the free participation of their members in the common heterogeneous society and can neither disqualify nor differentiate individuals by status or by capacity in the public sector, being themselves by the law and conditions of the secular society together incapable of subsuming and prescriptively regulating the major institutional interests and needs of their members. Thus, these institutional differentiations and collectivities are segregated as equivalent alternatives at the structurally secondary levels of national organization and personal affiliation. They fall primarily within the private domain of the wider collectivity.

XII

It is revealing to compare these white American patterns with others found among Negroes in the United States. Such a comparison shows how corporate divisions, once instituted as structural and institutional disjunctions in the public domain, are internally and externally reinforced and may perpetuate primary cleavages, irrespective of later institutional continuities across their boundaries and discontinuities within them.

Franklin Frazier shows how the Negro's social situation in the United States has tended to institutionalize deformities in all sectors of its private domain, kinship, mating, family, paternity, and domestic organization alike. He shows also that, especially in northern cities, where con-
ditions permit limited Negro professionalization and property accumulations, although Negro family and other social forms have tended to approximate the models institutionalized among American whites, the public domain of Negro society remains equally separate and distinctive. Comparable contrasts in the religious, social, and family life of whites and Negroes in the Deep South are familiar to all. In the North, Negroes and whites are segregated residentially, occupationally, and socially by informal caste or color-caste. The two racial divisions operate parallel but separate and distinctive organizations, and the Negro community characteristically remains economically depressed and dependent on the wealthier, more numerous, and more powerful whites. Thus, economic differentials and spatial and social boundaries interact to reinforce one another.

In the Deep South, despite recent tokenism in churches, courts, registration booths, and schools, caste divisions are basic, formal, and deeply entrenched as the fundamental conditions of Southern corporate structure. The requisite Negro subjugation is facilitated and maintained by their corporate exclusion as a residual category from the public domain of Southern white society. White control is pursued by various devices such as differential justice, denial of political rights, land control, tenancy, sharecropping, occupational and educational inequalities and insecurities, segregation of public facilities and residence, and the like. The recent rise of corporate organizations and public movements against this racial structure of inequality has evoked widespread hostile reactions in the South. Nonetheless, in the northern United States, where these movements won most initial support, parallel racial barriers persist with corresponding inequalities and tensions.

Negro acculturation in America has varied in degree and scope with differences of social circumstance. Negro and white professionals or bourgeoisie share many common institutional patterns; but these classes vary proportionately in both racial categories as a function of the prevailing inequalities of educational, economic, and political opportunity; further, the bourgeoisie and professionals in both races are structurally segregated and, with marginal exceptions, they are occupationally and socially restricted to their own racial categories. Thus, despite extensive institutional continuities across racial frontiers, Negro and white American professionals or bourgeoisie are not socially equivalent; rather, each group is isolated from the other within unequal, closed, and perpetual corporate categories which are racially defined and structurally contraposed. In consequence of this primary cleavage, Negro American professionals are defined first as Negroes, then as Americans, and only finally by occupation, in contrast with their white colleagues. How do the
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contexts and correlates of such phenomena illuminate the salient differences between pluralism and heterogeneity?

On their introduction to America, Negroes were racially, culturally, and socially distinct. Slavery categorized them as the property of their owners and systematically denied them civil, economic, political, and other social rights. Following the abolition of slavery after deep strife, effective substitute controls were developed by the dominant whites in the Deep South to perpetuate the categorical exclusions on which Negro subjugation and social inequality were based. All persons of Negro descent were identified as members of the category excluded from participation in the public domains of Southern white society. In the North, to which many Southern Negroes emigrated, residential and social segregation produced broadly similar effects by simultaneously excluding them from white society and by constituting them in urban ghettos as a residual corporate category, irrespective of their internal institutional and social differentiations. Given these structural contexts, institutional continuities across racial boundaries, or institutional discontinuities within either racial category, have limited relevance, in the wider society, in either corporation, or to the individuals concerned.

Similar divergences between institutional and corporate boundaries are observed among the East Indians and Creole Negroes of Trinidad and British Guiana. In Trinidad, East Indians may identify many local Creole Negro dishes and other cultural items as elements of "ancestral Indian culture." Conversely, Negroid Creoles, having forgotten their cultural debts to East Indians for numerous items, including cuisine, ornaments, and so on, identify these as traditional Creole patterns. Such "plural acculturation," cultural exchange, or assimilation merely highlights the distinction between strictly cultural and strictly social categorizations within this community. However incorrect these attributions may be in fact, the primary identification for any individual or cultural item as East Indian or as Creole Negro is prescribed by this corporate contraposition. Hybrids, distinguished as doglas (bastards), are excluded by East Indians from their collectivity. Though many middle-class East Indians and Negroes share common institutional forms and skills, they remain contraposed by their corporate identities.

