

The Nature of Factional Politics

Introduction

THIS BOOK is about local-level factional politics. It shows how factionalism is related to social networks and how it alters over time as changing resources become available to local protagonists either because of their own efforts or because resources and networks on other societal levels have influenced the local arena.

The study is located in Rajgahr Village, Guyana, South America. This village has the reputation of being comprised of rich people who farm rice, live in big houses and own tractors. This study shows how factional politics and economic change, from 1902 until 1970, created the conditions on which the reputation is based and why rich people form only a minority of the population. To do this, the book develops an anthropological method for the study of factionalism through the use of social networks and historical analysis. The book is, therefore, a study of the cumulative development of a village through an analysis of political and economic process.

The Village History

There are two empirical attributes of factionalism immediately apparent from the literature: factions proliferate in peasant communities around the world and, in many cases, factionalism persists over lengthy periods of time. Throughout the history of Rajgahr Village, both characteristics have been present.

In the two and a half decades after the founding of the village in 1902 by former East Indian indentured labourers, basic parameters were established and have persisted, albeit in attenuated form, until the present time. Rice became both the subsistence and the major cash crop; a dual occupational pattern became entrenched due to the uncertainty of crop returns; and economic choices made by families, partially because of land tenure regulations, led to some villagers becoming large capitalist farmers, while others become rural proletarians. Specifically during this period, some individuals were able to amass wealth and power through the exploitation of both economic resources and their fellow villagers. In particular, two families who moved to Rajgahr during this period, established themselves as an elite group. The descendants of their political allies developed a power base that still remains intact. However, the immediate implications of this formative period can be found in the following two decades, the era of Familial Elitism.

The Era of Familial Elitism: 1927-1942

This period was basically a continuation of the early years: in both, a cyclical process characterized the village economy. Crop uncertainty limited capital accumulation. This prevented farmers from providing adequate drainage and irrigation and from expanding their limited acreage. Inadequate water control and limited acreage created crop uncertainty, the need for dual occupations, and indebtedness to money-lenders, the major credit source in times of limited returns. The way was open for the exploitation of one element in the cyclical process. The crucial nexus, credit facilities, came under the control of two families, each owning a rice mill and thus able to bind the villagers into patron-client relationships. These ties, ostensibly economic, became associated with political support for a particular miller since the two milling families, each contending for the same economic resources, used factional politics as the means of competition. The period was one in which an ascriptive elite group of limited size controlled the economy and polity of the village while the members of this elite competed amongst themselves for total control.

The Period of Displacement: 1942-1947

The political process of this period was the result of changes in the availability and allocation of resources within the village — changes due to internal and external forces which in fact had begun during the second decade of Familial Elitism. First, the economic base of the village was modified. Crop diversification and new methods of surplus disposal undercut the credit monopoly of the millers and released the majority of villagers from dependence on them. Secondly, new suffrage laws enfranchised the population. The total effect was a new kind of political community, no longer economically dependent and able to express its opinion at the polls. The people, under the leadership of a "young generation," challenged the miller hegemony,¹ and with the demise of the old interrelationship between economy and polity, miller politics were eliminated.

¹ This was a form of "diagonal segmentation" in which a disaffected segment of the elite mobilized large-scale support from the lower strata in opposition to the traditional elite whose support in the lower strata was reduced (Bujra, 1973: 148).

The Period of Factional Peace: 1948-1952

The eradication of the structural features of Familial Elitism involved a major reallocation of economic and political power within the village. This permitted a period of unprecedented economic expansion which was stimulated by changes taking place in the wider society. A massive expansion in the sugar industry increased wage labour opportunities. Acreage for rice cultivation was extended both within the village and in surrounding areas, and secondary crop production, still expanding, continued to provide alternative sources of subsistence and cash. A large-scale cattle industry developed, providing further opportunity for economic gain. Finally, new means of production were introduced which stimulated the expansion. These included the co-operative movement for both production and credit facilities, mechanization which made possible the cultivation of large-scale acreage, and a renewed emphasis on joint ventures by extended family groups. Because resources were abundant, competition was negligible and the politics of the village were concerned with conciliation and arbitration.

