

**DUAL ORGANIZATION IN NORTH AFRICA
CAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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Sociologists and anthropologists mean by the remarkably widespread distribution of what is generally referred to as "dual organization", the type that divide a society or a tribe into two primary subdivisions or moieties, each opposed to the other (1).

Dual organization as a social phenomenon attracted the attention of many scholars who studied it in different parts of the world, such as Australia, America, Indonesia, Melanesia and Trobriand Island. But no of the scholars examined dual organization in Africa, in spite of its existence in some societies of North Africa.

Therefore, the researcher aims to indicate the type of dual organization in North Africa, compared with other types, through the theory of Radcliffe-Brown.

Dual organization is frequently correlated with definite systems of ritual, belief, and custom, in which the universe is divided into two opposed parts, sometimes associated with land and water, summer and winter, or with totemic beliefs, etc., (2).

(1) Winich, Charles : Dictionary of Anthropology, Littlefield, Adams & Co., New Jersey, 1964, p. 178.

Fairchild H.P. : Dictionary of Sociology, Littlefield, Adams & Co., New Jersey, 1955, p. 99.

(2) Notes & Queries on Anthropology, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1954, pp. 92—93.

The beliefs associated with dual organization of social organization may be regulated by ceremonies based on belief in a dual organization of Man, nature, and cosmic processes. Certain rituals will be carried out by one moiety of the organization while others will correspondingly be the duty of the opposite moiety. In a similar way of life may be regulated by ceremonies of a calendrical order. Myths concerning both systems may exist (1).

The dual organization may be regarded from several points of view. We must consider the attributes of moieties, the relations of exogamous to agamous moieties, the unity or multiplicity of origins of moieties ... Exogamous moieties require special attention. They are widely distributed, occurring in most of Australia and parts of Melanesia, in India and neighbouring parts of Asia, and in several parts of both Americas. Their complete or virtual absence in certain other vast region is also noteworthy. Except for a few dubious exceptions they are wanting in Africa and seem to be found only in the westernmost part of Siberia, among the Ostyak and Vogul (2).

During his intensive studies among the Australian aborigines Radcliffe-Brown (3) observed that some tribes in the interior of New South Wales have a division of population into two parts, which are named after the Eaglehawk and the Crow (Kilapara and Makwara). There is a rule by which a man should only take a wife from the division other than his own, and that the children will belong to the same division as their mother. The system is described in technical terms as one of totemically represented exogamous matrilineal moieties.

Radcliffe-Brown collected many tales about Eaglehawk and Crow in different parts of Australia, and in all of them the two are represented as opponents in some sort of conflict. If we examine some dozens of these tales we find that they have a single theme. The resemblances and differences of animal species are translated into terms of friendship and

(1) *Ibid.*, p. 193.

(2) Lowie, Robert H. : *Social Organization*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1950, p. 240.

(3) Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. : *Method in Social Anthropology*, (Edited) by Srinivas, M.N., Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1960, p. 93.

conflict, solidarity and opposition. In other words the world of animals is represented in terms of social relations similar to those of human society.

The Australian idea of what is here called “opposition” is a particular application of that association contrariety that is a universal feature of human thinking, so that we think by pairs of contraries, upwards and downwards, strong and weak, black and white, But the Australian conception of “opposition” combines the idea of a pair of contraries with that of opponents. In the tales about eaglehawk and crow the two birds are opponents in the sense of being antagonists. They are also contraries by reason of their difference of character, Eagle the hunter, Crow the thief. Black cockatoo and white cockatoo which represent the moieties in Western Victoria are another example of contrariety., Heaven and Earth, war and peace, up-stream and down-stream, red and white (1).

In many parts of Australia the tribe is divided into two exogamous, patrilineal in some regions, matrilineal in others.—In some instances the moieties are named after species of animals, generally birds. Amongst such names are the following : Crow, and white cockatoo, white cockatoo, eaglehawk and crow, native companion and turkey, kill kangaroo and long-legged kangaroo. In other instances the meanings of the moiety names have not been discovered, and in some of them, at any rate, it seems certain that they are not animal names (2).

Radcliffe-Brown (3) said after his lengthy comparative study “I think I am fully justified in stating a general law, that whenever, in Australia, Melanesia or America, there exists a social structure of exogamous moieties, the moieties are thought of as being in relation of is here called “opposition” (4)

So, the theory of dual organization as studied by Radcliffe-Brown is based on four principles :

(1) Ibid, p. 99.