Similarly, no American of either race fails to identify an American Catholic Negro bishop or bureaucrat as first and foremost a Negro—that is, by his primary corporate identity. In the United States, as in Guiana and Trinidad, the racial division is institutionalized as a specifically social boundary between two closed categories, irrespective of institutional continuities across boundaries or differences within either cate-
category. On either side of these corporate boundaries, each collectivity maintains its distinct “public” organizations, for internal and external collective action in matters of common interest. In all three societies, the contraposed collectivities participate unequally and differently, but primarily as units in the public sector that includes them. As in Guiana or Trinidad, so in the United States, following an initial situation of marked differences between two structurally segregated collectivities, institutional modifications and assimilations have left intact their social boundaries, and social pluralism prevails, regardless of strictly cultural continuities between or differences within either category. In Trinidad and Guiana it is probable that a majority in either category remains unfamiliar with the other’s institutional system, and perhaps also in the United States. However, exclusive categorical incorporations are clearly independent of cultural assimilation or internal differences. Likewise, in Senegal, despite official French doctrines of assimilation and association, similar categorical exclusions contraposed European and évolué, despite their common institutional allegiances.

The principal conditions that ensure such persistence of social pluralism despite the prevalence of institutional continuities across social boundaries are inherent in the corporate organization itself. If a social boundary rigidly separates two corporate categories, as in the northern United States, both collectivities will then lack inclusive corporate organizations in which they participate as equals and to whose coordinated actions alone they can look for peaceful changes in the corporate structure. On the other hand, if one of the collectivities has categorical form, while the other is organized as a corporate group, as in the South, the latter is generally dominant, and by virtue of its organizational and other resources, can effectively contain pressures for the dissolution of the corporate boundaries on which its power, status, and privilege are based. Individual actions and alignments cannot demolish or transform these social divisions and corporate units; nor can the representative national government initiate such radical action without assurances of overwhelming support from both collectivities, and especially from the majority of the dominant one.

When two corporations are defined by virtue of a common boundary, this can be abolished only by their separate but joint determination, or by the radical action of one of them. Tokenism is the logical corporate response to external pressures by a national government for the elimination of inequalities by which corporate sections are mutually defined and segregated, as in the Southern states. Cultural continuities or variations can neither erode nor transform these corporate structures directly for
the simple reason that sectional divisions and relations are based on other principles, such as power, race, or other criteria of exclusive corporate solidarity and autonomy.

All collectivities that are segregated as or within societies require special procedures and organization to coordinate and regulate their internal action and to guide their relations with external corporations. In consequence, the public domains of segregated collectivities develop specific modes of organization and action to handle their collective interests and problems. The more rigorous and institutionally extensive the segregation of the collectivity, the deeper and wider is its associational boundary, and the more exhaustively are its members socially identified with and dependent upon it. In the structural context of a plural society, each corporate section develops sectionally specific institutions, organizations, and procedures that constitute its distinctive public domain; and if the plurality contains two or more collectivities of equivalent or differing status, their segregation is further reinforced by these mutually distinctive collective organizations. If these social sections are also segregated spatially, as is often the case, then the public domain of either unit enjoys corresponding freedom from external competition or immediate internal challenge. In effect, any institutional development or systematic organization in the collective domains of either section in a context of pluralism tends to reinforce the already existing divisions and separatism of the sections as mutually exclusive, internally autonomous, contraposed corporations. Such structural developments proceed independently of cultural continuities or assimilation across sectional boundaries.

Thus in the Republic of South Africa, as in the United States, the "black bourgeoisie" remain subject to the categorical identities and disabilities of their social sections. In Trinidad, Guiana, and Mauritius, Indians and Creole Negroes have each developed and retained specific sectional structures; and when these social sections were simultaneously enfranchised, their distinctive organizations were quickly converted into political parties, as also in Surinam and Nigeria.

In sum, it seems that the decisive conditions that constitute and perpetuate social pluralism consist primarily in differences of institutional organization in the public domains of segregated collectivities identified as the basic corporate units of social structure, and contraposed in consequence of sharp initial differences in their political status and in their several public domains.