The Era of Class Elitism: 1953-1967

By 1953, all available land, labour and technology were being fully utilized and continued economic expansion became constrained by scarce resources. However, major changes in the allocation of resources had developed in the previous five years because families had experienced varying degrees of success during the expansion. A new stratification pattern had emerged. At one extreme was an expanded elite composed of large-scale farmers and cattlerearers committed to mechanized production. At the other extreme were family groups whose economic success was dependent on outside income sources, such as wage labour opportunities, which were now growing scarce. In between were the middle-range farmers, often over-mechanized, but having sufficient land and other means to maintain their position. Complicating this pattern of horizontal differentiation was a new occupational complexity, also a result of the expansion. The political sphere came to reflect the heightened competition as a result of scarce resources, class interests and vertical economic cleavages. This situation was exacerbated by the intrusion of national politics into the village. Local politics again became organized by factionalism.

The Period of Incorporation: 1967-1970

Although a continuation of the previous period, this phase was different from the preceding one because of a major political change. A new kind of national political competition, entirely distinct from that of the early fifties, was introduced into the local arena. Briefly, new national party alignments and governmental policies resulted in the infusion of massive patronage resources and in expanded avenues of mobility which further complicated the pattern of local-level affiliations. This altered village political competition, albeit still factional, and provided the potential for major modifications in the future.

The Nature of Factionalism²

Any study of factional politics necessarily encounters certain theoretical difficulties.

Although factionalist dispute or something like it can be seen to accompany some kinds of rapid cultural change, the external influences are inadequately described. The possibility that factionalism might emerge cyclically as part of the normal functioning of a society cannot be explored because there are few descriptions of such cycling (Beals and Siegel, 1966: 159-160).

This work, in analyzing the history of a village, provides a case study of such cycling. However, the other issues raised by Beals and Siegel become critical for such analysis. What is the role of social change, historical process and external influences in the development and persistence of factionalism? However, before this can be discussed, there is a more basic question: what are factions and factionalism?

The anthropological view that factions are "expected alignments of personnel in certain political fields" (Nicholas, 1965: 22) has produced the problem of how to "distinguish them from other kinds of political groupings" (*ibid.*: 23). The argument in this section is that factions are the structural component of a more inclusive political process. Put in another way, the controversy over definition must deal with the nature of "factionalism" as opposed to "faction". How can this view be formulated?

Three definitions of factions have found a degree of acceptability. First, Nicholas put forward five attributes: factions are political groups; conflict groups; non-corporate groups; recruited by a leader; and recruited according to diverse principles

² Sections of this general argument are found in M. Silverman, "Village Council and Factionalism: Definitional and Contextual Issues," in M. Silverman and R. F. Salisbury (eds.), *A House Divided?: Anthropological Studies of Factionalism*, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Newfoundland, Memorial University, 1977.

(1965: 27-29). Second, Boissevain defined a faction as "an exclusive coalition of persons recruited personally according to structurally diverse principles by or on behalf of a person in conflict with another person or persons within the same social unit over honour and/or control of resources" (1968: 551). Finally, it has been suggested that factions are "quasi-groups" as defined by Mayer (1966: 116), but there is limited agreement as to what a quasi-group is or how a faction fits this notion.³ In addition, assumptions appear in the literature to the effect that factions are located on a continuum between public opinion and parties (Boissevain, 1964) and that factions can be juxtaposed to "party" by virtue of the degree to which certain specified characteristics are present or absent (Bujra, 1973: 134).

Factions, of course, fit all of the above frameworks. As Bujra notes, "'factions' and 'parties' are terms covering a wide range of potential groupings at either end of a spectrum of possibilities" (Bujra, 1973: 135). Such flexibility, however, makes it difficult to apply the concepts to empirical material. The obvious alternative is to try to give precise meaning to these concepts, that is, to provide minimal definitions despite variations in form and context (Gulliver, 1971). This is the aim of the present section.

There are two contexts out of which the varying definitions have emerged: network analysis and political anthropology. This dual origin is related to the assumption that a distinction can be made between the intra-factional as opposed to the inter-factional sphere. In fact, analysis has gone in two directions: investigation of the internal organization of "factions" (the network approach) and the analysis of conflict between factions (the political approach) (Yadava, 1969: 898). Underlying this distinction is, of course, the more basic one between structure and process and the assumption that this is relevant for the analysis of factionalism.