(2) Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. : *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*, Cohen & West Ltd., London, 1968, p. 118.

(3) — — — : *Method in Social Anthropology*, op. cit., p. 99.

(4) Ibid, p. 99.

1. The social structure of two exogamous moieties.
2. The two moieties are represented as opponents in sort of conflict.
3. The opposite names and different characters of each moiety.
4. The relationships between moieties are in a form of "opposition".

Accordingly, the next step - a Radcliffe-Brown said is ⁽¹⁾ to attempt to discover what are the various forms that the opposition between the moieties of a dual organization takes in actual social life? In the literature there are occasional references to a certain hostility between the two divisions described as existing or reported to have existed in the past. All the - available evidence is that there is no real hostility in the proper sense of the term but only a conventional attitude which finds expression in some customary mode of behaviour. Certainly in Australia, although in some instances where there is a dispute it is possible to observe the members of the two patrilineal moieties forming separate "sides" real hostility, of the kind that may lead to violent action is not between the moieties but between local groups, and two local groups of the same patrilineal moiety seem to be just as frequently in conflict as two groups belonging to different moieties.

So, we shall use the above four principles to discover what are the types of dual organization in other societies, and to examine the existence of dual organization in North Africa.

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The Indonesian type of dual organization takes the same form as the Australian, and our example here is the Winnebago tribe — studied by Paul Radin ⁽²⁾ in his classic monograph — the people of Winnebago were formerly divided into two moieties, called respectively (Wangeregi) or those who are above, and (Manegi), or those who are on the earth. Those moieties were exogamous, and they also had clear reciprocal rights and duties. Thus the members of each moiety were required to hold funerals for deceased members of the opposite moiety.

(1) *Ibid*, p. 100.

(2) Radin, Paul : *The Winnebago Tribe*, Bureau of American Ethnology, 37th Annual Report, Washington, D.C., 1922, *After* : Strauss, Claude Levi : *Structural Anthropology*, Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1963, p. 133.

When he examined the influence of moiety division upon the village structure, Radin noted a curious discrepancy among the answers of the old people who were his informants. They described, for the most part, a circular village plan in which the two moieties were separated by an imaginary diameter running northwest and southeast.

As a general rule, there will be a progressive diminution in the number of component groups in societies of the latter type, since demographic evolution leads to the extinction of some of them. In the absence of an institutional mechanism permitting the fission of expanding group, such as will re-established equilibrium, this evolution will result in societies reduced to two exogamous groups, this may be one of the origins of so-called dual organization⁽¹⁾.

In the Trobriands there is a complex system of opposition between sacred and profane, raw and cooked, celibacy and marriage, male and female, central and peripheral. The roles ascribed to raw and cooked foods in the marriage gifts, which are themselves divided into male and female. Without undertaking an extensive comparison, we shall simply note the parallels between Trobriand village structure and certain Indonesian phenomena. The opposition between central and peripheral, or inner and outer, immediately recalls the organization of the Baduj of western Java. They divide themselves into inner Baduj, considered superior and sacred, and outer Baduj, considered inferior and profane⁽²⁾.

In North Africa, dual organization exists also according to the four principles of Radcliffe-Brow theory, among the Bedouin tribes who live in the northern coast of Egypt and Libya. The people there are divided into two tribes "Saadi" and "Mourabiteen", the Saadi which called (Sons of Ali) are divided also into two moieties with opposite names (White Ali) and (Red Ali). Although the two moieties are belonging to one ancestor "Ali", but the relations between them take the form of opposition and conflict. While Red Ali moiety is more peaceful, White Ali moiety is aggressive and always ready to solve problems by fighting their enemies⁽³⁾.

(1) Levi-Strauss, Claude : Totemism, Penguin Books, London, p. 80.

(2) — — — : Structural Anthropology, op. cit., pp. 137—138.

(3) Farouk M. Ismail : The social relations between the ethnic groups, Egyptian Organization for Book, Alexandria, 1975, pp. 77—78. (In Arabic)

Siwa oasis of Egypt gives us also another example of dual organization. The social structure of Siwa is divided into two distinctive moieties with opposite names (Easterners) and (Westerners), besides the opposite names of the two moieties, they are contraries by reason of their difference of character. While Easterners refer to themselves as "Lefaya" — which means by Siwi language the smiled face and good heart — Westerners refer to themselves as "Taghseeb" which means the stubborn face and rigidity. The historical events explain the cause of conflict and opposition between the two moieties, although all the people of the society live in one social structure with common culture, but the distinction appears clearly in the economic and political activities. There is no actual hostility in fact, but only a general attitude which finds expression in the common way of life⁽¹⁾.