Under such conditions, it is irrelevant whether the inclusive social order emphasizes the functional differentiation and autonomy of institutional spheres within either section. If collectivities are rigorously segre-
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Gated, spatially and associationally, although the institutional structure may be highly differentiated within either collectivity, their separate public domains will each represent a sectionally specific and structurally distinctive organization. Under such conditions, the societally integrative effects of institutional differentiations and interdependences are restricted by and within the primary demarcation of collectivities as separate associational fields. Similarly, the opportunities for and implications of institutional assimilations or isomorphism are subject to the structural conditions and requirements of the prevailing corporate organization.

XII

Inclusion of subordinate sections in the representative political institutions of the wider society on terms of formal equality is quite consistent with the maintenance of social pluralism, provided that this plural structure antedates the introduction of “democratic reforms.” In such cases, formal democratization of the political process may be merely the means for preservation and stabilization of the plural regime. This implies structurally profound divergences between formal equivalence and substantial reality.

Normally, however, the political regime of the plural society is identified by an exclusive concentration of political and juridical resources and functions in a ruling minority organized as a corporate group. In consequence, all other sections of the population are excluded from these political spheres as local aggregates or categories lacking extensive independent political organizations and capacities. Only where popular legislatures or tribunals prevail, or where offices are filled by direct or indirect election, can the scope of the franchise formally indicate the range of these differential statuses as citizen or subject. In most historic societies, such electoral institutions are lacking, and the ruling group is identified by its monopoly of the central political and administrative offices to which recruitment is primarily by descent or patronage. In either of these regimes, intermarriage and the equal association of the elite with the politically ineligible are normally proscribed. Generally, such structures of domination are centralized under a supreme office or corporation, identified exclusively with the dominant section.

In acephalous plural societies such as Pathan Swat, two further conditions are essential: the collective domination of the ruling group must be secure beyond local challenge; and the dominant section must have special institutional procedures to mediate its internal disputes and to mobilize its dispersed segments for joint action whenever necessary. In centralized pluralities that lack popular electoral institutions, the ruler, identified socially and institutionally with the dominant section, is often
ideologically represented as a personification of the polity, a divine king, or other quasi-sacred societal symbol. In themselves, these ideologies are clearly insufficient bases for the sectional dominions they seek to legitimate and rationalize.  

The political structure of a plural society is always dependent on a systematic organization of political, administrative, and military means and inequalities for its establishment and maintenance alike. In traditional contexts, sectional monopolies of regulative public structures normally presuppose and entail hereditary recruitments to office, sectional endogamy, and sharply differentiated contexts of socialization. As a result, the dominant section is identified as a self-perpetuating biological and social group by its closure, by its unique organization, by the societal authority of its public domain, and by the imposition of its own institutional order on the aggregate that it rules. The result is a characteristically oligarchic regime based on systematic political and social inequality and designed to preserve and perpetuate the institutional conditions essential for the sectional dominance with which it is identified. Ideologies of differing kind and quality may be elaborated to rationalize such plural regimes; but beyond such antecedent religious prescriptions as Islam enjoins, these ideologies generally misrepresent or sublimate the motivations, interests, and relations involved.

The structural stability of such a plural society has several important requisites. (1) There must be substantial continuity of the economic and ecological conditions in which the structure was first stabilized, involving either an appropriate population policy or a resource base capable of accommodating population increases over substantial periods. (2) There must be relative isolation of the aggregate from other societies of comparable scale and differing type. (3) By design or otherwise, the demographic ratios of the ruling and the ruled should be maintained or improved gradually in favor of the rulers. (4) Sectional identities and boundaries have to be maintained by generalizing the requisite inequalities and differences to all spheres—religious, familial, educational, occupational, economic, and other—with consequent restrictions on intersectional acculturation and exclusion of intersecotional mobility. (5) Symbiotic relations, which provide primary compensations for the subordinate section and increase the stability of the regime, and religions that offer deferred compensations—for example, Christianity—should be encouraged in appropriate forms. (6) The cohesion, esprit de corps, and superior organization and resources to which the rulers owe their initial dominance should be maintained or enhanced through collective action that preserves and develops their corporate exclusiveness. Internal dissensions in the ruling group are functional only if they can be institution-
alized in forms that subdivide and mobilize the subordinate sections to support elite protagonists, as in two-party systems firmly controlled by the dominant group. (7) Ideally the regime should be legitimized by an inclusive cult that sacralizes the structure and leadership, as in Inca or Ruanda society, by one that offers basic compensation in another life, or by one that advocates withdrawal from the world.