Let us assume that there is a factional political sphere. Leader A recruits a follower. This action is typically regarded as a step in building a factional structure, team, faction, etc. That is, it concerns the intra-factional realm. However, this act of recruitment means that something was gained—a resource or a supporter. There are at least three implications. First, if the game is zero-sum, Leader B lost in direct proportion to the gain of Leader A. Second, in a non-zero sum game, Leader B must alter his strategy if he wishes to gain the support of the recruit who is now engaged in a relationship with Leader A. Hence Leader B's strategy is "subversion" in contradistinction to Leader A's strategy of "recruitment". Third, regardless of whether or not the game is zero sum, both leaders' inter-factional strategies in confrontations and encounters must take into account the fact of leader A's additional support/resource. All three implications of a simple "recruitment" in faction-building lead to the logical conclusion that acts of recruitment are in fact acts of competition:

³ The difficulties in defining and applying the quasi-group concept are apparent in Yadava, 1968; Boissevain, 1971; and Lantz, 1971.

the distinction between the intra- and interfactional spheres is arbitrary. On this basis, the political and network approaches can be meshed.

Let us assume the network as the basic unit for social analysis. Following Barnes (1968) and Gulliver (1971), this network has been labelled the "total network" and is viewed as socio-centric and unbounded. Composed of nodes and linkages, the total network is made up of partial networks which are defined by egocentric foci (Barnes, 1968) or by activity or institutional fields (Jay, 1964; Mitchell, 1969). One such institutional field is the "political"; that is, there is a partial network composed of those roles and relationships socially defined as available for inclusion in political competition. Analogous to the "kin-set" which Gulliver (1971) distinguished, every total network has, as one of its components, a partial network or set made up of potentially political relationships. This view of the partial network has its counterpart in other concepts: "social categories" (Boissevain, 1971); classificatory "quasi-groups" (Mayer, 1966); and the "class of potential allies" (Boissevain, 1971). Regardless of label, a partial network/"set" can be abstracted from the total network and this partial network can be "political".

At this point, the concept of action-set becomes relevant. An individual, enmeshed in a total network and a partial network of any type (kinship, economic, etc.), may initiate interaction. If this is goal-oriented and includes more than one other person, the individual has initiated an "action-set." If this action-set is derived from the "political set," then the action-set is what generally has been labelled a faction.

However, it is critical to note the logic underlying this formulation. Activating a political action-set is factionalism and it is concerned both with building a "faction" (structure) and with competition (process). It is the competitive actions creating the set or so-called faction which are the foci of analysis and which constitute factional political competition, not simply the subsequent activities in which the set may engage. Such activities are problematic. For example, an ego initiates an action-set to sign a petition or to contest a local election either in opposition to a set mobilized by another ego or so as to cause another ego to mobilize a set. Factionalism is the initiation of the sets, not simply the presentation of the petition or the competition which may occur during the election. As previously noted, recruitment is competition; therefore, the fact that sets may subsequently compete over a particular prize is a secondary aspect. Simply put, *the mobilization of an ego-centred action-set from the political set is the minimal definition of factionalism. The critical issue, therefore, is the question of the strategies that produce the set. Such strategies comprise factional competition.* From this it follows that ego-centred political action-sets or so-called factions, that is, the structures, are the results of prior competition and action. To emphasize this theoretical position, I intend to use the term *factional set* instead of "faction". Additionally, in analyzing factionalism, focus should not be placed on arenas or fields. These are simply the context generated by competition and which competition may alter. Instead, focus should be placed on individuals as they

compete to recruit followers from their political set of relationships, that is, as they compete to mobilize their action-sets.

In brief, *factional structures are the results of prior competition.* Given this logic, the key question is not what has usually been assumed, namely, what are "factions". Rather, *the critical issue is what is factionalism. I suggest that factionalism may be most usefully defined as a strategy for engaging in political competition.*

Factionalism as Strategy and Process

Following from this argument, *factional politics can be seen as a logical, tactical means through which resources and power are allocated in particular socio-political and economic contexts.* This necessarily raises two questions. What are the characteristics of factional strategies or, phrased another way, what is the patterning of the factional process? Second, what is the nature of the context within which factionalism is used as political strategy?