In Algeria, the CHaamba people living at Metlili can provide another example of dual organization, The CHaamba used to have a well developed (sof) or parties like systems based on two party systems, which are so characteristics of the sedentary commercial centers of the Sahara. This dichotomous political organization has now lost much of its former force among the CHaamba nomads, but the fundamental underlying spirit still persists. The two political groupings (or sofs) that find expression in such ways are known respectively as CHarga "Easterners" and GHarba (Westerners), the former being traditionally progressive and the latter conservative in all things⁽²⁾.

Briggs observed that the striking feature of the political organization of Saharan urban centers is the almost universal division of the community into two parties, commonly though loosely referred to as sofs. These are seldom if ever associations designed primarily for mutual aid in the material sense, as are the sofs of Barbary from which the term was originally taken. Rather they are essentially political factions, groupings are usually of the more conservative citizens on

(1) Tawfik El-Houssieny Abdo : The ownership of springs and its effect on the social structure of Siwa Oasis, (Ph.D. Unpublished dissertation—in Arabic). Institute of African Research & Studies, Cairo University.

(2) Briggs, L.C. : Tribes of the Sahara, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960, pp. 195—196.

the one hand and the progressive partisans of change on the other, although the dividing line sometimes falls between the supporters and the opponents of some specific program of basic internal or external policy. Such a dichotomy extends, of course, through out the economic and social organization of the entire community, either by allegiance or alliance. The division of urban communities into two parts is influenced by various local factors and so manifests itself in various ways in different places. At Laghouat, on the extreme northern edge of the western desert, the two major parts have always occupied respectively the northwestern and southeastern halves of the oasis⁽¹⁾.

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We can conclude, from the above examples, that dual organization takes various forms in different places of the world, but we can distinguish between three types, Australian, Indonesian, and North African types.

The application of Radcliffe-Brown's theory indicates that all of them have the exogamous moieties with opposite names, and the relationships of the two moieties have some sort of conflict and opposition.

While the social function of the Australian and Indonesian types is to strength the kinship structure, the north African type has a political importance, its main function is to divide the community into two equal strength parties, each opposed to the other. The ethnic origin or the physical features do not play an important part in the process of division.

Dual organization as a social phenomenon needs more studies in different places, because the principles of Radcliffe-Brown can not be generalized for all moiety societies, without fieldwork studies.

(1) Ibid, p. 78.

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« التنظيم الانشطاري في شمال افريقيا » (دراسة اثروبولوجية مقارنة)

يعنى التنظيم الانشطاري انقسام المجتمع او القبيلة الى قسمين او جزئين فقط ، يأخذ كل منها اسما متعاكسة ، وتتسم العلاقات الاجتماعية التي تسود بينها بالتعارض او الصراع .

ويعد العلامة زاد كليف براون من أهم من تناول هذه الظاهرة الاجتماعية بالدراسة والمقارنة ، وجمع أمثلة لها من استراليا وغيرها وعكف على دراستها حتى أصدر ما يعتبره قانونا اجتماعيا عاما ، وطالب الباحثين بأن يتعرفوا على صور واشكال هذا التنظيم الانشطاري في انحاء العالم .

وهذا البحث محاولة للتعرف على نموذج التنظيم الانشطاري في شمال افريقيا ومقارنته بالتنظيمات الاخرى ، ومناقشة الى حد يخضع نموذج شمال افريقيا للمبادئ الاربعة الرئيسية التي وردت في نظرية زاد كليف براون والتي اتخذناها معيارا للمقارنة .

وعلى ذلك ، فقد امكن التعرف على انتشار هذه الظاهرة الاجتماعية في عدة مجتمعات في شمال افريقيا تمتد من مصر حتى المغرب مرورا بليبيا والجزائر ، كما وجدت أيضا تشابهات واختلافات في كل منها .

ويستنتج من الدراسة ان هناك ثلاثة نماذج لهذا التنظيم في استراليا واندونيسيا وشمال افريقيا ، الا انها تختلف فيما بينها في أسباب الانقسام وفي الوظيفة الاجتماعية رغم اتفاقها في الخصائص العامة للظاهرة .

مما يؤكد على الاهمية القصوى لدراسة هذه الظاهرة للتعرف على مزيد من المجتمعات التي توجد بها وربطها بالنماذج التي سبق اكتشافها للوصول الى تعميمات مقبولة تعتمد على دراسات واقعية .