XIV

It is to be expected that in a plural society the dominant section will employ all the political and social resources in its control to stabilize and preserve its power and regime. To this end its members must simultaneously monopolize positions of power and immobilize the subject categories by suppressing or proscribing their collective political organization. To remedy this situation, the subordinate section needs first to develop an effective and inclusive corporate group, as for example, the consilium plebis at Rome in 439 B.C., the Hussite congregation in fourteenth-century Europe, the Parmehutu Aprosoma in Ruanda, the Congress Party in India, and so forth. Often the collective protest of a subordinate acephalous section takes the form of social movements, such as Lollardy or Chartism in Britain, Cargo Cults in Melanesia, or the revolutionary movements in France and Haiti at the close of the eighteenth century. In other cases a charismatic leader may direct this sectional revolt through a loosely structured corporate group or body of disciples, as Gandhi did in India, Toussaint and Dessalines in Haiti, John Ball in feudal England, Shehu dan Fodio in the Central Sudan, Miguel Hidalgo in Mexico, or the Mahdi and Bolívar. At all events, as corporate categories, subordinate sections in plural societies lack the inclusive organization requisite for effective political action to challenge the organized and entrenched minorities that rule them; unless they can create and support such units, they remain immobilized by their internal divisions and common situation as residual subject categories.

If religious differences imposed the primary cleavage on which the plural structure rests, as in India, the Sudan, and elsewhere, then conversion and assimilation are necessary to eliminate it. Like Marxism, Islam for example has spread by enforcing the conversion and assimilation of conquered communities. Notably it has encountered sharpest resistance in India, where the ramified categorical organization of caste fragments its pressure and appeals.

Another peaceful process by which the institutional and corporate conditions of pluralism may be dissolved requires the absorption or assimilation of the dominant group into the culture and society of the dominated majority. This course is feasible only where the mass of the
people bear a common culture which is appropriate to the maintenance of the political regime and which is more elaborately developed than that of their rulers. Such assimilations occurred among the Liao, Mongols, and Manchu in China, the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks in Islam, the Bulgars under Byzantium, and the Fulani in Hausaland.

Symbiosis may preserve a plural structure with minimal modification by institutionalizing mutually satisfactory accommodations of the rulers and the ruled. This presumes the maintenance of favorable internal and external conditions, together with adequate balances between population and resources. Institutionalized symbiosis excludes structural change by stabilizing relations of reciprocal interdependence on the basis of institutional and status differences between component sections of the plural society. It simultaneously represents the ideal resolution of structural tensions and a condition of stationary equilibrium in such societies.

Clientage, the institutionalized association of men of sharply different status in contexts of political competition, has often served to integrate the members of differing social sections in plural societies, such as the plebs and patricians in early Rome and Athens, the Hutu and Tutsi in Ruanda, the Fulani and Hausa in Northern Nigeria, and free men of every station in the feudal systems of medieval Europe and Japan. Such clientage may only erode corporate divisions if it is sufficiently widespread and general, in consequence of basic cleavages within the ruling stratum or insecurities in their external context, which require mobilization of intersectional support. Further, to promote structural transformation, the institution should also legitimize and encourage intermarriage across sectional boundaries, and should facilitate or entail structurally significant changes in individual status and political identity. Clientage is institutionalized political symbiosis between individuals and/or reasonably small groups. It may accordingly enhance the internal stability of a plural order by establishing valuable intersectional affiliations oriented to factional competitions within the ruling group. By itself, clientage is unlikely to dissolve sectional boundaries wherever differences of culture, religion, or race are prominent. In feudal polities which rested heavily on such relations, the servile majority remained beyond the range of institutional clientage, which was restricted to men of free or noble birth.

XV

Domination by the ruling minority in a plural society may be exercised collectively through its political institutions, as at Sparta, in Ruanda, among the Inca, or in Pathan Swat, or by repartimiento or the territorial segregation of the dominated on “tribal” reserves under the supervision of the dominant groups, as was general in settler societies in
colonial Africa. Alternatively, segments of the subordinate population may be placed directly under the control of individuals drawn from the dominant group. In the latter instance, servitude is personalized; in the former it is collective. Personal servitude has many forms: serfdom, slavery, peonage, indenture, bondage, and so on. It is normally ascribed by allocation, birth, capture, debt, purchase, or lease. Personal proprietorship may be acquired by descent and inheritance, by vassalage, purchase, or official allocations, separately or together.