In the present view, factional process refers to two phenomena. First, at the micro-level it refers to the tactics of protagonists which generate action-sets for political competition. Each phase of Rajgahr Village history can be viewed as a closed system and the strategies within each compared to those in the other phases. Relevant to this is Bailey's notion that politics is analogous to a formal game which can be analyzed through its constituent rules. These rules define (1) the prizes for which protagonists compete, (2) who is eligible to compete, (3) the composition of competing teams, (4) how competition takes place, and (5) the control mechanisms which keep the game intact (1969: 19-33). However, although Bailey's vocabulary can provide certain operational tools, most of his underlying assumptions must be modified.

Bailey defines process as a political structure (the rules of the game) interacting with environmental resources and constraints (*ibid.* 10-11). In contradistinction, this study considers process to be the recruitment of action-sets by leaders. A problem then stems from Bailey's basic distinction between "normative" and "pragmatic" rules, a dichotomy which must be amended if applied to factional politics. This is because factionalism has been consistently defined as normatively unacceptable, covert, and governed by expediency.⁴ Further, my own view of factionalism as strategy also seems to imply solely the pragmatic elements. On the other hand, although pragmatic, factionalism can be an efficient method of getting things done (Schwartz, 1969). Additionally, the fact that it persists, often for decades, in various communities, indicates that what people do and what they approve of may be two different things. If the former is pragmatic and the latter normative, then factionalism

⁴ Reference can be made here to Firth, 1957; Siegel and Beals, 1960a and 1960b; Beals and Siegel, 1966; Spiro, 1968; Schwartz, 1969; and Bujra, 1973.

embodies both. Therefore, in my view, factionalism is only generally analogous to a game: it does consist of participants accepting rules of what constitutes fair play (normative elements) with a premium placed, as in all political situations, on new strategies (pragmatic elements). At a more general level, however, factionalism is itself a pragmatic strategy which is simultaneously an orderly political process with discernible normative regularities. Thus, in the present study, the definition of process and therefore the object of analysis differ from Bailey.

Further, I do not regard the rules as constituting political structure. Rather, rules should be regarded as generative: individual actions result in regularities which may be accepted as "normative" for a time, which affect subsequent competition, but which are constantly being reformed due to the pragmatic nature of the factional process. With my focus on leadership strategies, I see a constant interaction between regularities and action rather than Bailey's one-way interaction in which normative rules govern competition except when pragmatic rules gradually alter norms.

Given these major differences between my view of process and structure and Bailey's, how can the five types of rules which Bailey distinguished be made useful?

I view Bailey's concept of "prizes" as simply referring to the fact that political behaviour is goal-oriented. Generally, wealth, power and influence constitute prizes. However, the particular definition of prizes is environmentally and temporally specific, and factional politics will vary according to how the goals are defined and by whom.

In discussing rules governing eligibility to compete and the composition of competing teams, Bailey delineates several levels of political involvement: the "political community," or "the widest group in which competition for valued ends is controlled"; the "political elite," or "those within the community who are entitled to compete for honours and power"; and "political teams", the least inclusive category, which are the products of rules "specifying... how those who are active in politics should organize themselves" (*ibid.*: 23). These three categories are useful. Again, however, I do not regard them as rules; rather, they are categories which factional leaders respond to or manipulate in dealing with human resources. I also suggest that there will be an intimate association between these categories and the nature of stratification. Further, I see leaders constrained by the "political set," or partial network, in carrying out their tasks. In general, the total network of the village defines the political community and the partial network, or the "political set," constitutes the political elite. However, Bailey's third category, the team, is not necessarily the same as what I have called the political action-set. In some historical periods in Rajgahr Village, depending on the stratification pattern and the network linkages, the team was coterminous with the political action-set/factional set; in other periods the team was the product of additional leadership strategies in which leaders deployed supporters from their factional sets for particular encounters. In brief, the structural levels may be more complex than Bailey's three categories.

Moreover, since factional sets and teams are the products of competitive actions by leaders, it follows that it is the leaders who should be the objects of analysis. They carry out certain tasks constrained by the resources of the local arena and wider society. In factional politics, these tasks can be called resource management: the mobilization, maintenance and deployment of resources. Resource management means that leaders recruit action-sets: these are competitive actions which are patterned. This patterning can be analyzed through the encounters and confrontations which produce "oscillating games", "cumulative games", or "fights" (Bailey, 1969). These "games" may also have enmeshed the control mechanisms of which Bailey speaks. Bailey's notion of the rule governing "how competition should take place" constitutes, in the present study, not a rule, but the micro-level political process.

