

other. 'K'é and clan relationships are the primary way in which the Navajo people locate themselves in the social universe' (Lamphere 2001: 39).

Summarizing, we can say that a clan or lineage claims a common mythical or historical ancestor, and usually recognizes some shared substance, shared memory, or any other shared background which is used to justify the social body as a corporation. Landownership, residential composition, conflict and its resolution, roles in ritual, and so on are in many cases articulated around membership of such categories and around the opposition or distinction of various such categories within a society or ethnic group.

These groupings (clans or lineages) abide by rules that organize their internal structure and establish the relationships between all the clans of a society (usually marriage rules, as we shall see). Additionally, these clans may be organized around local typologies and representations that need to be understood in order to understand the social structure. The Maisin of Papua New Guinea, studied by Barker (e.g. 2005), know two types of clans, *Kawo* and *Sabu*. They stand in an asymmetrical relationship to each other: the former host so-called Great Men, who are leaders and have the role of taking responsibility in other clans, and the latter do not have such Great Men and so are expected to listen to the advice formulated by the former. In other cases, such as in many Australian Aboriginal or lowland Amazonian groups, clans stand in a more symmetrical relationship to each other. They all claim some shared relationship to history, language, and land and thus constitute together a larger unity (a society, tribe, or ethnic group), but each clan also claims to be descended from one particular ancestral being, has the responsibility for particular sites or stretches of land, and in some cases addresses the others using particular speech etiquettes that mark clan distinction. All clans, on the other hand, are related to each other through the exchange of human beings, since women and men of one clan will marry women and men of other clans. They are linked through the responsibility of performing the necessary ceremonies that will reproduce the shared cosmic and social order, through the exchange of goods, and, sharing a common language, through the exchange of words. Relationships between clans and lineages are relationships of distinctions between groups of people; at the same time, relationships of similitude and exchange, unifying these distinctions within a global social entity such as the ethnic group, the tribe, or the society. The same is true for any other type of social category system.

Indeed, while clan and lineages are widespread and important types of social groupings, they are only two among the many other types of categories that belong to the domain of social organization. Some constitute actual and visible corporations of people and families, while others are limited to the domain of discourse and representation but are nevertheless significant in structuring social space and practice. Importantly, these various category systems are not exclusive of one another, but are in many occasions piled on top of each other or encapsulated, thus building up for every individual several layers of membership (or identity) and several contexts of relational speech etiquettes. 'Patrimoieties' or 'matrimoieties' are other quite common category systems. They divide society into two global entities that stand to each other in a relationship of distinction and exchange as well. In a patrimoiety system, belonging to one or the other moiety is defined through 'patrification' (children belong to their father's group), while in a matrimoiety membership is defined through the female line. In certain contexts, speakers may refer to their moiety, in others to their clan, and in yet others to their lineage, organized around what is called a 'segmentary system', as described for example by Evans-Pritchard (1940) for the Nuer or by Riches (1978) for the Tiv. A moiety may encapsulate clans, which may encapsulate lineages. This system is most visible in conflict situations. Imagine two patrimoieties, each composed of several clans and each clan composed of several lineages. When two people within a lineage are in conflict, only immediate family members may get involved in conflict resolution. However, when two people belonging to different lineages of the same clan are in conflict, then all members of each lineage may get involved. When two members of lineages belonging to different clans but to the same moiety are in conflict, then the entire clan may get involved. Even further, if members of two clans belonging to different patrimoieties are in conflict, all members of the patrimoieties may get involved in conflict resolution. In other words, social categories are mobilized