It is evident that these two alternative modes of instituting sectional dominance, the individual and the collective, establish patterns of intersectional relation among individuals which differ notably in immediacy, intensity, continuity, variability, and scope, and in the opportunities for cultural and social assimilation they provide. Any collective organization of sectional dominance segregates the dominated in local collectivities that foster their cultural distinctness and solidarity. Communally segregated Spartan helots, like the Russian serfs, maintained a spirited collective life apart from their masters, and repeatedly revolted, in vain, as did Negro slaves on New World plantations. In Europe and Japan serfs were subject to far more rigorous and personal supervision of their social life and lacked equivalent incentives and opportunities for revolt. In Ruanda, subject Hutu were simultaneously supervised by at least two hierarchies of officials; and the Inca also institutionalized a dual system of collective administration. In Grenada (West Indies), after emancipation, ex-slaves were habituated to servitude by symbiotic relations and by dispersal in discrete estate communities. In nearby Barbados, sectional legislation explicitly forbade the ex-slaves to move about within the island, thereby tying them to the plantations as a dependent, immobile, landless proletariat, where they remain to this day. In Mexico and other Hispanic New World territories, Indian communities were subjected to individual domination by Creole Spaniards and mestizos as field labor under various forms of peonage; and although violence was common, given the specific personal structure of control, in this context it was rarely generalized at this level of the society, except during wider struggles among superior social sections.

The structure of categorical subordination, organized and exercised collectively through locally discrete autonomous corporate groups, invites frequent revolt to the extent that its conditions are onerous and its supervision lax. This structure insulates the several social sections, and accordingly preserves their institutional differentiations by restricting opportunities for intersectional assimilation. In its most extreme form, it prescribest tributary relations between two politically distinct societies, the explicit antithesis of pluralism, which requires a common corporate
organization of disparate elements in one society. By contrast, personal administration of discrete segments of the subordinate section brings corresponding increases in the range, intensity, and frequency of interpersonal contacts across sectional boundaries. Such increases of intersectional personal associations institute corresponding opportunities for cultural and social assimilations consistent with the corporate requirements of the inclusive regime. Under structures of either type, maintenance or modification of intersectional boundaries and relations depends primarily on collective social action rather than on cultural assimilations as such. In consequence, acculturated members of the subordinate section are situationally condemned to frustration, dissidence, or revolt, or to alignment with their superiors as trusted but expendable servitors and aides. This is so because in plural regimes individual qualities are irrelevant for the determination of social identity, which is ascriptive and corporate in base and significance. In effect, intersectional social mobility is kept at a minimum.54

Unless the politically excluded category is systematically subjugated by these collective or personal structures of domination, sectional control of the total society remains ambiguous and uncertain, despite sectional monopoly of the political regime; such a situation generates tension and invites revolt. Notably, this is the modal form of social pluralism which prevailed in western Europe from the dissolution of feudalism to the recent establishment of popularly elected representative governments. Characteristically, in this area until the mid-nineteenth century, peasants and emerging proletariats were denied political and civil rights under systems of legal immunity and privilege, sectional administration, and restrictive political franchise.55 Besides their monopoly of government, commerce, land, law, church, and the officer corps, the dominant sections of these divided societies sought to enhance and preserve their institutional differentiation from the dominated majority by exclusive educational provisions for socialization of their young, and by restrictive control of occupational opportunities. In their heyday, as Disraeli, Mayhew, Marx, and others observed, such societies consisted of two broad categories, the masters and the servants; but under the prevailing frame of organization, servitude was a contractual alternative to unemployment, brigandage, emigration, or forced recruitment to the army, the mines, or the fleet.

Marx and Engels, observing these societies, interpreted their political structures as consequences of the economic inequalities inherent in their capitalist organization; 56 in this they systematically inverted the relations that held between the structures of political and economic inequality.
Analytically and historically alike, the economic inequalities these writers observed were based upon antecedent conditions of political and juridical domination and presupposed them. With subsequent enfranchisement of the previously unrepresented section, economic inequalities have steadily reduced as the implications of political equality were realized. Anticipating such effects of political and industrial reform, Marx, whose dialectic led him to look for radical transformation of European society by working-class revolution, condemned gradualism and advocated political polarization. In this he clearly reveals his recognition of the primacy of political relations and action in determining the forms and degrees of social inequality and the conditions of social and economic organization.