The second phenomenon to which factional process refers stems from a macro-view of village history; that is, factionalism as a micro-process is located in a wider context both spatially and temporally. Specifically, village politics is situated within wider political units. Local competition is also located within broader processes of social change and development over time. The processes in which factionalism is enmeshed, and of which it is an integral part, have found expression in anthropological models such as "cycles of conflict" (Attwood, 1974); factionalism as a process moving towards generalization, resolution, or specialization (Bujra, 1973); and factionalism as the co-optation of potentially more disruptive forms of conflict (Schryer, 1974). Also relevant here are studies which draw associations with internal stratification patterns, or lines of cleavage (Nicholas, 1968; Bujra, 1973), in the attempt to place factionalism within a wider conflict pattern as part of a larger range of conflict types. This analytic level of politics also has been discussed when factionalism has been associated with social change in both early (Siegel and Beals, 1966; Nicholas, 1965) and more recent work (Bailey, 1969; Gallin, 1968). Finally, the majority of dichotomies, such as public opinion vs. *partit* (Boissevain, 1964); faction vs. party (Bujra, 1971); schismatic vs. pervasive (Siegel and Beals, 1966); action-set vs. quasi-group (Mayer, 1965; Yadava, 1968) deal not simply with definitional problems, but also attempt to ascertain general processes of development and change. This level of analysis, premised as it is on a macro view of village political history, is discussed in the Conclusions.

The Nature of the Factional Environment

The two approaches to factional process, leaders' strategies and macro-patterning, both imply the existence of an environment. In the case of strategies, factionalism is necessarily affected by resources and constraints embedded in an environment (Bailey, 1969). In the case of macro-patterning, factional politics is quite clearly enmeshed in larger competitive and conflict processes which may be viewed as an

environment. Further, my hypothesis that factionalism is a strategy through which resources and power are allocated in particular contexts, necessarily raises the issue as to the contexts or environments which surround factional processes.

Generally, the concept of environment has been applied to micro-political analyses (Swartz, 1968; Bailey, 1969) but thus far has not been applied systematically to the analysis of factionalism. It seems fair to presume, however, that the environment provides resources for, and constraints on, political competition and is composed of human and physical resources (Bailey, 1968, 1969; Nicholas, 1968). I suggest, however, that human resources are not solely normative roles (Bailey, 1969) or personnel as actors (Swartz, 1968). Rather, the fact that an action-set is derived from the "political set" which in turn is a section of the total network, means that resources/constraints also consist of the structural and interactional features of both prior "nets" in which the ego is involved (Gulliver, 1971). Further, recruits are not passive; they devise their own strategies within the context of their own "nets" and in terms of their own interests. Specifically then, human resources/constraints consist of persons in terms of their numerical support, their normative roles, their political choices, and their own network resources/constraints, while ego himself is simultaneously constrained by his own network and previous actions in relation to it. All these comprise the human resources/constraints of the environment.

Physical resources (Nicholas, 1968) are viewed as dependent upon particular economic facts. However, almost every society—and this is critical—has "differential access to resources", that is, a stratification pattern (Fried, 1967). Specifically, it has been noted that village communities are characterized by varying patterns of stratification often despite ideologies of equality. One such pattern occurs when the control of community resources resides in the hands of one, or a few, families (Whitten, 1965), an example being the "cacique" (Friedrich, 1965; Goldkind, 1966).

A common method for describing stratification patterns is through the use of Weber's three dimensions: people can be differentiated by class (economic criteria), status (prestige criteria), and party (political criteria). From an economic perspective, stratification can also refer to "status differences based on economic differences... by which adult members of a society enjoy differential rights of access to resources" (Fried, 1967: 52). A third approach is to deal with class structures based on differential access to the means of production.