In western Europe, during the nineteenth century, disenfranchised categories—Marx’s peasants and proletariats—were institutionally differentiated and sectionally segregated from the ruling minority but were not prescriptively subordinated by organized collective or personal systems of domination. They were accordingly identified as masterless subjects, a residual category beyond the polity but subject to the state, which here as elsewhere was the corporate organization of the ruling group. In this context of sectional isolation, trade unions, workers’ political associations, revolutionary movements, and ideologies of varying type flourished apace, repeatedly shaking the foundations of these plural societies and successively demonstrating the urgency of incorporating the mass as citizens and providing them with the essential resources of education and organizational access necessary to translate formal citizenship into active capacity. Established political parties representing the elite and its interests occasionally sought to incorporate some of the disenfranchised within their ranks to achieve party advantage, and also to frustrate the emergence of rival structures devoted to sectional interests of the subordinate class. These aims were variably realized; but, as the hitherto disenfranchised acquired citizenship, education, and effective industrial and political organizations, they simultaneously reduced the institutional gulf that had formerly separated them from their rulers, until, after World War II, the distinctive institutions, organizations, and differences of political status which had once contraposed the social sections of these European nations lost their initial significance; and, with some notable exceptions, the plural societies of eighteenth-century Europe were transformed into heterogeneous nation-states. We can summarize these processes of national development and integration as the progressive elimination of corporate categorizations in the social structure through the extension of citizenship from the oligarchy to all members of the corporate group.
Colonialism in Africa repeats these European developments with much greater clarity and speed. Once enfranchised in consequence of military disasters and/or changes of political orientation experienced by the imperial states, the African colonial populations could not long be denied autonomy. Having obtained it, the ex-colonial states pursue economic development and social modernization in different ways, by single or multiparty regimes and under ideologies of varying provenience or coherence.

The essential conditions that currently diversify the organization and orientations of these new African states seem to flow in approximately equal measure from their history and from their social constitutions, but their histories and social constitutions both identify these emergent states as pluralities of varying complexity and form. In some states the major political divisions are between regionally segregated ethnic collectivities. In others the primary cleavages are between the westernized elite and the traditional mass, organized in several tribal societies and/or traditional states. In yet others these two modes of cleavage are variously and fluidly combined; and in both the older independent African states, Ethiopia and Liberia, despite striking differences in history and form, social pluralism is basic to the political regime and shows no sign of immediate disappearance. When to these alternatives we add the variable presence of European settler communities, the wide variety in the constitution of plural societies in modern Africa is clear, and a corresponding variety in their political and constitutional forms and developments seems inevitable.

Clearly, to transform these plural societies into institutionally heterogeneous nation-states is no easy task, however desirable or essential it may seem to nationalists committed to ideals of corporate unity, identity, and consensus. Yet, if our analysis of the structural and institutional conditions of pluralism is correct, its transformation into the social heterogeneity that is prerequisite for “modernization” involves the following conditions together: (1) Effective institutionalization of uniform conditions of civil and political equality throughout the country; this especially involves the elimination of elite, sectional, or ethnic privileges in the public sphere. (2) Provision of equal, appropriate, and uniform educational, occupational, and economic opportunities to all cultural sections of the society, and the principled recruitment of active participation in approximately equivalent ratios from all major ethnic groups. (3) Public enforcement of the fundamental freedoms of worship, speech, movement, association, and work. Such measures seem to be equally
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Pluralism has been identified in my preceding paper by the differential incorporation of two or more collectivities within the same society. It has been argued that such differential incorporation generally presumes significant antecedent differences of institutions, culture, and ethnicity between the collectivities concerned; and further, that it restricts assimilation by preserving or promoting the institutional distinctness of these structurally segregated collectivities. It is possible and useful to test these general ideas by reviewing the ethnographic materials on precolonial Africa. Ideally, even a limited test of these hypotheses would seem to require a comprehensive survey of the continental ethnography; but nothing so ambitious is attempted here; and indeed it is doubtful whether such inquiries would be fruitful without preliminary development of the appropriate concepts, typologies, hypotheses, and procedures. This paper is thus designed to illustrate a conceptual framework and method for such comparative analyses.

SOCIETY AND CORPORATIONS

In studying social pluralism we are directly and continuously concerned with the conditions, problems, and modes of social cohesion, structure, and development. Following Radcliffe-Brown, Nadel, and others, we can distinguish societies as the widest continuing collectivities bound by common and distinctive forms of social structure. As Fortes says, social structure is not an aspect of culture, but the entire culture of a given people banded in a special frame of theory. 

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Carl Broedelmann, History of the Islamic Peoples, trans. Joel Carmichael


48 Barth, op. cit.


51 Moore, op. cit.


54 M. G. Smith, *Stratification in Grenada*, pp. 205-227, 258.