Regardless of perspective, Rajgahr Village has always been a stratified community. There has always been differential access to and allocation of resources, but the manner in which this has occurred has changed over time. These changing patterns have intimately affected factional politics. I, therefore, suggest the concept of "resource structure" to refer to the constellation of physical, human and normative resources and to the pattern of access and allocation at particular points in time. It has been on this basis that the periods of Rajgahr history have been delineated. From the data, there can be discerned different resource structures and factional "styles" at dif-

ferent times in Rajgahr history. There are, of course, no distinct lines of separation between periods. Rather, there appears a flow of events and changes which permits an observer to say that time x is different from what went before in that new resources, new strategies, and new processes have become paramount in the local arena. Therefore, factionalism is a strategy for engaging in competition for power and resources with variations caused by differences in the immediate context or environmental structure.

The above view, however, does not deal with the notion of "context" in a wider sociological sense, that is, context as "rapid social change" (Nicholas, 1965), as a transitional means of organizing the allocation of new resources (Bailey, 1969), as an overall system of conflict (Siegel and Beals, 1966), or as an orderly means of political goal attainment (Schwartz, 1969). Such wider context is not to be found within the local arena, village, level, etc. This results only in teleological explanation. For example, when the local arena is viewed as conflict-ridden/orderly, factionalism becomes viewed as a cause, an effect and a measure of degree, all simultaneously. Our initial premises predefine the nature of factionalism: context/factionalism cannot be explained in terms of itself. Rather, the wider social context is socio-political change in general and the allocation of power in the wider society, beyond the boundaries of our "little contexts" and "little communities."

The Nature of "Factional Sets"

What have hitherto been called "factions" are, in my view, products of prior competitive strategies. Studies have shown, however, that the internal organization of "factions" vary and that this has implications for ongoing competition. In Rajgahr as well, there have been variations in structure. However, such variations are empirically specific and simply the result of strategy decisions by a leader and/or particular supporters, or, the product of particular environmental circumstance. Briefly, the fact of structural variation, although real, is not relevant for a minimal definition of factionalism; it is only after the definition emphasizes prior political process that the derived structures (factional sets) and their effects on subsequent competition can be adequately seen. With that view of factional sets, the important issues are the structural variations which have been noted and the associations which have been drawn between factional structures and political processes.

These issues have been most commonly phrased as problems in "degree of solidarity" (Spiro, 1968) or "factional integration" (Bujra, 1973).

...an important variable [is] factional solidarity... whose range of variation... must be discovered before we can describe the invariant characteristics of factionalism (Spiro, 1968: 420).

The basic factor in any... assessment of political conflict groupings is the degree of integration of the groupings under study (Bujra, 1973: 134).

Such perspectives have resulted in "factions" being placed on a continuum which emphasizes diffuseness of structure at one end and corporateness at the other. For example, there is the notion of a "faction" as lying somewhere between "public opinion and party" (Boissevain, 1964) or as not quite achieving the integration of a "party." In dealing with that middle area which "factions" seem to occupy, there have been, once again, two basic approaches, the political approach and the network approach.

From a political perspective, Bailey notes that relations between leaders and followers may result in two types of teams: the "contract" team and the "moral" team. The difference between them is one of degree: "The hireling wants his keep and a salary besides; the faithful want only their keep" (1969: 43). Bailey suggests that:

...actual relationships between a leader and his followers are likely to contain both a moral and a transactional element... A leader may have an inner circle of retainers whose attachment to him is moral, and an outer circle of followers whose attachment to him is transactional. [But] ...faction leaders... by definition have only followers and no core (*ibid.*: 44-45).

This is because:

... there are two connected characteristics which mark out a political group as a faction: firstly, the members do not co-operate because they have a common ideology...; secondly, they are recruited by a leader with whom they have a transactional relationship... The point of unity... is the leader (*ibid.*: 52).

Bailey adds that:

...continued transactions create friends... If at first the sole bond of allegiance lies in the pork barrel, later the credit built up by continued successes will carry the leader through one or two failures. When that point is reached *the faction is already developing a core and has ceased to be purely a faction* (italics mine; *ibid.*: 53-54).

In general terms, Bailey's view fits my idea that factional sets are ego-centred political action-sets in which relations are solely transactional, and, therefore, transitory. Other writers, however, allow for greater degrees of solidarity. Spiro notes:

The *core* of each faction consisted of a relatively homogeneous upper-class group while its *support* was socially heterogeneous, deriving from different social classes and moved by a variety of motives (1968: 409).

Graham suggests a more complex variation:

...the members of a faction may be divided into two categories, the leader or leaders composing its *core* and the followers composing its element of *support*. A faction has a direct structure when its secondary leaders are the lieutenants of the primary leader, to whom the followers owe direct allegiance; it has an indirect structure when the secondary leaders have independent followings and the ability to secede—when, in fact, a faction is a federation of minor factions. In practice, a faction combines direct and indirect features in its structure although the balance may vary (1968: 324).

Such variability in structure has also been noted by those attempting to deal with "factions" as social networks. Mayer's work provided the basis via the notions of "action-set" and "quasi-group":

...a wide variety of bases for linkages are involved; ...the links are sometimes, but not always based on group membership; ...the action-set is not a group ... [and] could not exist without the ego around whom it is formed (1966: 108-109). When successive action-sets... [i.e.] the same pattern of linkages... exists through a series of contexts... without any formal basis for membership (*ibid.*: 115),

a quasi-group exists. One of the important features is that quasi-groups

...can be found in many arenas of social activity. In politics for instance, a succession of action-sets... would add up to form a quasi-group which could be labelled a faction (*ibid.*: 116).

Subsequently, however, there has been a great deal of confusion as to how the two notions in fact fit into a coherent definition of "faction" (Yadava, 1968: 908-909; Lantz, 1971: 804; Boissevain, 1971: 471). This necessitated my re-definition. At this point, however, it is not the definitional issue that is important, but the fact that the network theorists allow for factional sets exhibiting a variability of structure and solidarity comparable to that demonstrated in the political approach. The network approach also permits the solidarity/integration issue to be phrased in terms of factional sets exhibiting variation in their morphological and interactional features, as do all ego-centred social networks (Mitchell, 1969).

It now becomes possible to bring together the results of the political and network approaches. For this purpose, reference is again made to my definition of factional set as an ego-centred political action-set. It is a minimal definition embracing Bailey's emphasis on the transactional nature of factions and the definition of factions as structurally ephemeral (Firth, 1957; Nicholas, 1965). It follows logically that should a greater degree of solidarity be developed by the leadership, that is, should core and support become distinguishable, then, following Mayer's terminology, the next most inclusive category, the quasi-group has been generated. Further, insofar as core/quasi-group is defined in network terms, it is possible to deal with

even further solidification through a notion of network density surrounding the leadership. The concept of clique (Mayer, 1966; Barnes, 1968) can be introduced as the next logical step in defining internal solidarity in cases where the core/quasi-group has achieved a high degree of internal interaction, that is, where there is a high network density.

This discussion can be summarized with a typology of factional sets, beginning with the simplest form, the ego-centred political action-set composed of transactional relationships between a leader and followers. Variation and/or solidification may then result:

- Variation 1: Transactional relationship between a leader and all followers (Bailey 1969); or
Action-set (Mayer, 1966); or
Ego-centred political action-set (my concept).
- Variation 2: Group of leaders each with own followers recruited on a transactional basis (Bailey, 1969); or
Indirect structure (Graham, 1968); or
Ego-centred political action-sets with several egos in collusion (my concept).
- Variation 3: "Core" distinguishable:
Quasi-group (Mayer, 1966); or
Direct structure (Graham, 1968).
- Variation 4: High degree of core solidity:
Clique (Barnes, 1968; Mayer, 1966).

It is suggested that factional sets exhibit variability as a result of different leadership strategies as these relate to environmental resources and constraints. Such structures may in turn provide resources and constraints for subsequent strategies.

The Framework for Analysis

This chapter has defined the focus of the present study: the analysis of factionalism as a political strategy through which power and resources are allocated. For this purpose, I have proposed definitions of factionalism and of the "environment." The substantive chapters which follow are arranged in a manner most suitable for the analysis. Each historical period is contained within a chapter and, as an initial step, the resource structure of the period is described. This is followed by an analysis of the strategies within the associated political competitions. The ultimate aim is to deal with the dynamics of factional politics within particular social and economic circumstances. In the final section of the book, a comparative analysis between the periods of village history is presented. This leads to an examination of the macro-political process, that is, the evolution of periods one into the other, in the effort to place factional politics within the broader context of general political process.